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HATFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
2 SCHOOL STREET
HATFIELD, MA 01038
O: (413) 247-9202 F: (413) 247-6428
OFFICE@HATFIELDHOUSING.ORG
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REGULAR MEETING HELD THURSDAY, November 21, 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, Judy Schell, Kyle Scott, Christopher Smith, and Brenna Duquette/Executive Director. Member absent was Alex Malinowski. Tenants present were Jackie Courchesne, Roland Laurin, Judith Lambert, Karen Barcomb, Donna Ferrett-Rhodes, Nancy Broussard, and Nancy Parsons. Fee accountant Gary DePace also attended virtually.

Citizens Speak:
Nothing at this time.

Judy Schell made a motion to accept the minutes if the regular meeting held October 17, 2023, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

HHA's fee accountant, Gary DePace, summarized the October 31, 2023 financial reports, which include the September 30, 2023 Year-End reports. One specific item Mr. DePace discussed was HHA's reserves, which are lower than what was anticipated for FYE23. This was due to both a loss in tenant rent as well as a \$22,000 payment owed to HHA from EOHLIC. The Top 5 Compensation Form was then discussed in detail, though HHA compensates no more than two employees. Judy Schell made a motion to accept and sign the Top 5 Compensation form, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously. Judy Schell then made a motion to accept the September 30, 2023 Year-End financial statements, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. DePace presented the Board with the FYE2024 Annual Operating Budget. Changes incorporated in FYE24's budget include the following:

- The ANUEL was increased by seven percent (7%) with an additional one-time increase based on number of units for HHA for a total of \$195,983.
- There is a \$3,500 budget exemption for legal expenses.
- EOHLIC's Vacancy Initiative has been added to HHA's budgeted subsidy.
- LHAs are no longer required to share fifty percent (50%) of net metering credits with the State.
- Property insurance through Hays insurance increased by ten percent (10%).

Mr. DePace drew the Board's attention to HHA's solar net metering credits received, which are averaging \$8,500 per year. There was a discussion about selling excess credits to other municipalities; this transfer is allowed once per year and profits go into HHA's reserves. Mr. DePace added that a budget revision would occur for solar credit profits, should HHA choose to sell its excess. Judy Schell made a motion to approve the FYE2024 Annual Operating Budget as presented, seconded by Christopher Smith. 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 November 21, 2023 Warrant, seconded by Kyle Scott. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Chair Wilkes asked the Director if there was any new information regarding the air source heat pumps (ASHPs). The Director presented the members with a proposal from Sunwealth for the installation of solar panels at HHA. The Director has not had the opportunity to meet with a representative from Sunwealth to discuss the proposal in further detail and asked that the Board table the ASHPs discussion until December's meeting. Christopher Smith asked the Director if she was implying both ASHPs and solar panels could not be installed at HHA; the Director responded she did not make an implication. Her job is to provide facts to the Board so that they may arrive at the most energy efficient solution; an agenda item Mr. Smith and the rest of the members have been discussing for months. The Director asked the members to email her any questions they may have regarding the solar panels for the representatives from Sunwealth. There was also a petition against ASHPs presented to the members signed by thirteen (13) tenants. After a brief discussion surrounding this petition, Christopher Smith made a motion to bring the installation of ASHPs to a vote. Kyle Scott seconded the motion to open it for discussion, stating that if a vote were taken, his would be a 'no'; Judy Schell agreed with Kyle Scott. Chair Wilkes was not ready to vote, adding the project would affect the future of HHA not just current tenants. He also asked the Director if there were any deadlines for a decision one way or another; there are not at this time. Judy Schell made a motion to table the ASHPs, seconded by Kyle Scott. Motion passed 3-1.

New Business:

The Director presented the Board with amendment #10 to the Contract for Financial Assistances (CFA) 5001 in the amount of \$158,122 for project #127056: Vacant Unit Rehab. Judy Schell made a motion to accept amendment #10 for CFA 5001 in the amount of \$158,122, seconded by Kyle Scott. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

The Director proposed an amendment to HHA's Personnel Policy to include a stipend for personal cell phone usage to conduct HHA business. She proposed this stipend will be paid monthly in the amount of forty (40) dollars. Judy Schell made a motion to approve the amendment to the Personnel Policy, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

PHN 2023-15: Revised Housing Situation Priority Policy and Issuance of a Homeless Verification Checklist – EOHLIC adjusted the documentation required to support Priority claims for applicants.

PHN 2023-16: MRVP Going Live and Centralizing Screening Determinations for Priority & Preference – A contracted company – Archipelago Strategies Group (ASG) – is now responsible for screening applicants' Priority and Preference claims for all LHAs. ASG has made significant progress in determinations for LHAs. As of November 10, 2023, 22,758 applicants had been contacted by ASG for priority claim verification.

PHN 2023-17: EOHLC Vacancy Initiative – EOHLC is undertaking a new initiative to significantly reduce the number of state-aided public housing vacancies by January 1, 2024. HHA is included in the vacancy initiative. Some aspects of the initiative include budget exemptions for internal work to complete vacancies and the temporary pause on LHAs contribution of at least \$25,000 of the operating budget when requesting funding from EOHLC's Vacant Unit Award. HHA was able to reabsorb \$30,000 due to the Vacancy Initiative.

PHN 2023-18: Resident Service Coordinators Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

PHN 2023-19: Public Housing Innovations 2024 Notice of Funding Availability

PHN 2023-20: RFI Pre-Qualifications of Accounting Firms to Conduct AUP Audit

Report of the Executive Director:

Solar panels were previously discussed under Old Business in conjunction with the air source heat pumps project.

Project #127056: Renovation of Units 6A, 11B, & 11D – Bids for this project were originally due on October 31, 2023. Unfortunately, EOHLC interjected, and the project was amended from RCAT-managed to EOHLC-managed due to an internal error made by EOHLC. This shift meant the creation of a new work order and scope of services. The construction budget for this project is now \$150,000.

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

Project 127051: Sustainability – Bathroom Fans and Range Hoods – The Director presented the Board with Reimbursable #4 in the amount of \$8,780 for the abatement of two (2) closets. This work is necessary as Bowman Engineering is still trying to determine a feasible location for the bathroom fans and venting of the range hoods. Christopher Smith made a motion to approve Reimbursable #4 in the amount of \$8,780, seconded by Judy Schell. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to Adjourn

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenna Duquette

Brenna Duquette, Secretary