

Minutes

A **regular meeting** of the Bridgewater Housing Authority (BHA) was held on Monday, October 5, 2009 in the Community Room, 10 Heritage Circle at 7:00 p.m.

Upon **roll call**, those present and absent were as follows.

Present:

Bob Vazza
Matthew Striggles
Linda Lundin
Matthew Rushton
Kevin Bligh

Absent:

None

Visitors:

Mildred Talbot – 25 Hemlock
Marilyn Fournier – 39 Hemlock
Brenda Gentili – 22 Hemlock
Rose Bean – 111 Heritage
Willie Williams – 102 Heritage
Annette LaChance – 201A Heritage
John Desmond – 211 Heritage

The **minutes of the regular meeting** held on Monday, September 21, 2009 were presented. Ms. Lundin advised that the word “he” should be changed to the word “they” on page 4 in the first paragraph under “Any Other Business”. Mr. Rushton made a motion to accept the minutes with the one correction and seconded by Mr. Bligh. **Voted 5-0.**

Mr. Vazza discussed the independent and state **auditing process** to the new members.

The **Accountant’s Report** was presented. There was a discussion concerning the benefits amount in the 689 program. There was a discussion concerning the money allocated for low flow toilets and the money. There was a discussion concerning money from a grant for the replacement of regular toilets with the low flow toilets. The BHA did not receive any money but an application was submitted. The BHA will hopefully be included in the next round of grant money.

Mr. Vazza had a discussion concerning the **GASB45 Actuarial Report**. He wanted to know if the BHA should be concerned with the \$960,000 figure of the unfunded future benefits. Rich Conlon, the Accountant for the BHA, has not expressed concern over this report. The Commissioners were informed that Mr. Conlon will be here a week from this coming Friday. Any Commissioner could come to ask him questions. It is believed that there will be a line item on future budgets for this figure. It is unknown if this figure is the average amount for a housing authority this size or if it is high. Although the BHA is paying for 5 present employees, it is paying for an additional 4 retired employees. Mr.

(pg. 2 Minutes of 10/05/09 meeting)

Bligh wanted to know if there were any negotiations concerning other health plans and the amount that the employee contributes as well as how other housing authorities are handling this problem. Mr. Vazza requested that this be placed on the agenda for the next meeting after the Commissioners have had time to read the report.

The Commissioners were informed of the **present vacancies:**

101C Heritage – This is a Congregate unit. The unit became vacant on 07/01/09. There is an applicant under consideration.

17 Hemlock – This unit became vacant on 09/01/09. It was offered to an applicant for a 09/15/09 tenancy but was turned down. The next applicant accepted it for a 10/15/09 tenancy but soon afterwards turned it down. It has been offered to and accepted by a third applicant for a 10/15/09 occupancy.

215 Summer Street, 2nd floor – This unit became vacant on 10/01/09. It has been offered to and accepted by a local applicant for a 11/01/09 occupancy.

The Commissioners were informed of the **upcoming vacancies:**

None confirmed.

The Commissioners were informed of the **recent occupancies:**

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Vazza updated the Commissioners on the **Bridgewater Housing Partnership.**

Mr. Vazza updated the Commissioners on the **Community Preservation Committee.**

Mr. Vazza reported that he had responded to Jeff Ritter for the job description of the **CPA Planner** to include something specific about starting a housing trust.

Mr. Vazza asked about the **personnel policy.** Mr. Rushton reported that he was waiting for all information that could concern the personnel policy. The Executive Director said that as far as he knew Mr. Rushton now had all of the information. Mr. Vazza asked if they could leave this meeting tonight being assured that Mr. Rushton and Mr. Bligh, who has presented an anti-harassment policy, have all of the necessary information. The indication was yes. Mr. Vazza said he had concerns regarding the employee grievance procedure that is being considered. He said that he ran into Ron Adams, the Town Clerk, who recommended that the Executive Director not be the hearing officer for

(pg. 3 Minutes of 10/05/09 meeting)

employee grievances. Mr. Rushton asked if there was someone at DHCD who could be the investigative person/hearing officer. The Executive Director said he would investigate the matter.

Mr. Bligh informed the Commissioners of his investigation concerning a professional **website** for the BHA. He asked four companies to submit bids. Two companies responded. The low bid, submitted by Your Design Studio, has a set up fee of \$873.30. The other bid was \$1435.00. After much discussion Mr. Rushton made a motion to approve the low bid of \$873.30 and seconded by Ms. Lundin. Further discussion included the domain name that BHA should use. It was decided that www.bridgewaterhousingauthority.org would be the most appropriate. **Voted 5-0.**

Next on the agenda is a discussion on the **PILOT program.** The Executive Director reported that of the 20 or so housing authorities for whom our accountant does business, none pay anything on the 667 developments. After a lengthy discussion Mr. Rushton made a motion that the BHA is in agreement that it should not pay anything on the 667 program, we should continue to pay on the 705 PILOT program and should now include the 689 program. This was seconded by Mr. Bligh. **Voted 5-0.**

The Executive Director informed the Commissioners on the age of the **laundry equipment.** At Heritage Circle there is a washer that is 17 years old, one that is 3 years old and one that is 2 years old. There is a 17 year old dryer and a 6 year old dryer. At Hemlock Drive there is a washing machine of unknown age, one that is 11 years old, one that is 2.5 years old and one that is 7 years old. There is a 7 year old dryer, a 5 year old dryer and two that are 3 years old. Mr. Vazza said that the reason for this information was to find out if there are more efficient machines available or ones that will dry better. The Executive Director said that he has only received one complaint since the last meeting which was a hand written note given to one of the administrative staff. Ms. Lundin asked if the vents were cleaned. The Executive Director said that all dryer vents have been recently cleaned. The Executive Director reported that all dryer vents will be cleaned around the first of every month. Mr. Rushton said that from this information he sees that the BHA does not routinely turn over the equipment. He questions that whether a machine is working properly or not, there have been advances to make the equipment more energy efficient. He believes any equipment beyond 10 years old should be replaced. Mr. Rushton added that he had just purchased a front loading high efficiency washer and dryer and they are much more efficient. Mr. Rushton added that with the amount of laundry done in this building that the cost would be returned in a year's time. He also said that it is the consensus of the residents that the dryers do not dry properly. The Executive Director said he has received only one complaint. Ms. Lundin said that none of the new machines would last 17 years because they aren't made as well. She added that the initial cost is very intensive so we should keep those 17 year old machines until they no longer work properly. Mr. Vazza asked if everyone on the board was comfortable with replacing the 17 year old washer and dryer at Heritage Circle as we have an \$1800 line item to do so. The consensus was yes although there was no vote.

(pg. 4 Minutes of 10/05/09 meeting)

Mr. Bligh reported that in checking with National Grid there have not been any problems with the **electricity** decreasing between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. He also reported that we could have a free energy audit. Mr. Bligh also recommended that when our contract with Direct Energy is up in October of 2011 we should consider Easy Energy as they presently have competitive rates and you don't have to lock in a price for a long duration of time. The Commissioners instructed the Executive Director to look into the energy conservation program that Mr. Bligh recommended.

Mr. Vazza reported that at the last meeting the board wanted to enter into some sort of agreement with the town concerning the **PILOT program**. The Executive Director was instructed to ask DHCD if they have a boiler plate agreement between the housing authority and the city/town.

The Executive Director reported that he contacted the **police department** for the purpose of reporting all incidences that occur on housing authority property as requested at the previous meeting. Mr. Rushton reminded the board that when the police department advises the BHA of a problem a notice should be posted in the laundry rooms.

Mr. Vazza reported that he was surprised that the **Executive Director's 6 month evaluation** was not on the agenda. He expected to see it on the agenda.

Mr. Bligh reported that he did some research on **tenant's organizations**. He had an informational packet and samples of bylaws that he would happy to share with the tenants. He also reported that he contacted the head of a tenant's organization at the Weymouth Housing Authority who would welcome anyone to come and ask questions of him.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Executive Director informed the Commissioners that the **inspections** for Hemlock Drive would be starting tomorrow. In addition to the inspections, residents will be informed of the lead based paint law. Each tenant will be asked to sign that they are aware of the law. If they don't want to sign there has to be a reason why. After the Executive Director has all of the information, he must enter it all into the computer by 10/16/09 for DHCD to review.

The Executive Director informed the Commissioners that our accountant, **Rich Conlon**, will be here to revise this year's budget and to work on next year's budget on Friday, 10/16/09. He also informed the Commissioners that from 10/01/09 to the end of the fiscal year our budget will be cut 1.7%. For fiscal year 2010 it will be cut an additional 4.7%.

(pg. 5 Minutes of 10/05/09 meeting)

ANY OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Bligh had some remarks concerning the \$488,000 dividend for **MassNAHRO** worker's compensation insurance. He wanted to know if we are part of that insurance company. The Executive Director said yes. Mr. Bligh wanted to know if we knew how much money we may be getting back The Executive Director said he didn't know.

At this time Mr. Vazza opened the floor to those in the audience. Ms. Talbot wanted to know if **Mr. Conlon** was an accountant. The Executive Director said that he is a Certified Public Accountant with a specialty in housing authorities.

ADJOURNMENT:

With **no other business** to conduct, a motion was made by Mr. Bligh to adjourn and seconded by Mr. Rushton. **Voted 5-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian J. Tatro – Executive Director
Secretary, Ex-Officio