

ACTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
68 WINDSOR AVENUE, ACTON MA 01720
MINUTES
March 31, 2015

1455.

Present: Ryan Bettez, Nancy Kolb, Ken Sghia-Hughes and Robert Whittlesey
Absent: Bernice Baran
Also Present: Kelley Cronin
Attending: Peter Berry

Mr. Whittlesey called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

1. The Board reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting. Mr. Sghia-Hughes made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Bettez and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Approve the minutes of the February 10, 2015 meeting, as amended.

2. Ms. Cronin updated the Board on operations. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that the maintenance mechanic, Rusty Martin, had knee surgery and had been out for the past three weeks and was expected to be out through April 17th. Ms. Cronin went over the revised job descriptions she had sent out to the Board for the Assistant Executive Director, Office Manager/Bookkeeper, Part-Time Administrative Assistant and Part-Time Maintenance Custodian. The current Assistant Executive Director, Linda Colby, is retiring in June and Ms. Cronin wants to update the job descriptions for the posting. Ms. Kolb suggested adding language to the job descriptions, "and other duties as assigned by the Executive Director." The Board approved the revisions but felt that the job descriptions were the responsibility of the Executive Director and that these alterations did not require a formal vote.

Ms. Cronin let the Board know there was going to be a lot of turnover the next few months. A first floor unit at Windsor Green is becoming available due to one of our residents moving into long-term care and a Windsor Green couple had previously put in a reasonable accommodation transfer request for a first floor unit so they will be moving in. When the second floor couple moves to the first floor we have a remaining household member of a two bedroom that needs a one-bedroom that will move into the second floor unit. That will open up a two-bedroom unit for a family on our waiting list. We also have an elderly unit at McCarthy Village that will be available mid-April. We have a family who has been in a three bedroom for a couple decades whose adult child moved out so they will be downsizing to a two bedroom and another family who had another child moving from a two bedroom to a three bedroom.

Ms. Cronin let the Board know that a few of the units that are becoming vacant in the family units are in the capital plan for modernization so as families move out they will be renovated prior to the new occupant. This will delay the turnover time by several months.

Ms. Cronin let the Board know that next year one of the Board positions that was becoming vacant would be reserved for a tenant of the Acton Housing Authority (AHA). The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) is responsible for developing the regulations which will spell out the process. In the meantime Ms. Cronin recommended that in late summer early fall the Board and staff conduct outreach to AHA residents about the position and hold a couple meetings to inform residents about the opportunity to be on the Board and what responsibilities the Board has. Ms. Cronin also reminded the Board that Board training was one of the new requirements of the law and that MA NAHRO offers trainings at the annual conferences. Ms. Cronin said she would send the agenda for the May Conference out to the members.

3. Ms. Cronin discussed the problem of residents opening their windows during the winter. Heat and electricity is paid for by the AHA and the staff have asked residents repeatedly to keep their windows closed during the cold weather. One resident badly damaged a window by opening during the winter and letting ice build-up. Ms. Cronin recommended adding language to the tenant handbook to address this issue. Ms. Kolb made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Sghia-Hughes and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Include a new rule in the tenant handbook which states, windows cannot be left open when the temperature is below 45 degrees and there will be imposed on residents who violate this policy of \$25.

The Board reviewed the purchase and sale for two condominium units at the Meadows. Mr. Sghia-Hughes made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Kolb and unanimously voted in the affirmative that:

The executive director and chairperson, or either one of them acting alone, are authorized to enter into, execute and deliver a purchase and sale agreement with 263 Great Road, LLC, for the purchase of unit 39 and 41 Gabriel Lane, Acton, MA 01720, of the Meadows at Acton Condominiums, for a purchase price of \$250,000, upon such further terms and conditions as they may deem necessary or desirable, and to execute on behalf of the Corporation such other documents or instruments as they may deem necessary or desirable in connection with the consummation of the transaction contemplated therein, including but not limited to a deed and such certificates and other instruments as may be required by the purchasers.

The Board also reviewed the Local Initiative Regulatory Agreement for the Meadows. The agreement will be sent to the Town Manager to review and eventually voted on by the Board of Selectmen and signed by the State. Mr. Sghia-Hughes made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Bettez and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Approve the Local Initiative Program Regulatory Agreement for 39 and 41 Gabriel Lane.

Ms. Cronin solicited three quotes from organizations who conduct lotteries for affordable units. The Regional Housing Services Organization (RHSO), one of the organizations solicited, is the monitoring agent for the Town of Acton's affordable units. When the RHSO responded they sent the proposal from the Sudbury Housing Trust. Ms. Cronin explained that the Sudbury Housing Trust, like the Acton Community Housing Corporation, is responsible for creating affordable housing opportunities in the Town of Sudbury and she is on the Trust. Ms. Cronin requested a written opinion from the State Ethics Commission regarding the potential for an appearance of a conflict of interest if the AHA does business with the SHT. Ms. Cronin provided a copy of that opinion with a written disclosure from her identifying the potential conflict. The SHT was the low bidder for the lottery. The Board stated that they did not consider the conflict to be substantial or that a contract with the SHT would interfere with Ms. Cronin's official duties. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that she would follow up with the State Ethics Commission regarding the selection of the SHT by the AHA. Mr. Sghia-Hughes made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Kolb and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Contract with the Sudbury Housing Trust to provide lottery services for 39 and 41 Gabriel Lane in the amount of \$5,000.

Ms. Cronin let the Board know that although the initial reports about the new heat were positive from the tenants a lot of residents are having difficulty with understanding how to use the remote control. Ms. Cronin held a meeting with residents with Russian and Chinese translators and the plumbing contractor to walk people through the use of the remote.

The Board discussed the community room furniture and floor replacement. The Board asked about the two pianos. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that one of the pianos belonged to the Acton Housing Authority (AHA) and the other was privately owned by a resident. Ms. Cronin explained that when the resident moved in the former Director allowed him to store his piano in the community room. The Board inquired as to whether or not the piano was allowed to be used by other residents and Ms. Cronin let the Board know that residents could use the piano owned by the AHA not the one that was privately owned. The Board had concerns about private property being kept in the community room. It was suggested that the discussion should be tabled until the April meeting when the owner of the piano could be invited to attend.

Ms. Cronin went over the annual subsidy agreement between the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. Mr. Sghia-Hughes made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Kolb and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Authorize Ms. Cronin to sign the operating subsidy agreement between the Acton Housing Authority and the Department of Housing and Community Development as written for the period from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2020.

Ms. Cronin went over the agreements between the Town of Acton and the Inn at Robbins Brook. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that the Inn at Robbins Brook was purchased by Benchmarks and there was a real learning curve for them regarding the affordable units. Ms. Cronin has been in discussions with Benchmarks and the Town and wants to have clearly defined roles for the waiting list, lease up and monitoring of the units. The AHA has been assisting the Inn with the initial income determination and rental amounts. Ms. Cronin does not want the AHA to be the responsible party for the monitoring of a privately owned property. The AHA is not the monitoring agent for the Town and wants to make sure this role is clear going forward. There has been confusion regarding language in agreements between the Town and original owner that the AHA was not a party to. The Board expressed their interest in making sure that marketing/outreach would be conducted to AHA residents when units were available. Ms. Cronin let the Board know that the most recent resident was a former AHA tenant.

4. Mr. Sghia-Hughes let the Board know that the AHA proposal was part of the Community Preservation Act funding presentation for Town meeting and he would be there for the presentation.
5. Mr. Sghia-Hughes made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Bettez and unanimously voted in the affirmative to:

Approve the January and February vouchers (monthly list of accounts payable) as presented.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelley A. Cronin
Kelley A. Cronin
Executive Director

Attachments for the March 31, 2015 meeting:

Minutes of the February 10, 2015 meeting, revised job description for Assistant Executive Director, job description for part-time Maintenance Custodian, Email from Nancy Tavernier regarding the Local Imitative Application for Robbins Brook, pictures of furniture and pricing for furniture and flooring and plans for the community room at Windsor Avenue, memo from Sarah Glassman, Deputy Associate Director of DHCD regarding the Subsidy Agreement, Subsidy Agreement between DHCD and AHA, purchase and sale agreement and LIP application for 39 and 41 Gabriel Lane, disclosure memo from Kelley Cronin to AHA Board regarding potential conflict of interest for lottery and Ethics Commission opinion, lottery proposal from Sudbury Housing Trust and MCO Housing Services, January and February vouchers