

AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY JANUARY 27, 2013
ANN WHALEN 5th Floor Community room
33 KELLOGG AVE., AMHERST, MA

Members of the Amherst Housing Authority met in regular session on Monday January 27, 2014 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 4:33 p.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Constance Kruger, Peter Jessop, Paul Bobrowski, Laura Quinn,

ABSENT: Judy Brooks

ALSO PRESENT: Denise LeDuc Executive Director, Debbie Turgeon Director of Housing Programs, Nancy Schroeder, Director of Asset Management and Janna Tetreault, Leased Housing Administrator. Public: Alan Root, Nancy Dubin, Joan Burgess, Fran Soto, Barbara Steinmetz, Eleanor Marie-Gath, Pennie Marcus, Deborah Levenson, Frank Gatti, Janet Kaley, TracyLee Boutilier, Chad, Janet Keller, and Maurianne Adams

AGENDA ADOPTION/CHANGES: It was noted that the Agenda did not have the 2013 Audit listed for discussion and this will be put on the Feb. 2014 agenda. Discussion occurred on the agenda in general. Upon motion of P. Jessop, seconded by P. Bobrowski, it was voted to adopt the agenda. 3 yes, 1 abstention

MINUTES APPROVAL: It was noted that the Chair's Report was not in the minutes, and since they were prepared comments they should be a part of the record. Ms. Kruger stated she will provide a copy for the AHA to have on file. Discussion occurred about what was required to be part of the minutes per law; D. LeDuc will investigate this further to ensure that the AHA is in compliance. Upon motion of P. Jessop, seconded by P. Bobrowski, it was voted to accept the minutes of the December 12, 2013 meeting (Unanimous)

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT: Upon motion of P. Bobrowski, seconded by P. Jessop, it was voted to accept the Accounts Payable Warrant as presented for December 2013. (Unanimous)

TENANT CONCERNS: Alan Root, an AW resident stated he is engaged in forming a group of AW residents to discuss how the AHA is run and what could be done to help improve it. Fran Soto, AW resident not happy with services, thinks the AHA should hire a social worker to deal with residents. D. LeDuc stated that the AHA is one of the few housing authorities in the state that receives funds from DHCD for resident service coordination services, which is to help residents coordinate with services available in the community.

SCHIFFER HOUSE UPDATE & DISCUSSION: J. Tetreault provide board with a brief update on what has transpired so far with the Schiffer house and some of the challenges the AHA has faced with selling it according to the restrictions that were set up by the documents. J. Tetreault advised the board that the court approved the amendment to the agreement and the AHA can move forward with the disposition of the property. P. Bobrowski requested that for the February meeting that the board is presented with a list of steps that the AHA would need to take to dispose of the property under the requirements of Chapter 30B. J. Tetreault will draft this

document. L. Quinn asked that the vote be postponed. Maurianne Adams was recognized by the chair and gave a brief presentation on the Amherst Community Land Trust and was hoping the AHA would donate the land to the trust. Ms. Adams and Ms. Keller asked the AHA for some additional time to figure everything out as the trust was in the process of being formed. Ms. Adams provided the board with a document outlining what the trust was hoping to do.

CHANGE ORDER FOR EMERGENCY GENERATOR- AW: D. LeDuc advised of the gas line problem for the Emergency Generator which required additional plumbing to increase the size of the piping for sufficient gas flow to the generator. The additional cost this change is \$17,542. D. LeDuc also advised the contractor had upgraded the switchgear at no additional cost which was saving a significant amount from the Formula Funding allocation. Upon motion of P. Jessop, seconded by L. Quinn, it was voted to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Change Order in the amount of \$17,542. (Unanimous)

AMHERST MEDIA INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITY- L. Quinn re-drafted an Internship opportunity recommendation for review. L. Quinn advised that Amherst Media would waive the \$100 fee for the agency; however we would be responsible to pay the training fee. Amherst Media would supply the equipment for the intern to video the AHA board meetings, it was recommended by members that the AHA consider offering a stipend. P. Jessop asked if the staff had comments; the staff was to review it on 1/28 at their monthly staff meeting and based on feedback the description would be revised and distributed. D. LeDuc will follow up with this.

EDGEMERE REPORT- The report was distributed and reviewed by the board and meeting attendees. There was a difference of opinion on what constituted a disparate impact. Ex. Race and ethnicity in one example had 74% of white households vs. 81% of black households that would receive an increase if payment standards were changed. Concerned was also raised about the extended area and how the impact would affect them.

HUD RESPONSE ON AFHN! COMPLAINT- D. LeDuc provided copies of the complaint Amherst Fair Housing Now! filed with HUD in regards to the formation of the Resident Advisory Board. General discussion occurred regarding when the response was required by to why the RAB committee would be meeting on February 27th. Other questions came up had to do with term limits, and how the RAB works to how the communication with take place. D. LeDuc will follow up with HUD to determine the date they want the response and send the Commissioners with a draft of the response.

LEGAL SERVICES ENGAGEMENT- Discussion occurred that the AHA needed to engage the services of an attorney for a current case that is pending. Due to the timeframe of the response due, the Executive Director authorized a maximum of \$2,500 to begin the work and ensure our timely response. The board was asked to increase this amount, but at the present time the full cost is not known. Upon motion of P. Bobrowski, seconded by P. Jessop, it was voted to authorize a maximum of \$15,000. 3 Yes 1 No

P. Jessop left meeting 6:45 quorum still in place

ITEMS HELD OVER FROM THE 12/12 MEETING FROM THE PUBLIC HEARING ON WORDING IN THE 5 YEAR PLAN, AND POLICY MISSING FROM SECTION 8 ADMIN PLAN- Discussion occurred around the wording of 9.1 in the 5 year plan where it was originally recommended that the sentence dealing with 120% HUD exception rent be eliminated. P. Bobrowski stated that it doesn't belong in a policy statement and was ok with the removal. Some members of the public wanted it to stay in the plan to force the AHA to continue to apply

for and the exception rent. Upon motion of L. Quinn, seconded by P. Bobrowski, it was voted to re-word 9.1 to: The AHA will request from HUD exception payment standards of 120% for the community of Amherst to ensure that households seeking housing under the Voucher Program will be successful in locating appropriate housing. (Unanimous)

Upon motion of L. Quinn, seconded by P. Bobrowski, it was voted to add the following policy missing from the current Section 8 Administrative Plan:

The AHA may opt to lower payment standards for all or some unit sizes. A lower payment standard will immediately apply to all new admissions, all movers, and families remaining in their units with a new HAP contract (e.g., when the owner offers or requires a new lease). For all other HCV participants, decreased payment standard amounts are not applied until the second regular reexamination after the payment standard is lowered (see 24 CFR982.505(c)(3)), unless the AHA has requested a waiver for good cause and is approved by HUD so the payment standards may be applied sooner than provided by regulation. (Unanimous)

REVIEW OF UNIT VACANCIES: Not discussed

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: No discussion

CHAIR'S REPORT: C. Kruger will send note to Commissioners re: E.D. performance review for any comments the board may have. C. Kruger stated received letter from State Ethics Commission that she could remain on the AHA board if she were elected to the Town of Amherst Select Board.

OTHER BUSINESS- NOT ANTICIPATED WITHIN 48 HOUR NOTICE- None

ADJOURN: Upon the motion of P. Bobrowski, seconded by C. Kruger, it was voted to adjourn until the next regular meeting of the board on Monday, January 27, 2014 at 4:30 in the community room at Ann Whalen Apartments, 33 Kellogg Ave., Amherst, MA. Meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m. (Unanimous)

Documents Distributed

Agenda

Minutes, December 12, 2013

Accounts Payable, December 2013

Executive Director report- January 2014

Current AHA Reasonable Accommodation Policy

Proposed AHA Reasonable Accommodation Policy- dated January 24, 2014

Payment Standard Changes, Impact Analysis Report- dated December 2013 prepared by Edgemere Consulting Corporation

Amherst Fair Housing Now! HUD complaint re: RAB

Unit Vacancy Report, December 2013

Amherst Media Internship Opportunity

Amherst Community Land Trust- supplied by Maurianne Adams