

Brookline Housing Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 9, 2019
22 High Street
4:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Sullivan at 4:35 PM. Those present included Ms. Dugan, Ms. Katz, and Ms. Cohen.

Board Reports

Ms. Cohen said that she attended the summer CLPHA conference and learned a great deal about disaster response best practices. She recommends that the BHA consider preparing a disaster response plan. BHA Assistant Executive Director, Matthew Baronas, mentioned that the BHA does have such a plan, but that it could be updated.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- A cookout is scheduled for residents of the Walnut Street Apartments following the Board meeting and all are welcome to attend. There will be service program representatives in attendance for information sharing and program sign-ups.
- The 61 Park Street RAD redevelopment project is on schedule for a late July/early August closing and construction start. This is a significant step forward for the BHA and its resident community.
- BHA Ross Grant Coordinator, Megan Smith, organized a fantastic art exhibit showcasing the creative skills of many residents of the Walnut Street Apartments.
- Megan Smith will be relocating to another part of the state and moving on from her position as BHA ROSS Grant Coordinator. Ms. Smith is an exceptional talent and will be missed by the many BHA residents she has served. Her employer, the Brookline Community Center for Mental Health, is working on a succession plan and has set up transition coverage for Ms. Smith's BHA clients.
- The BHA understands the concerns of residents about customers of NETA illegally parking in the 22 High Street parking lot. BHA Assistant Executive Director, Matthew Baronas, and BHA Property Manager, Nereida Otero-Torres, have been in touch with NETA's General Manager regarding this matter and have been conferring with Brookline Police as well.
- A meeting has been scheduled for residents of the Walnut Street Apartments on Thursday, July 18, 2019 to discuss the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's (DOT) plans for the Gateway East project. Representatives from the Town of Brookline and the DOT will share information and listen to the concerns of residents. Construction work is scheduled to commence this week. The first phase of work is landscaping, including the removal of some trees on BHA property, and utility work. The second phase of work, beginning this fall, includes the reconfiguration of Walnut Street and Juniper Street near BHA property, and the installation of improvements to the rear yards of the two adjacent Walnut Street elderly buildings.

Construction Report

BHA Director of Capital Improvements, Sharon Cowan, reported the following:

- The Egmont Street Veterans Apartments bathroom mechanical fan project is in the schematic design phase, with a construction start anticipated this fall.
- The High Street Veterans Apartments exterior stairs and playground improvement project is substantially complete.
- The fire alarm improvement project at Sussman House is out to bid, with an anticipated August construction start.
- The Town of Brookline has increased the BHA's CDBG funding which will allow the new High Street Veterans and Egmont Street Veterans front entrance door and lock replacement project to go forward. Design work is anticipated to start this fall.

Resident Association

Brookline Housing Town Wide Tenant Association President, Jaymmy Colon, said that the BHA Maintenance staff are doing a tremendous job. She feels, however, that the Maintenance Department needs more staff to handle their workload.

Ms. Sullivan said that BHA funding agencies require that subsidy money be devoted to a wide variety of critical tasks, which is a difficult balancing act. The considerable accomplishments at the BHA are a testament to the hard work of staff throughout the agency.

Mr. Dober agreed with Ms. Colon that BHA Maintenance staff work very hard. Six months ago, the BHA Maintenance Department was short three full time staff which presented challenges. Fortunately, two new staff have been hired and a third staff member may be returning soon.

Consent Agenda

On a motion from Ms. Dugan and a second from Ms. Cohen, the consent agenda was unanimously approved and authorized the following: the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on June 11, 2019; a confidentiality policy required by DHCD in relation to resident income information made available to the BHA under the state Wage Match system; Substantial Completion of the High Street Veterans stairs and Landscaping contract with Valiant Group LLC; and an encouragement and endorsement of the Town of Brookline's participation in the Municipal Engagement Initiative sponsored by CHAPA, in order to educate and inform the Brookline community about the benefits of creating affordable housing.

Fire Alarm Upgrade Contract

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Dugan, a contract to LeVangie Electric Company, Inc. in the amount of \$448,000 for Fire Alarm Upgrades at Sussman House, was unanimously approved.

Architect Contract

On a motion from Ms. Dugan and a second from Ms. Katz, the selection of Nangle Engineering Incorporated as the architect-engineer for the Egmont Street Veterans Apartments bathroom fans installation project, for a fee of \$20,575, was unanimously approved.

RAD Update

BHA Director of Redevelopment, Maria Maffei, reported the following:

61 Park Street

- The 61 Park Street closing is expected by the end of July or early August.
- The RAD Conversion Commitment (RCC) has been extended in case of delays.
- A lengthy HUD closing review is underway.
- Construction bids came in slightly under budget. This is a testament to good design consultants.
- Colantonio will be putting together a maximum guaranteed price for construction. This will be reviewed by the lenders and then executed by the BHA.
- Boston Private Bank accounts are being set up, separating expenses from BHA public housing accounts.
- The trash compactor replacement is underway.
- The number of unit vacancies should allow for an accelerated construction schedule.
- A meeting is being planned to introduce 61 Park Street residents to the construction team.
- The relocation of residents to temporary apartments within the 61 Park Street building will begin soon.

90 Longwood Avenue

- BHA central office redesign layout schemes are being considered by staff.
- An RFQ has been issued for the construction manager.

Miscellaneous RAD

- A Section 18 conversion is being considered as an alternative to a RAD conversion for Walnut Street Apartments and Col. Floyd Apartments. A Section 18 conversion could mean higher rents and higher project income.

Mr. Dober said that he is very pleased with the redevelopment team for keeping the project on schedule and getting reasonable bids.

BHA resident, Elizabeth Warshaw, felt that 61 Park Street residents are remarkably calm in anticipation of the construction start. She has been very impressed by BHA staff and their team of consultants.

61 Park Street Change Order Policy

Ms. Maffei said that the Board is being asked to consider allowing staff some discretion to approve limited types of change orders prior to formal Board approval. Change orders falling into this category would need to be instances of emergencies or regulatory mandate, and less than \$50,000 in value. **On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Sullivan, a change order policy that will give the Executive Director discretion to approve change orders prior to BOC approval under certain circumstances, was unanimously approved.**

Obsolescence Assessment Contract

Ms. Maffei said that obsolescence assessments are necessary for determining if Section 18 is a viable alternative to RAD for the redevelopment of Col. Floyd Apartments and Walnut Street Apartments. Two bids were received. Staff is recommending the higher bid because the bidder demonstrated a clearer understanding of local requirements and obsolescence analysis. **On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Katz, a contract to Dominion Due Diligence Group in the amount of \$24,000 to provide Section 18 Obsolescence Assessments for Col. Floyd and Walnut High Apartments, was unanimously approved.**

Surveyors Contract

Ms. Maffei said that surveys are another necessity for Section 18 assessments. **On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, a contract to Feldman Surveyors in the amount of \$49,500 to prepare ALTA surveys for 190 Harvard Street, 50 Pleasant Street, Col Floyd Apartments, and Walnut High, and topographic surveys for Col. Floyd Apartments and Walnut High, was unanimously approved.**

Financing and Redevelopment Consultant Contract

Mr. Dober said that the BHA finds itself in need of building out its team of consultants as it adds a significant number of developments to the redevelopment pipeline. **On a motion from Ms. Dugan and a second from Ms. Cohen, a contract to Connie Cogswell, for services related to the financing and redevelopment of 61 Park Street and other RAD projects at a rate of \$125 per hour, in an amount not to exceed \$18,000 per year and \$50,000 in total, for an initial two-year term with a one-year renewal at the BHA's option, was unanimously approved.**

Waste Removal and Recycling Contract

Mr. Dober said that given limited financial resources, the BHA attempts to keep costs down by rebidding contracts on a regular basis. The BHA received some strong bids for waste removal and recycling which will reduce costs significantly. The low bidder, Casella Waste Management of Massachusetts, provides recycling services for the Town of Brookline, and received very good references. **On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Dugan, a contract for waste removal and recycling at all BHA properties to Casella Waste Management of Massachusetts Inc., in the amount of \$162,528 per year for each year of the initial two-year term, with three one-year renewal options at the BHA's discretion, inflating at 5% in year three and 3% in each of years four and five, was unanimously approved.**

Other Business & Public Comment

BHA resident, Sharon Cornelius, asked if the Gateway East contractors will consider hiring BHA residents. Mr. Dober said that staff will investigate this.

Ms. Pope said that she has seen rat burrows, and trash being left on the grounds. Mr. Perry said that his staff will police the grounds for trash and enlarge the signs related to proper trash removal.

BHA resident, Paul Lohr, said that it is more difficult for residents to place their trash into the smaller dumpsters now on site. Mr. Perry said that he will ask the new waste removal contractor for the most accessible dumpsters.

Ms. Cornelius said that the NETA customers parking in the BHA parking lot is an ongoing concern. Mr. Baronas said that the BHA is: consulting with the Brookline Police on this matter; has increased towing patrols; and is communicating with NETA staff.

The Board confirmed that the next two meetings will be held as follows:

- Morse Apartments at 4:30 PM on July 23, 2019
- High Street Veterans Apartments at 4:30 PM on August 13, 2019

On a motion from Ms. Dugan and a second from Ms. Katz, it was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 PM.

**A TRUE COPY
ATTEST**



**Patrick Dober
Executive Director**