

**RUTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**May 13, 2019**

Chairman Kevin Markowski called the meeting to order at 8:04 AM on Monday, May 13, 2019 in the RHA Board Room at 5 Tremont Street, Rutland, VT.

**ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:** Let the record show the following:

**Board of Commissioners Present:**

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

**Rutland Housing Authority Staff Present:**

Kevin Loso, Executive Director; Julie Sanderson, Property Manager; Carol Keefe, Resident Services Program Manager & SASH Supervisor; Staci Buysse, Director of Finance & Human Resources; and Barbara Richardson, Administrative Assistant.

**Tenants and Members of the Public Present:**

Ron Hemenway.

**TENANT CONCERNS**

Mr. Hemenway proposed that RHA adopt a policy to forbid the storage of collected returnable bottles in RHA residences. He provided a written proposal (attached) citing past and current incidents, as well as concerns that salvaged bottles may be the source of spiders in a neighboring unit and have the potential to introduce roaches or other vermin. During an earlier discussion, Property Manager Julie Sanderson told Mr. Hemenway that RHA cannot forbid tenant behavior based on what *might* happen in the future. With this proposal Mr. Hemenway hoped to empower RHA to do so. Mr. Loso affirmed Ms. Sanderson's statement and assured Mr. Hemenway that RHA does take housekeeping violations very seriously and that there is currently no danger of an infestation of the sort described in the proposal. The Board and staff thanked Mr. Hemenway for his input, and agreed that, for now, RHA's current policies are adequate for the purpose of maintaining safe and clean living conditions at its properties.

Mr. Hemenway also asked if RHA staff were aware that the Rutland City Fire Department's ladder truck is out of service, and if we have any concerns about upper-story rescues at Sheldon Towers. Mr. Loso thanked Mr. Hemenway for bringing it to our attention, and assured him that rescues by truck are far less likely than an inside rescue. Subsequent to this Board meeting the Fire Chief was contacted to schedule a meeting to review the status of the replacement truck.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** (pages 1.3 – 1.7)

A motion was made by Commissioner Carlson and seconded by Vice-Chairman Anderson to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 8, 2019. There was unanimous approval.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Mayor David Allaire, 04/30/2019 – Board Appointments** (page 1.8) – This letter confirms the current appointments to the Board of Commissioners, including Chairman Markowski’s appointment to his fifth term. We are grateful for everyone’s dedicated service to RHA.

**BOARD EDUCATION**

HUD Sexual Harassment Prevention Training (page 1.9) - The assembled viewed the following short video presentations (additional modules will be viewed at the next Board meeting):

- Hostile Environment Harassment
- Quid Pro Quo Harassment

**CONSENT AGENDA:** (pages 1.3 - 1.11):

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Carlson to approve the Consent Agenda items for May 2019, including:

**Manifests: Section 8 Checks #2384 through #2389 and Direct Deposit #62545 through #62649**  
**Manifests Public Housing #15760 through #15845**  
**Credit Card Report 03/21/2019 – 04/20/2019**  
**Manifests: Payroll: 4/10/2019 and 4/24/2019**

The motion was unanimously approved.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

- **Hickory Street Update**

Forest Park Drive Discontinuance/Transfer (page 1.19) – The City has referred this to Charles Romeo of Ryan, Smith and Carbine. We have supplied him with ALTA maps and a consolidated written legal description of the street.

Single-Family Home Update – The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board has committed funding to Housing Vermont for the construction of 2 single-family homes on the remaining .43-acre parcel at Hickory Street. There’s a funding gap of \$20K, and Housing Vermont asked if RHA could help. Mr. Loso reported that it would be difficult to provide funding for a project in which we don’t have an ownership share.

Report on Phase 1 HVAC – After a long process that involved the help of Efficiency Vermont and an HVAC contractor, the ventilation system is finally balanced and running smoothly.

Phase 3 Capital Needs Assessment – This CNA is scheduled for this week, and will outline what the engineer anticipates for repairs and replacements over the next 20 years. CNAs are required by the funders at 6-year intervals. Because the property is new, no immediate repairs are anticipated.

- **SASH Funding Update** – The House restored the Governor’s cuts through savings from the Choices for Care program. The Senate came up with a different plan that would fully fund SASH for the next 3 years as the program transitions to the One Care budget. The initial response has been positive though there are details to work out. One Care wants to own and market the program, though this is not the vision of Cathedral Square or the DROHs. The budget is headed to the conference committee.

- **Replacement Storage** – Since the removal of the 9 Tremont garage we have been short on storage space. We’ve reviewed options and have settled on a portable shed (not on a foundation) to take its place. We will need to get the approval of Housing Initiatives, Inc., to place the shed on their property.
- **Carbon Monoxide Detectors** – Many PHAs throughout the nation lack CO detectors because there isn’t a state requirement. This has resulted in tragedies at a few PHAs. Vermont does have a mandate that requires us to install CO and smoke detectors. All properties currently have detectors which are replaced every 10 years.
- **Sheldon Towers Project** – There are 15 units that need renovation to bring them up to date and to finish the modernization project. It has been a challenge as we have to take units offline five at a time, and we have had to either wait for move-outs or relocate residents in order to secure the initial five. We will meet with the architect today to finalize the bid packet. Four of the units are occupied by fragile tenants, so Ms. Keefe, Ms. Sanderson and Mr. Loso will come up with a plan for working with these tenants. We may have to proceed with those units in a piecemeal fashion once they are vacated as opposed to including them in the project: though it’s more expensive, we have to put the residents’ welfare first.
- **RAD Update**
  - Disposition/Retention Action: Hickory Street – HUD’s Special Applications Center has the required environmental review document they requested. The next phase will be a formal agreement regarding RHA’s requirements for the property which the Board will need to approve.
  - RAD Financing Plan – The process is moving smoothly. We have sent operating pro forma/financial docs to the RAD Transaction Manager and hope to have them back by Thursday with suggestions/corrections. We are composing amendments to the CHAP letter (HUD’s commitment to RHA for RAD funding): The first is for an increase in rents and the second is to account for the upgrade of 7A and 7B Templewood Court from efficiency to 1-bedroom units. This will result in increased funding. There is also the Housing Replacement Factor (DDTF) HUD funding for the demolition of Forest Park (an allocation made over 5 years to our Capital Fund grants). RHA can take money from the fund to add to the HUD subsidy. We don’t have an immediate need to use this funding, so the increased base amount in our HAP rents will result in more funding from HUD in the future because of the 3% guaranteed annual funding increase to the base.
- **Staffing Update**
  - Property Manager – Ms. Sanderson has accepted this appointment, and Mr. Loso requested that the appointment be ratified.

**Proposed Resolution 2019-12 to approve the appointment of Julie Sanderson to the position of RHA Property Manager effective 05/02/2019**

Commissioner Anderson, made a motion, to approve the resolution which was seconded by Vice-Chairman Anderson. There was unanimous approval.

- SASH Coordinator – Erica Raiche has returned to work at Rutland Mental Health Services. We have three promising candidates to interview and are confident that we will

find a skilled and effective replacement.

- **RAD Finance Accounting Training** – See Finance Report.
- **Sheldon Towers Rooftop Leases** – Mr. Loso has returned a revised contract to Verizon Wireless, which was modified with the help of our legal counsel. T-Mobile is interested in leasing space as well and we are negotiating that contract.
- **Recovery Housing Update** – As an update to last month's introduction to the Governor's initiative around Recovery Residences, Mr. Loso has taken the lead to encourage Project VISION to get it on their agenda. While it is termed a housing initiative, what's most important is guaranteeing wraparound recovery services for the people it would serve.
- **HAI Group Premium Rebate** – Our insurance provider had a very profitable year and they are sharing that profit with members. We will see a healthy refund of our insurance premiums as a result.

## **REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **Finance/Administration Report (pages 2.2-2.11)**

- **Consolidated Budget Comparison and Variance Reports for FYE/March 2019: Revenues and Expenses** – Ms. Buysse reported that the closure of the books with our fee accountants went smoothly. Variances overall came within targets. Fuel expense did come in over budget due to severe cold. For 2019-2020 we may consider locking in a price, though it's a volatile market. Commissioner Richards suggested that we proceed with caution due to this volatility. Our year-to-date bottom line shows a surplus of \$30,900 (\$12,630 under the original budget) and the ending bank balance was at \$1,170,714.

Mr. Loso mentioned that the accountants gave great feedback on how strong our finance function is right now – Ms. Buysse was commended for her work.

- **RAD Finance Training** – Mr. Loso was looking for RAD training opportunities and asked Ms. Buysse to attend the BDO RAD Budgeting, Accounting and Financial Reporting 2-day seminar. Ms. Buysse researched the program and discovered that having RHA host a training has great financial incentives – in fact, we can send 5 RHA staff or Board members to the training and perhaps end up owing nothing for the training, as opposed to a \$650 enrollment fee plus flights/food/lodging. The training firm would market the program and RHA would receive half of the \$650 enrollment fees. Two Vermont PHAs have already committed to attending.

### **Property Management (page 2.12)**

#### **Property Updates**

Templewood Court: Biannual inspections are complete. Two new tenants have moved in, and we've made offers to two others.

Sheldon Towers: Recertifications are complete. One unit is offline in preparation for unit upgrades. Elevator inspection received a conditional pass – we need to have stops replaced.

Hickory Street: The Phase 3 CNA is complete. There are two vacancies, and offers have been made. The fence between the rail siding and the duplexes is complete.

Miscellaneous - Maintenance staff were trained on the workings and maintenance of the Hickory Street Phase 3 pellet boiler. In April property managers met with Burlington Housing Authority staff to learn about their experience with the RAD transition and it was very enlightening and helpful.

Projects – There were no bids for the sealing, patching and striping of the Templewood Court lots and drives. Companies want paving jobs rather than patch-and-seal jobs – we are working hard to find someone to take it on.

#### **Section 8 Program** (pages 2.13 – 2.14)

Mr. Loso reported that 100% of Mainstream vouchers are leased up, utilizing 99% of budget authority. Of the 219 regular Housing Choice Vouchers, 216 are leased up, utilizing 98% of budget authority. Funding represents an obstacle, but with the ebb and flow of lease-ups we will no doubt get those remaining vouchers filled.

#### **Resident Services Report** (pages 2.15 – 2.34)

Ms. Keefe reported that in addition to replacing a SASH coordinator, the Parker House/Linden Terrace Panel is seeking a new wellness nurse. Community Health Team Education Coordinator Sarah Cosgrove gave a training on respiratory health and generated interest in a smoking cessation class to be scheduled for this summer. The spring Healthier Living Workshop is complete. Volunteers from Rutland High School will once again participate in the Templewood Court flower box planting in June.

#### **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:** (pages 3.2 – 3.18)

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

- A. Aged Delinquency Reports 4/2019
- B. Collections Report 4/2019
- C. Lease Violations/Evictions 4/2019
- D. Housing Occupancy Charts 4/2019

#### **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

None.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion by Vice-Chairman Anderson and seconded by Commissioner Richards, the Board entered Executive Session at 9:08 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 Carlson, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the Board came out of Executive Session at 9:23 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:**

There being no other business, Commissioner Carlson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 a.m. Commissioner Richards seconded the motion, and there was unanimous approval.

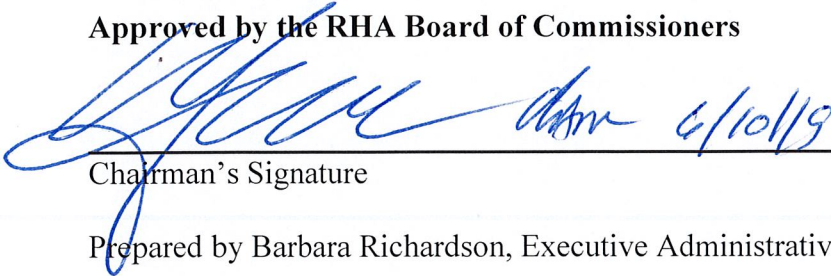
**Date of next BOC Regular meeting: Monday, June 10 @ the Sheldon Towers Community Room, 5 Tremont Street, Rutland, VT at 8 a.m.**

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