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REGULAR MEETING HELD TUESDAY, December 21, 2021, 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 (virtually), Mike Hogan (virtually), Alex Malinowski (virtually), Christopher Smith (virtually), Judy Schell, and Brenna Duquette/Executive Director. Tenants present were Roland Laurin and Jackie Courchesne.

Citizens Speak:

Roland Laurin thanked the Board for the Holidays meals distributed to the tenants on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, and wish the Board Happy Holidays.

Judy Schell made a motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting held November 16, 2021, seconded by Christopher Smith. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Both the October 31, 2021 and the November 30, 2021 financial reports were presented to the Board. Chair Wilkes noted that HHA is starting to accrue monies in the Laundry account. Chair Wilkes also questioned a balance of MOD expenses paid, not reimbursed in the amount of \$6,843.94 which has been outstanding for a few months. The Director will present the Board with an exact breakdown of what that figure represents during January's meeting. Judy Schell made a motion to accept the October 31, 2021 financial report and the November 30, 2021 financial report, seconded by Alex Malinowski. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

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

A motion to accept and sign the December 21, 2021, Warrant was made by Judy Schell, seconded by Alex Malinowski. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Project #127036: Repave of the Parking Lot – The Director asked the Board to table the approval of the Certificate of Final Completion for this project, as some of the final punch list items have not been completed. CFC tabled until January's meeting. Christopher Smith had previously discussed the possibility of lowering the School Street crosswalk signs and changing the color of the flashing lights

from yellow to red. The Director contacted Tighe and Bond who reported this was not a possibility. There was a brief discussion of options to make the School Street crosswalk safer, including an unused *police department vehicle being parked in the Town's parking lot* as a deterrent for speeding vehicles.

Project #127048: Emergency Generator for Backup Power – Bids were received and low bidder for the project was CDS Unlimited LLC out of Bennington, New Hampshire, in the amount of \$107,900.00. Chair Wilkes asked if the company was qualified; DHCD had provided references for CDS Unlimited LLC and they appear qualified for the job. Christopher Smith asked about converting the generator to gas at a previous meeting. Hesnor Engineering told the Director it would be simple to convert the generator to gas. Christopher Smith questioned if there was a gas line near the site of the future generator; the Director will find out for January's meeting. Mike Hogan made a motion to accept CDS Unlimited LLC's low bid of \$107,900.00, seconded by Judy Schell. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

The agenda had an error; "Maintenance Compensatory Time Pay-Out" should have read "Maintenance Vacation Time Pay-Out." The Director presented the Board with the document maintenance personnel Vincent Paniczko was given upon hire. This was a job description and details regarding holidays, benefits, and benefit accrual per year. Based on this documentation, Vincent is allowed to amass four (4) weeks of vacation after nine and a half (9.5) and beyond years of employment. Vincent currently has almost twelve (12) weeks of vacation accumulated and was allowed to do so under the previous Director. As Vincent is potentially nearing retirement, the Director asked that the Board assist in deciding how to reduce this buildup of vacation to four (4) weeks, thus avoiding a potential massive buy-out of all twelve (12) weeks. Mike Hogan suggested Vincent's vacation time be capped at twelve (12) weeks for the remainder of fiscal year 2022 and that four (4) weeks of vacation be used in FYE2022, four (4) be used in FYE2023, and four (4) weeks be used in FYE2024, until only four (4) of the twelve (12) weeks remained. Mike Hogan emphasized the need to spread out this vacation time; perhaps one (1) week every quarter. The Board agreed with Mike Hogan's proposed solution and decided this accrued time would be paid out at the current maintenance hourly wage, not at time and a half. Christopher Smith added the Board has the power to change the policy without Vincent's approval because he does not have a contract with the Housing Authority. Judy Schell noted it is not in HHA's best interest for Vincent to get upset at a decision made by the Board and then use all twelve (12) weeks at once. Mike Hogan asked the Director if Vincent knew this was being brought before the Board; he did. Mike Hogan then suggested the Director put something in writing to present to both Vincent and the Board for January's meeting. This item is tabled until January.

New Business:

Project #127045: Unit 8D Renovation – This project was rebid with one bid received from General Contracting Solutions, Inc. out of Southwick, Massachusetts in the amount of \$31,524.00. This is \$6,024.00 higher than what is budgeted in Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for this project. The Director asked that the Board consider paying the \$6,024.00 difference using HHA's operating reserves rather than taking from funding of future projects in HHA's CIP, being that HHA has very healthy reserves: approximately \$84,000.00. The Board agreed to use HHA's operating reserves to cover the disparity in the low bid and the project's funding. Mike Hogan made a motion to accept General Contracting Solutions, Inc.'s low bid in the amount of \$31,524.00, seconded by Judy Schell. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

Contract for Financial Assistance (CFA) 5001, amendment #8, was presented to the Board in the amount of \$67,958.58. Of that, \$10,000.00 was awarded for project #127045: unit 8D renovation's asbestos removal and \$57,958.58 was awarded for project #127036: repaving of the parking lot's funding. Judy Schell made a motion to accept amendment #8 to the CFA 5001 in the amount of \$67,958.58, seconded by Mike Hogan. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

The Director presented the Board with a draft of a Language Access Plan (LAP) created using a template given to LHA's by DHCD in PHN 2021-21, which was modified to suite HHA. The Director obtained quotes from different companies which provide translation and interpretation services. Chair Wilkes would like more information on the companies and Mike Hogan would like more time to review the LAP. The Director will provide the Board with information on the services and companies she has contacted thus far. The Board agreed to table the LAP until January's meeting.

Christopher Smith had asked if HHA had an emergency plan for tenants should an emergency arise. The Director had not found one and therefore assumed HHA did not have an emergency plan in place. The Director spoke with the fire chief, Chief Flaherty, as he is on the Town's Emergency Management Planning Committee, who confirmed the Town is in the process of finalizing an updated Hazard Mitigation Plan, which includes a vast number of emergency situations. Chief Flaherty anticipates this to be released in January. The Director proposed the Board wait until the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan is made available to the public and use that as a resource to develop HHA's own emergency plan. Chair Wilkes agreed with the Director. Christopher Smith suggested adding the document to the Tenant Handbook. Chair Wilkes suggested a reference to the emergency plan in lieu of adding an, for example, one-hundred-page document to the Tenant Handbook.

PHN 2021-22: Massachusetts State-Aided Housing Programs Property, Boiler & Machinery, and Crime Insurance Policy Period – This PHN notified LHAs of renewal of the above-mentioned insurance through the Hays Company. Chair Wilkes asked if any member of the Hays Company had come to look at HHA's property; they have not to the best of the Director's knowledge. Judy Schell asked if it was a pooled insurance; it is, and the contract was procured by Salem Housing Authority.

Judy Schell had nothing to report from tenants meeting held on December 13, 2021, as only one tenant attended this month's meeting, who had already spoken during Citizens Speak.

Report of the Executive Director:

HHA has a new energy supplier as of January 2022. Eversource is HHA's current energy supplier, and their rates will rise from the current \$0.11065 to \$0.26349 beginning in January 2022. To avoid this drastic increase in pricing, the Director procured pricing from other energy suppliers. HHA will be entering a thirty-six (36) month contract with NextEra with a locked-in rate of \$0.1160. This new contract will not affect HHA's solar net metering credits and the Director anticipates that rate changing for the better upon the installation of air source heat pumps at HHA.

2021 DHCD Annual Inspections of all units have been completed. Chair Wilkes asked about the state of the units. The Director explained most of the units were in good shape, especially considering the 2020 Annual Inspections did not take place due to the COVID-19 pandemic so it has been quite some time

since the units were inspected. Most tenants took care of their units, with a few exceptions. She also noted most of the necessary repairs are in bathrooms. This was anticipated and the installation of tub surrounds was included in HHA's CIP for FYE2022 to cover costs of such repairs.

The Director thanked Mike Hogan and the Smithsonian for all the planning involved to deliver the catered holiday meals, distributed to tenants on December 15, 2021. Mike Hogan added the Smithsonian covered the \$42.00 which remained after some Board members contributed to the cost as a 'thank you' for all we do for the tenants at Capawonk. The meals were a big success, and many tenants have voiced to the Director how grateful they were to be rewarded for their patience during the parking lot renovation.

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 suggested HHA purchase portable generators in the event of a power outage for medical equipment. This will be considered in further detail at a future meeting.

Christopher Smith talked about the location of the dumpster being that it is currently placed by School Street, not an ideal location. He suggested HHA could install a service road from School Street, leading to the back Maintenance shed and place the dumpster there permanently. This location is out of sight and Christopher Smith suggested an additional fence could be installed to alleviate any potential issues with the abutters of HHA's property. Mike Hogan's concern was about kickback from neighbors; an access road would cause a disturbance, specifically, a garbage truck pickup at unreasonable hours in the morning. Another issue with the access road – brought up by Judy Schell – is tenant access should the dumpster be moved in the back corner of the property. Judy Schell noted many tenants would more than likely have an issue taking out their trash to that area opposed to its current location. Alex Malinowski agreed that was not a plausible location for the dumpster, adding that in addition to being an eyesore for neighboring properties, it is impractical to ask the vendor to change the pickup time to be set for later in the day and therefore agreeing with Mike Hogan, early morning pickups would be a nuisance for neighbors of Capawonk.

Mike Hogan had missed the portion of the meeting where the Board discussed the School Street crosswalk and therefore asked for a recap of what was discussed. He added he has noticed Capawonk residents have not been pushing the button for the flashing signs when using the crosswalk. The Board gave Mike Hogan a synopsis of what was discussed regarding the School Street crosswalk.

Motion to Adjourn

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenna Duquette, Secretary