

RUTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY
Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
MINUTES
December 10, 2018

Vice-Chairman Karl Anderson called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM on Monday, December 10, 2018 in the Rutland Housing Authority Board Room at 5 Tremont Street, Rutland, VT.

ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:

Let the record show the following:

Board of Commissioners Present:

Vice-Chairman Karl Anderson, Commissioner Andrew Carlson, and Commissioner Jim Richards.

Rutland Housing Authority Staff Present:

Kevin Loso, Executive Director; Staci Buysse, Director of Finance & Human Resources; Becky Ladabouche, Section 8 Program Manager; Sheri McCloskey, Property Manager; Carol Keefe, Resident Services Program Manager & SASH Supervisor; Corey Webster, Maintenance Worker, and Barbara Richardson, Administrative Assistant.

TENANT CONCERNS

None.

BOARD EDUCATION (pages 1.3 – 1.8)

RAD Information Sheets – This month's information sheet, covering the difference between Project-Based Vouchers and Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA), is the final in the series of 10 provided by HUD for tenant and community education.

STAFF RECOGNITION

Each year we recognize the work of employees who have achieved milestones in their employment.

Corey Webster has been with RHA for 10 years. He started with a summer student internship and has been a full-time maintenance worker since 2008.

Carol Keefe has also been with RHA for 10 years. Her department has grown from a single person to one that now includes 4 SASH Coordinators and a part-time service coordinator.

Becky Ladabouche has been with the RHA for 5 years. In 2016 she was promoted to the position of Section 8 Program Manager.

These are valued employees, and we thank them for their service.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (pages 1.6 – 1.13)

A motion was made by Commissioner Carlson and seconded by Commissioner Richards to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 12, 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 1.17 - 1.58):

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

**Manifests: Section 8 Checks #2361 through #2364 and Direct Deposit #62019 through #62123 (#62067 returned, voided)
Manifests Public Housing #15301 through #15392
Credit Card Report 10/18/2018 – 11/20/2018
Manifests: Payroll: 11/07/2018 and 11/21/2018**

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- **Hickory Street Update**
 - Development Surplus – There is a surplus of \$175K remaining in the six-million-dollar project budget. This is one of the few times that an affordable housing development was completed ahead of schedule and under budget. We are currently negotiating with funders to determine how the balance should be distributed. One of the options being discussed is the addition of a fence behind the duplexes on Hickory Street. Tenants have expressed safety as well as aesthetic concerns now that Green Mountain Railroad has reactivated what was once a dormant track. We are collecting estimates and will report back to the board with a plan.
 - Forest Park Drive Discontinuance/Transfer – We have finalized the negotiations with the city to take ownership of Hickory Street. We're working through the necessary documentation. The city will share responsibility for the retention pond/storm water control for the portion generated by the road and public right-of-way. It's not a large quantity, but the agreement provides long term protection

for both parties. The actual transfer of property is in process. The city will maintain two hydrants on Juneberry Lane for which the Limited Partnerships will pay a modest annual maintenance fee.

- Single-Family Home Update – We’ve explored development options with a few entities: Habitat for Humanity, the Stafford Technical Center, and NeighborWorks of Southwestern Vermont. After reviewing the caveats from HUD, it’s become clear that the best option may be partnering with NeighborWorks to build 2-3 single family homes. In addition, working with them gives us access to some state funding. We hope they’ll be willing to partner with the Tech Center so the students can receive training and practice alongside construction professionals.
- Community Center Lease – The Rutland County Parent-Child Center’s space suffered major water damage due to a broken pipe. They had to relocate while they make the repairs and negotiate with their insurance company. Housing Vermont and RHA stepped up and streamlined the opening of the former Boys & Girls Club space so that they could resume operations as quickly as possible. Because Head Start wishes to utilize the space in the future they have signed the lease and will in turn sub-let the space to RCPCC for between three to six months. Head Start hopes to expand their programming into that space in July of 2019 pending federal and state funding. This use is consistent with the intended mission-driven purposes for the space. Unfortunately, we won’t be able to use the space for community events such as Board meetings, but there will be other opportunities for the Board to visit the site.
- **2019 ROSS Application** – We are still awaiting a response to our request for an extension of 2012 Resident Opportunities & Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) program fund utilization. Based on current projections there will be a balance of more than \$30K in the grant when it expires in March 2019. The extension will allow us to continue to fund the program for between 3 to 6 months. We are still awaiting word on our 2018 application for continued funding for 2019-2022.
- **Templewood Court Unit Conversions** – Two first-floor 1-bedroom units have opened up to allow the tenants in the efficiency units to transfer while work is completed.
- **RAD Update**
 - CHAP Issuance (pages 1.23 – 1.26) – This is HUD’s initial commitment to our conversion, and now we can move forward knowing that the Project Based Section 8 subsidy is available. HUD is very motivated to convert as much Public Housing as possible to this model. We will keep the Board apprised of progress as the process continues.
 - Capital Needs Assessment – This is a requirement of the RAD application process, and is simply good management practice. Since the initial RAD contract is for 15 years with an option for 15 more, the CNA provides a projection of capital needs over a 20 year period. There was just one main requirement revealed by the CNA: handicapped accessible units need to be brought up to standard, and we are in the process of doing so.
- **Vermont Statewide Housing Conference Report** – Sarah Carpenter, the director of Vermont Housing Finance Agency, is retiring, and her successor is Maura Collins. Sarah

has been a great supporter of our work during her tenure. The conference included several housing and service-related topics including recovery housing, funding challenges and best practices for design.

The biggest issue in Chittenden County, and spreading throughout the state, is the lack of workforce housing – it's a serious limitation to attracting and growing a skilled workforce.

- **Homeless Prevention Center Changes** – HPC Director Deb Hall has retired, and she has been succeeded by Angus Cheney, previous AHS Director of Housing under the Shumlin administration. Deb provided extraordinary leadership and energy, and has left HPC in really good hands. We look forward to future opportunities for partnership.
- **Federal Pacific Electrical Boxes at Sheldon Towers** (page 1.27 – 1.28) – This letter describes our response to the recommendations made by the HAI Group Insurance inspector regarding replacement of defective electrical panels. The replacement work at Sheldon Towers is scheduled.
- **Significant Amendment to Annual & 5-Year Plan** (see folder) – Since the proposed Disposition and Retention of the undeveloped Hickory Street parcel represents a significant amendment to our Annual & 5-Year Plan, we are required to invite comments through Resident Advisory Board meetings, and via a Public Hearing scheduled during our February Board meeting. The document also speaks to who we can partner with on this project (see 6b of the PIH notice re: the development of rental homeownership units affordable to families at 80% or less of area median income, with rents no greater than 30% of 80% AMI). This would be difficult to achieve if we work with the Stafford Technical Center exclusively; it would be less difficult with Habitat for Humanity, and fairly easy with NeighborWorks. The HUD Demolition and Disposition process will be necessary, though a bit more streamlined than in the past. The acreage will be removed from Declaration of Trust and ownership will be transferred to RHA. If we use the property for affordable housing we don't have to pay HUD for the property.
- **RAB meetings** – In addition to the Significant Amendment, these meetings will be used to review HUD's annual updates to our Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy and Section 8 Program Administrative Plan, and the Capital Fund and Annual & 5-Year Plan, as well as updates on our RAD application.

REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Finance/Administration Report (Pages 2.3 – 2.14)

Consolidated Budget Comparison and Variance Report for October 2018:

Revenues and Expenses – Ms. Buysse reviewed the report. Revenue from rents is \$5K over budget because there are no vacancies in our Public Housing properties. Other Revenue is about \$123K over budget due to many items, mostly the Operating Subsidy that was larger than budgeted. Section 8 is about \$18K

over budget due to additional funding in June, but November's funding was lower and the overage is beginning to level off. On the expense side, Payroll & Benefits combined are running under by \$4,889. Utilities are under budget by about \$25K but propane and fuel deliveries are now more frequent and this number will steadily decrease through the winter months. Admin Expenses are \$900 under budget. Legal expenses are over budget by about \$2,700 due to an ongoing eviction at Templewood Court. Maintenance expenses are slightly under budget. General Maintenance expenses are slightly under, so they're tracking well to the budget. Rubbish Removal is slightly over budget but will balance out with year-end accrual. Extraordinary Maintenance was over due to the Templewood Court catch basin work and tree removal at Sheldon Towers. The bottom line currently shows a surplus of \$160,770 (fee accountant's calculation of \$185,990, minus less the PILOT payment of \$25,220), and the General Fund balance is \$1,290,557.16.

Cash Flow – Cash flow is consistent. SASH funding of \$90,615 was received and billing sent for the Parker House/Linden Terrace and Maple Village panels. The twice-annual HASS payment of \$17,318 was received as well.

RHA Newsletter – We hope tenants enjoy reading it as much as we enjoy creating it. Barbara Richardson has done a great job.

VT Municipal Employee Retirement System Rate Increases (page 2.9) – The State sets the rates for this pension benefit, and this 3-year schedule shows the stepped increases for both employers and employees. RHA is in Group B of the schedule, with annual increases effective on July 1. The Employer share increases to 5.750% for 2019, 6.00% for 2020 and 6.25% for 2021.

HAI Group Dividend Refund (page 2.10) – Our liability insurance yields a dividend when HAI Group has a successful year. This refund helps offset premium expenses.

Property Management (page 2.15 – 2.17)

Site News - Ms. McCloskey reported that Templewood Court rent recertifications will be scheduled for January, and paperwork will be mailed to tenants next week. There is currently one vacancy. At Sheldon Towers, biannual unit inspections are scheduled for the week of December 17th. There are no vacancies. The VHFA Hickory Street file review and inspection yielded no findings. All units passed RHA's Hickory Street biannual unit inspections. There are 3 vacancies that we are working diligently to fill. RHA signed a contract for a Capital Needs Assessment (CNA) for Hickory Street phases 1 and 3.

ACOP Revisions - 2018 revisions were released in July. There are no significant changes – nothing that affects our operations or impacts tenants. Essentially it's updating PIH notice date and number changes. We'll discuss this with tenants at this week's Resident Advisory Board meetings, and the Board will vote on the changes at the public hearing in January.

RAD Capital Needs Assessment - We're working with Dominion Due Diligence Group (DG3) to complete the CNA for Templewood Court and Sheldon Towers to clear up some confusion about ADA-accessible units at Sheldon Towers. They requested photos and wanted clarification of measurements. These items were sent and we hope to wrap it up this week. Five percent of RHA's units at each site are required to be ADA-accessible (Sheldon Towers has 6 vs. the 4 required). We have to balance the inventory – accessible units aren't always marketable, because they aren't ideal for people without disabilities (e.g., lower counters). Ms. McCloskey stated that as residents age and need more accommodations we're able to make small modifications to meet their needs – and access to SASH means that more elders are aging in place and require these unit changes. Also some accommodations are specific (e.g., strobe alarms for hearing impaired tenants). With the 23 upcoming unit renovations at Sheldon Towers, we could add more accessible units if they meet the current requirements of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), however, options in complying with ADA standards are limited due to the buildings concrete construction. How strict HUD will be, and if they may grandfather older buildings, is uncertain. We want to modify under the UFAS standards before HUD makes the change to ADA.

Neighborhood Watch - Mr. Loso and Ms. McCloskey met with Commander Sheldon of the Rutland City Police Department to discuss development of neighborhood watches at each site, starting with Hickory Street. Over the next couple of months we will reach out to the tenants to test interest and consider logistical questions.

No specific incident sparked this; it's simply a way to clarify when residents should contact us vs. the police and vice-versa. Hickory Street residents are generally very respectful of the property and proud of their homes. Our goals are education and community building. We picture programming that involves visits by community leaders that will focus on topics like safety, community services and fire prevention.

Projects Update

Templewood Court Bath Renovations – The floor replacement wasn't completed as scheduled, and three are yet to be finished. We've reached out to the general contractor and hope to report next month that this project has been finished.

Unit Conversions/Upgrades – Once the Templewood Court tenants are transferred to empty units, the efficiency unit conversions will be put out to bid. Our maintenance staff will assist with the transfer, and RHA will pay any other moving expenses. The Sheldon Towers unit upgrades are on hold until we have sufficient vacancies.

Sheldon Towers Electrical Panel Replacement - We have signed a contract with Patch Electric to begin work next week on this project, and it should take just a week to complete. If power interruptions occur they should be few and brief.

Templewood Court Paving Striping & Sealing – We received no response to the second RFP, and will make another attempt in the spring.

Emerald Ash Borer Update – Maintenance has determined that there are no ash trees on RHA properties.

Security Deposit Agreements – The Property Management department has finished a review of accounts with balances due on security deposits and found that 7 tenants have not kept up. We have sent letters instructing them to contact us to sign new agreements.

Section 8 Program (page 2.18 – 2.21)

Utilization Reports - Ms. Ladabouche reported that there were 3 unexpected turnovers in the Housing Choice Voucher program due to tenants passing away, so there are just 215 active vouchers for November and December. In the Mainstream Program, 6 more tenants were housed in November. Five more are still seeking apartments. There aren't a lot of 1-bedroom units in the community and many landlords are unwilling to take the chance on an applicant with a poor rental history. The Homeless Prevention Center often helps in these situations. If extensions are required we can grant them.

2018 Administrative Plan Updates – Nan McKay, the company that we use to track federal changes, released revisions in July. One significant HUD policy change is that a unit must pass the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection before the voucher holder can move in – this is already RHA's practice. In the past HUD allowed tenants to move in before the HQS if the landlord agreed to make necessary changes.

Under the heading of Applications, Waiting List and Tenant Selection, both Project-Based and Mainstream Vouchers were added to our targeted funding. Med-Waiver was the existing targeted funding category.

Commissioner Carlson asked if neighbors of deceased tenants had requested or were made aware of bereavement support? Ms. Ladabouche said that two of the deceased had lived at Regency Manor – she had spoken with neighbors but no counseling was offered. At 6 Juneberry Lane, where community has been developing, there might be an opportunity for some bereavement support. Ms. McCloskey will look into this with support from Commissioner Carlson, as he facilitates a grief group through the VNA, and participants find it helpful.

Resident Services Report (pages 2.22 – 2.49)

Staffing Updates – Ms. Keefe reports that SASH Coordinator Erica Raiche returns to work this week. Mr. Loso recognized Ms. Keefe for filling in while Ms. Raiche has been away for 3 months, and also while another SASH Coordinator has been out on an unplanned leave. The Housing Trust of Rutland County has hired Rebecca Mashak, formerly of SVCOA, as their new SASH Coordinator. All panels are full and openings are quickly filled. We'll be putting more emphasis on inviting referrals from Hickory Street.

SASH In the News (pages 2.23 – 2.26) – U.S. News and World Report ran a great article about the SASH model spreading to additional states.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: (pages 3.2 – 3.14)

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

- A. Aged Delinquency Reports 11/2018
- B. Collections Report 11/2018
- C. Lease Violations/Evictions 11/2018
- D. Housing Occupancy Charts 11/2018
- E. 2019 Board Meetings – the September meeting will be on the 3rd Monday of the month.
- F. 2019 Holidays

There were no questions about the Informational Items.

NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS – Mr. Loso distributed a copy of the Notice of Significant Amendment to the Annual and Five-Year Plan. This notice and subsequent tenant meetings and public hearing are necessary requirements in pursuing a disposition application. This application would de-federalize the remaining .43 acres at Hickory Street, with ownership converting to the RHA, so that we can pursue single-family homeownership opportunities. Additionally, we need to dispose of the property as part of the RAD conversion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

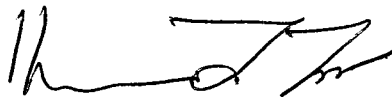
None needed.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

There being no additional business to bring before the Board the meeting adjourned at 9:07 a.m. on a motion made by Commissioner Carlson and seconded by Commissioner Richards. Upon a roll call, the ayes were unanimous to approve, and the meeting was adjourned.

Date of next BOC meeting and public hearing: Monday, January 14th, 2019 @ Templewood Court, 5 Tremont Street, Rutland, VT at 8 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

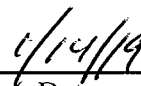


Kevin L. Loso
Executive Director/Secretary

Approved by the RHA Board of Commissioners



Chairman's Signature



Date

Prepared by Barbara Richardson, Executive Administrative Assistant