

Housing Authority of the Town of Winchester

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*Anthony J. Page, Jr., - Chairman
John R. Sullivan, - Vice-Chairman
Neil R. Kelsey, - Treasurer
June D. Mickley, - Assist. Treasurer
John Iacino, - Commissioner*

Fred W. Newman, - Executive Director

MINUTES

July 5, 2011

7:00 P.M.

A meeting of the Housing Authority was held on July 5, 2011 in the offices of the Housing Authority at 80 Chestnut Street, Winsted, CT.

Vice Chairman Sullivan called the meeting to order. Present were Ms. Mickley, and Messer's, Iacino and Newman.

After a review of the Minutes of the meeting of May 12, 2011, Mr. Iacino made a motion to accept the Minutes, Seconded by Ms. Mickley and unanimously approved.

Mr. Newman reviewed financials with the Board including the Performance to Budgets reports for the various entities. He brought to the attention of the Board the dollars (above budget) that snow removal of January and February had cost. In addition he pointed out that WHA continued to await the results of the FEMA application. He explained the lack of reserves in E-72 due to no subsidy payments that the State provides, as does HUD for WHA's other communities. He also reminded the Board that in compliance with their wishes that all active Bank accounts had been changed to Northwest Community Bank.

Mr. Newman provided a report on the Section 8 and Housing programs. He shared a listing of information and explained that the DiAmelia Agency (who is contracted with the State's DSS program) had offered to transfer five (5) current voucher holders that are located throughout the seventeen (17) Town Allied area that the WHA manages, to the WHA. Mr. Newman explained further that in conversation with Ms. Wortman the WHA was advised to rent up as many as twenty (20) more Waiting List applicants due to additional funding received from HUD. He reported there was a total of 281 applicants on the HCV Wait List, with a total of 119 local persons. He read a list of active participants who were veterans.

Under Housing, he shared an updated Turnaround chart listing a number, (22) individuals for the past fiscal year who had vacated apartments causing quite a bit of costs for apartment preparations. He informed the Board that the total Waiting list was ninety-four (94) applicants. Lastly, he shared with the Board an extensive list of information gleaned from the Google Analytics capability the WHA has from its new, updated web site.



Mr. Newman introduced the topic of the “Flat Rent Policy, reminding the Board that it is authorized to review , and change as required the rental rate for those renters who have incomes that allow them to pay high rents. He informed the Board that the Flat Rent had not been changed in over ten years. He recommended to the Board that the rates be changed from \$475 to \$525, and \$525 to \$575 for efficiency and one bedroom apartments respectively. Following a discussion, Commissioner Mickley made a motion to resolve that *the Flat Rent rates be changed from \$475 to \$525, and \$525 to \$575 for one and two bedroom apartments respectively*, this motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Sullivan and unanimously approved

Under the Greenwoods North update, Mr. Newman informed the Board that besides a meeting that took place at the beginning of June with representatives of HUD, DECD, CHFA and the offices of Senator Blumenthal, and Representative Larson other activities have taken place to resolve the inequities between Greenwoods South and Greenwoods North. For the North, these include the 1. Federalization, 2. ERAP, 3. Obtaining vouchers from the DSS, 4. Having residents apply individually at the Sec. 8 office, 5. Opening the apartments up to market rates, and 6. Apply to HUD to have the fourteen units “Project Based Vouchers”. Of these options all have failed with the exception of #6. This option is a complex one and will take several months to process through HUD. Mr. Newman recommended to the Board that the WHA pursue this option. He let the Board know that he would keep them informed, and in doing so, he handed out copies of a Comprehensive Facility Analysis prepared by Community Planners. The discussions involving Greenwoods Garden North concluded with the Board requesting that the Management Plan (budget) for Greenwoods North be tabled in light of the fact that the budget was unable to maintain the property.

Under Old Business Mr. Newman informed the Board that Chairman Paige had renewed his membership with the WHA Board of Commissioners. He added that Charter Cable continued to offer the WHA \$6,000 for signing a document making them sole provider of TV, Cable and Phone service for Chestnut Grove. He reiterated that Attorney Stedronsky had advised against signing any document. He also informed the Board that the response from FEMA concerning some compensation for the high snow removal costs earlier in the year continued to be awaited.

New Business Mr. Newman presented annual contract for Ms. Wortman, CPA, Mr. John Morici for computer support, and Jules Lefcowitz for facility and Capital repairs. He informed the Board that all had reduced their proposed hourly and contract prices significantly. Commissioner Iacino made a motion to accept the proposals, seconded by Commissioner Mickley and unanimously approved. He informed the Board that a Bill was before the Governor that would significantly alter the way a Resident Commissioner was selected for serving on the Board. He added that the CONN - NAHRO organization has sent a letter recommending that he veto the measure. Mr. Newman reminded the Board that two Housing Authorities had proposed the new measure to their Legislators. Both Housing Authorities are known to have bad track records in communicating with their residents.

Also under New Business he reported to the Board that a resident made a request to provide a dog adoption process by which he would have one dog at a time living with him, under 30 lbs. in conformance with the WHA guidelines and that he would pay the Pet Deposit. Mr. Newman recommended that this be allowed. The Board provided their approval for this proposal. A report, with pictures of an intruder was shared with the Board. Mr. Newman explained that it was eventually discovered that the intruder was the son of a resident who had called him for assistance. He shared with the Board a recording of all the attempts to buzz his mother from the callboard. It was apparent that he did not know his mother's phone apartment or phone number.

Next, Mr. Newman passed out a three-year review of major cost accounts for WHA's Entity-Wide Revenue and Expenses. He informed the Board that he undertook the review as a result of the WHA losing its High Performer status to Standard Performer. He detailed several points of the review with the Board, pointing to two accounts that had significantly impacted the change in the performer factor. They were: 1. (account 91300) the extraordinarily high dollar amount to pay Community Planners for a. management of the \$700,000 Small Cities Grant, and b. preparation of an enormous amount of work relating to the Federalization of Greenwoods Garden, and 2. (account 10000) use of \$62,000 of Section 8 reserves, along with excessive maintenance costs to maintain the aging Chestnut Grove facility. Also, the costs involving repairs for the preparations affiliated with the Greenwoods Garden facility for Federalization.

Also under New Business Mr. Newman informed the Board that although a proposal to replace the now inoperable central A/C system had been made the staff would continue to make use of window A/C's. This, due to the unavailability of Capital funds from HUD until October. He showed two inspection reports to the Board dealing with the "PRE-REAC" (HUD) inspection due in October. The Pre Inspections were an effort to best prepare for the HUD inspection. Lastly, Mr. Newman informed the Board that a hearing had been held for a non-complying client of the Section 8 Program. As a result, an Attorney, who was in attendance at the hearing, had challenged the results of the Hearing Officer, and that he was immersed in preparations of a response letter.

There being no other business, Vice Chairman Sullivan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Iacino and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted, Fred W. Newman