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REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, February 15, 2022, HELD AT 2 SCHOOL STREET, HATFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, and virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. with Chairperson John Wilkes presiding.

Roll Call: Chair John Wilkes, Christopher Smith (virtually), Judy Schell, and Brenna Duquette/Executive Director. Alex Malinowski attended virtually after roll call. Members absent were Mike Hogan. Tenants present were Roland Laurin, Jackie Courchesne, and Nancy Broussard.

Citizens Speak:

Roland Laurin commended HHA for trying to save energy with the weatherization upgrades provided through the LEAN program.

Judy Schell made a motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting held January 18, 2022, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

There was a brief discussion of the financial reports as of January 31, 2021. Chair Wilkes question the MOD expense reimbursed but not paid in the amount of \$4,300.00 which was paid to Tighe & Bond for project #127036 (repaving of the parking lot) as of February 15, 2022. Chair Wilkes also noted HHA had remitted payment to Eversource for the first time in over a year, citing the limited solar credits received this billing cycle. The Director will monitor this, but it is consistent with previous years' billing during the late Winter months. Judy Schell made a motion to accept the financial report as of January 31, 2022, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to review, approve, and sign payroll, time sheets and accounts payable was made by Judy Schell, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

The February 15, 2022, warrant was discussed in detail as some of the payments were unique to this warrant, such as the Hatfield Police Department and A&S Building and Remodeling, Inc. A motion to accept and sign the January 18, 2022, Warrant was made by Judy Schell, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Project #127048: Emergency Generator for Backup Power – The pre-construction meeting for this project was held on January 27, 2022; the Notice to Proceed was initiated at the conclusion of the

meeting. During the pre-construction meeting, CDS Unlimited LLC proposed the installation of a diesel tank with the generator rather than a propane tank, as the project specifications call for. The Director presented the Board with the benefits of a diesel tank opposed to propane. Judy Schell made a motion to reject CDS Unlimited's recommendation to switch the project's specifications to a diesel tank, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

The Director began the discussion regarding maintenance compensatory time pay-out and vacation time accumulation by informing the Board Vincent Paniczko, maintenance personnel for HHA, was invited to attend February's meeting and declined the offer. Mr. Paniczko also voiced his dissatisfaction with the Board potentially meeting in Executive Session to discuss this matter. Judy Schell would like to know the legalities involved with amending the accrual of vacation time and noted Mr. Paniczko's compensatory time should be paid out at a rate of time and a half per the Personnel Policy. Christopher Smith spoke in length of the Board's role being solely as the "pocketbook" of the Housing Authority and that anything maintenance-related rest exclusively in the hands of the Executive Director, per HHA's By-Laws and Management Plan. Judy Schell noted this issue effects the finances of the Housing Authority as well as being a policy matter, justifying the Board's involvement in the issue. Chair Wilkes requested the matter be discussed with HHA's attorney and both him and the Director resolve the issue accordingly.

Nothing new to report on the Language Access Plan; the Director is in the process of amending the draft further to reflect the specific needs of HHA. Chair Wilkes requested that the Director reach out to other small LHAs – the Director suggested through the avenue of the Western Massachusetts Executive Directors Association (WMEDA) – and use other LAPs as a reference for HHA's LAP.

The Town of Hatfield's Hazard Mitigation Plan is ready to be implemented pending approval from FEMA per Chief Flaherty. The Director feels strongly that HHA's emergency plan be parallel with the Town's. Chair Wilkes questioned what would be included in HHA's emergency plan; Christopher Smith emphasized a need to plan in the case of flooding being that HHA is in a flood zone. Christopher Smith agreed there should be a connection between the two plans, citing there are a lot of contingencies to be navigated. He would like to see HHA's emergency plan added to the Tenant Handbook. Alex Malinowski's mother works for the school system, and noted they have maps posted for exit routes in case of emergencies as well as pamphlets explaining protocols for several specific emergencies. Chair Wilkes asked that the Director reach out to someone in the school system for more information on what they have done as far as informational material. Chair Wilkes would like to see progress on this topic for the next meeting.

New Business:

No report from the tenant meetings held February 7, 2022, and February 14, 2022.

Christopher Smith led the discussion on HHA's By-Laws and Management Plan. Christopher Smith began by noting the materials need to be updated to align with the State's guidelines, including hiring procedures. Christopher Smith added all maintenance personnel issues are the purview of the Executive Director and if necessary, HHA's legal counsel, not a Board issue. The Director agreed the Housing Authority's Management Plan should be updated, but that Christopher Smith is attempting too many updates simultaneously. Chair Wilkes asked the Director to reach out to HHA's DHCD Housing Management Specialist, Carolina Gonzalez, as well as fee accountant Gary DePace and other small LHAs to gather different Personnel Policies to use as a guide when altering HHA's own plan.

PHN 2022-01: COVID-19 Omicron Variant and State-Aided Public Housing – DHCD issued guidance to LHAs on handling the large surge in COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant.

PHN 2022-02: FY2022 Executive Director Salary and Qualifications Schedule – DHCD has updated the salary and qualifications schedule for the Executive Director, allowing for an increase in salary based on Board approval.

Report of the Executive Director:

The LEAN weatherization upgrades have been completed with a few minor issues which are to be addressed by the installers before the project is closed out.

HHA's FYE 2022 Budget has been approved by DHCD.

OTHER BUSINESS - Consideration of any matter not known about or which could not have been reasonably foreseen within 48 hours of this meeting.

Chair Wilkes noted the sidewalks appear to be cracking in some areas. The Director has made all relevant parties involved in the Parking Lot project aware of the issues which have recently arose, presumably due to the cold weather. It is unclear if the engineer and contractor are waiting until Spring – and the warmer weather – to assess the issues and make the necessary repairs.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn was made by Alex Malinowski, seconded by Judy Schell. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenna Duquette, Secretary