

**STONINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
EDYTHE K. RICHMOND HOMES
COMMUNITY BUILDING
MAY 13, 2014
MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER:

Jim Kelley called the regular meeting of the Stonington Housing Authority to order at 4:00pm.

ATTENDANCE:

Those in attendance were Commissioners Jim Kelley, Julie Savin, Ruth Nolder, and Giulia Jaramillo. Also attending were Elaine Schmidt, Chuck Roberts, Carol Umphlett, and several residents. Jim Kelley introduced Giulia Jaramillo as the new commissioner.

MINUTES:

Jim Kelley tabled the reading of the minutes until next month's meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Julie Savin presented the Treasurer's report showing a year-to-date balance in checking of \$11,760.21, a balance of \$531,464.85 in savings and investments, and a petty cash balance of \$108.58 for a total of \$544,325.64.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

None

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Elaine Schmidt submitted the following report:

1. As of May 2nd we have filled all 60 units. I think a Standing O is appropriate for Chuck. Over the past two months we have rented 7 vacant units which entailed a lot of painting, cleaning and repairs. The last unit was especially very difficult. Some of the walls had large holes that had to be patched with sheetrock, the new cabinets installed and lots of hard scrubbing.
2. With all the new residents and our new Commissioner Giulia Jaramillo, we have set May 21st at 1 PM for our Meet and Greet. I have attached a copy of the notice and hope you have an opportunity to attend.

3. Cindy completed all the re-certifications on April 30th which is quite a feat considering the other daily tasks. We had a few stragglers that were difficult to commit to come in but once we advised them if they didn't recertify they would be paying the maximum rent of \$740.00, they complied. It was a lot of work for Cindy too and another Standing O would be appropriate. Each resident came in with their documents, and before they left they knew what the new rent would be. Chair Kelly has been coming in to sign the new lease Addendums as we had groups of re-certifications completed. All the new tenant rents need to be updated in the system. If we maintain our present level of rental income, based on full occupancy, for the rest of the year, we should have an additional \$12,000. of excess rental income. Chuck, at the same time as the re-certifications were being done, did annual unit inspections.
4. Kapa notices are being sent this week to our smokers. We found 6 residents in violation of their lease agreement after inspections and/or observations. There may be more in the near future, however, these are the ones we have documentation on at this time.
5. Scott James, the part-time maintenance person does landscaping part time on his own and is a great asset to Stonington Housing Authority. He has trimmed the pines and trees along the property line especially near buildings 11 and 12 that have reportedly created moisture and mold issues. The residents have expressed their appreciation for getting this work done. Scott is going to continue to clean the trees and shrubs, so Spring Clean Up has begun. The lawn has been cut twice so far and we are now cleaning garden beds too.
6. On May 22nd the students from West Broad Street School, Kids Care Club of 3rd and 4th graders are coming, after school, to plant flowers in garden beds around the site. Their plan is to help our residents with the plantings so it will be a joint effort. Christine King from Stonington Social Service is coordinating the project. We are all looking forward to a colorful season.
7. After research on the raised garden beds that were included in the CHFA Resident Grant from Home Depot, we decided Chuck would build them so we could enlarge the beds (4' x 8') and make them at a height that would be appropriate for the residents to be able to work on the plantings. As reported in Commissioner Nolder's report, we have started a lot of vegetable and herb seeds in egg cartons that we will transplant as the seedlings start to grow. The goal is for residents to grow some produce to share with their neighbors.
8. We visited a wonderful garden center in Niantic, Smith Acres on May 7th. While we were there the group selected the plants to be installed in the garden outside the office/community room entry and the window boxes and planters.

9. At the June Board meeting Mike Burns from BWB Solutions will join the Board at 5 PM on Strategic Planning. I will arrange for sandwiches etc. to be available.
10. As a follow up on the Fellows St. Ext. land conveyance, Chair Kelley and I attended the Planning and Zoning meeting on April 15th and provided information on why we were requesting the conveyance. The Commission approved our request which will now be on the Board of Selectman's meeting agenda for May 14th at 7 PM at the Police Department meeting room.
11. As part of my April report, I mentioned the possible development of additional units at the EKR site. I contacted three Soil Scientists to obtain proposals to mark the wetlands on the lot that is at the corner of the Sisk Dr. fire lane exit opposite the pond and Building 8. The proposals for delineation of wetlands with flags from the list provided by the Town were as follows:
 - a. James Cowen, Environmental Planning Services \$500.
 - b. Ian Cole, Professional Registered Soil Scientist \$400.
 - c. Don Fortunato, Soil & Environmental Services, Inc. \$425.As funding is available from both CHFA and DOH depending on the size of the development (CHFA you must have at least 20 units to be developed), this is an excellent opportunity to look at options for expansion. If acceptable I will proceed with the Soil Scientist then discuss the other areas within our site that have potential for development.
12. I have started a new \$5,000 application for the CHFA Resident Program Fund. So far we have suggestions for a new large 65" screen TV that is wall mounted which would allow several residents to come to the community room to enjoy movies or special TV events. In addition we would request another year of Netflix for movies. This would especially be beneficial if we receive the CDBG Small Cities grant to expand the size of the community room. We also want to plan more Day Trips which would include renting small buses or vans depending on the demand. We are requesting input from residents before we finalize the application.
13. I am also planning on applying for the \$25,000 CHFA Small Improvement Program. As part of that application we would like to replace the existing kitchen faucets with the gooseneck type faucets which would allow residents to clean larger pots and pans with greater ease, install self-storing storm doors to all the apartments that have the older style, this includes many of the bedroom storm doors. Also under consideration is Trash Enclosures. While all of the above are important, we recently had one drain line that backed up into a residents' shower and made a real mess. We had to snake out and

then use the high pressure jetty to the line, which was quite expensive but corrected the problem. The drain representative reported that the cast iron pipe is corroding. If this is the case, we may have to look at replacing these when the new flooring is installed through the CDBG Small Cities grant. Further investigation is necessary and we will advise you of the outcome.

14. Chuck and I have met with 3 Security System firms and each have provided proposals, including some wireless and some hardwired cameras. The companies are Professional Security Systems, Sonitrol & Advanced Alarms Security Systems Inc. I will have the proposals at the meeting. Advanced who we initially met with had submitted a proposal for only 8 cameras so we are waiting for an updated proposal and I will bring them to the meeting on May 13th. We met with the other 2 companies afterward and they suggested additional cameras to more effectively cover the campus. In addition we would need to hire an electrician to provide electrical outlets for the cameras. We have not sought proposals for electrical services at this time until the Board has given us direction on how you wish us to proceed.
15. I've added some information to the Stonington Housing Authority website and we are now waiting to take some photos and add them to the site. Let me know if you have any other suggestions.
16. Finally, Comcast is starting to be less time intensive. Most residents are not getting bills through Comcast other than those who have added services. Based on the number of residents signed up for April each resident was responsible for \$41.00 for expanded basic. For May with the new residents having service, the cost was \$37.50. Starting June we anticipate the cost to be \$37.00 going forward if we continue to have the same number of residents signed up for service. Initially it has been time consuming and needless to say, lots of questions from residents and my phoning Comcast with the residents sitting with me to give permission to speak on their behalf but we've managed to resolve just about all the issues. We also found several residents who had charges that were not necessary or equipment that they didn't need so even the costs for services beyond expanded basic have been reduced in costs. Hopefully we are finally on our way to a cost savings for all.
17. Every two weeks Cindy is creating a 2 week calendar of events with one side for each week and Commissioner Nolder is distributing it to residents so they are aware of activities. Hopefully this will reduce all the flyers and notices which cover the doors and walls of the community room.
18. During the past month, as stated above, Chuck completed the final vacant unit as mentioned above and completed 77 total work orders: 20 for carpentry, 7 for cleaning,

28 for grounds, 12 for plumbing and 10 for electrical. This also included building 2 of the 3 raised garden beds and assisting Scott with a lot of tree trimming and brush removal.

19. We are attaching copies of the following financials:

- Cash Balance
- Accounting of Petty Cash
- Cash Flow
- Deposits
- List of all invoices paid for April
- Bank Reconciliations

REPORT OF THE TENANT COMMISSIONER:

Ruth Nolder submitted the following report:

On March 17th, seven residents went to the new Broad Street Bistro for a St. Patrick's Day Lunch. They returned to our Community Center where they were joined by another dozen residents for cake and tea.

On March 19th, I attended the Grant Presentation Meeting at a special meeting of the Town of Stonington Selectmen to encourage support of the Small Cities Grant Proposal.

We're moving forward on our raised garden bed project. The Gardening Committee met on April 1st to begin our planning process. We selected a site for the garden and talked about the next steps and the supplies we need for the project. Since the beginning of April when we first met, we have met again several times for the planning process and to start seedlings for the garden beds.

On May 7th, ten residents and staff went to Smith Acres for a presentation on gardening techniques. We purchased flowers for the front entrance of the Community Center and the plants we need for the raised garden beds.

Our Welcoming Committee created eight Welcome Baskets for distribution to the new residents. It's a nice gift and an opportunity to make new residents feel welcome. We've scheduled a "Meet and Greet" Celebration on May 21st at 1 P.M. to introduce our new residents and our new Commissioner, Giulia Jaramillo.

Our work for the Emergency Preparedness Planning continues. Our Executive Director, Elaine Schmidt and I met with Captain Jerry Desmond. We reviewed the work we've done so far. Captain Desmond asked that we take the emergency contact information we gathered for the residents a step further. He suggested we add both mobility and oxygen needs to our contact information. He asked that we give a copy of the emergency contact information to LeeAnn at

the Human Services Office. We set up a meeting for April 24th for a Representative from the Police Department to come and talk with residents about the importance of safety.

On April 24th, Lt. Todd Olson gave a Safety Presentation to 17 residents and staff. He focused on awareness of scams and how to avoid them. He encouraged everyone to say something if they see something that doesn't look right.

Bingo on Tuesdays began again at the beginning of April. The number of residents participating keeps increasing every week. We're really pleased to see so many of our new residents joining the fun.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Status of Grant Request – (see report of the Executive Director). Elaine explained that she will continue to apply for Small Cities grants as long as they are available.
2. Development of Housing Authority property - Jim Kelley explained that Elaine sat with Keith Bryne, town planner, and identified property that the housing authority owns and discussed the opportunities to perhaps expand housing at EKR.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Julie Savin mentioned her sadness at the loss of Ed Shaw.

Julie also commended the staff for attaining 100% occupancy.

Jim Kelley opened the floor to questions and comments from residents.

- John Millett asked about the status of enforcement of the smoking policy. Jim assured him that a process is in place and will be followed (see report of the Executive Director). Barbara DelBene asked what the process is. Elaine explained that residents were served with a KAPPA notice, which is a violation of part of the lease. Residents served have a right to a hearing, then the issue goes to court.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ruth Nolder made a motion to adjourn; Julie Savin seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:22pm.

Resprctfully submitted



Jim Kelley
Chair