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HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF COLCHESTER
MINUTES REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 15, 2024

Gayle Furman
GAYLE FURMAN
TOWN CLERK

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Colchester was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Marion Spaulding, Chairperson
Janet LaBella, Member
Denise Salmoiraghi, Treasurer
Michael Dankiw, Tenant Commissioner

Commissioners Absent: None

Guests Present: Past Executive Director R. Gustafson (2); Atty Jeff
Mastriano – Potential New Board Member

Staff Present: Consultant: Interim Executive Director – K. Haddad
Resident Services Coordinator – A. Hutchins

Public Time: (Comments/discussion will be limited to 3 minutes per person)

Past Executive Director, R. Gustafson, was present to deliver a legal document served on the Colchester Housing Authority delivered to him at his resident by the Marshal on February 12, 2024. The Board of Commissioners discussed; K. Haddad will reach out to CHA atty for review of the document and next steps.

Executive Session: None

Approval of Meeting Minutes, Regular Meeting December 21, 2023: Members reviewed the meeting minutes from the Regular Meeting, December 21, 2023; there were no questions, comments, or concerns.

Commissioner LaBella moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes, December 21, 2023, as submitted; seconded by Commissioner Dankiw. All Commissioners voted in favor. So, moved.

Administration Report: A. Hutchins reported on the vacancies, maintenance, the waiting list, Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan, and Training. There are currently 9 vacancies (2 at Dublin/5 at Ponemah, which does not include D20 and 2 at Breeds Tavern). Two additional units will become vacant with the passing of two residents last week at Dublin Village. Units are waiting to be cleaned. There are four (4) units with a 3/1/24 move in date. The waiting list has 27 applicants (2 from the original waiting list and

25 from the new waiting list) for Dublin/Ponemah and 2 applicants for Breeds. Maintenance work orders generated this month were 29, with 26 completed. CHA Truck is still on site (Roger Palmer, who was going to purchase the truck, passed away). There was a brief discussion by members for options: sell the sander and plow separately – keep the truck and make repairs. Discussion to be continued. A. Hutchins will draft the Affirmative Fair Housing Market Plan for submission to DOH and CHFA. A. Hutchins is participating in a training session at DOH – “Training Opportunity to all ERAP and RSC Programs Participants;” this training will provide the updates of the programs process and requirements to understand the timeframe and schedules of all activities. The training will begin at 10:00 am with details of ERAP program then followed by RSC program on March 4, 2024, via TEAMS. A. Hutchins will participate in a training session sponsored by CONN NAHRO presented by DOH Representative Tawney Pho regarding 2024 Rent Certification in State Sponsored Housing on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, from 9:30 am – 3:00 pm (cost \$95).

Management/Consulting Reporting: Financial reporting update was distributed; members will review and make any comments at the next meeting.

K. Haddad update

- Staffing – Additional staff was hired as seasonal employees to assist with Snow Removal.
 - Commissioner Spaulding and Dankiw attended Commissioner Training at Mohegan Sun on February 4, 2024 – training was very informational!
 - A. Hutchins to attend two (2) training sessions in March.
 - ADP Payroll was modified – work period will be two weeks (Thursday – Wednesday), payroll will be processed on Thursdays and deposited on Mondays.
- Applications are being processed, landlord references, background checks and verifications of income/assets is ongoing.
- Jason Nowosad, Building Official, has signed off on the Building Permit and will issue the Certificate of Occupancy, waiting for hard copy to be received, which will be forwarded to the Auditor to finalize the Cost Certification. DOH has been updated regarding the issuance.
- DEF prepared an estimate for the unfinished work in Unit 20; (\$4,407) the Board agreed this was an acceptable price and authorized K. Haddad to move forward, requesting a schedule be submitted for a mobilization date and a completion date. All materials are on site to complete this work.
- Breeds Tavern Priority Needs Funding for Urgent Items application was reviewed and discussed.
 - Application includes Smoke Detector/Carbon Monoxide Detector Combo Units (22 residential units – 66 devices); Mold Remediation (unit 15) and funding for performing a Capital Needs Assessment and an Environmental Phase I which will be needed for future application of CDBG Funding.
 - K. Haddad & Commissioner Spaulding met with Town of Colchester to discuss applying for CDBG funding.
- Rent increases for the base rent at Breeds Tavern has been increased to \$550 effective 1/1/24. Residents have been notified of the change; income of current residents have been reviewed and rental increases based on their income will be effective 3/1/24. K Haddad has collaborated

with residents who have low back balances to commit to repayment agreements; three (3) residents who had larger back balances have been served with legal action – one (1) resident paid in full and the other two (2) are pending (March 4 summons date). Two vacant units have been renovated – one has been rented and the other will be leased in late February.

- CHA Maintenance Staff will relocate the siding from the trailer so that the trailer can be utilized.
- The Verizon cell phone was discussed and agreed it should be left in working order.
- There is a sink hole at Ponemah that needs to be repaired – A. Hutchins will reach out to Shorts for an estimate to repair.
- The Generator relocated from Taylor Road was delivered to Breeds (located in the side yard) where it was vandalized; A. Hutchins to contact scrap yard for a price to remove.
- Maintenance needs were discussed; K. Haddad will track maintenance needs on site to see if Willimantic Housing Maintenance Staff should be scheduled to come back on site to complete pressing needs and unit turnover work.
- Recertification packages were sent out the residents and are due back today (approximately 50% of the packages sent out have been returned).
- CHFA/DOH notification dated January 10, 2024, of Housing Authority Annual Report Requirement – reports due annually by March 1.

Resolution: Approve Addition of Administrative Assistant Job Description to be added to the Personnel Policy: Members reviewed and discussed the Administrative Assistant Job Description. Minor revisions/modifications were agreed upon.

Resolved: The Colchester Housing Authority Board of Commissioners approves the Addition of the Administrative Assistant Job Description to the Personnel Policy as revised; Commissioner LaBella moved to approve the Resolution for the addition of the job description; seconded by Commissioner Dankiw. All Commissioners voted in favor. So, moved.

Resolution: Approve Application of Priority Needs Funding for Breeds Tavern: Members reviewed and discussed the Application of Priority Needs Funding for Breeds.

Resolved: The Colchester Housing Authority Board of Commissioners approves the Application of Priority Needs Funding for Breeds Tavern; Commissioner Salmoiraghi moved to approve the Resolution for the application submission; seconded by Commissioner Dankiw. All Commissioners voted in favor. So, moved.

Resolution: Review and Approve Proposals for Cleaning Furnaces: Members reviewed and discussed the proposals for cleaning the furnaces at Breeds Tavern. A quote for boiler/water heater cleaning from Corbett HVAC Services (\$5,940) was reviewed and approved; K. Haddad will reach out to Corbett to schedule.

Resolved: The Colchester Housing Authority Board of Commissioners approves the Proposal of Corbett HVAC Services dated December 11, 2023, for the boiler/water heating cleaning for the 22 units at Breeds Tavern; Commissioner Salmoiraghi moved to approve the Resolution for the services; seconded by Commissioner Dankiw. All Commissioners voted in favor. So, moved.

Discussion: Budget Preparation and Schedule: K. Haddad discussed rent increases at the Colchester Housing Authority properties. There are six (6) residents (4 at Dublin and 2 at Ponemah) that are not currently part of the RAP; therefore, increasing the rents by a proposed amount of \$100 would be absorbed by the RAP program. A meeting with the residents will need to be held in April; (notification regarding the increase needs to be circulated on 3/1/24). CHA is proposing to set the base rents at \$450 – small units and \$500 – large units at Dublin/Ponemah. In addition, CHA is proposing to set the base rents at Breeds Tavern to \$700; this is in participation with CHFA to have a rent strategy in place and to enable the properties to become more sustainable. Members requested additional time to reflect on the increase of \$100 at Dublin/Ponemah; but agreed that the base rents at Breeds Tavern should be increased to \$700.

- CHFA/DOH notification dated December 6, 2023, of new requirements in Section 10 P.A. 23-207 regarding compliance on notice distribution to each tenant of rent increases.
- CHFA notification dated February 6, 2024, regarding budget deadlines for FYE 6/30/25. The budget is due to CHFA for review by 4/30/24. If the HA is contemplating an increase, a list of criteria to include:
 - Copy of 30-day notice with meeting with residents (Meeting to be held 3 months prior – meeting notice 4 months prior or March 1)
 - Meeting minutes
 - Rent roll showing how rent increase will affect current residents.
 - Board approval of the increase
 - Budget (Board approved - uploaded to CHFA – timeline: 2 months prior)
 - Signed Affidavit
 - Copy of 30-day notice to residents with the new rent amount (notice: 1 month prior)

Snow Removal Update: CHA is maintaining the walks for the 2023-2024 winter season; two (2) additional seasonal staff were hired to aid in the sidewalk snow removal/deicing. Salt/Sand is stocked at both villages. A new Snow Blower was purchased for Dublin at Gano's and the Snow Blower from Ponemah is being evaluated at Gano's. A Salt Spreader was purchased for Dublin Village. Shorts Landscaping has been cooperative with call backs to clean up after storms.

Other Business

- December 2023/January and February 2024 Consulting Services Invoice was reviewed and approved by the board for payment.
- Commissioner Spaulding & Commissioner Dankiw shared their comments regarding the Training Session attended February 4, 2024.

- Members reviewed the quotes received to replace the oil-fired boiler at Breeds Tavern 11-2; quotes received were for different replacement units, K. Haddad stated that she spoke to Engineer A. Tarpill at QA&M and the units are comparable replacement units. Members accepted the Corbet HVAC Services proposal for \$8,298. K. Haddad will reach out to Corbet to schedule.

Commissioner LaBella moved to approve the Corbet HVAC proposal dated January 22, 2024, in the amount of \$8,298.00 for Breeds Tavern Unit 11-2 to remove and install a New Yorker oil-fired boiler; seconded by Commissioner Dankiw. All Commissioners voted in favor. So, moved.

- Service Agreement for Casella – Willimantic Waste – was reviewed. Service fees have been increased effective 1/1/2024.
- Draft Breeds Tavern Lease Agreement was distributed for review – Members tabled this item until next month for more time to review.
- A certified letter was received from a former resident requesting copies of their file. K. Haddad will reach out to CHA attorney for review and next steps.
- Members discussed an alternate to relieve Commissioner Dankiw when he is out of town.
- Members discussed the approval of renewing the current Administrative Services Agreement between CHA and Willimantic Housing Authority and agreed to extend the agreement for an additional 6 months. This will allow K. Haddad to move CHA through the redetermination/budget preparation process while working with CHA to advertise for the Executive Director position.
- A. Hutchins stated that she is no longer capable of performing her duties of cleaning units to turn them over. Members discussed the need to look at the budget and ascertain whether new maintenance/cleaning staff could/should be hired.

Executive Session (Employment Matters): **None**

Public Time: **None**

Adjournment:

Commissioner Salmoiraghi moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Dankiw. All Commissioners voted in favor; so, moved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion K. Spaulding

Marion Spaulding, Chair

