

The Webster Housing Authority held its regular monthly meeting on Monday April 26, 2021 in the community building at 10 Golden Heights, Webster. The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm and Chairman announced the meeting was being recorded through the GotoMeeting app.

- I. *Roll Call* Upon roll call, the following members were present David DuPont, Douglas Babcock, William Herra, Peter Luchina and James Avery. Also present: Paula Mayville, Executive Director, Rhea Parker, Julie Dell'Anna, Marie Hardy.
- II. *Minutes* James Avery made a motion to accept the minutes from 3/22/21 as presented. Motion seconded by Douglas Babcock. All other members were in favor.
- III. *Executive Director's Report*
 1. Paula provided sample board packets from other agencies shared during the Mass Nahro virtual conference. Slight difference included the "consent agenda" option. Members will review further and discuss again if changes are desired.
 2. Personal Property policy enforcement is upcoming. Policy approved back in October 2020 to address the outgrowth of outdoor seating, decorations, artificial flowers etc. Although residents have received ample time and multiple notices have gone out, some personal property remains in common areas. On the initial day WHA intended to remove these items it snowed. Doug Babcock suggested the Webster Fire Department be utilized to enforce this policy for common stairs and hallways. Paula reported that items would be stored at the GH2 garage for a short time after removal. Paula will ensure that both she and maintenance supervisor are both on site during removal since residents have threatened to call police, etc
 3. Modernization Update: Paula discussed the slower schedule since the electrical installation is taking about a week per building. A summary page with heat pump information was provided and reviewed. As the air conditioning output is oversized for the apartment square footage these units will eliminate the need for window air conditioners.
 4. Vaccine Clinic #2 will be held on Wed April 28 in conjunction with Webster's Board of Health. Vaccines will be held in building #19 again, based on the success of the last clinic. Two GH2 residents

tested positive since the first clinic, but did not spread beyond their social circle.

IV. Report of Tenant Organization: Lainey Hardy reported the group scheduled its next meeting for May 20 with prepackaged pastry and coffee and hope to have a luncheon when Board of Health allows. Board is working on a SNAP food truck and anticipates the newsletter starting up again May 1.

V. *New Business:*

1. *Answering Service changes: Board members discussed dissatisfaction with existing answering service Executel including if it was a legal company or based out of someone's house vs . Paula surveyed other Central Mass housing authorities and many noted Executel's service had declined in the last year. Instead of looking for another company, Paula suggested replacing the phone system (neighbors recommended NEC)rather than just switching answering services. A number of housing authorities are successfully using a system with more direct call forwarding to staff during business hours with varying options for directly reaching on-call maintenance staff after hours. In the current system, Executel screens the after hours calls and only puts legitimate emergencies through to maintenance. Paula noted that the office fields waiting list inquiries the entire day, with these calls driving down the productivity in other. James Avery recommended the answering service keep a list of commissioners to automatically put through. Board requested that Paula get additional information from NEC for the next meeting.*
2. *Collective Bargaining Agreement: No in-person meetings have been held and all discussion took place via email. Paula noted she would limit the discussion since the Board was not in Executive Session. WHA questioned the need for new language in agreement addressing the hiring of part time or temporary help since two of three maintenance employees will be on sick leave; Union felt it was not necessary. Union has requested only one change from the existing agreement: maintenance hours change from 730-4 TO 7-330 allowing more time to clean in the mornings before home care workers arrive. Peter Luchina recalled the same request last year addressing the summer heat, which was solved with language stating any hour changes were at the discretion of the Executive Director.*

WHA proposed its own change to the existing agreement: if maintenance is called in after hours and the on-call person comes to the site for two hours minimum pay, the repair should be made during that two hours of paid time rather than advising tenant "someone will come in the morning during regular hours". Board acknowledged the challenges of resident who call insisting on after-hours visits for non emergency repairs.

- 3. Employment Advertising/Restructure: Paula discussed the departure of long time employee Tracie Pollier and recommended restructuring the current administrative team. Currently the two full time positions are broken down between state and federal programs resulting in duplicate tasks done by each employee. Instead, Director of Occupancy and Director of Leasing. The previous structure with four admin employees was reviewed for its benefits, noting our request for another part time position was still pending in the 2021 budget. Paula reported that she would like to advertise on an electronic platform like monster/indeed, but a credit card is required to contract those services. Paula recommended the Board consider obtaining a bank card from Webster Five with a low credit line. Douglas Babcock made a motion to request a \$2,500 credit card from Webster Five, seconded by James Avery, all members in favor with Chairman suggesting the monthly credit card statements appear in board packets for reconciliation.*

VI. Unfinished Business

- 1. Corrected state modernization award/contract: DHCD drafted a replacement Amendment #11 Contract for Financial Assistance removing the \$675k in sustainability funding from the document approved at last month's board meeting. DHCD will not proceed with this work, upon the recommendation of its own designer, however it will not apply this funding towards our ongoing window replacement project. Douglas Babcock made a motion to approve REVISED Amendment 11 to the Contract for Financial Assistance 5001 in the amount of \$291,675, nullify the board's previous vote and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of WHA. Peter Luchina seconded that motion and all members were in favor.*
- 2. Smoking policy review w/on-site areas: Paula provided a copy of the original 2016 policy in packets, marked up with potential changes. She proposed clarification that e-cigarettes, vaping and marijuana smoking*

under prohibited items. Additionally, the policy requires review of continuing the designated smoking areas on a yearly basis, which had not been addressed in several years. Number of warnings was also up review, with a proposed revision from four down to two. Estimated 20-25 smokers between the two properties but difficult to get honest count, Golden Heights II area inside the circle is used regularly by handful of faithful residents, however Golden Heights I area is never used at all. One eviction for smoking has been completed, one scheduled for this Friday and another has a pending court date. GHTO previously held a vote at its meeting and members voted to eliminate the two designated areas originally sited to avoid residents on the street, in pajamas, smoking at the entrance like at Slater Estates “bad advertising” for potential applicants. Doug Babcock made a motion to approve the policy changes as presented, effective June 1st. Motion seconded by Bill Herra and all members were in favor. Paula noted that the heat pumps (filters) will gather further evidence of smoking inside the apartments, based on experience at other housing authorities. Board discussed the cessation resources already provided through the housing authority. Chairman DuPont opened further discussion on the enforcement plan, suggesting three warnings instead of the two proposed in this revision. After deliberating, Peter Luchina made a motion to provide three strikes/warnings prior to legal action, including peoples’ existing warnings; motion seconded by David DuPont, all members were in favor. Chairman DuPont recommended considering a bench just outside the property for smokers, however given town sidewalks abutting private homes, that would be difficult. Rhea Parker spoke on the dangers and liability of smoking inside the apartments spreading second hand smoke and risking potential fires, recommended efforts to address the known smokers inside apartments, recommended immediate termination of the designated areas and noted the circle at Golden Heights would be enjoyed by more people if it wasn’t used for the designated smoking area.

3. *Other Business* unknown at time of posting: Paula provided an estimate for replacement tractor, however additional information needed for the discussion did not arrive before packets went out so consideration of this purchase will be addressed next meeting. Douglas Babcock noted the Board was past due to reorganize since members had agreed to do so at

our first in-person meeting. Given the upcoming election for three seats in a couple of weeks, Board agreed to hold off.

4. *Bills and Listing* Checks were signed and registers reviewed at beginning of meeting.
5. *Adjourn* With the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday May 24, Douglas Babcock made a motion to adjourn at 611pm. Motion seconded by James Avery; all members in favor.

Respectfully Submitted (Attest)

Paula Mayville, Executive Director

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