

WINOOSKI HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF MAY 6, 2020 REGULAR BOARD MEETING

A meeting of the Winooski Housing Authority Board of Commissioners was held electronically as allowed by special Vermont Statute due to COVID-19 requirements.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Potvin at 4:15 A.M. Upon roll call those present and absent were as follows:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Potvin, Vice Chair and Commissioner Patricia Raymond, Commissioner Robert Arnell, Commissioner Nicole Mace
COMMISSIONER ABSENT: Commissioner Jay Lambert
OFFICERS PRESENT: Executive Director KR Decarreau

1. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Arnell: I move that the Agenda is approved. Second by Commissioner Raymond

Motion Passes 4 - 0

2. Approve Minutes of March 18 and April 27, 2020 meetings

Motion by Commissioner Arnell: I move that we approve the minutes of March 18 and April 27, 2020. Second by Commissioner Mace

Motion Passes 4 – 0

3. Public Comment

No public in attendance

4. Update of Activities During COVID 19 Operations

See Board Notes and the Plan for May 4, 2020

ED Decarreau noted that we have experienced several deaths, none known to be associated with COVID – 19.

ED Decarreau also noted that we issued the first round of Hazard Pay during the last pay period. We are watching the S 346, the Vermont Senate bill on hazard pay. Our definitions

are consistent with the bill. The House assigned the bill to a committee on May and is likely to have amendments. This is not likely to pass soon.

Commissioner Raymond noted that some of the tenants may be deteriorating with the isolation. The Board discussed opening the community rooms and agreed to wait for the Governor's extension of up to ten people in a social gathering to be extended to the elderly and the vulnerable.

5. RAD Update

See Board Notes

6. Depot Electric Contract Approval

a. Electrical Work at the Family Units

See Board Notes and Contract

Motion by Commissioner Arnell: I move that the Board of Commissioners accept the bud from Depot electric to perform upgrades at the family properties and authorize the Board Chair to enter into the work contract. Second by Commissioner Raymond.

Motion passes 4 - 0

7. Winooski School District Lease Approval

Commissioner Mace recused herself from the discussion due to a conflict and did not participate.

See Board Notes and Contract.

ED Decarreau pointed out the change of dates to July 1, 2020 due to the pandemic.

Motion by Commissioner Arnell: I move that the Board of Commissioners approve the contract with the Winooski School District and authorize the Chair to sign the lease. Second by Commissioner Raymond.

Motion passes 3 – 0 with Commissioner Mace abstaining.

8. HUD Waiver Discussion

ED Decarreau reviewed the matrix of waivers WHA wishes to take, either in full or in part as part of the CARES act allowance by Public and Indian Housing - HUD. The waivers fall into four main categories:

1. Those driven by participants unable to provide the highest level of proof of income resulting in self-certification with follow up through our regular program.
2. Those driven by our policy to avoid entering into occupied apartments for purposes of inspections.
3. Those driven by working from home and a lack of access to paperwork
4. Those driven by the inability to hold an open public meeting.

ED Decarreau intends to bring all items to the Board for approval at a date in the future and to approve retroactively. At the moment, we are using only the self-certification for income which is allowed in our Administrative Plan and may not need approval.

9. Other Business

There being no further business, Commissioner Mace moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Arnell. Vote 4 — O. The meeting was adjourned by Chair Potvin at 4:46 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

KR Decarreau

Secretary

UPDATE from email of April 21, 2020:

We are working our way through the issues involved in reopening. During our time we have:

- Switched software and are now working in the new system
 - The landlord payment had some issues that are now corrected
- We have changed our internal process to improve this process
- We can now work paperlessly, across functions, and from home for most functions.
 - We will issue our first checks out of the new software. Reports are improved
 - We will continue training over the next few weeks as we integrate more features in the financial software
 - We are working on procedures and instructions to support the new processes
- We are prepared to award the following contracts
 - Electrical upgrades at the family housing properties
 - HVAC system at the Terraces (65 Barlow)
- We have delayed the bid on the exterior work at the family properties until May 18 when we anticipate being able to hold a walkthrough
- We are on hold with the roof work at Spring Gardens (31 East Spring Street) until we get that clearance from the Governor. We anticipate May 15 at this point. We will still ask that workers not pass through the building as was previously planned.
- We are working on several bid packages to finish the work required by the bonds. I will have a more formal update at the next meeting.
- We are working on a plan to use some of our HCV (Section 8) vouchers as Project-based vouchers. This means agreeing to use a voucher for a particular new affordable unit where the voucher stays with the apartment, not the person. It is important to finance new units.

- We received waivers from HUD for particular regulations that cannot be fulfilled under the stay at home order. We are evaluating which we should use.
- We have organized calling tenants on a regular basis to stay in touch with their issues and make sure we can respond.
- We put our regular SASH newsletter out with lots of information
- We have continuously communicated new suggestions from the CDC and the Health Department.
- We are catching up with some training for folks that have been too busy to stop and take courses.
- We are working on a strategy for dealing with a case (or an outbreak) in a building.

Staffing:

- Staffing on Property:
 - One maintenance person working on emergencies (Hazard Pay Requested)
 - One maintenance person disinfecting all high touch areas daily and exceptionally high touch area twice daily (Hazard Pay Requested)
 - Two admin staff sharing front desk duties that involve managing packages and issuing keys to residents (Hazard Pay requested for hours in the office)
 - Finance staff working in the office two days a week on processing invoices
 - HCV staff working two days a week processing income changes for those folks who lost income, keeping voucher process in compliance (this relied on handling documents that cannot go home) and continue to issue vouchers.
- Staff Working at Home
 - Executive Director
 - Program Director
 - Maintenance Director
 - Leasing Agent
 - Property Manager
 - SASH Nurse
- Staff at Home
 - Custodial Supervisor and two part time staff
 - Four Maintenance staff

We continue to pay staff their full paychecks and are receiving finds from HUD (extra admin fees from Section 8 program) that will cover this cost.

We are working with the Post Office (through the Mayor) to be sure that if we have a case of COVID 19, they will continue to deliver mail. They have refused to deliver to other buildings until a process was negotiated (using the Congressional Delegation). This is unacceptable as we should not be handing personal mail and their proposed solution is to have the landlords pick up and distribute all mail.

We will start bringing maintenance staff back next week to do landscaping and to work on turning over vacant units so we can lease them as soon as possible.

We will start bringing cleaning staff back to “spring clean” the buildings as we have only done disinfecting and very limited cleaning.

We will allow two people in the office “pods” (offices sharing a common bathroom) next week. We will not require people to come back, but allow work to be done during regular hours. Up until now, we have had staff that need to go into the office work off hours so that only one person at a time was in the office.

DRAFT