



HATFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY 11/13/2023 @ 10:06 AM
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AN EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

REGULAR MEETING HELD THURSDAY, September 14, 2023, HELD AT 2 SCHOOL STREET, HATFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS.

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

Roll Call: Chair John Wilkes, Christopher Smith, Kyle Scott, Alex Malinowski, Judy Schell, and Brenna Duquette/Executive Director. Tenants present were Jackie Courchesne and Roland Laurin.

Citizens Speak:
Nothing at this time.

Judy Schell made a motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting held August 15, 2023, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

There was a brief discussion of the financial reports as of August 31, 2023. In looking at the Treasurer's Report, Chair Wilkes noted the accounts receivable balance – which the Board voted to write off during the July 18th meeting – was not written off. The Director will reconcile the oversight. The Director also mentioned BankESB's coin machine has been in disrepair for a few weeks hence the lack of laundry receipts. In regard to the Income/Expense Report, Chair Wilkes noted the balance in extraordinary maintenance. September's contract costs were expensed to this account due to the deficit in the contract costs to balance the budget rather than preparing a budget revision at the end of HHA's fiscal year. That being said, the Director asked HHA's fee accountant to allot monies for HHA's landscaping as she is aware this has been a matter of interest to the Board for quite some time. Judy Schell made a motion to accept the financial reports as of August 31, 2023, seconded by Alex Malinowski. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Judy Schell made a motion to review, approve and sign payroll, time sheets, accounts payables, and the September 14, 2023 Warrant, seconded by Alex Malinowski. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Project #127051: Sustainability – The Director presented the Board with Fee Amendment #1 from Bowman Engineering, Inc. in the amount of \$1,500 for two (2) additional site visits. It has been challenging for Bowman Engineering to ascertain where the bathroom fans will be installed based on the design and plumbing of HHA's bathrooms, hence the additional site visits. Judy Schell made a motion

to accept Fee Amendment #1, seconded by Alex Malinowski. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

A new design plan – which had two (2) options to choose from – was created by New Ecology and Girard Heating & Cooling based on all previous discussions and concerns of the Board regarding the air source heat pumps (ASHPs) project. In addition to tailoring the design and proposal to the Board's requests and concerns, Steve McCarthy of New Ecology and Steve Girard of Girard Heating & Cooling met with the Director to answer any additional questions she or the Board may have. Prior to this meeting, the Director sought any additional questions from Board members. The hope was, with every question and concern addressed, the Board would have sufficient information to bring this project to a vote. Some changes to Girard's design and proposal included eliminating thirty-three (33) of the outdoor units, the addition of vinyl fencing to hide the eleven (11) outdoor units and extending the service contract from one (1) year to three (3) years. Judy Schell took the initiative and polled tenants who lived in first-floor units; most expressed discontent with the idea of an almost six (6) foot unit outside of their window. There were discussions about whether the Board should be considering what is in the best interest of the Housing Authority versus the interests of its tenants; the Board was not in unanimous agreement on this matter. Christopher Smith emphasized the savings the ASHPs would outweigh the costs of their maintenance, adding the cost of electricity will continue to rise in the future and receiving a reduced rate for heating and cooling would be highly beneficial for the Housing Authority. The Director informed the Board that the FY2024 Budget Guidelines included an increase in budget exemptions for ASHPs from \$150 to \$150 per unit to support maintenance and encourage their installations. She also wanted to add that Girard Heating & Cooling mentioned several other LHAs in which they installed ASHPs with almost no issues (and what issues arose were quickly resolved). With this new information, Chair Wilkes would like to obtain the history and experience of working with Girard Heating and Cooling from other LHAs before bringing this project to a vote. Judy Schell made a motion to table the air source heat pumps installation project, seconded by Kyle Scott. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business:

PHN 2023-13: On-Site Solar Power Operations for Cost Savings and Clean Energy Production – The Director presented the Board with a copy of this PHN and noted virtual net metering contracts (which HHA participates in) can coexist with on-site solar. This presents an interesting prospect for HHA's future: on-site solar panels. There was a brief discussion regarding the location of solar panels; the discussion and topic being in its infancy with much more information needed to further the conversation.

PHN 2023-14: FY2024 Budget Guidelines – The Director presented the Board with a brief overview of the FY2024 Guidelines. Some changes of note were: a 7% increase in Allowable Non-Utility Expense Levels (ANUEL) with an additional 6% (13% in total) increase to ANUEL for chapter 667 elderly/non-elderly disabled, 2% increase to maximum unit-based Executive Director salaries (with Board approval), ASHP budget exemption increase as previously discussed, and LHAs are now to retain 100% of net metering credit savings, rather than 50%.

Report of the Executive Director:

Signature cards for BankESB authorized signers are to be updated to include Kyle Scott and remove previous member Mike Hogan.

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 reported on a meeting held regarding the Day Pond study and moving forward and how to move forward on its utilization. The land must first be surveyed to ascertain the Housing Authority's possible connection to the project.

Christopher Smith reported discussions with tenants at the Senior Center whose tubs had been "replaced." The Director corrected him; they were not replaced into walk-in showers, rather, "Easy Steps" were installed into the existing tubs. Chair Wilkes asked if all tubs were to have these installed; they are not. The two Easy-Steps were installed as approved reasonable accommodations for those tenants.

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