

AMHERST HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY JULY 28, 2014 4:30 P.M.
ANN WHALEN BUILDING 5TH FLOOR COMMUNITY ROOM
33 KELLOGG AVE., AMHERST, MA

Members of the Amherst Housing Authority met in regular session on Monday, July 28, 2014 in the fifth floor community room of Ann Whalen Apartments, 33 Kellogg Ave., Amherst, MA. Board Vice Chair, Judy Brooks called the meeting to order at 4:43 p.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners: Judy Brooks, Laura Quinn, & Constance Kruger- Chair Paul Bobrowski arrived at 4:50

ABSENT: Peter Jessop

ALSO PRESENT: Denise LeDuc Executive Director, Debbie Turgeon Director of Housing Programs, Alan Root, Paul Vasconcellos, TracyLee Boutillier

AGENDA ADOPTION/CHANGES: Upon motion of L. Quinn seconded by C. Kruger, it was voted to adopt the agenda. (Unanimous)

MINUTES APPROVAL: Upon motion of C. Kruger, seconded by L. Quinn it was voted to adopt the minutes from June 23rd meeting with the following adjustments; L. Quinn was not present during minutes approval of June meeting she arrived at 5 pm. (Unanimous)

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT: Upon motion of L. Quinn and seconded by C. Kruger, it was voted to approve the Accounts Payable Warrant as presented for June 2014. (Unanimous)

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE (no public, only two tenants in room)

TENANT CONCERNS: P. Vasconcellos made comments on the successful 4th of July picnic, second thing is that many tenants have done an excellent job dealing with the very difficult situation, understand the legal issues and how difficult it is, stated the staff dealt with it effectively. L. Quinn had concerns over the perception of homeless people causing problems, and asked if that was the case. D. LeDuc explained that there were several incidents (lease violations) that occurred and caused D. LeDuc to call the police. Some people in question were smoking on the balconies and hanging over the balcony where they were in danger of falling. A. Root is doing a survey (7 areas of perception) spoke about the areas that he wanted to contact info. D. LeDuc stated that the AHA is looking at the possibility of going back to utilizing the state lease and expects to have this for the board for the August meeting. Paul V. stated that he hopes that there is a balance between people who wish to complain versus. Ms. Kruger wants to see the report as a whole and not piecemeal.

APPOINTMENT TO CPAC: Denise LeDuc identified that P. Jessop when his term was up and he sought re-election that another vote would need to be taken to elect a board member to the CPAC on behalf of the AHA. Mr. Jessop is willing to continue in that role should the board wish to consider appointing him. Upon a motion by J. Brooks and seconded by C. Kruger, it was voted to appoint Peter Jessop as the Amherst Housing Authority representative on the Town of Amherst Community Preservation Act Committee. (Unanimous)

Members of the board expressed appreciation for the work that Peter has done as a member of the CPAC representing the AHA and how he can effectively manage his role as the chair of the CPAC and his role as a commissioner on the AHA.

CERTIFICATE OF FINAL COMPLETION-SUNRISE FURNACE: Upon motion by L Quinn, seconded by J. Brooks the Board authorized the Executive Director to enter into the contract with GDS Associates in the amount of \$3,812 with annual update costs of 2015 - \$630 and 2016 - \$643. (Unanimous)

CERTIFICATE OF FINAL COMPLETION- HEALTH AND SAFETY CONTRACT: Upon motion by L. Quinn, seconded J. Brooks authorized the Executive Director to sign Certificate of Final Completion. (Unanimous)

BANKING SERVICES: D. LeDuc explained that during the FY'13 audit, the AHA was cited in the audit for not having a Federal General Depository Agreement as required for the programs with associated with Federal funds. An RFP was written and sent to several local banking institutions. Greenfield Savings Bank came back with the best overall package, and the least amount of fees. D. LeDuc recommended that the board vote to move the accounts and open new accounts with Greenfield Savings Bank who can meet the regulatory requirements. Upon a motion by C. Kruger and seconded by L. Quinn it was voted to have Executive Director D. LeDuc open the accounts with Greenfield Savings Bank. (Unanimous)

SCHIFFER HOUSE CLOSING: There may a request to lower the bid, and asking that the board consider allowing the Executive Director to go to the minimum bid in the event it might be a factor to close on the house. After discussion, it was asked that the Executive Director negotiate in good faith within the boundaries of the law and try to get the best price possible. Upon motion by J. Brooks , seconded by L. Quinn authorized the Executive Director to negotiate with the seller on the sale of the property to the extent allowed by law. (Unanimous) Upon a motion by J. Brooks, seconded by L. Quinn to authorize the Executive Director to sign the deed for the sale of the house. (Unanimous) Other discussion occurred on what programs the board may want to consider for the funds coming from the proceeds of the sale. It was determined that this will be discussed after the sale occurs.

PUBLIC HOUSING REFORM (BILL 4211/4306/4316) DISCUSSION: D. LeDuc advised the board of what has been occurring at the state level on the anticipated reform, along with the discussions that have occurred across the state at the Commonwealth Housing Task Force and the CHAPA meetings. It is anticipated that the bill will pass the Senate by July 31st and move to the governor for signing into law.

HUD IMPLEMENTATION OF FISCAL YEAR 2014 APPROPRIATIONS PROVISIONS ON PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY CONSORTIA, BIENNIAL INSPECTIONS, EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME DEFINITION AND UTILITY ALLOWANCES-DISCUSSION: A handout from HUD on the Final Rule on changes to the Section 8 (Housing Choice Voucher Program) was provided to the board. The new regulations went into effect on July 1, 2014

PUBLIC COMMENT: Comment was made that minutes of board meetings were not up to date on the website. Char advised that minutes are always available upon request from the Executive Director. The Executive Director advised that AHA is having an issue updating website- and looking to upgrade the site as tasks are taking much longer than they should and simple links are causing the website to go out of whack. P. Bobrowski stated that he would review the AHA website and make possible recommendations. Members of the board asked the ED to see if the Town of Amherst may be able to host our minutes until we can get a better interface on our website. D. LeDuc stated that she would follow up with the town.

REVIEW OF UNIT VACANCIES: Currently, there are 4 vacancies, one at Pomeroy and Ann Whalen and two at John Nutting awaiting HILAPP rehab.

DIRECTORS REPORT: The Executive Director provided a brief recap of the written report as submitted to the Board. Questions were asked about security and stated that the firm that was hired will end in a few days for a cost of approximately \$5,000.

OTHER BUSINESS NOT ANTICIPATED WITHIN 48 HOURS: L. Quinn asked about the media Intern. D. LeDuc stated that she will send information out to the area colleges to see if we are able to obtain one now that the new semester will be starting soon.

CHAIR'S REPORT N/A

ADJOURN: Upon motion J. Brooks, seconded by C. Kruger it was voted to adjourn until the next regular meeting of the board on Monday August 25, 2014 at 4:30 in the community room of Ann Whalen Apts., 33 Kellogg Ave., Amherst, MA. Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Materials Distributed:

Agenda- July 28, 2014

Minutes- June 23, 2014

Accounts Payable Warrant- June 2014

Unit Vacancy Report as of June 30, 2014

Executive Director Report- July 2014

Massachusetts Senate- Bill 2292 (An Act Relative to Local Housing Authority Reform)

HUD Implementation of Fiscal Year 2014 Appropriations provisions on Public Housing Consortia,

Biennial Inspections, Extremely Low-Income Definition and Utility Allowances