

Fitchburg Housing Authority Minutes – Regular Meeting

Daniels Heights Community Room, Fitchburg, MA

July 22, 2015

PRESENT:

Paul Fontaine, Chair

Linda Byrne, Treasurer

David Rousseau, Assistant Treasurer

Mark Jackson, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Peter Proulx, Secretary

Benjamin Gold, Asst. Exec. Director

Denise Ivaldi, Recording Secretary

ABSENT:

Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair

There were tenants present with the following comments:

- a. A resident asked when the tenants would get notice about the no-smoking policy. *The E.D. stated that residents were given notices already. He added that the policy will not be in effect for eviction right away, so as to give residents time to acclimate to the new policy.*
- b. A resident wanted to know why no notice was given when the office was closed July 10th and 13th. The resident stated notice was only given for the Monday, not the Friday. *The E.D. noted that Cathy was doing recertifications one day.*
- c. A resident asked about the fence at Day St.; noting there was more trash being left in that area. *The E.D. replied that the security cameras would be going up in the next couple of months; approval going to the board at the August meeting.*

1. With no further comments from the tenants and a quorum present; the Chair called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m.
2. Linda Byrne made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 17, 2015 meeting, Mark Jackson seconded the motion; all in favor; the motion passed unanimously.
3. The Executive Director Report:
 - a. The Durkin exterior fence is complete. As noted non-residents are now leaning against the fence; leaving trash. We will monitor this with the new security cameras. There is not much we can do on the Blossom St. side; perhaps some plantings.
 - b. We have a resolution later in the meeting on a revised pet policy. Note, pets are allowed in the common areas as long as they are on a leash and with the resident. They cannot be outside.

Mr. Rousseau stated that for the last three years, a policy has been in effect that no pets were allowed in the common areas. *The E.D. stated that the official policy states pets are allowed. It's possible the policy was just in effect at Day Street; we possible to have an amendment for that building only.*

- c. Issues with residents are being addressed per the state regulations.

Mr. Rousseau stated that some regulations are not being enforced. The manager says they will look into an issue, check with Leominster. Why is that? He added that the Day St. office is important and should be open when it's stated it is. *The E.D. replied that the Day St. office is important; but if there are issues at other complexes; those have to be dealt with as well.*

Mr. Rousseau noted other issues. The floors have not been waxed yet. People are leaning against the fence; camping out on the other side and sleeping until morning. He also asked about the open container law. *The E.D. replied that we would be switching over some maintenance the lawns are done. Once the security cameras are in place the fence issue may be less of a problem; adding we could put up a sign as well. Mr. Jackson added that there is an open container law. Residents should call and identify the individual and also be available to speak with an officer on duty. He noted that if the cameras are IP based, that would be beneficial.*

- d. DHCD is allowing the housing authority to sell seven (7) of our 705's without the one to one replacement or 30 year requirement. We would need to get an appraisal and sell the house for that amount. All money will go to DHCD to be put into an account for the housing authority; which can be used for future units.

The Chair asked what happens if we can't sell the 705's. *The E.D. replied that we would have to sell it for \$1.00 and meet DHCD requirements (affordable housing units).* The Chair noted that Prospect St. might be a hard sell; is there a timeframe. *The E.D. replied that we might be able to use the one to one replacement with the HILAPP at Green Acres.* The Chair asked when the appraisals would be done. *The E.D. replied within 60 days; all by one vendor.*

Ms. Byrne asked about 132 Pleasant St. *The E.D. replied that was separate; the 705's are all family units. He further explained.* The Chair asked what would happen if the city condemned that building. *The E.D. replied he would make a phone call.*

- e. The Leominster board has voted to allow the E.D. to apply for RCAT. The application is due the end of August. He explained the regions and added that Leominster would be host for Worcester county if awarded.
- f. The Leominster board will be voting to lease additional office space at their August meeting. This space would house our finance and leased housing departments; a total of eight employees.
- g. Sterling Housing hosted a picnic for their residents this past Saturday; it was well attended.
- h. Lunenburg Housing – MART has added a stop at the Pearl Brook Community Room to their schedule now.

4. Financial Report:

- a. Page F3 – Reserves are at 15%, up a little from last month.
- b. Page F4 – Rents are averaging \$242 per unit/per month; dropped a little.

The Chair asked if the write-offs were removed from last month. *The E.D. replied they were.*

- c. Maintenance is still over budget, but we are recouping some; should be down significantly by the end of the year.

Motion made by Linda Byrne to accept the financials. Seconded by Mark Jackson, all were in favor.

5. Facilities Report:

- a. The annual inspections work orders were being closed out.

6. State Housing Report:

- a. The biggest vacancy issue is at Green Acres. This is due to evictions for non-payment and some residents leaving due to their higher rent after the recertifications were completed.

The Chair asked how the 20 vacancies were being filled. *The E.D. replied that it was being handled slightly differently for now. He explained that as someone is being approved; the apartment is being readied.*

Mr. Jackson asked if there were any issues while the units were vacant. *The E.D. replied that we did not have any break-ins; more issues with damage by the resident moving out (we charge them for the damage).*

Ms. Byrne asked again about the scattered sites as she was not understanding. *The E.D. replied that we received seven (7) waivers for the homes we discussed earlier. He added that we have 15 scattered site homes in all.*

Mr. Jackson asked if there was any collateral damage with the scattered sites. *The E.D. replied that some are vacant and boarded up. He added there were some problems in the past as some have been vacant for up to ten (10) years.*

- b. Overall occupancy is at 90.17%; it was at 68% in April 2014 (just over a year ago). Our goal is to be at 98%. Our biggest problem is at Green Acres. He further explained the process for filling vacancies; verifying income, performing the background checks, etc. The state-wide waiting list should be coming soon.

7. Section 8 Report:

Doing very good; 216 vouchers leased out of 219.

8. Old Business:

The painting of vacant units contract was awarded to M.R. Construction for \$46,075.00.

9. New Business:

The following resolutions were presented by the Chair:

RESOLUTION FOR AUTHORIZATION OF CHANGE ORDER
NUMBER ONE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE
ROOF REPLACEMENT AT DANIELS HEIGHTS (667-2)

DHCD PROJECT NUMBER 097073

Resolution 2015-07-01

Whereas: The Fitchburg Housing Authority has the need to sign a Change Order Number One in conjunction with the roof replacement at Daniels Heights (667-2) and,

Whereas: This Change Order Number One will decrease the contract by **\$1,679.66.**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Fitchburg Housing Authority Board of Directors authorizes the Chair or the Executive Director to sign the Change Order Number One in conjunction with the roof replacement at Daniels Heights (667-2) now being undertaken by the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Fitchburg Housing Authority.

RESOLVED, Motion made by Linda Byrne to authorize the signing of the Change Order Number One by the Chair or Executive Director in conjunction with the roof replacement at Daniels Heights (667-2).

SECONDED, David Rousseau seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SIGNING OF THE CERTIFICATE OF
SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION FOR THE ROOF REPLACEMENT AT
DANIELS HEIGHTS (667-2)

DHCD PROJECT NUMBER 097073

Resolution 2015-07-02

Whereas: The Architect (Nault Architects, Inc.) has inspected the roof replacement at Daniels Heights (667-2) and,

Whereas: The Architect has recommended that the roof replacement at Daniels Heights (667-2) has reached the point of Substantial Completion and, contingent upon DHCD's approval,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Fitchburg Housing Authority authorizes the Chair or Executive Director to sign the necessary documents in connection with Substantial Completion of the roof replacement at Daniels Heights (667-2).

RESOLVED, Motion made by David Rousseau to accept the Substantial Completion of the roof replacement at Daniels Heights (667-2).

SECONDED, Linda Byrne seconded the motion, and the motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION TO ALLOW A PROPRIETARY BID SPECIFICATION FOR
THE 667-1, ET AL LOCK AND SECURITY CAMERAS

DHCD PROJECT #097066

RESOLUTION 2015-07-03

Whereas: The Fitchburg Housing Authority seeks to minimize its costs in providing security locks at its properties, and

Whereas: It will reduce costs to use one lock manufacturer at all sites, and

Whereas: The Fitchburg Housing Authority is installing new locks at the Canton Valley, Daniels Heights, Wallace Towers and C.J. Durkin developments.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Fitchburg Housing Authority Board of Commissioners hereby votes to allow for a Proprietary Bid utilizing Arrow as the manufacturer of all locks within the specification.

Resolved, Motion made by Linda Byrne to allow for a Proprietary Bid utilizing Arrow as the manufacturer of all locks within the specification.

Seconded, Mark Jackson seconded the Motion, and the Motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION TO ALLOW A PROPRIETARY BID SPECIFICATION FOR
THE GREEN ACRES ROOF REPLACEMENT PROJECT

DHCD PROJECT #097077

RESOLUTION 2015-07-04

Whereas: The Fitchburg Housing Authority seeks to keep a uniform appearance of the forty-five (45) building roofs at Green Acres, and

Whereas: The Fitchburg Housing Authority is replacing roofs at twenty-nine (29) buildings at Green Acres.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Fitchburg Housing Authority Board of Commissioners hereby votes to allow for a Proprietary Bid utilizing GAF Timberline HD “Fox Hollow Gray”.

Resolved, Motion made by Linda Byrne to allow for a Proprietary Bid utilizing GAF Timberline HD “Fox Hollow Gray” roof shingles at Green Acres.

Seconded, David Rousseau seconded the Motion, and the Motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

The E.D. noted that Ben Gold had updated the Pet Policy for the following resolution. The Chair added that the policy was well done and he appreciated the cross-outs/color making it easier to identify the changes; the board all agreed.

David Rousseau wanted to go back to the common area section noting an amendment should be in effect at Wallace Towers too. He then made a motion to make an exception to pets in the common areas. The Chair asked if there was a restriction; how the residents would get their pets to their apartments. Mr. Rousseau noted that the exception would be for the laundry, community room and lobby sitting areas only. The E.D. noted that some places require carrying pets (probably why there is a weight limit); adding under a Reasonable Accommodation, it would be allowed.

The Chair noted a second was needed on the amendment “to make an exception to pets in the common areas at Wallace Towers”; Linda Byrne seconded; all were in favor.

David Rousseau made a motion to approve the original adoption of the revised pet policy as amended; Linda Byrne seconded; all were in favor.

RESOLUTION TO UPDATE THE PET POLICY

Resolution 2015-07-05

Whereas: The Fitchburg Housing Authority has the need to update the existing pet policy.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Fitchburg Housing Authority Board of Commissioners approve the revised pet policy to be effective immediately.

RESOLVED, Motion made by David Rousseau to amend the pet policy to make an exception to pets in the common areas at Wallace Towers,

SECONDED, Linda Byrne seconded the motion, and the motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

FURTHER
RESOLVED, Motion made by David Rousseau to approve the adoption of the original revised pet policy as amended above effective immediately.

SECONDED, Linda Byrne seconded the motion, and the motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

The E.D. noted that the following resolution on Procurement was set to the current DHCD standards under Chapters 30B and 149.

RESOLUTION TO UPDATE THE PROCUREMENT POLICY

Resolution 2015-07-06

Whereas: The Fitchburg Housing Authority has the need to update the existing procurement policy.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,

That the Fitchburg Housing Authority Board of Commissioners approve the revised procurement policy to be effective immediately (*see attached proposed changes*).

RESOLVED, Motion made by Linda Byrne to approve the revised procurement policy effective immediately.

SECONDED, David Rousseau seconded the motion, and the motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A SMOKE-FREE POLICY AT THE FITCHBURG HOUSING AUTHORITY ELDERLY DEVELOPMENTS

Resolution 2015-07-07

Whereas: The health and safety of our residents and staff are negatively impacted by second-hand smoke, and

Whereas: The attached smoke-free lease addendum has been determined to be the most expedient method of implementing a smoke-free policy,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

That the Fitchburg Housing Authority Board of Commissioners adopt a smoke-free policy for the Fitchburg Housing Authority elderly developments including the adoption of the attached smoke-free lease addendum and further direct the staff to implement said policy at their earliest convenience.

Resolved, Motion made by David Rousseau to adopt a smoke-free policy at the elderly developments.

Seconded, Linda Byrne seconded the Motion, and the Motion was passed by a unanimous vote.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 a.m. was made by Paul Fontaine. Linda Byrne seconded; all were in favor.

