

Stonington Housing Authority  
Edythe K. Richmond Homes Community Building  
Regular Meeting  
March 14, 2019  
Minutes

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice Chair Kate Careb called the regular meeting of the Stonington Housing Authority to order at 4:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Those in attendance were Vice Chair Kate Careb, Commissioner Kevin Beverly, Commissioner Beth Leamon, Resident Commissioner Megan Falcone, Executive Director Phylcia Adams, and Becky Champlin. Chair Julie Savin was absent.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Leamon and seconded by Resident Commissioner Falcone to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2019 regular meeting. Motion passed 4-0-0.

READING OF THE TREASURER'S REPORT:

Commissioner Leamon presented the Treasurer's report as of February 28, 2019 showing a balance of \$27,892.47 in the Savings Institute checking account; \$3,271.40 in the Savings Institute Pet account; for a total in all Savings Institute accounts of \$31,163.87. A total of \$390,518.17 for savings and investments and \$88.32 in petty cash. The total of all savings and checking assets is \$421,770.36.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS: None

MAINTENANCE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT REPORT:

1. Two snow events, clearing and salting sidewalks, etc.
2. Final two LG Cleaning/Light switch conversions were completed.
3. Apartments 2-4, 3-1 and 7-3 turnovers completed.
4. Attended 2019 Mid-Winter conference at Mohegan Sun on February 4<sup>th</sup>.
5. Upcoming projects for March: Inspect and clean exterior lighting. Make minor sidewalk repairs where needed. Clean dryer vents.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Operations:

1. Staff attended the NERC NARHO annual conference. Attended workshops on grievance procedures, reasonable accommodations, service and assistance animals, and marijuana in public housing, and fraud prevention.
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2. Submitted article to be included in the next Stonington Events magazine about the students at Pine Point assisting with the rain barrel project.

Financial:

1. Annual PILOT payment made to town - \$4,497.28.
2. Grant application to Pfizer in progress. Will request \$5,000 in funding to assist with the Resident Service Coordinator Program.
3. Accountant mailed 1099s to appropriate vendors.
4. CD at Savings Institute matured. \$90,000 was moved to the money market account and the balance (\$9,150.29) was moved to another CD that matures on 10/27/2020 at 3% APY.

Maintenance:

1. Contacted Nutmeg Inspections and Pat Kelson Associates to get estimates for a UPCS inspection. This is a maintenance inspection that is required annually for federally assisted projects. Although SHA does not receive federal funds, the purpose of the inspection is to have an impartial third-party assess the property.

EKR Phase III Expansion

1. Conducted first Resident Engagement Meeting. Nearly 20 residents attended.
2. Geotechnical study completed.
3. Nick Fomenko hired to complete the traffic engineering study.
4. Kent & Frost hired as the landscape architect.
5. Community meeting regarding the expansion project is scheduled for Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 5:30pm.

During the reading of her report, ED Adams stated that Pat Kelson Associates had been hired for the maintenance inspections.

REPORT OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER:

Updates:

1. On Friday, February 15 we had a Valentine's luncheon here in the EKR hall. It was a huge success. Thank you to the planning committee that organized this event and everyone who participated.
  2. On February 19 we had a Master Gardener come to the EKR hall to talk about future plantings for the raised garden beds. Thank you to those residents who came to this informative meeting. We look forward to you all working together this spring for a bountiful harvest! Kris, the Master Gardener, will be coming back on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2:00pm. Please feel free to join the meeting.
  3. On February 21 we had the Resident February birthdays. We had quite a few residents attend and all enjoyed cake.
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#### February Events:

- 2/15/19: Valentine's Luncheon
- 2/16/19: Coffee with Kate Rotella (cancelled)
- 2/19/19: Master Gardener 2:00pm
- 2/21/19: Resident February birthdays

#### March Events:

- 3/20/19: Lunch outing at Kelley's Deli
- 3/21/19: Resident March Birthdays 1:00
- 3/22/19: Master Gardener meeting 2:00

#### OLD BUSINESS:

##### **EKR Expansion Phase III:**

- **Parking on Connecticut Ave.** – ED Adams stated that a couple of neighbors on Connecticut Avenue called with some concerns about our residents parking on Ct. Ave. blocking their mailboxes & not moving their vehicles during a snow event, which is causing issues with people who live on that street. Adams stated she is working with neighbor Elaine Smith to get this issue resolved. Adams has drafted a letter to the Board of Police Commissioners to let them know these are some of the issues the neighbors of Ct. Ave. are concerned about and the Housing Authority wants to work with them to come up with a solution.
- **Trees on Connecticut Ave.** – ED Adams stated that at last month's meeting a couple of neighbors expressed concern about the pine trees on Ct. Ave. The concern is the pine needles fall off the trees and clogging the stormwater drain at the cul de sac on Connecticut Avenue. The clogged drain impacts the neighbors on Ct. Ave. She stated one of the pine trees is on SHA property and she has reached out to the tree warden to come assess what should be done with this particular tree. Adams is waiting on a response from the tree warden.
- **Drainage at the corner of Sisk & Trumbull** – ED Adams stated that some of the neighbors on Courtland St. said their backyards and basements flood when it rains. She stated she has communicated these concerns the development project's site engineer. Adams said there is a drainage pipe over there that is buried under the brush and is clogged. She stated this is an issue SHA will fix going forward with the input of the Town.

**Tenant Selection Plan:** ED Adams stated this is a plan on how we decide who is eligible to move into Edythe K. Richmond homes. She said we have a plan that's in place but CHFA has come out with further guidance on what our plan should include. We have updated our plan to include some of those things, specifically around criminal background checks and credit checks. She stated the updated plan still needs to be approved.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

**Resident Service Coordinator:** ED Adams explained SHA needs someone on site to address some of the needs of our residents. She said this is one of her goals to get funding for this position and it would be a part-time position.

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**Smoking Policy:** ED Adams stated some of the neighbors of SHA are concerned about our residents smoking on their streets because our property is a smoke-free property and they have to go off-site to smoke. She stated she believes they should look into having designated smoking areas on SHA property for the residents who do smoke. Hud recommends smoking areas should be at least 20' away from any buildings. Discussion ensued as to whether one area or multiple areas should be considered on the property.

ED Adams stated she had one more comment to address that had just come to her attention. CHFA will be doing a site visit in April to come out and inspect the units.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Resident Elizabeth Terico of unit 12-2 asked where the money is coming from to pay the surveyors and land inspectors. She also asked if the land on Sisk & Trumbull is a wetland. ED Adams answered the funding is coming from SHA reserves. ED Adams stated we have to make an initial investment to learn whether or not it is feasible and to do that, it costs money. Adams stated that the area on Sisk & Trumbull is a regulated intermittent watercourse. That is how it is defined by the Town.

Resident Debora Lee asked if SHA planned to build on that area of Sisk & Trumbull. She expressed concern that residents of the buildings to be torn down would have to move off-site during the construction phase. ED Adams stated at this time we do not plan to build on the area of Sisk & Trumbull. Lee then asked what the plans are for residents who reside in buildings 11, 12 & 14 once those buildings will be torn down. Adams said she is in the process of working on a plan for that. She said it is a possibility to still construct in another location on SHA property prior to tearing down those 3 buildings. Residents would then go into the first new building to be constructed. ED Adams explained we are doing studies to find out what they can do and what's feasible. Part of that is deciding where buildings are placed on the site. She stated plans are still evolving as they receive new & updated information. Lee asked Adams if they are looking to build another building somewhere else on the property to place those affected residents and Adams replied yes. Lee stated the rumor is that those residents of the three buildings would be placed off-site. Commissioner Careb stated in the worst case scenario there might be a short period of time where they are relocated temporarily off-site. Careb stated we should not be concerned yet about this because we are still in the feasibility stage. Lee stated she is very concerned about where she is going to be living if and when this takes place. Careb stated their first and foremost concern is to make sure that every resident's health and safety is well taken care of. She stated this expansion concept is a concept. Nothing is permanent yet. She said part of the planning is how to create the least amount of stress for the people who live here. She stated the hope is to build a new building first to place those residents in before tearing down any of the current buildings.

Terico expressed concern about the residents who have mental health issues and that this will create too much stress for them. She also expressed her concern for the animals who live in this area with land encroachment. She said she loves seeing the animals who live here. ED Adams stated their goal is to keep all informed well in advance as to the plans. She stated they want to stay in constant communication with the residents to alleviate some of the feelings about the unknown future. Terico also expressed concern about screening for criminal history of future residents. She stated she feels people cannot be discriminated against if they have a record because of a disease such as mental health issues, addictions, alcoholism, etc. In response, Commissioner Careb said they are going to follow everything to the letter of the law in terms of our guidance there. Careb also stated if they get

to the point where they will be going forward with the plan, the Board will take the residents' mental health into full consideration. They would consider on-site counselors to help people get through the process. She stated the hope is to get a plan that everybody feels comfortable about. Careb stated she understands that change is hard and difficult for anybody and she certainly understands that. But the plan is to expand if we can.

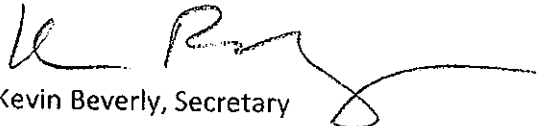
Susan Jones of Palmer Street asked ED Adams if they are not building on the corner of Sisk and Trumbull location. She also thanked the Board for making the neighborhood meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 so more neighbors can attend. Jones also asked where another building would be if not on Sisk and Trumbull. ED Adams replied they are looking at areas on Winthrop. Jones also asked if the policy on resident screening is a public policy or internal only. ED Adams stated that it is an internal document. Adams assured Jones we check for criminal history prior to allowing people to live here.

Resident Louise Bray stated in regards to the smokers she thought maybe the enclosures we already have on the property could be used for smoking areas. Commissioner Leamon said she thinks possibly with the help of Megan, she could find out where residents who smoke would like to see a smoking area or areas on the property. Leamon stated while she doesn't want to encourage smoking on the grounds she does want to address the neighbors' concerns regarding this situation. She feels it would be easier for the residents to smoke in a designated area rather than walking out onto neighboring streets and sidewalks. She stated she is not in favor of seeing multiple areas on the property, however. Further discussion ensued between Debora Lee and Commissioner Leamon regarding how many areas and locations of smoking areas should be allowed. Leamon stated to Lee that maybe she should work with Megan and come up with a plan of a couple of different areas and present it to the Board of Commissioners.

Liz Terico made a comment that only one resident does not move their vehicle in a snowstorm on Ct. Ave. and that should be addressed.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Commissioner Beverly and seconded by Resident Commissioner Falcone to adjourn the meeting at 5:08 p.m. Motion passed 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Kevin Beverly, Secretary