

**RUTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**July 8, 2019**

Chairman Kevin Markowski called the meeting to order at 8:04 AM on Monday, July 8, 2019 in the Rutland Housing Authority Board Room, 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 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 Services & Occupancy Specialist; Bob Killary, Maintenance; Stephanie Bertrand, SASH Coordinator.

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

None.

**TENANT CONCERNS**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** (pages 1.3 – 1.6)

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 (Vice-Chairman Anderson had not yet arrived).

**INTRODUCTION & RECOGNITION**

Stephanie Bertrand was introduced as the new SASH Coordinator for Templewood Court and Sheldon Towers. Bob Killary was recognized for his 30 years of service to RHA.

**BOARD EDUCATION**

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

- Disability Harassment
- Religious Harassment

This completes the recommended HUD trainings. RHA has policies and investigative procedures in place to cover any of the situations discussed in these trainings.

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

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

**Manifests: Section 8 Checks #2394 through #2397 and Direct Deposit #62756 through #62860**

**Manifests Public Housing #15944 through #16026  
Credit Card Report 05/21/2019 – 06/20/2019  
Manifests: Payroll: 6/5/2019 and 6/19/2019**

The motion was unanimously approved.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

- **Hickory Street Update**

Forest Park Drive Discontinuance/Transfer – The street monuments that had been removed during the Phase 3 site preparation were re-placed according to the recent site survey, and the surveyor is now working on a consolidated map of the all three phases. We hope that the transfer will be complete by the August Board meeting.

Single-Family Home Update – After Mr. Loso participated in a presentation to the Vermont Housing Conservation Board (VHCB), they awarded funding for the project. However, the director of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) favors investing in remodeling existing homes versus new construction. Mr. Loso expressed that the proposed homes will complete the streetscape and inspire continued reinvestment in the Southwest Neighborhood. There is reason for optimism as VHFA's board is often influenced by VHCB's actions. Mr. Loso will continue to follow up.

- **Recovery Residences**– Eileen Peltier from Down Street Housing in Barre presented the report (see last month's Board packet) to about 70 people who gathered for the Project VISION meeting on June 13, and there was a significant level of interest. Rutland County is one of the areas with the greatest need for recovery housing. RHA won't necessarily take the lead in developing the housing, but will serve as a catalyst in starting a community conversation.

- **RAD Update**

Disposition/Retention Action: Hickory Street – We have had no success obtaining a response from HUD's Special Applications Center (SAC) for a status on this request, thanks to all of the RAD conversions the SAC office is handling. Mr. Loso will engage HUD's Boston Field Office for assistance.

Sheldon Towers Project – The initial word from our RAD transaction manager was that moving forward with the remaining 14 unit upgrades at Sheldon Towers would not interfere with the RAD conversion process. We learned recently that this is not the case: they cannot occur simultaneously. Thus, we have decided to postpone the unit upgrades until after the RAD conversion. A potential advantage is that the conversion should be completed sometime in the winter of 2020, so perhaps bids will come in lower when contractors are seeking indoor jobs. Another consideration is that Sheldon Towers rent recertifications occur January – March, which is a busy time for Property Management. None of the Sheldon Towers residents who we moved to Templewood Court will have to move back. Ms. Sanderson and Mr. Jordan worked very hard to make 5 units available for the work, and now we have to turn them over and lease them. In addition, Mr. Loso and Ms. Buysse are tweaking the pro forma financial documents and CHAP amendment request to earmark some operating reserves to cover the cost of the Sheldon Towers upgrades, and add in a common area renovation. This should help to protect the funds from recoupment by HUD.

- **Vermont Association of Public Housing Authority Directors** – Highlights from the meeting: the Executive Director (ED) of the Burlington HUD Office will retire this year, and HUD will scale back the Burlington office. The Winooski Housing Authority replaced their retiring ED six months ago; the new ED will attend our RAD Finance training in September. VAPHAD's advocate to the state legislature reported that the next biennium will feature activity of interest to Housing Authorities. HUD will be ramping up attention to lead paint compliance. Vermont is getting attention for having issued few reports. HUD's Boston Field Office alerted us to be certain that any reports have been entered in the system. None have been reported in our Public Housing or Section 8 programs during Mr. Loso's tenure. This is more of an issue for Section 8 properties because we don't have control of

unit maintenance. The other alert from Boston was regarding Section 3 compliance (the program ensures that any contract awarded for work in HUD properties benefit low-income residents through employment and training opportunities).

- **Housing Initiatives, Inc. Board Meeting** – The HII board met on June 24th and voted to pay down the promissory note held by RHA against the 9 Tremont property. The payment has been received and booked.
- **Staffing Update** – Mr. Jordan is no longer chapter chair. Corey Webster was elected to replace him, and Patrick Burton is the Shop Steward. They will be the new union contacts, along with and AFSCME's Dave Van Deusen. See pages 1.17 – 1.19 for the new Maintenance Aide II position, created to encompass the skills Alison Patterson possess, including adding her to the on-call rotation. It was suggested to remove the Foreman from the on-call rotation, but that has not yet been approved. If so resolved by the board, the union contract will be amended to recognize the Maintenance Aide II position in the Collective Bargaining Unit.

### **Proposed Resolution 2019-16 to approve the Maintenance Aid II Job Description effective July 1, 2019**

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

- **Verizon Contract Update** – Verizon made a claim that over the life of the contract they have overpaid RHA \$43K. Mr. Loso responded and found that Verizon has passed the matter on to their legal team to determine if they can even request the funds from us. If the claim is valid, the most they can recover from us would be overpayments from the last 6 years.

### **REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **Finance/Administration Report (pages 2.3-2.10)**

**Consolidated Budget Comparison and Variance Reports for April & May 2019** – See full report for details. Highlights: Revenues from rents were down due to vacancies related to the Templewood Court unit modernizations and planned Sheldon Towers upgrades. HAP revenues show as \$8,473 under budget because of how Mainstream Vouchers are accounted for.

**Cash Flow** – Cash flow is in line as you would expect over the first two months of the fiscal year. One standout: the Hickory Street 2 Incentive Management Fee of \$7,155 provided a hearty bump in funds. The year-to-date bottom line surplus is \$34,785, and the ending bank balance for May was \$1,184,056.83.

#### **Property Management (page 2.11)**

**Site Updates** - There are 3 vacancies at Templewood Court, with one orientation and one lease up scheduled for this week. At Sheldon Towers tenants expressed concerns that people are sleeping in the gazebo, and Maintenance has installed motion sensor lights. The first annual rent recertifications for Hickory Street Phase 3 are complete. Ms. Sanderson is working to fill two units with Section 8 voucher holders. The LP has received their Tax Credits on time. It is a challenge to keep Tax Credit units filled, because it's hard to find applicants, other than Section 8 voucher holders, who fit the narrow income qualifications and can still afford the Tax Credit rent. If there's any chance that an applicant will be over income in the first 12 months we can't offer them the unit. Hickory Street Phase 2 is full, and in Phase 1 there is a lease up in process.

**Railroad Spur Activity** – Vermont Railway, Inc. held a public information meeting at Hickory Street on June 20 regarding the temporary use of the rail spur that abuts the property. In the summer of 2020, they estimate needing use of the spur twice per day to turn around a train. Tenants expressed concern that full

gas tankers might subsequently be stored there, as well as worries about noise and an increase in traffic. Tenants can't change what VRI will do, but the company wanted to be open about their activities and educate their neighbors. The property line fence is effective at stemming pedestrian traffic, screening the track and cars. A sturdier privacy screen will be installed.

**Bedbug Committee Meeting** - A number of housing organizations convened to troubleshoot infestation issues. Another affordable housing provider in attendance reported dealing with 1 to 3 infestations/month. RHA hasn't had one in months. Our robust bed bug policy impressed the other organizations, and is a model thanks to frequent preventive inspections and post-treatment follow-up.

**Parking/Driveway Paving, Sealing & Lining** – We have finally secured a contractor for this work at Templewood Court and Sheldon Towers. It's been a 2-year process. We will award a single-bid contract and will bring it to board for approval. We had to cast a broader net because of time constraints (asphalt availability concentrates the work period).

### **Section 8 Program** (pages 2.12 – 2.13)

Ms. Ladabouche reported that the pattern of turnovers is slowing but continues. Of the 219 regular Housing Choice Vouchers, 217 are leased up and two lease-ups are scheduled. One family ported to Florida, though we will continue to be responsible for their subsidy. A Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) was issued for more Mainstream Voucher funding, and we plan to request a grant to fund additional vouchers.

### **Resident Services Report** (pages 2.14 – 2.34)

Ms. Keefe reported the new SASH Coordinator, Stephanie Bertrand, has been doing a lot of training and has already engaged residents with activities and support. Rutland High School students worked with staff and residents to create window boxes for Templewood Court, using flowers from Boardman Hill Farm. Every SASH Designated Regional Housing Organization will host a certified diabetes educator this summer, and the Castleton/Fair Haven panel's will be held in Castleton in August. Later this month we will host a barbecue in partnership with the Vermont Food Bank to supplement the door-to-door visits made earlier this month to quantify residents' level of food security with the intention of increasing 3 Squares participation. Other SASH panels in our purview have been invited. In addition to picnic fare, there will be food demos and participants will also be given produce and other groceries to take home.

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

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

- A. Aged Delinquency Reports 6/2019
- B. Collections Report 6/2019
- C. Lease Violations/Evictions 6/2019
- D. Housing Occupancy Charts 6/2019

### **NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

**Appointment of Alison Patterson, Maintenance Aide II** (Pages 3.12-3.13) – A resolution is required to ratify this appointment.

### **Proposed Resolution 2019-17 to ratify the appointment of Alison Patterson to the position of Rutland Housing Authority Maintenance Aide II position effective July 1, 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 (Vice-Chairman Anderson left the meeting before this resolution was brought forward).


**EXECUTIVE SESSION** - None.

**ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:**

There being no other business to bring before the Board, Commissioner Carlson moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 a.m. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval, including the vote of Chairman Markowski.

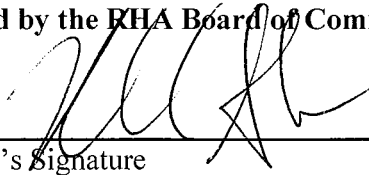
**Date of next BOC Regular meeting: Monday, August 12 @ the Sheldon Towers Community Room, 14 Sheldon Place, Rutland, VT at 8 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin L. Loso  
Executive Director/Secretary

**Approved by the RHA Board of Commissioners**



8/12/2019  
Date

Vice

Chairman's Signature

Prepared by Barbara Richardson, Administrative Services & Occupancy Specialist