

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF WETHERSFIELD
MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING
January 11, 2016

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Wethersfield was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present:	George Kelly Samuel Spratlin Michael Wrona Stephen Kirsche Levi Ofori
Commissioners Absent:	none
Others Present:	Cathy K. Forcier, Executive Director Donna Hemman, Town Liaison Residents

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Kirsche moved to approve the minutes of November 16, 2015; seconded by Commissioner Ofori. All Commissioners voted in favor. So moved.

Tenant Meeting to Hear Comment on Proposed Rent Increases:

Ms. Forcier presented to the Chairman a petition received from Donna Cerra signed by 27 residents.

Donna Cerra stated there was no increase in social security in 2016 so there should be no rent increase. Ms. Forcier pointed out that with state calculations we look back a year on income so 2016 income won't be looked at until 2017.

Carol Stewart asked how many names were on the petition.

Laura Melluzzo asked what the increase is used for as her apartment hadn't had repairs done that were needed. Commissioner Kelly stated there were 19 years when rent increases weren't done and yet expenses go up every year. He stated that anyone was welcome to look at the budget. Ms. Melluzzo said increases should not be asked of the lowest income.

Michelle Scalora stated she had a problem with a neighbor. She also said no one can afford a rent increase.

Ms. Cerra asked if the tenants could vote on the proposed rent increase.

Ms. Stewart stated she'd read the Rare Reminder for years looking at apartments for friends and that they are expensive and don't allow pets.

Ms. Melluzzo stated she sees no service, that maintenance is overlooked.

Commissioner Kirsche stated that cuts have been made over the years to the budget. He reiterated that the budget could be viewed by all. He said the board would listen if anyone had any ideas of what could be cut. He also addressed Ms. Melluzzo's complaint about the 1942 building by saying that was why over \$6 million was being spent to update the property.

Commissioner Ofori thanked everyone for attending and voicing their opinions. She said the board listens and considers what tenants say and that it's always a very difficult decision.

Communications:

Bradley, Foster & Sargent – November 30, 2015, December 31, 2015

Executive Director's Report:

The Executive Director presented the following reports to the Commission: Maintenance, Finance, Tenant Selection and a Personal Report.

Commissioner Kirsche moved to approve the bills list for November and December; seconded by Commissioner Wrona. All Commissioners voted in favor. So moved.

Unfinished Business:

Updates.

2014 CHAMP 6 APPLICATION: Westfield Heights. Ms. Forcier reported that siding and windows are done on 54 units (not buildings). Gutters are complete on 41 units. Kitchen and bathroom floors have been abated and new floors installed in 13 vacant units. In those same 13 units the kitchen cabinets, sink, faucet and exhaust fans, bathroom tub, surround, toilet, sink and faucet have been replaced. Painting has also been done in those units in kitchens, baths and window trim. Hot water heaters have been replaced in 33 units, furnaces in 34 units along with the gas valves. Smoke detectors have been replaced in 130 units. Bath exhaust fans are done in 67 units. Siding trim on the porches is done in 38 units. All sidewall insulation is complete. Attic and basement insulation is ongoing.

Final closing paperwork was signed but then underwent review by the Deputy Commissioner. Changes have been negotiated but revised paperwork has not been received. The DOH Commissioner and the AG's office will need to sign before

payments can be received. A large payment requisition from the General Contractor is pending.

CDBG Application. James Devlin Rehabilitation Project. The town received notice that the Small Cities Assistance Agreement has been approved and executed by the Department of Housing. The WHA is waiting for a copy of the agreement. At that time it is planned to put this project out to bid.

Solar Heat. Installation is expected to start in January at 31 Butler Street, weather permitting. Next will be the administration building, the garage at 47 Lancaster and finally Boardman Terrace. This is all for house electric. Approvals have been received from Eversource for two locations.

New Business:

Rent Increases.

Commissioner Kirsche moved to approve a base rent increase of \$10 at each of the three elderly/disabled properties; seconded by Commissioner Wrona. All Commissioners present voted in favor; so moved.

Commissioner Kirsche moved to approve a base rent increase of \$20 at the Westfield Heights property; seconded by Commissioner Wrona. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Kirsche amended his motion for the base rent increase to be \$15. All Commissioners present voted in favor; so moved.

Commissioner Kirsche moved to approve a base rent increase of \$25 at the Highvue Terrace property; seconded by Commissioner Wrona. Discussion ensued about the new need to pay the PILOT due to the state removing this item from the state budget. There was recognition of the strain this will place on some residents. A meeting will be set up with the town manager to determine if the town can provide some relief. Commissioner Ofori opposed the motion. All other Commissioners present voted in favor; so moved.

PILOT for MR. Ms. Forcier included in the packet information confirming the housing authority will be responsible to pay PILOT for the MR property for the state fiscal year beginning 7/1/16 to 6/30/17 as well as statutory language.

Public Comment:

none

New Business continued:

Executive Session to Discuss Collective Bargaining Issues. Commissioner Wrona moved to go into executive session; seconded by Commissioner Spratlin. All Commissioners present voted in favor; so moved.

Commissioners' Comment:

Commissioner Ofori noted some tenants left items like the couch on Boardman Terrace on the lawn and maintenance staff have not addressed it.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Spratlin moved to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Kirsche. All Commissioners present voted in favor; so moved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy K. Forcier
Secretary/Executive Director

