

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, June 19th, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to Order at 7:00PM

Open Public Meetings Act Statement: In compliance with Chapter 213 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this Meeting was given by way of the Annual Notice published in the Trenton Times, Princeton Packet and are posted on the calendar at The Hightstown Borough Municipal Building by the Authority and posted in a public place reserved for such announcements in the lobby of the Community Building of the Housing Authority Office.

Roll Call: showed that those present and absent were as follows:

Present: Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director, Commissioner James Eufemia, Chair, Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Sean McDonnell, Commissioner Anne Studholme.

Also, Present: Borough Liaison Jeet Gulati

Absent: Commissioner Terry Parliaros, Commissioner Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Jameellah Lance

Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting Minutes of April 17th The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Teller and seconded by Commissioner Studholme. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Open Public Meeting: At this time the public is invited and encouraged to participate in open forum. It is requested by the Chairman of the Board and the Commissioners of the Housing Authority that all comments and opinions be relevant and timely and be expressed in a manner which contributes to and advances the orderly progress of the meeting and for all concerned. The Chairman or presiding Commissioner may determine that it is necessary to limit the amount of time allotted to speakers from the public.

None Present

Borough Council Liaison Report:

- Jeet Reported the Harvest Fair has been cancelled for this year. The Harvest Fair will be replaced by a Family Fair run by a borough committee.

Committee Report:

- None

Resident Council Report:

- Keith reported the council met and discussed Chelsea’s maternity leave and when she will be back in September. Lynmarie will fill in until she gets back.
- The residents questioned whether the current plumbing project is causing the brown water. We reported the Borough has been flushing the hydrants which cause the brown water and for a short period of time during the shutdowns and reenergizing of the water lines there could be some discoloration of the water.
- The residents discussed a picnic this summer and asked again why they cannot have a grill. It was explained that due to safety concerns residents can not have a BBQ grill unless there is a staff member present to oversee the grill.

Resolutions:

- None

Discussion Items:

- **Piping Project:** Keith discussed the current project and where we are at the moment. He explained building 3 and 5 are substantially piped and the contractor has “charged” the hot and cold water lines on the new system. All the underground work is done and the sidewalks have been repoured and access to all the areas restored. The next step is the final connections for the heating lines and in the boiler room. The contractor is ahead of schedule and will complete the work as planned.
- **2024 Capital Funding:** We have received the 2024 Capital Fund and the process has begun to access the money. The problem right now is our project manager at HUD has retired and all his projects have been distributed to other project managers. The project manager we received has over 200 projects to oversee and ours is not a priority. I am being a nice “pain in the side” right now.
- **The asbestos** issue has not been resolved yet. We have an engineer on the issue and she reassures me it will be dealt with.

Executive Director Report:

- We are currently at 99 % Occupancy. We are renovating a studio unit for a new tenant. We currently do not have any notices of move outs.
- The infrastructure piping project is well underway. The heating system has been turned off and the contractors have drained the existing heating system and are beginning to cut in the new connections and remove the old heating loop. This process will take several weeks, if not months to complete. All the underground work has been done between buildings 4 and buildings 3 and 5. The sidewalks have been repoured and the ground repaired. The final connections in the boiler room have not been made at this point but will happen in the next couple of weeks.
- We are still working on the Asbestos issue. The engineers are working with a company that is going to give us the price on removal. We are not going to include the office at this point and will address in the future renovation.

- We have a temporary project manager at HUD. I have been working with her and her boss to get our Capital fund for 2024 approved and available. HUD Newark is desperately understaffed, getting anything done is difficult.
- The waiting lists are closed.
- We have not had time to begin making the changes to the ACOP(Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy). We will begin working on these changes in the coming months. Changes will need to be adopted by the end of 2024. Copies will be sent to the committee to review and comment before new policies are adopted. Changes are needed to comply with the HOTMA changes that are being implemented by HUD. This will affect entrance and occupancy requirements as well as annual certifications.
- 2024 Capital funding has been approved and we have received \$255,087 this year. Part of this money will be used to support the infrastructure piping project. We have reviewed and certified our occupancy for the 2025 grants already.
- We have reached out to HUD Washington regarding our phase 3 funding and grant money. They have not received the approved package from Newark. I have reached out to our new project manager and her boss regarding the package. Our last communication with Suresh before he retired was that it was approved and waiting for signatures. Now it can't be found. I will keep working on it.
- We will be replacing the old camera system starting this year. The Federal Government has made Hikvision, the manufacturer of the current system, illegal for HAs to use. This is due to fears the Chinese government is doing something nefarious with the data. We are switching to an Avigilon system that is produced by Motorola in Texas. The total project will begin with replacing the DVR and in-house systems, and next year we will begin replacing the cameras. Fortunately, our existing cameras will work with the new DVR and internet system.

Financial Update: May 2024

In review of the financial reports for the month of April 2024, the Hightstown Housing Authority completed the month with positive results. I have included a variety of reports for your review.

Income:

- Residential income has come in over budget. Even with the budgeted increase we are still exceeding the amount. We are aggressively going after late payers and those behind on their rent.
- Excess utility is over budget for the period. We have been installing a lot of AC's.
- Interest income is slightly over budget for the period. We are now getting current rates on our accounts.

- Other Operating receipts are under budget for the period. This comes in line later in the year when the insurance dividends come in.
- Laundry income is slightly over budget for the period.
- Operating Subsidy income is over budget for the period. We received a large amount of money from HUD to cover the first 5 months including May. I discussed this with our accountant, and he recommends we download the money and get it out of the Eloccs system. For March and April, we drew down the final amount in May. The balance of the year will be on or below budget.

Expenses:

- Administrative salaries are over budget for the period. May was a 3 pay month.
- Legal expenses are over budget for the period, In May we sought more evictions and legal action to reinforce collections which affected this account.
- Staff training was over budget. We had a commissioner take one class.
- Telephones are over budget for the period. Most of the increase is due to the multiyear lease on the phone system came due.
- Sundry Administrative is over budget for the period. This account initially gets most of the activity, and the accountant adjusts the amounts to other categories. Much of the overage is due to the annual Board dinner and replenishment of Petty cash.
- Computer supplies are under budget for the period. We will be looking to upgrade at least 2 more computers this year, we held off in '23, but we will need to do some upgrades in 2024.
- Dues and Memberships are slightly over budget for the period.
- Misc. Maintenance supplies are under budget.
- Electric is under budget for the period.
- Natural Gas is under for the period.
- Maintenance salaries are over budget due to the 3 pay month.
- Maintenance materials are over budget for the period. In renovating units, we are purchasing supplies and materials for those units. Only one of the two units renovated needed flooring and complete renovation.
- Extermination Cost is under budget. We have been dealing with a bed bug problem which we hope is under control.
- Ground maintenance is over budget. All the summer flowers have been planted.
- Blue Cross/Blue shield is slightly under budget.

The enclosed financials include Income Statement for the Current Period- May 2024(VS Budget), and General Ledger Cash account for May.

The next meeting will be a 7:00PM on July 17th.

The meeting was adjourned by a motion made by Commissioner Teller and seconded by Commissioner McDonnell.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director