

AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY JULY 22, 2013
ANN WHALEN 1st Floor Conference room
33 KELLOGG AVE., AMHERST, MA

Members of the Amherst Housing Authority met in regular session on Monday July 22, 2013 in the fifth floor conference room of Ann Whalen Apartments, 33 Kellogg Ave. Amherst, MA. The chair, Constance Kruger, called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

PRESENT: Constance Kruger, Laura Quinn, Peter Jessop, Judy Brooks

ABSENT: Paul Bobrowski

ALSO PRESENT: Denise LeDuc, Nancy Schroeder, Alan Root , Barbara Steinmetz, Allen Deslongchamp, Gloria Thibodeau, Linda J. Clifford, Dr. Mark Kislysk, and TracyLee Boutilier,

AGENDA ADOPTION/CHANGES: Upon motion of P. Jessop, seconded by J. Brooks, it was voted to adopt the agenda. (Unanimous)

MINUTES APPROVAL: Upon motion of P. Jessop, seconded by L. Quinn, it was voted to accept the minutes of the June 24, 2013 meeting (3 ayes, 1 abstention)

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT: Upon motion of J. Brooks, seconded by L. Quinn, it was voted to accept the Accounts Payable Warrant as presented for June 2013 (Unanimous)

TENANT CONCERNS: A. Root expressed gratitude to the board for the recent air conditioner purchases and installation during the extremely hot spell that was had. M. Kislysk asked about the fall replacement of these, and was told this would be addressed later, once summer and the heat was over.

SMOKING POLICY: Several tenants came to hear about the smoking policy. The board was advised by the E.D. that a meeting had occurred at the Ann Whalen Apartments where residents had the opportunity to voice their concerns on the current smoking policy. A recommendation from the E.D. was to have no smoking in all of the AHA properties effective 1/1/2014, and to have our Mixed population service coordinator begin to assist residents who wished to stop smoking with the services they need. M. Kislysk spoke that he would like to see the board require that residents purchase smoke eaters, and allow the current policy to remain. The board asked if this had been brought to all of the AHA tenants, and N. Schroeder stated it had not, just the AW resident population. The board asked that the entire AHA tenant population be outreached regarding this issue and to bring this back to the board at the next board meeting, as they were not ready to vote on the topic.

SAFETY CONCERNS: N. Schroeder stated that more work needed to be done on this topic and asked that this be re-addressed in the fall. N. Schroeder will discuss the possibility of a partnership with Clark House, or explore other options. J. Brooks stated that she would connect Police Chief S. Livingston and D. LeDuc to discuss ways the APD could assist the AHA. L. Quinn volunteered to work with a tenant sub-committee on the Safety concerns.

PUBLIC HOUSING REFORM: C. Kruger, D. LeDuc and former commissioner J. Logan attended the July 22nd Public Hearing of the Joint SubCommittee on Housing Reform in Springfield. Both C. Kruger and D. LeDuc testified before the sub-committee. Upon motion of P. Jessop, seconded by J. Brooks, it was voted have C. Kruger and D. LeDuc craft a response and send to the committee. (Unanimous)

AHA ROLE IN EMERGENCY RENTER'S FUND: A joint proposal (AHA and Family Outreach) was approved at Town meeting which would establish an Emergency Renter's Fund in the amount of \$15,000 to be used for residents of the community who need the assistance; which could be for first and last month's rent, security deposit and finder's fees. The Amherst Housing Authority would like to have the grant in Family Outreach's name alone for their administration. The basis of the fund would remain the same, and C. Kruger will send a letter to the chair of the town's CPA committee to thank the committee for their support and explain that Family Outreach will be the primary with no changes on the administration of the fund.

UNIT VACANCIES: The board was provided with a print out of the vacant units at the AHA for the boards review. There were no units vacant other than the three units with waivers.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: D. LeDuc asked the board if they would support the AHA partnering with the Belchertown Housing Authority, and if it was acceptable to provide a packet of information to explore the option further. Discussion ensued, and the board supported the exploration of this potential partnership further. The information would need to be at the BHA no later than August 9, 2013.

D. LeDuc advised the board that a recent inspection was done by the HUD REAC team and that the AHA received a 97% score, and is considered to be a High Performer.

D. LeDuc also advised the board that the AHA has an intern for the summer that is learning about governmental entities and non-profits. The intern is assisting the Leased Housing Department with Rent Reasonableness, writing up procedures based on policies, and compiling information that is needed to reinstate the Amherst Affordable Housing Associates.

D. LeDuc advised the board that there will be a staff retreat on Friday, August 30th. The details have not yet been fully worked out, but will be available at the next board meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT: No formal report

OTHER BUSINESS NOT ANTICIPATED WITHIN 48-HOUR NOTICE:

CONTRACT- ELEVATOR: Upon motion of P. Jessop, seconded by J. Brooks, it was voted to authorize the Executive Director to enter in a two-year contract with Associated Elevator. (Unanimous)

ADJOURN: Upon the motion of J. Brooks, seconded by P. Jessop, it was voted to adjourn until the next regular meeting on Monday, August 26, 2013 at 4:30 p.m. in the community room at Ann Whalen Apartments, 33 Kellogg Ave., Amherst, MA. Meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m. (Unanimous)