

**RUTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**June 10, 2019**

Chairman Kevin Markowski called the meeting to order at 8:11 AM on Monday, June 10, 2019 in the Sheldon Towers Community Room, 14 Sheldon Place, Rutland, VT.

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

**Board of Commissioners Present:**

Chairman Kevin Markowski, Commissioner Tina Johnson, 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; Becky Ladabouche, Section 8 Program Manager; and Barbara Richardson, Administrative Assistant.

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

Ron Hemenway, Pat Warner, and Susan Mattison.

**TENANT CONCERNS**

Commissioner Johnson brought a request from Templewood Court tenants to have their mailboxes moved to the front of the building for ease of access and safety. Ms. Sanderson will seek approval from the Post Office; if approved, maintenance will relocate the boxes.

Ms. Warner was curious why there are empty apartments at Sheldon Towers. Ms. Sanderson explained that the modernization of the remaining 15 units is starting and we need to have a minimum of 5 vacant units at a time to make the job cost effective. The project has been put out to bid and should take approximately 3 months to complete.

Mr. Hemenway read in the paper that a local library received a grant to upgrade their elevator, and he wondered if RHA might apply for such a grant. RHA has a contract with Otis Elevators to inspect and update our elevators on a regular basis. Ms. Mattison requested they look into what is causing the clunking noise when the elevators descend. RHA will bring it to their attention.

Ms. Warner commented that tenants regularly keep the transport carts in their units or leave them on the elevators rather than returning them to the lobby. Mr. Loso suggested that tenants remind one another of the courtesy. If this doesn't work, RHA can address specific tenant issues if a complaint form is submitted to the Property Manager.

Referring to the "Live Bully Free" sign hanging in the Sheldon Towers Community Room, Ms. Mattison asked that it be taken down because the person who placed it there does not espouse those words. Mr. Loso replied that RHA cannot dictate individuals' behavior; if there are conflicts tenants can't work out among themselves, RHA can mediate.

Ms. Mattison also mentioned that there are odor issues on her floor that the air fresheners do not address. Maintenance and Property Management will investigate.

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES (pages 1.3 – 1.8)

A motion was made by Commissioner Carlson and seconded by Commissioner Johnson to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 13, 2019. There was unanimous approval, including the vote of Chairman Markowski.

## CORRESPONDENCE/MEDIA (Pages 1.9 – 1.14)

“Arkansas housing authorities in pot quandary; they weigh tenant’s use in situation where state, federal laws at odds” Ginny Monk, May 26, 2019.

This article covers the realities facing Public Housing Authorities in places where federal and state laws are at odds. RHA’s are federally funded properties, so we are obligated to follow federal law.

“A Note About Marijuana and Renting”, <https://Vtlawhelp.org/print/1716> – On the Vermont Legal Aid website, Ms. Sanderson found this advisory to renters indicating that that the legalization of marijuana use by the State does not necessarily mean a landlord will allow it on their property. A renter must still follow the letter of their lease when it comes to marijuana use. It also emphasizes to federally subsidized renters that such behavior can put their housing/subsidy at risk.

“VHFA LIHTC Compliance Monitoring Report for year ending 12/13/2018 – Hickory Street Housing III Limited Partnership”, 05/30/2019, Andrea Tresco (Page 1.15 – 1.16) – Every two years Vermont Housing Finance Agency reviews Tax Credit properties and tenant files. They found no evidence of any noncompliance issues in this recent review. This is significant because most compliance reviews find at least 1 or 2 issues. In the worst-case scenario the investor runs the risk of losing Tax Credits if the paperwork isn't accurate or compliant. Ms. Sanderson is to be congratulated and recognized for her great work.

## BOARD EDUCATION

HUD Harassment Prevention Training - The assembled viewed the following short video presentations of recommended training:

- Quid Pro Harassment (Responding to Complaints)
- Tenant-on-Tenant Racial Harassment

The final two videos will be presented at the July meeting.

## CONSENT AGENDA: (pages 1.17 - 1.26):

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Carlson to approve the Consent Agenda items for June 2019, including:

**Manifests: Section 8 Checks #2390 through #2393 and Direct Deposit #62651 through #62755**  
**Manifests Public Housing #15846 through #15943**  
**Credit Card Report 04/24/2019 – 05/20/2019**  
**Manifests: Payroll: 5/8/2019 and 4/22/2019**

The motion was unanimously approved, including the vote of Chairman Markowski.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

- Hickory Street Update  
Forest Park Drive Discontinuance/Transfer – Hickory Street survey boundaries have been confirmed by our surveyor. The likely final step before transfer is for our surveyor to restore a few markers that were moved during Phase 3 excavation.

Single-Family Home Update – We await response from HUD’s Special Applications Center re: our request for disposition and retention of the .43-acre parcel. Mr. Loso has been following up on an ongoing basis.

Phase 3 Capital Needs Assessment – The CNA is complete. We await the report outlining anticipated repairs and replacements over the next 20 years.

Phase 3 1-Years Warranty Inspection – Ms. Sanderson will address this.

Phase 2 Capital Needs Assessment – This is in process and we expect the results soon.

- **SASH Funding Update** –The Senate’s plan is to ensure \$975K in funding for the next 3 years without using Choices for Care savings. After that the program will transition to the One Care (Accountable Care Organization) budget. Funding and program administration negotiations with One Care are underway.
- **Sheldon Towers Project** – The mandatory pre-bid meeting for the unit upgrades is scheduled. We need 3 bids in order to move forward. Ms. Sanderson will provide more details.
- **Westat Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Interview** – Mr. Loso and Ms. Keefe responded to this interview request by the RWJF, which is active in a number of areas including housing. They are very interested in the SASH program.
- **Project VISION Recovery Residencies Presentation** – Eileen Peltier from Down Street Housing in Barre will present the study results to Project VISION on June 13 (Board members were invited to attend). We hope it will ignite interest in the topic. RHA won't necessarily take the lead in developing the housing, but serves as a catalyst in starting a community conversation.
- **RAD Update**  
Disposition/Retention Action: Hickory Street – Once we get approval from HUD, the board will need to approve a formal agreement with Housing Vermont regarding RHA’s requirements for the development of the property.  
RAD Financing Plan – We will meet with our RAD point-of-contact to review the pro forma/ financial documents a final time before submission. We are working to guarantee that the Housing Replacement Factor (DDTF) funding HUD provided for the demolition of Forest Park will be added to our Project-Based Section 8 rents. The increased base amount in our HAP rents will in turn result in more funding from HUD in the future because of the 2-3% annual funding increase to the base.
- **Executive Director Performance Appraisal** – Chairman Markowski and Vice-Chairman Anderson are reviewing the draft of the appraisal form provided by Mr. Loso.
- **Staffing Update**  
SASH Coordinator – Stephanie Bertrand will be joining the staff next week. Her enormous experience in mental health and home care, including Choices for Care, will be a great asset.
- **Revised Organizational Chart & Job Descriptions** (pages 1.27 – 1.46) – We took the opportunity to restructure based on staff skills and organizational future needs. What used to be the Executive Administrative Assistant position is now called Administrative Services & Occupancy Specialist, which will split time between supporting the front office and Property Management. A Maintenance Aide position will focus on curb appeal and snow removal, and gives us the flexibility to bring lawn care in-house when our current contract expires. In addition, we have changed the status of the Section 8 Program Manager position to exempt from non-Exempt to give Ms. Ladabouche the flexibility required for what is essentially a one-person department and reflect her management role and responsibilities. The Customer Service Specialist job description has minor changes to absorb some of the former Executive Administrative Assistant duties. We are bringing this before the board because we are not filling the Assistant Property Manager vacancy. The proposed changes will be cost-neutral.

**Proposed Resolution 2019-13 to approve the revised Organizational Flow Chart, Section 8 Program Manager, Customer Service Specialist and Maintenance Aide Job Descriptions and the new Administrative Services and Occupancy Specialist job description effective June 10, 2019**

Commissioner Carlson made a motion to approve the resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. There was unanimous approval, including the vote of Chairman Markowski.

## **REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **Finance/Administration Report (pages 2.3-2.14)**

**Consolidated Budget Comparison and Variance Reports for April 2019** – There is no budget comparison in the first month of the fiscal year.

**Cash Flow** – Ms. Buysse reports that we are using some of the 2017 Capital Funds for the Sheldon Towers unit renovations. The fee accountant advised us to move forfeited security deposits to the operating fund rather than leave them in the security deposit account. The ending bank balance for April was \$1,208,968.29.

### **Property Management (page 2.15)**

We have transferred two Sheldon Towers residents to Templewood Court to prepare units for renovation, and have made offers for two more Templewood Court units. At the pre-bid meeting for the Sheldon Towers renovations contractors viewed units to gather information about what is required.

At Hickory Street, Housing Vermont and Naylor & Breen performed the 1-year warranty inspection for Phase 3. Only minor repairs were required. Every resident responded to Housing Vermont's tenant satisfaction survey and the results were great. The residents have really created community there.

The fence company added more sturdy fasteners on the privacy drape for the fence separating the railroad siding from the north side of the Hickory Street property.

At the Hickory Street property, we've had one transfer, one move-in, and have sent offers for two more units.

Ms. Buysse and Ms. Sanderson trained on a new component of our application and housing management software that we expect will make housing application processing more efficient and accurate.

At the May meeting, Mr. Hemenway mentioned that the Rutland City Fire Department's ladder truck was out of commission. Mr. Loso has attempted to contact the fire chief. He also stated that the fire department is trained to address emergencies inside the building, as our emergency plan directs tenants with limited mobility to the stairwells for evacuation.

### **Section 8 Program (pages 2.17 – 2.19)**

Ms. Ladabouche is seeing a lot of voucher turnovers. Of the 219 regular Housing Choice Vouchers, 217 are leased up and briefings are scheduled for more. Mainstream vouchers are fully leased up. Ms. Ladabouche and Mr. Loso have completed the updated 6-hour Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) training for use of the government income tracking database. Ms. Richardson will also be completing the training.

### **Resident Services Report (pages 2.21 – 2.55)**

Ms. Keefe reported that May was very busy with trainings, conferences, and providing coverage while we sought to fill the SASH Coordinator position. There were valuable takeaways from conferences, including a great session on the ROSS grant reporting process. At the SASH full-day training, SASH Director Molly Dugan shared a study showing significant cost savings to Medicare because SASH participants can delay enrollment in long-term care. Rutland SASH panels are nearly full.

Pharmacist Marty Irons presented the SASH Diabetes Pilot results at the Clinical Quality Symposium. He has been an extraordinary resource for the community and SASH participants. Ms. Keefe proposed that RHA formally recognize him in some way.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:** (pages 3.2 – 3.20)

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

- A. Aged Delinquency Reports 5/2019
- B. Collections Report 5/2019
- C. Lease Violations/Evictions 5/2019
- D. Housing Occupancy Charts 5/2019

A new format for delinquency reports is in development for the July meeting.

**POLICIES:** (Pages 3.21-3.53)

Continuing our ongoing review and update of our policies, the board reviewed and approved the following:

**RHA Procurement Policy** – HUD increased spending thresholds: Micro-Purchases are now set at \$10K or less, except that construction projects have a \$2K threshold. The Small purchase limit is now \$250K, up from \$150K. Though RHA would, no doubt, request bids at a much lower threshold, this increase gives us flexibility when circumstances merit.

**Rutland Housing Authority Resident Self Sufficiency and Section 3 Policy** – This reflects modest changes and cross references with the contract rider. Section 3 is a federally mandated policy: Whenever hiring staff or for contracted projects, PHAs and their contractors are required to hire Public Housing residents or citizens who fall at or under HUD’s income limits (i.e., 80% of Adjusted Median Income). RHA has had a couple of internal hires over the years, but contractors don't usually hire new people for our projects. Contractors have to sign a rider that they will comply with Section 3.

**Proposed Resolution 2019-14 to approve the Rutland Housing Authority Procurement Policy and the Rutland Housing Authority Resident Self Sufficiency and Section 3 Policy effective June 10, 2019**

Commissioner Carlson made a motion to approve the resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Johnson. There was unanimous approval, including the vote of Chairman Markowski.

**NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

**Verizon Tower Contract** – While continuing negotiation of the new contract, we received a letter from Verizon stating that we allegedly owe them over \$43K in overpayments since the original contract was signed. We have a lot of homework to do to demonstrate that the contract has been followed. We have been advised that the most they could recover would be 6 years’ worth of overpayments.

**Appointment of Stephanie Bertrand SASH Coordinator** (Pages 3.54-3.55) – A resolution is required to ratify this appointment.

**Proposed Resolution 2019-15 to ratify the appointment of Stephanie Bertrand to the position of Rutland Housing Authority SASH Coordinator effective June 17, 2019**

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the resolution which was seconded by Commissioner Carlson. There was unanimous approval, including the vote of Chairman Markowski.

**Celebrating Bob Killary** – We'll recognize and celebrate Mr. Killary, a 30-year veteran of our Maintenance staff, at a Board/staff lunch at noon on June 27, followed by a reception with tenants at 1 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** - None.

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:**

There being no other business to bring before the Board, Commissioner Carlson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval, including the vote of Chairman Markowski.

**Date of next BOC Regular meeting: Monday, July 8 @ the Templewood Court Board 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

7/8/19  
Date

Prepared by Barbara Richardson, Executive Administrative Assistant