

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting
of the Gardner Housing Authority
March 25, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Gardner Housing Authority was held Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 9:30 AM at the office of the Housing Authority, 116 Church Street, Gardner, MA. Upon the call of the Chairman, those present and absent were as follows:

In accordance with the Governor's Order on March 15, 2020 imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place this meeting was also held remotely to allow members of the public to participate.

Present: Roger Tousignant, George Ouellet, Irene Dubzinski, Stephen Hancock, Jeanne May, Sandra Mullins, Executive Director.

Excused: Peter Goguen, Director of Maintenance

Absent:

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:31 A.M.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the February 25, 2021 meeting and a Motion was made by Jeanne May and seconded by George Ouellet to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2021 Board meeting. Voted unanimously.

Capital Improvement Projects:

The Director, S. Mullins reported on the following updates:

1. The Highrise Hall Carpet Replacement Phase 2: Prior to bidding this out it is recommended by RCAT Project Mgr. to use the carpet tile previously used in the first phase. This makes any necessary replacement due to possible damage a much easier process. Therefore, it is recommended the Board vote, in the public interest, to designate "Ghost Artist Shadowpoint by Milliken" carpet tile as the proprietary specification for the Highrise 667-2 common hallways. A Motion was made by Stephen Hancock and Seconded by George Ouellet to approve the "Ghost Artist Shadowpoint by Milliken" as the proprietary carpet tile in the specification of the project. Voted Unanimously.
2. Retaining Wall Replacement Phase 1 – Birch Street 200-2. DHCD approved the project for bidding. All bids are due by 4/2/21 @ 2pm. In consideration of time, it is recommended to vote for approval of the low bidder contingent on good references. A Motion was made by Jeanne May and Seconded by Irene Dubzinski to approve the low bidder contingent on positive references. Voted Unanimously.
3. Addition to Maintenance Garage – The fire alarm connection issue should be resolved following an on- site tech service scheduled for 3/26/21 to connect the heat detector to the panel. The Certificate of Substantial Completion has been submitted for approval. A Motion was made by George Ouellet and Seconded by Stephen Hancock to approve the Certificate of Substantial Completion and App. for payment #4. \$2,470.

Voted Unanimously. The Board is asked to review and vote on the Certificate of Final Completion and Final payment App. #5 \$7,513.28 contingent on the Building Commissioner's final sign off of the project. A Motion was made by George Ouellet and Seconded by Stephen Hancock to approve the Cert. of Final Completion contingent on the Bldg. Commissioner's sign off. Voted Unanimously.

Other Matters:

1. S. Mullins request the Board approve the H.A.'s waiver request to DHCD to allow a "Biennial Rent Re-determinations" for the Ch. 667 Elderly/Handicapped program. This will allow GHA to conduct rent recertifications every alternate year instead of annually and would essentially take effect for May 2022, whereas the rent redeterminations are currently in process for 5/1/21. A Motion was made by Stephen Hancock and Seconded by Jeanne May to approve the waiver request to conduct rent re-determinations on a Biennial schedule if approved by DHCD. Voted Unanimously.
2. COVID-19 Response: Maintenance staff are maintaining the cleaning/sanitizing of all common areas.
S. Mullins was pleased to report the success of the Housing Authority's partnering with the Heywood Healthcare group to hold the second dose COVID-19 vaccine Clinic on site in the Church St Community Room on 3/17/21. The 2nd dose clinic went very well, and the residents who attended were grateful they did not need to go to a public clinic off site. The first dose COVID-19 clinic was also held on 3/12/21 for the residents at Hillside Gardens in the Comm. Bldg. The Board of Health and Heywood Healthcare aided with the coordination of the clinic and on-site health care volunteers on the day of the clinics. S. Mullins brought up the matter of re-opening the community rooms at both developments. After some discussion S. Hancock expressed concern that it was still too soon given the increase in new variants of the virus. R. Tousignant and remaining members agreed stating they should remain closed for now and assess again next month.
3. The Board was briefed on the unauthorized occupants at 210 Waterford St. refusing to vacate the property after the tenant moved out. The H.A. Regional Attorney, Karen Ahlers filed an emergency court order to have the occupants vacate the property. The two unauthorized occupants left the house on 3/5/21 and maintenance changed the locks and safely secured the property.

Maintenance Report:

The Maintenance Director, P. Goguen was not available due to being out on sick leave. The expense report was provided to the board for review.

The status of vacancies was brought up by R. Tousignant asking for an update. S. Mullins explained vacancies are at an all time high over the past few months explaining there were three new tenants leased up and there were four that vacated – making it difficult to get ahead. Most reasons for vacating are long-term tenants "aging out" either they are going to long-term care (nursing home) or deceased.

A Motion was made by Irene Dubzinski and Seconded by Jeanne May to pay the bills. Voted Unanimously.

A Motion was made by George Ouellet and Seconded by Stephen Hancock to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 AM. Voted Unanimously.

Next meeting scheduled for March 25, 2021.