



Claremont Housing Authority

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 21, 2018, 4:30 p.m.

Ball Room, 243 Broad St., Claremont, NH

Commissioners in Attendance:

Robin Butterfield

Wendy Hodgdon

Judy Austin

Liane Westcott

Kathleen O'Brian

Michelle Aiken, Executive Director/Secretary

Others in Attendance

18 members of the public, including City Manager Ryan McNutt

1. Roll Call, Quorum. Ms. Butterfield called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m. Roll call was taken; 5 commissioners were present. A quorum was established, and the meeting convened.

2. Adopt Agenda. Ms. Westcott moved to approve the agenda with a modification to place the response to the complaint letter prior to public comment; seconded by Ms. Austin. **Motion carried.**

a. See attached letter read out loud to all present

3. Public Comment. There was a lot of discussion regarding the letter read from Ms. Aiken and discussions regarding the smoking gazebo, the toilets and the chain of command.

4. Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting (April 23, 2018). Ms. O'Brian advised that she did not approve the Treasurers report from the last meeting. She felt that she would not make a motion unless all questions were answered. Ms. Austin made a motion to accept the minutes; seconded by Ms. O'Brian. **Motion carried.**

5. Executive Director's Report: Ms. Aiken advised that as she has discussed in the past the Auditors felt we should pay the money back for the fish tank, although as a board we all feel that the fish tank is a beautification of the property and do not know if the trustees of trust funds would think that the fish tank maintenance would be good use of the funds. So Ms. Aiken felt making a motion regarding their feelings about the fish tank would help the cause. Ms. Westcott made a motion In response to the management letter from the Auditors, the Claremont Housing Authority Board of Commissioners feels that the fish tank brings marketing appeal to the property. In the recent months since the notification of the recommendation, the CHA has received over \$300 in donations from tenants, staff and visitors of the property. We, the Board feel this confirms that the fish tank is a welcoming sight to everyone who visits and a beautification of the property and should be paid for and maintained through funds from the operating account; seconded by Ms. Austin. **Motion carried.**

Ms. Aiken asked everyone if they had any questions or additions to the by-laws since their last meeting regarding the by-laws. Ms. O'Brian felt that they need to put more time into the by-laws and that she would like to have another meeting to discuss them. Motion was made by Ms. O'Brian to push the by-

laws off until the board could look at the by-laws a little closer and develop the complaint policy. Ms. Aiken advised that we will need to update the ACOP soon anyway, so we can complete the complaint policy at the same time; seconded by Ms. Butterfield. **Motion carried.** A motion was made to approve the Executive Directors report by Ms. Austin; seconded by Ms. Westcott. **Motion carried.**

6. Treasurer's Report. A motion was made by Ms. Hodgdon and seconded by Ms. Westcott to approve the Treasurer's Report. **Motion carried.**

7. Housing Choice Voucher / Section 8 Program Report – Ms. Aiken reviewed the Section 8 report and advised that we are at 127 vouchers and still close to our goal of 130 vouchers. Motion was made by Ms. Westcott; seconded by Ms. Austin. **Motion carried.**

8. Marion L. Phillips Report. Ms. Aiken presented the Marion L. Phillips report and advised we are at 100% occupancy. Ms. Kostandin from the MLPTA advised that the Association will be holding their elections next month on June 7th and would like a commissioner present, Ms. Austin volunteered to be the one to attend. Ms. Westcott moved to accept the Marion L. Phillips Report; seconded by Ms. Austin. **Motion carried.**

9. Committee Reports. There were no committee reports.

10. Old Business. Capital Fund Submission. Ms. Aiken discussed the items that were the most needed for the building and provided the board with the 5 year plan as discussed. A motion was made by Ms. Butterfield to approve the Capital Fund 5 year plan as presented; seconded by Ms. Austin. **Motion carried.**

11. Unfinished Business. There was no unfinished business.

12. New Business. There was no new business.

Adjournment – Ms. Butterfield advised that the summer is a very busy time and unless there is something the board must discuss we will take a couple months off. Next meeting will be July or August to discuss the budget. Ms. Austin motioned to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Ms. Westcott. The meeting was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Next meeting: TBD

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Aiken, Secretary

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Commissioners
FROM: Management
RE: Tenant Issues
DATE: May 4, 2018

I would like to address the issues brought up by tenants so it does not have to be discussed again. There are a lot of people who used to like to come to these meetings to find out what was going on, until a select few tenants decided it was going to be an ambush to staff.

To address the first comment on the need to spend money on luxury items is a matter of opinion and addressing some of the out of date features of the building has marketing appeal and may not be important to some people but as a Director it is important for our building to look modern and up to date. Anything less makes it appear that we do not make improvements to the property and do the bare minimum. That is not appealing to most people looking for a nice place to live.

- **Toilets:** First of all the bathrooms are far from being made of marble, they are commercial grade tile. The toilets installed should have been high boy toilets as that is our normal standard. It was an oversight, but the contractor was doing the work up to code. We are not required to have high boy toilets installed in the public restrooms, although it would be a nice feature. The Board advised that we will plan to include new toilets in the public restrooms with the new budget after October 1st.
- **Fish Tank Maintenance:** We have received a recommendation from the Auditors to use Ball Fund money for the Fish Tank. The Board has decided that the fish tank is a beautification of the property, in the same equivalent as the flowers we plant each year and are planning to make a resolution that the fish tank maintenance and upkeep be maintained through operations budget. As far as the correlation between canceled dinners, that never had anything to do with the fish tank funds, it had to do with the need for tenants to volunteer to cook and serve the dinners. The Site Manager is always speaking with tenants in regards to ideas for meals and trying to get volunteers. In regards to the Ball Fund being wiped out, that did not mean that it cost \$10,000 for the fish tank it meant that we had used half our funds this fiscal year and that we had \$5000 left which is what the initial Audit had advised should be repaid. The recommendation was then reduced to \$3000. Which would still leave the Ball fund with \$2000 which would be plenty for the remainder of the year for dinners and a trip. Although, as I

mentioned this should no longer be a problem because the Board will be addressing it at this meeting.

- Trees: I have spoken with the Arborists and they think we can get another few years out of these trees and to wait for them to bud into leaves and then we can determine how the tree is actually doing. They will be monitoring the tree for dead spots and trim those as needed.
- Dog Park: The dog area has been in that spot since I started at Claremont Housing Authority 10 years ago. The area was in great need of some attention and no one had ever mentioned it prior to me getting a dog. I brought my dog to the area to use and felt it was severely lacking and understood why some people would rather take their dog off site to do their business. The trees were low hanging and hard to maneuver around and blocked the sun. The footing was unstable and it was unmaintained. It appears that some think this was self-serving, but I assure you that I spoke with other dog owners in the building and they felt the same way. We decided to clean up the area and make it nice for dog owners or anyone else who would like to use the area and the cost was affordable as we were able to get a fence at a discounted price. We will be updating the seating area so anyone can use the area and have lunch or sit and read a book if they choose.
- Carpeting: I have not made a final decision on the carpeting but we went along with carpet tiles to switch out tiles that became stained and the color appeared to be neutral and has stain guard. The intention is to complete the carpeting on the remainder of the floors.
- Heating System: We have been aware that the heating units in the lobbies need to be replaced and at a cost of \$10,000 each we can only do one per year. We have replaced the unit on the 2nd floor which is working perfectly and will work our way up and complete the 3rd floor within the next budget and then complete the 4th floor the following year. As for the efficiency of the heating system in the building, this has been tested and it is in the 90th percentile for efficiency so we will not be making any changes to that system even with the appears of wasting energy we will do what is best for the building as a whole. Having the hall doors open during the winter is a great way of heating the stair wells without having to install heaters on each level of the stair way, usually the heat already in the halls works perfectly.
- Parking lot: We will be addressing the parking lot in this coming year budget. Although, you should remember that we live in New Hampshire and frost heaves develop and those are out of our control.
- Laundry: As of last week all of the washers were working and had been for a while. There are 110 people in this building and the washers get a lot of usage. All the washers cannot be expected to be problem free 365 days out of the year. When something is wrong we put an out of order sign and the statement about the washers being down for a year is false. You cannot wash your laundry anywhere at the prices we provide you. If we do not have enough machines you are more than welcome to utilize the laundry mat.
- Kitchen A/C: an A/C unit was installed in the kitchen as soon as the season began.
- Gazebo: The gazebo needs a new roof.

- Grocery carts: The letter said we did not have 6 grocery carts, yet we did have 6 grocery carts. 2 of the carts were shorter than the others and Rob was able to take them to be raised up.
- Ball room is only a few feet smaller and no storage space was removed.
- Soda machine was requested to remain in the lobby because it was used more and the MLPTA made more money that way.
- There are 8 seats in the main lobby area – that is more than adequate.
- The framed pictures are being sold and are no longer the theme we are going for in the building. We will be hanging more photos of the building and the Claremont area throughout the building as our theme. The paintings that I do are hung because the majority of the tenants enjoy them and request them. We will be putting out a survey soon and that will be one of the questions we ask.
- We are working on building a smokers gazebo
- The office has been open 8:30-3:00 since I started here 10 years ago and we have updated the office so that there is now a receptionist who can answer questions if the rest of the staff is busy. It used to be closed from 11-1 and now it is only closed from 12-1. Everyone needs to plan accordingly. Some buildings do not even have an office on site.
- K-9 inspections: The tenants are given usually a weeks' notice that the K-9 inspections are being completed.
- Pest Control: We will be continuing to address the pests in and around our building at the recommendation of the experts. Although the mice and chipmunks are cute than can be destructive to our building and can carry disease.