

RUTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY
Board of Commissioners
Annual/Regular Meeting of June 11, 2018

Vice-Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM on Monday, June 11, 2018 in the Hickory Street Community Center, 15 Juneberry Lane, Rutland, VT.

ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:

Let the record show the following:

Board of Commissioners Present:

Vice-Chairman Karl Anderson, Commissioner Tina Johnson, and Commissioner James Richards.

Rutland Housing Authority Staff Present:

Kevin Loso, Executive Director; Staci Buysse, Finance Manager; Becky Ladabouche, Section 8 Program Manager; Sheri McCloskey, Property Manager; and Barbara Richardson, Administrative Assistant.

BOARD EDUCATION

Letter, Dominique Bloom, General Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, May 18, 2018, re: Proposed Recession of Prior Year Budget Authority (pages 1.3 – 1.4) – The President made a proposal to retroactively defund some programs, including 2015-2017 unobligated balances in the Public Housing Capital Fund. The proposal hasn't found support in Congress, but PHAs are cautioned. HUD has already posted the FY 2018 Capital Fund grant to the online Electronic Line of Credit Control System (LOCCS) and grant monies are available for drawdown once we complete the Public Hearing process.

Procurement Practices at Public Housing Agencies (pages 1.5 – 1.16) – This HUD publication provides a good reminder of the procurement process and requirements and is a helpful reference for Commissioners. RHA updated our procurement policy within the last few years, and we're scheduled to review it on a 2- to 3-year cycle. Our policy is so detailed that procedure is spelled out. As the Board knows, operational and capital improvements contracts are brought before the board for approval via resolution - most recently, the bathroom renovations at Templewood Court. We are required to publish Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for projects and contracts over \$150K, but sometimes publish them for projects that cost less than this. Mr. Loso noted that during his tenure RHA has chosen the lowest bidder without exception for construction projects. We also have the option to delete or add subcomponents to contracts to achieve financial goals. The process provides a framework within which we can judge if an expenditure is properly justified. However, in emergencies, the policy allows us to pursue an expedited process, as when one of the boilers at Sheldon Towers failed this past winter.

TENANT CONCERNS

Commissioner Johnson reported that many Templewood Court tenants let her know they were quite pleased with the work done on their bathrooms. They were appreciative of the bottled water and the availability of the porta-potty and early morning bathroom access. Mr. Loso reported to the Board that the plumber subcontracted by Wright Construction has been really wonderful to work with – the change orders received have actually returned money to the project. After last month's Resident Advisory Board meeting where we heard tenant concerns, Ms. McCloskey, Ms. Keefe and other staff looked at options to lessen the impact on tenants and are communicating with them more regularly. All the plumbing should be done this week, which is at least a week ahead of schedule. The tradesmen are on schedule.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (pages 1.17 – 1.26)

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Richards to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 14, 2018. Upon a roll call, the ayes, including that of Vice-Chairman Anderson, were unanimous to accept as submitted. Said motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA: (pages 1.27 - 1.33):

Vice-Chairman Anderson asked if there were any questions regarding the items in the Consent Agenda for the month of May 2018. There being none, a motion was made by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Richards to approve the Consent Agenda items, including:

Manifests: Section 8 Checks #2331 through #2335 and Direct Deposit #61394 through #61496
Manifests Public Housing #14812 through #14894
Credit Card Report 3/22/2018 – 4/19/2018
Manifests: Payroll: 5/09/2018 and 5/23/2018

Upon a roll call, the ayes, including that of Vice-Chairman Anderson, were unanimous to accept as submitted. Said motion carried.

MEDIA

VermontBiz Magazine, Wednesday May 23, 2018: “Vermont gets \$2.5 million in public housing grants” (pages 1.34 – 1.35) – Based on the Trump Administration’s recommendation to eliminate the Public Housing Capital Fund, PHAs have been fully prepared for a reduction in 2018. However, thanks to a trade-off in Congress, some domestic programs were sustained or increased in the tax cut discussion. The \$434K RHA received is the most that Mr. Loso has seen in the 18 years he has worked here. In part because of running under budget on the bathroom project and this increase in Capital Fund Program funds we're going to move forward on other

needed projects, including converting two additional efficiency apartments at Templewood Court to 1-bedroom units, and the unit upgrades at Sheldon Towers. PHAs have really benefited from this year's budget reconciliation.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **Hickory Street 3 Update** – Construction is complete except for some punch list items. One tenant has already moved in. With some of the funds left over we will be installing an electric door on the 18-plex for additional accessibility, enhanced landscaping and some cleanup on the fence line. Even with those additions we still anticipate a bit over \$100K left in the budget! RHA and Housing Vermont are preparing to talk to the funders about how to use that money. We may pursue development of 2 single-family homes to finish out the street. The contractors have improved those two house lots in anticipation of that option. Commissioner Johnson asked for the status of the rest of Hickory Street. Mr. Loso happily reported that the atmosphere is not like it was at Forest Park, where there were persistent problems in 1970s and '80s. Over the last 20 years things improved. The mixed-income structure has allowed us to achieve a good tenant mix and this has had a positive impact on mutual accountability, mentoring, etc. It's inevitable that we'll run into trouble with some tenants, but our lease enforcement is getting more consistent, too.

We can now turn Hickory Street ownership back to the City of Rutland. They had relinquished ownership of Forest Park Drive upon the development of Hickory Street. The Department of Public Works inspector expressed some concern about the condition of the first section, which is seven years old. We anticipate some response from the Board of Highway Commissioners next month.

We will hold off on a grand opening until the lawn grows in, and also so we can coordinate with Senator Leahy's office, because he has been so supportive of the development of Hickory Street, including a legislative earmark for Phase 1.

- **Hickory Street Phase 1 Flooring** – The work is nearly complete. Removal of the old flooring was more difficult than anticipated. Mr. Loso invited the Board to walk over to view the work. This was paid for by Naylor & Breen's insurance company to get the flooring corrected, and they contracted with Abatiello (also the subcontractor for TWCT bathrooms).
- **Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Training** (pages 1.36 – 1.39) – This is the agenda of the HUD-sponsored Keys to Successful RAD Conversion training Mr. Loso attended last month. It provided a great deal of helpful information about the process, and we will continue with a feasibility analysis. Colleagues from other PHAs and our attorney Steve Holmquist have all strongly recommended this option. If it makes sense financially and in terms of facilities, we should move ahead with it. It's been somewhat simplified from the previous process because our properties don't require much in the way of modernization, keeping it relatively streamlined, - no tax credits or demolition/disposition involved. Mr. Loso will keep the Board posted on progress.
- **9 Tremont Street Garage** – Three contractors have provided estimates for the demolition, and Giancola Construction had the lowest bid. A testing company (Claypoint

Associates) has taken samples to check for asbestos on shingles and other materials. We will hold off on this project until after the July REAC inspection.

- **Mainstream Section 8 Vouchers** – Ms. Ladabouche generated data for our grant request for 25 Section 8 Vouchers that are specifically earmarked for young-disabled applicants. We have to demonstrate that there are strong support services in the community, so we will be working with the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL), the Homeless Prevention Center, the Community Health Team, Rutland Mental Health Services, and meeting with Community Health Centers of the Rutland Region (CHCRR) regarding their case management program. We will submit the grant this week. In Hickory Street Phase 3 we have 4 ADA-compliant units and several are adaptable in that just modest changes are needed to make them handicap accessible.
- **Executive Director Job Description** (pages 1.40 – 1.44) – This was last updated in 2005. The Executive Committee has been involved in the process.

Proposed Resolution 2018-11 to approve revisions to the Rutland Housing Authority Executive Director Job Description effective June 11, 2018

Vice-Chairman Anderson asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Commissioner Johnson moved to approve, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. Upon a roll call, the ayes, including that of Vice-Chairman Anderson, were unanimous to approve the resolution.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Finance/Administration Report (Pages 2.2 – 2.4)

Consolidated Budget Comparison and Variance Report for April 2018

Revenues and Expenses – Ms. Buysse explained that there is no Variance Report for this month. Due to year-end adjustments done in March and reversed in April, the budget-to-actual date would be uninformative.

The Ending General Fund balance on April 30, 2018 was \$1,188,266.98.

Cash Flow – The only remarkable item to report was the quarterly SASH grant payment of \$86,500.

The audit is scheduled for July 19 & 20.

Staff First Aid & CPR/AED Training – In May, 13 staff members received training and 2-year certification in basic first aid, CPR and AED (defibrillator) use. Ms. Buysse was able to secure a non-profit discount on AED units and purchased one for each housing site. We have posted signs at each site indicating that AEDs are available, though they will be in staff offices, not in public spaces, and units will be inspected monthly.

Property Management (page 2.6)

Ms. McCloskey reviewed her report.

Public Housing Update: REAC inspections have been scheduled for all three sites July 30 – 31. At Templewood Court, there are no vacancies. We continue working on the eviction due to violation of the no-smoking policy. At Sheldon Towers, there is currently one vacancy.

Sheldon Towers Tree Removal – This week we will mail certified letters notifying neighbors with properties abutting Sheldon Towers that we are going to be removing fragile trees, and letting them know that they will be responsible for any future damage caused by their trees.

Hickory Street Update: We have two tenants leased up with four more signing this week. We expect to have nine leases signed by the end of June.

Public Housing Management (PHM) Certification: Ms. McCloskey received her certificate for this 32-hour training.

Contracting Updates:

From the Ground Up has signed a 3-year contract for lawn care.

Templewood Court Bathroom Project – There were a few minor problems with flooring installation – the method used for installation of the floor covering, combined with the state of the subflooring, caused discoloration, and flooring in affected units will be redone. Commissioner Richards recommends that RHA look into using a different method used by Rugs and Rems that allows for replacement of damaged sections without the need to replace all the floor covering.

We need to replace two catch basins at Templewood that are collapsing due to age. We expect a final contracting bid today.

We will be doing the inspection of Hickory Street Phase 1 common area flooring replacements today.

Mr. Loso acknowledged and praised Assistant Property Manager Julie Sanderson, who has taken the lead on occupancy for Hickory Street Phase 3. She is also working to lease up applicants who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in the PBV units, but it's been a challenge. We're coordinating with the Homeless Prevention Center (HPC) to identify candidates, but the applicants aren't complying or just drop out of sight. This is very frustrating for HPC, as they invest a lot of energy and time in the process. Due to our deadline we have had to lease the PBVs to others who qualify but are not homeless at the time of admission.

Hickory Street VHFA Audit: Mr. Loso also reported that RHA received the audit report indicating a few issues with Phase 1 & 2 recertifications that were quickly resolved. We will complete a full file review to make sure current residents' files are compliant because IRS Tax Credit compliance is very important. Housing Vermont has agreed to help us with the file review. All of the Phase 3 files are flawless. The process can be extremely complicated and applicant eligibility is a challenge. However, Ms. McCloskey says she sees no problem getting all units leased up by due date of July 31.

Section 8 Program (page 2.5)

Ms. Ladabouche reviewed her report. Not much changed since the April report, and everything is running smoothly. We are working to fill the Project-Based Vouchers (PBV) at Hickory Street Phase 3, and will have more to report on that in July.

Mr. Loso commended Ms. Ladabouche for her part in keeping the program going so smoothly, emphasizing that Section 8 budget management is balancing act, and made even more challenging because the 8 PBVs are coming from our current voucher inventory.

Resident Services Report (pages 2.7 – 2.25)

Ms. Keefe was coordinating Rutland High School student volunteers working on landscape cleanup and other projects at Templewood Court; she will report on the SASH Conference that was very well attended, next month.

Mr. Loso informed the Board that as of August 2018 RHA will distribute a newsletter of general RHA news from all departments to supplement the SASH Flash newsletter that will go to all residents.

POLICY REVIEW (pages 3.2 – 3.5)

RHA Drug-Free Workplace Policy – Ms. Buysse attended a Human Resources workshop where it was recommended that organizations clarify their policies in light of the State legalizing recreational use and possession of small amounts of marijuana as of July 1.

Proposed Resolution 2018-12 to approve revisions to the Rutland Housing Authority Drug Free Workplace Policy effective June 11, 2018

Vice-Chairman Anderson requested a motion to approve the above resolution. Commissioner Johnson made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Richards. The ayes, including that of Vice-Chairman Anderson, were unanimous to approve.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: (pages 3.6 – 3.15)

The following informational items were sent out prior to the meeting:

- A. Aged Delinquency Reports 06/2018
- B. Collections Report 05/2018
- C. Lease Violations/Evictions 05/2018
- D. Housing Occupancy Charts 05/2018

There were no questions about the Informational Items.

NEW/OLD BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Richards, the Board entered Executive Session at 8:50 a.m. to discuss contractual or human resource issues the premature disclosure of which could put the RHA at a significant disadvantage.

On a motion by Commissioner Richards, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board came out of the Executive Session at 9:10 a.m.

ACTION

Resolution #2018-13 to approve the Contract of Employment between the Rutland Housing Authority and Kevin L. Loso, SPHM, dated April 1, 2018 and to authorize the Chairman of the Board to execute same.

Vice-Chairman Anderson requested a motion to approve the above resolution. Commissioner Richards made the motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The ayes, including that of Vice-Chairman Anderson, were unanimous to approve.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

There being no additional business to bring before the Board the meeting adjourned at 9:11 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Richards. Upon a roll call, the ayes, including that of Vice-Chairman Anderson, were unanimous to approve, and the meeting was adjourned.

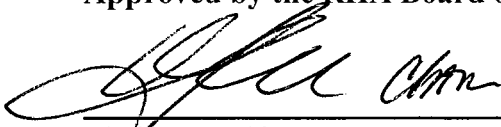
Date of next BOC meeting: Monday, August 13, 2018 @ the Rutland Housing Authority Board Room, 5 Tremont Street, Rutland, VT at 8 a.m. This meeting will include a hearing on the 208 Capital Fund Program budgets.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin L. Loso
Executive Director/Secretary

Approved by the RHA Board of Commissioners



8/13/18

Chairman's Signature

Date

Prepared by Barbara Richardson, Executive Administrative Assistant