

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH  
OF HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, July 17, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Chairperson James Eufemia called meeting to Order at 6:55PM

**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 Brent Rivenburgh, Commissioner Eva Teller, Commissioner Sean McDonnell, Commissioner Anne Studholme Commissioner Jameellah Lance

**Also, Present:** Jeet Gulati, Borough Council Liaison.

**Absent:** Commissioner Terry Parliaros, Resignation letter received.

**Approval of Minutes:** Regular Meeting Minutes of June 19<sup>th</sup>. The minutes were motioned to be approved by Commissioner Teller and seconded by Commissioner McDonnell. 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.

**Commissioner Eufemia** read the resignation letter from Terry Parliaros:

Dear Mr. LePrevost,

I am writing to formally resign from my position as Commissioner of the Hightstown Housing Authority effective immediately.

It has been an honor to serve the community through my role at the Housing Authority. I am grateful for the opportunities I have had to contribute to the development and implementation for housing initiatives and to work alongside such dedicated colleagues.

This decision was not made lightly, as my time with the Housing Authority has been both rewarding and fulfilling. However, due to how busy my life has become and my new employment, I have made the decision to step away.

Thank you for your understanding and support. I have confidence that the Hightstown Housing Authority will continue to achieve great things for our community.

There was a lengthy discussion started by commissioners Teller and Rivenburgh on the replacement for the vacancy. Several names were discussed. Keith asked Jeet to inform the Mayor and see what feedback she may offer.

A roll call vote was called and the board accepted Terry's resignation letter.

### **Borough Council Liaison Report:**

**Jeet** discussed the current state of the budget and the CFO leaving unexpectedly. Advertisements have been done and the administration will be interviewing new candidates.

The county has approved their budget, and the new bridge was included in the budget. We are anticipating construction to begin later this year.

### **Committee Report:**

- **None**

### **Resident Council Report:**

- Jameallah gave the report from today's meeting.
  - Trash around the buildings. Especially buildings 2,5 and 6.
  - Feeding the squirrels, stray cats. A couple residents have been feeding the cats and the squirrels are getting the food also. The problem is mainly behind buildings 5 and 1. Lynmarie suggested they talk to their neighbors, as when Keith talks to them it often takes on a different tone.
  - Loiterers. There are several residents that are concerned that there is a couple that is hanging out in the parking lot by building 1. So far, they have not caused any damage or harmed anyone, but Lynmarie suggested they call the Police non-emergency line when they see people loitering.
- Keith commented he is aware of the trash issue, and some of it is from the construction project that is underway. The contractor has been told about the problem and they will address it. Also, there is a family in building 2 that has a lot of kids. My impression is the mother doesn't want them to litter the grounds but doesn't want them running in and out of the house with their trash, so she attached a trash bag to the railing. We will have it removed.

### **Resolutions:**

- **None**

### **Discussion Items:**

- **Audit:** Keith discussed the 2023 Audit that was recently done. We have a clean audit with no findings. There were 2 recommendations, one of which is updating the ACOP, which is in process, and adding Cyber Insurance to our policy. Keith explained we already have Cyber Insurance; it was added last year. Commissioner Eufemia congratulated the HA on the audit.
- **Piping Project:** Keith discussed the current progress. All the underground work is done and buildings 4 and 5 are fully energized with hot and cold water. The contractor is working this week to energize building 3. The heating system is fully drained so they will do the final tie

ins in the next week. There are some details to clean up and inspections for leaks when the heating system is energized. Also, we will be able to determine what work is needed in the residential units.

- **Capital Funding:** Keith discussed his work with our new temporary project manager at HUD. She has made us redo the 5-year plan and the previously approved submissions before she would approve our 2024 Capital Fund. After several go arounds, and a discussion with her boss, we got the plan approved and the 2024 capital fund freed up. Now that this is done, I will work on her again on the emergency funding that seems to have gone missing.

### **Executive Director Report:**

- We are currently 100 % Occupancy. We currently do not have any written notices of move outs. Currently we have 2 apartments that may be available for September 1. We have a 2 bedroom that has already been refurbished so all it will need is paint and floors waxed, and the other is a senior one bedroom that will need everything. We are waiting on formal notice.
- The infrastructure piping project is well underway. The heating system has been turned off and the contractors are now focused on tying the boilers into the new 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 underground water system between 4 and 5 is complete and online. The sidewalks have been repoured and the ground repaired.
- We are still working on the Asbestos issue. The contractors are working with a company that is going to give us the price on removal. They have done jobs with them before, and they specialize in small jobs. We are not going to include the office currently as we are considering installing a small hot water boiler just for the office. This will remove the office from the main piping project, eliminating the underground work and the various tie-ins and repiping that was necessary.
- We have a temporary project manager at HUD. She made us completely redo an existing 5-year capital plan to her liking, which involved jumping through several hoops and getting previous years revisited and approved. We worked through the process and have the 2024 Capital fund approved and moved into LOCCS. We have already accessed the funds, drawing down appliances and salaries incurred earlier this year.
- The waiting lists remain closed. We are preparing the update letters now and will revisit the list later this summer.
- 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.

- Now that we have worked through the 2024 Capital fund fiasco, I will reach out to HUD Washington regarding our phase 3 funding and grant money. HUD Washington has not received the approved package from Newark. I will reach 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 initial deposit has been made on the new DVR and the material has been ordered. 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: June 2024**

In review of the financial reports for the month of June 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 on 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 well under budget for the period. We received a large amount of money from HUD to cover the first 5 months including May. For the balance of the year, we are receiving a smaller amount which will put this category under budget later this year.

Expenses:

- Administrative salaries are under budget for the period.
- Legal expenses are under budget for the period.
- Staff training is under budget.
- Telephones are under budget for the period.
- 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 purchase of receipt books and a large Staples order. .
- 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.
- Misc. Maintenance supplies are under budget.
- Water is on budget for the period
- Electric is under budget for the period.
- Natural Gas is slightly over budget for the period.
- Maintenance salaries are over budget due to hiring a part-time person for the summer.
- 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.
- Boiler contract costs are over budget. We have each of the 6 boilers torn down and completely cleaned. While we were doing this, we added new fresh air kits and filters to each unit so that hopefully they stay cleaner in the future.
- Extermination Cost is under budget. We have been dealing with a bed bug problem which we hope is under control.
- Ground maintenance is under 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-June 2024(VS Budget), and General Ledger Cash account for June.

The next meeting will be a 7:00PM on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

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Allen Keith LePrevost, Executive Director