

**BROOKLINE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2022, 4:30 PM
By Telephone Conference Call**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jacobs at 4:33 PM. Those present included: Ms. Dugan, Ms. Sullivan, and Ms. Cohen. Not present: Ms. Katz

1. Call to Order
2. Board Reports. No votes or reports.
3. Executive Director Report. No votes.

Mr. Alperin highlighted the following:

Rent Roll vs. Rent Collection report: Future reports will be generated by the Finance Department and may be in a different format. There are 128 households in arrears. The Property Management/Resident Services team is working to access SHERA program funds, but 113 new households must still sign the release form. The goal is to get them signed up as soon as possible since SHERA funds only last until June 2022. There are 55 households with a balance more than 90 days due, and nine with a balance of more than \$1,500.

Vacancy reports-The Authority continues to have great leasing activity. The one unit vacant at Kickham will be leased in the next month.

32 Marion St. Home Rule Petition: The BHA's home rule petition passed and was signed into law by Gov. Baker. Rep. Vittolo was vital in getting this legislation passed. This will help ensure that the new Col. Floyd development will be built in a new energy efficient manner and remain 100% public housing.

Vaccine Clinics-The BHA, in conjunction with the Brookline Health Department, Brookline Emergency Management and Brookline Police Department held two vaccine clinics where 120 adults/kids received vaccines/boosters. One more vaccine clinic will be held at the 15 Egmont Street Community Room on February 17th.

Senior IT Support-The Town provided funding to hire BHA resident, Alex Krieger, to provide weekly tech support at all senior properties.

CDBG Capital Needs-CDBG applications were submitted. Capital needs of \$7.55M were requested for assistance to help redevelopment and modernize the BHA's state public housing portfolio and \$65,000 for Resident Services. The Board is asked for approval of these submissions.

Babcock St. Parking Lot Study Committee-The BHA was asked to appoint a representative to the committee. The BHA is seeking a ruling from the State Ethics Committee to see if a representative can serve because the Authority may have interest in developing affordable housing on the parcel if that's a future recommendation.

4. Public Comment. No votes.

Alex Krieger facilitated miscellaneous questions from residents.

5. Consent Agenda. **Vote to approve Consent Agenda, Items 5.A. through 5.D.**

- 5.A. Approval of Minutes. **Vote to approve January 11, 2022, HUD Annual Plan Public Meeting Minutes, and Board Meeting Minutes.**
- 5.B. Contract Award High Street Veterans. **Vote to approve a contract for the roadway, parking and sidewalk repaving project at High Street Veterans Development to Woodall Construction Co., Inc. in the amount of \$126,698.00.**
- 5.C. Substantial Completion Kent Street Fire Alarm Upgrade. **Vote to approve substantial completion with Galway Electric Co., Inc. for the fire alarm upgrades at 153 Kent Street. Substantial Completion was approved by our engineer at Nangle Engineering Inc.**
- 5.D. Final Completion Sussman & Kickham Trash Compactor. **Vote to approve final completion with Maguire Equipment Inc. for the trash compactor replacement project at the Kickham and Sussman House Apartments.**

This agenda item was unanimously approved on a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second by Ms. Dugan.

6. CDBG Application Modernization State Public Housing. **Vote to endorse the BHA's FY 2023 modernization grant application to the Town of Brookline for CDBG funds in the amount of \$7,557,288.**

Mr. Alperin said it's a requirement of the Town's CDBG process that the Board authorize and provide a vote for the consideration of the BHA's CDBG application. The BHA is applying to the Town for \$7.5M various construction projects that would greatly enhance the condition of the Authority's state public housing and resident experience. Mr. Alperin read the extensive list of repairs needed to modernize the BHA's state public housing developments. According to Mr. Alperin, for decades the State has not provided funds to help make these improvements, which is why the BHA is desperately seeking these funds to complete these important projects in a timely manner. The Town only receives approximately \$800,000 of CDBG funds per year, so not all the projects will be funded. However, Mr. Alperin feels it's important to show the Town a pipeline of necessary projects which are based on a recent Capital Needs study at these developments.

This agenda item was unanimously approved on a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second by Ms. Sullivan.

7. CDBG Application Resident Services. **Vote to endorse BHA's FY 2023 resident services grant application to the Town of Brookline for CDBG funds in the amount of \$65,000.**

Mr. Alperin said the BHA is asking for more funds from the Town than were received last year to help fund targeted employment, education and related supports to build upon the success of the Self Sufficiency Program.

This agenda item was unanimously approved on a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second by Ms. Sullivan.

8. Capital Needs Reports Egmont Street Veterans and Trustman Apartments. Discussion of BWA Architects Capital Needs Reports and Construction Cost Estimation for Egmont Street Veterans and Trustman Apartments. No Votes.

Mr. Alperin explained this is the result of the Board's consideration and approval of two Capital Needs studies last fall at Egmont Street and Trustman Apartments at a cost of \$28,000 and \$25,000 respectfully. The studies will help inform the capital planning at these properties and highlight the dire need for investment in the State public housing portfolio. According to Mr. Alperin, the report from Egmont St. shows there are \$36.9M in today's construction costs to fully modernize the property and bring it into a state of good repair. The BWA architect report breaks down needs by priority, of which \$26.99M were deemed immediate. At Trustman, BWA's report identifies \$16.67M of construction costs in today's pricing (of which \$9M is identified as priority one immediate needs) which are necessary to fully modernize and bring the property into a good state of repair.

Mr. Alperin highlighted the Authority used these reports to support their application for between \$4-\$16M of American Rescue Act Plan (ARPA) funds from the Town (which will soon begin consideration of various projects but is waiting on a BCF report on needs and priorities). The BHA has met with the selectboard and administrators to describe this request. DHCD believes the BHA will be able to match and leverage them with State funds, which is attractive to the Town as well. Mr. Alperin said it's important to advocate to the Selectboard about how to use these funds, yet \$4-\$16M is a fraction of the hard costs needed to invest in these properties. The BHA is trying to figure out long term how to create a low-income housing tax credit or other mechanism to reinvest in these properties because for decades the State underinvested in the capital of the State housing portfolio.

9. Resident Services Report. Danielle Mendola, Director of Resident Services. No votes.

Ms. Mendola reported the following:

- Four focus groups were co-hosted in Nov./Dec. along with the Brookline Community Foundation, Steps to Success, and the Commission on Diversity to provide resident input into the community engagement process the Selectboard is using to inform ARPA funding opportunities.
- In December, the BHA and its partners distributed over 300 coats and gifts to families.
- Currently the Brookline Center, BHA and BEEP are helping 18 BHA families successfully complete the preschool enrollment process for Fall 2022.
- Resident Services helped with COVID vaccine efforts; e.g., COVID care packs were distributed door to door with masks, tests, and resources.
- The Town Clerk's office held voter registration at several BHA properties.
- Online English classes will start soon with a bilingual instructor and a focus on Chinese residents.
- Ms. Lara will be starting a group on preparing for employment (e.g., resume development, etc.)
- There has been great enrollment in the Self Sufficiency Program.
- A free Tax Prep Clinic for residents will be held every Monday and is posted at properties.

10. Executive Director Contract Renewal. **Vote to approve the renewal Contract Cover Sheet and Contract of Employment for the Executive Director.**

Mr. Jacobs said this vote is required by DHCD and was previously reviewed by both BHA legal counsel and negotiated with Mr. Alperin and is for a three-year term.

This agenda item was unanimously approved on a motion from Ms. Dugan and a second by Ms. Sullivan.

11. Change Order Morse Apartments. **Vote to approve Change Order Item, and Affirmation of Staff Approved Change Orders.**

Mr. Anderson said this should be one of the final change orders for this property as the project is substantially completed.

This agenda item was unanimously approved on a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second by Ms. Sullivan.

12. Contract Award Sussman. **Vote to approve a Construction Manager at Risk Contract to Daniel O’Connell and Sons of Franklin, MA, to renovate 50 Pleasant Street (Sussman) Apartments.**

Mr. Anderson said all proposals received, reviewed, and there were three strong RFP responses. After completing due diligence, the committee unanimously agreed that this was the strongest proposal for what will be a difficult renovation project with major exterior and utility replacement components.

This agenda item was unanimously approved on a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second by Ms. Cohen.

13. FY 2023 Budget. Discussion of FY 2023 operating budget and **vote to approve FY 2023 budget and submit authorizations to DHCD.**

Mr. Alperin called the budget conservative and highlighted the following:

- Both the 32 Marion Street and 50 Pleasant Street projects should be closed sometime this fiscal year. These closings are very important to the BHA’s bottom line and future fiscal health.
- The Section 8 Program is growing drastically because of VASH and Mainstream vouchers which the BHA has been awarded in the year through HUD and because of the Authority’s RAD and Section 18 development activities converting former Federal public housing properties to the Section 8 platform. This allows Section 8 and BHA revenues to grow as a whole.

Overall budget highlights:

- The variability in the miscellaneous line item is due to the Lean utility program that helps fund affordable housing with grants to upgrade utilities to more energy efficient systems. There is a new line item called surplus cash and ground lease income which is budgeting for the Dummer St. cash flow. As the BHA gets out of development and has converts future projects to permanent financing as it has with 61 Park St., income received from development activities will be noted as surplus cash. It is anticipated this line item will grow.
- Developer fee line item. The Authority is budgeting \$2.7M of fees this year. This is the biggest line item as BHA development activities continue and will vary year-to-year.
- The HUD operating subsidy line item for the Federal public housing program. It is growing this year but will shrink in future years as the BHA’s Federal housing portfolio program shrinks.

- The HUD Section 8 subsidy and administrative fee is growing from a budgeted \$1.6 M in FY'23 compared to \$1.36M FY'22 due to administering more Section 8 vouchers. Additionally, the Section 8 Program is going from \$19.39M in revenues received from HUD to \$25.36M budgeted to administer more HAP vouchers.
- Year over year expense comparisons. The biggest controllable change in controllable expenses is salaries going from a budgeted \$2.6M to \$2.9M to add four new positions in this year's budget in the Maintenance, Finance, and Section 8 departments and two new positions to administer new Resident Services programming.
- Maintenance budget. Labor, materials and supplies contract costs and front-line maintenance fees don't include extraordinary maintenance line items and equipment replacement. As the Authority's buildings continue to age (particularly in the State public housing program) is going to continue to crowd out other expenses because it is more expensive to maintain buildings that have deferred maintenance because emergencies come up all the time.
- Employee benefits line item grew by 14% due to the legacy pension obligation. It is important to preserve reserves to address legacy pension and health care costs.
- The housing assistance expense line that the Authority pays to landlords is expected to grow from \$19.6M to \$25.5 M.
- Total expenses are projected to grow by 4% as compared to last years' budget and the BHA is doing a reasonable job of controlling expenses and strategically growing in areas where the BHA has to grow in order to administer more complicated programs such as tax credit projects.
- The bottom-line, net income is projected at \$2.06M compared to net income of \$2.2M last year budgeted and \$3.2M in FY'2021 actual.

Mr. Kelley then discussed budget specifics on programs and commissioners asked clarifying questions.

This agenda item was unanimously approved on a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second by Ms. Dugan.

14. Other Business.

15. Upcoming meetings. March Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 8th - 4:30 PM.

16. Vote to adjourn.

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

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Michael Alperin, Executive Director