

DRAFT

STONINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
EDYTHE K. RICHMOND HOMES
COMMUNITY BUILDING
JANUARY 8, 2015
MINUTES

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
STONINGTON, CT.
15 JAN 15 PM 2:18
CYNTHIA LADWIG
TOWN CLERK

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chairman Tom Hyland called the Regular and Annual Meeting of the Stonington Housing Authority to order at 4:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Those in attendance were Commissioners Tom Hyland, Julie Savin, Kate Careb, Janice Bogue, Executive Director Elaine Schmidt (by phone), Cindy Faucher, Sharon Drago and four residents.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Chair Hyland and seconded by Commissioner Savin to dispense with the reading of the Special Meeting Minutes of December 12, 2014. Motion carried 4-0-0. A motion was made by Chair Hyland and seconded by Commissioner Bogue to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting of December 12, 2014 as written. Motion passed unanimously 4-0-0.

READING OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT:

Commissioner Savin presented the Treasurer's Report for December 31, 2014 showing a balance of \$1,803.00 in the Citizen's Pet Account, \$2,211.60 in the Citizen's Checking Account, with a total in all Citizen's checking accounts of \$4,014.60, \$472,590.89 in Savings and Investment Accounts, \$6.85 in Petty Cash with a GRAND TOTAL of all savings and checking assets of \$479,612.34.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (Report was read by Commissioner Savin):

1. We changed insurance carriers for our vehicle. We were in a pool with other housing authorities so our rate was reflected by their history too. Cindy contacted a couple local insurance companies and we got the best quote

from Panciera Insurance Agency with NGM Insurance Company at \$1,000 versus \$1,347 from the Willis through Liberty Mutual Insurance Company. We also got a lower deductible for collision from \$500 to \$250.

2. Five of the six smoke alarms with the cages have been installed. We have one resident who has refused to sign the agreement and allow us to install the detector.
3. The Proposed Rent Increase letters were delivered to all residents on January 2, 2015. I have attached a copy of the form letter for your review. I reviewed the letter with CHFA to assure we were in compliance. Sharon Drago has also provided the attached Samples of Impact of Proposed Changes in Rent Schedule as requested. None of the samples relate to actual resident incomes but ranges based on our current rent. Additionally, residents with higher medical related costs benefit from a reduced adjusted gross income. When Cindy does the recertification we will need to do a calculation at both 30 and 30.5% plus those at minimum of base rent since we will not have the approval prior to the re-certifications being completed. We anticipate the impact will affect possibly 5 at base rent and 3 at the new maximum rent. Chair Hyland stated as this is an item on the agenda, it will be discussed later.
4. Effective January 1st we are changing our payroll system from Sharon Drago to ADP. The cost from ADP is an initial set up charge of \$25.00 plus \$37.06 per pay period. In addition there is an annual charge of \$45 plus \$5.60 per employee for year- end payroll reporting. As part of the fees mentioned, ADP will also file all quarterly state and federal payroll reports and annual W2's as well as remit our taxes. I advised Sharon about the ADP costs that Groton Housing Authority is paying and she felt this is much more cost efficient for us. Sharon also spoke with Quickbooks and their price was slightly higher. I will call the hours into ADP for them to prepare the payroll.
5. At Chair Hyland's request I contacted Attorney Beth Leamon and Commissioner Savin to find out if they knew of any local attorneys that did non-profit filing paperwork. I also received a proposal from Attorney Mellissa Mack from Suffield, that Groton Housing Authority is utilizing to create their non-profit, for \$3,500 (copy attached). I spoke to Attorney Leamon and she thought Attorney Mack's proposal was very reasonable and offered the only other option of having the filing done pro bono.

Chair Hyland noted the non-profit Pro Bono Partnership gets lawyers to donate time, free of charge. However, he has been working on the by-laws with Pro Bono for over a year. Using Pro Bono lawyers would likely take longer than working with Attorney Mack for a cost of \$3,500. Commissioner Careb will contact Attorney Beth Leamon to discuss the issue of possible conflict of interest and e-mail Chair Hyland with the findings.

6. We have not heard from anyone at Congressman's Courtney's office on the site lighting. I will follow up with Commissioner Savin to see if we can get a response after the New Year.

Commissioner Savin stated she spoke with Matt from Congressman Courtney's office who has been in touch with Access. He assured her he would not let this go.

7. We currently have one vacancy effective January 1st. Chuck has already been working on the apartment. We have notified the next applicant on our waiting list to come in and get certified and be ready to move in on February 1st allowing Chuck a month to get each ready since the resident lived here for 20+ years and we may have snow and ice to deal with soon.
8. We are opening our Waiting List effective January 12, 2015 for 90 days. We are placing an Ad in the Westerly Sun and The Day for January 11th to notify that we are opening our waiting list. At the same time we will send a flyer to Town Hall; the Library; Stonington Community Center; North Stonington and Westerly Senior Centers, Stonington Social Services, Warm Shelter and - Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center.
9. The Rhode Island Foundation provided funding in the amount of \$424.00 for the July 4th resident picnic. I provided the annual application in September.
10. We received a dividend check in the amount of \$397.76 from our Housing Authority Insurance Group. Last July we received a dividend in the amount of 194.03.

11. Cindy coordinated the Thanksgiving and Christmas Turkey basket delivery with the Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center organizing the list and providing names and resident locations. For Thanksgiving we had 23 turkeys delivered and 22 for Christmas.
12. Commissioner Kate Careb and her Mom, generously donated an abundance of new and gently used jewelry and miscellaneous labeled wrapped gifts for residents to receive or give to their loved ones. The residents were so pleased. Commissioner Careb also assisted in getting a \$500 donation from Cognitive Box Consulting LLC that we will use for grocery gift cards for the residents along with some furniture for a couple residents.
13. The Holiday Party had 51 attendees with 42 residents and 9 guests. We had several comments that the residents thought the party was very nice and everyone seemed to enjoy the evening and felt everyone got along so well, stress free.

Chair Hyland expressed his concerns as he felt the service was slow and Commissioner Savin felt her meal was not up to their usual standards.

14. A Memorial Service was held on December 30th for Jean Cahill. Father Perkins led the group in a prayer, First Selectman George Crouse read a Proclamation declaring December 30, 2014 as Jean Cahill Day, Selectman Simmons spoke along with Chair Hyland, Commissioner Savin, Commissioner Bogue and a few residents.
15. I have been unable to finish revising the Procurement Policy and plan to complete it during my medical leave having it ready for the February meeting.
16. Cindy has prepared the attached two week calendar. Copies are left at the front entry of the Community Building for the residents.
17. For November Chuck completed 103 total work orders: 10 for carpentry, 42 for grounds, 5 for plumbing, 15 for electrical, 11 for cleaning and 3 for painting.

18. For December Chuck completed, between vacation, 520 total work orders: 5 for carpentry, 21 for grounds, 9 for plumbing, 9 for electrical, 7 for cleaning and 1 for painting.

REPORT OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER:

Bingo is very popular. We have had some response, but would love more people to come to Chair Exercise on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. We are starting to get ideas for the coming years, please let me know of any suggestions you may have.

Thank you for the Christmas Party! Everyone had fun! Also, very appreciative of the thought and effort to have a memorial service for Jean Cahill.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Status of 501(c)(3) Non Profit Designation – As mentioned under the Executive Director's Report #5.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Resolution #2014-4: Continuation of Discussion. Commissioner Savin spoke regarding the increase saying "I realize it doesn't amount to much monetarily, however, fundamentally I am having a hard time going above 30%. I'm not on the Board to go against what I'm supposed to be bringing to the Board". She felt a better way to deal with the issue would be to build extra units, decrease spending and/or find more ways to bring in revenue. Chair Hyland agreed with Commissioner Savin. He noted HUD was at one time at 25% and moved up to 30%, creating a bigger burden for residents. Commissioner Careb also agreed with the other Commissioners sentiments. She recommended looking into grants to raise revenue, i.e. SE Community Foundation; forming non-profit would allow us more grant opportunities. Residents expressed their concerns. A motion was made by Chair Hyland and seconded by Commissioner Savin to keep the resident rent at 30%. Motion carried 3-0-1 (Commissioner Bogue abstained).
- b. Strategic Planning: The Executive Director recommended to wait until another Housing Commissioner is appointed before going forward with this project.
- c. Procurement and Disposition Policy. This topic will be deferred until the next meeting. Commissioner Savin suggested looking into hiring a snow removal service to help with snow removal in the event of a large storm.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- a. Accountant Sharon Drago explained there would be changes to rent amounts due to the adoption of Resolution No. 2014-3 and 2014-5. Resolution 2014-3 allows for an increase in Base Rent Amount from \$197 to \$207 for smaller one-bedroom units; \$227 to \$237 for larger one-bedroom units beginning May 2015. Resolution No. 2014-5 is a phase in of maximum rent amounts which are currently capped at \$740 which will become \$771 and will gradually become 30% with no cap. There should never have been a max cap as this is not allowed by CHFA.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Commissioner Bogue and seconded by Commissioner Careb to adjourn the meeting at 4:50 p.m. The motion carried 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Careb, Secretary