



HATFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY

2 SCHOOL STREET

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Town Clerk

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REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, March 21, 2023, 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, Alex Malinowski, Judy Schell, and Brenna Duquette/Executive Director. Tenant present was Jackie Courchesne. Member Christopher Smith joined the meeting during "Report of the Executive Director".

Citizens Speak:
Nothing at this time.

Judy Schell made a motion to accept the minutes if the regular meeting held February 21, 2023, seconded by Mike Hogan. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

There was a brief discussion of the financial reports as of February 28, 2023. With the Laundry receipts continuing to grow (\$3,847.62 as of February 28th), Judy Schell questioned whether a portion of that account will be set aside for future maintenance to the laundry machines. The Board has not established a policy regarding the use of these funds and the Director will not use these monies until a policy has been instituted. Chair Wilkes noted HHA's investment account through MMDT has increased due to an increase in interest. Chair Wilkes and Judy Schell discussed the possibility of using extraordinary maintenance for landscaping; specifically, shrub removal around the property. No decision was made at this time. Judy Schell made a motion to accept the financial reports as of February 28, 2023, seconded by Alex Malinowski. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

There was a brief discussion about the March 21, 2023 Warrant report. Mike Hogan noted the high payment remitted to Richard Watling Plumbing & Heating for the replacement of a water heater. Mike Hogan was concerned HHA is being charged an exorbitant amount for the work completed. The Director felt it was in line with previous invoices for similar work but agreed to reassess old invoices. Mike Hogan would like to investigate the cost of a water heater made by Bradford White (the brand of tank installed) and report back to the Board. Judy Schell made a motion to review, approve and sign payroll, time sheets, accounts payables, and the March 21, 2023 Warrant, seconded by Mike Hogan. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Project #127036: Repaving of Parking Lot – The Director spoke with HHA's construction advisor, who confirmed DHCD would be funding the either change order for the installation of the catch basin as needed. The Director also spoke with JL Construction Corp. and obtained additional information regarding the two proposed change orders. The change order calling for a concrete catch basin five (5) inches in diameter will need heavier equipment to install and, in JL Construction Corp.'s opinion, is unnecessarily large for the small area of puddling it would be addressing. Mike Hogan would like guarantees from both Tighe & Bond and JL Const. Corp. that the installation of a catch basin will alleviate the issue that was created as a result of their planning and construction as it stands. Mike Hogan also noted how concerning it is that these proposed change orders are approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of the original budget for this project. The Board agreed. The Director added that DHCD does see this as a health and safety issue, especially in winter months when the pooling freezes, hence their willingness to fund these repairs. The Board would like HHA's attorney to review the facts of this project including change orders, citing someone should be held responsible for the negligence of installation of the sidewalk creating this issue for HHA. Judy Schell made a motion to approve the change order for the concrete catch basin, in the amount of \$38,508.08, with the caveats discussed, seconded by Alex Malinowski. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Project #127056: The Director has corresponded with DHCD over the past several weeks regarding HHA's request for Vacant Unit funding; HHA has not been awarded any monies to date. Regarding the bid amount being \$12,712.00 over what HHA has allocated for this project, the Director noted that DHCD reimburses HHA for asbestos removal which has been anywhere between \$8,000 and \$10,000 in previous unit renovations. This will help offset the additional costs HHA will be incurring. Judy Schell made a motion to accept General Contracting Solutions, Inc. low bid for project #127056 in the amount of \$42,712.00, seconded by Mike Hogan. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Girard Heating & Air Conditioning won the bid for the installation of air source heat pumps (i.e., mini splits) in all forty-four (44) units in the amount of \$429,573.00. A notice to proceed has been initiated with work expected to begin in April 2023. The Board was given copies of Girard's quote which raised some questions and concerns. Some concerns noted were: why was Hair equipment quoted and not a superior product, such as Mitsubishi? Will the budget for repairing and painting walls in the units be sufficient and if not, is HHA expected to cover additional costs? Will the electric baseboard heaters be removed and disposed of by Girard Heating & Air Conditioning? During the walkthrough, it was noted the thermostats in the units would be set to a specific temperature and locked, is that still the plan? The lack of ability for tenants to adjust the temperature is a great concern. The Director will be providing answers to these questions during the April 2023 meeting. No work will begin before that time.

New Business:

None at this time.

Report of the Executive Director:

Per the Board's request, surveys were distributed to all tenants requesting feedback from the tenants' perspective the property and buildings. A sample of this survey was distributed to all Board members. Fifteen tenants responded to the survey and of those, four (4) responses stated HHA is doing a great job and those tenants were very happy here. Of the eleven (11) who responded with critiques or concerns:

- Five (5) included replacing the current tubs with walk-in showers and/or removing the tiles around the tubs.
- Five (5) discussed railing and repairing of entry doors to the buildings.
- Two (2) requested a full-time Director and Maintenance staff.
- Other miscellaneous responses included purchasing a new building, solar panels, more efficient heating and cooling systems, painting the common hallways, and addressing the landscape.

The Director noted many of the items that tenants were concerned about are currently in our Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to be addressed within the next few years.

Virtual meetings may be extended until March 31, 2025.

Alex Malinowski addressed Christopher Smith's remote attendance, asking if Mr. Smith is on any other Boards in Town. He is. Alex Malinowski stated it is "bullsh**t" that Mr. Smith is the only Board member who only attends remotely. Mr. Smith stated it is not bullsh**t and that Alex himself has used the remote option in the past. Alex Malinowski added he has utilized the virtual meeting option only when he is working, but that is not the case with Mr. Smith. Alex Malinowski voiced frustrations because Mr. Smith's virtual attendance impacts the whole Board and does not find it fair or reasonable the Mr. Smith still insists on attending HHA meetings remotely when Mr. Smith will attend the other Boards he sits on in-person.

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

Christopher Smith asked if any gardening could be allowed in the back of the Housing Authority's property. No members agreed with this idea.

Motion to Adjourn

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenna Duquette, Secretary