

Brookline Housing Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2020
By Conference Call
4:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jacobs at 4:30 PM. Those present included Ms. Dugan, Ms. Katz, Ms. Sullivan, and Ms. Cohen.

Board Report

Mr. Jacobs explained that in accordance with Governor Baker's order pertaining to the state's open meeting law, this meeting was being conducted by conference call. The meeting was properly posted at the BHA public housing developments, and access to the conference call meeting was offered to the public. There were no such requests for access. The order is related to the Coronavirus health emergency.

Brookline Food Pantry

Kim Kushner, Project Director of the Brookline Food Pantry's (BFP) Brookline Thrives program was introduced by Mr. Dober. Ms. Kushner reported the following:

- Brookline Thrives is a weekend backpack food program supplying free breakfasts to Brookline students who qualify for the free lunch program. Pickups occur on Fridays. The BHA has recently renovated space at the High Street Veterans Apartments for Brookline Thrives staff and volunteers to package the food for distribution at various Brookline Public Schools.
- BHA and BFP have had meaningful partnership for many years.
- There are currently two BFP locations: St. Paul's Church and Egmont Street Veterans Apartments. A third BFP location is scheduled to open on March 24, 2020 at High Street Veterans Apartments.
- An emergency food distribution plan has been put into place in cooperation with the BHA. This includes: a trimmed down volunteer staff to encourage social distancing; keeping BFP consumers out of BHA buildings; and the provision of pre-packaged bags of food for pick up.
- The provision of food to residents in need is critically important at this time.
- Over 900 Brookline households are served by the BFP. Half of the households reside at the BHA. The BFP expects an increase in participation when the High Street Veterans Apartments location opens.
- If a BHA resident requests food, they are automatically qualified with no paperwork needed.
- 1,100 Brookline Public School students are eligible for free lunch, and Brookline Thrives wants to reach all of them.
- Seniors and infirmed are a target population for whom the BFP wants to offer home deliveries.
- Under the current circumstances, the BFP is relaxing the once every two weeks use restriction.
- There have been a tremendous number of inquiries from members of the community wanting to help in light of the health emergency.

Board Reports

Mr. Jacobs reported the following:

- An Executive Search Committee held its first meeting in the effort to hire a new Executive Director.

- A consulting contract has been signed with Egmont Associates and an outreach plan has been put together for wide distribution.
- There is a tight timeline, with meetings scheduled through June.
- The committee is confident that quality candidates will be found.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- Approval of the FY 2021 budgets and the Asset Management Report are being deferred to a planned second March BHA meeting.
- BHA staff is doing a tremendous job in response to the Coronavirus, communicating well and adjusting quickly to the changing circumstances.
- Maintenance staff are shifting a great deal of their focus to sanitizing the sites, particularly the senior developments and BHA offices. Two temporary workers have been hired to assist in this effort. Many residents have expressed their gratitude that this work is being done.
- The BHA is following the Town's lead with respect to who reports to work/designation of essential staff. Maintenance staff continue to work on site, and a limited number of administrative staff are on site as well.
- Communications and postings to residents are ongoing.
- Essential functions include: paying bills; processing receivables; conducting interim rent adjustments as worker hours are reduced or eliminated; emergency work orders; and sanitizing efforts.
- Preparations for remote work is ongoing.

Mr. Jacobs suggested that the BHA should consider any potential risks to BHA residents associated with the upcoming elections and the election polling locations in BHA senior buildings. Mr. Dober agreed, saying that planned activities at BHA locations have been cancelled. The Springwell hot lunch program at Morse Apartments has been converted to a box lunch pickup program. The tax prep program at the family buildings will instead be conducted through the mail.

Mr. Dober continued his report:

- BHA construction projects are being suspended. The likelihood of being able to continue the 61 Park Street redevelopment work is being considered.

Ms. Cohen said that the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) has shut down virtually all construction projects, including tax credit projects. There has been no pushback from the contractors thus far. CHA is contacting every lender/investor regarding the consequences of delays.

RAD Update

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

61 Park Street

- Staff is assessing ongoing operations on a daily basis with: Construction Manager; Owner's Project Manager; architect; contractor; lenders/investors.
- The work is proceeding with caution, observing CDC protocols.
- The hope is to finish four units and some of the first-floor community space work this week. These residents are eager to move into their new apartments without delay.
- Supply chain issues are occurring.
- Tax credit awards could be in jeopardy if deadlines are missed.

Mr. Jacobs asked if the lenders/investors have been notified. Ms. Maffei said that they have been notified. The project can technically be shut down for 21 days without default.

Mr. Dober asked for the Board Members' views regarding proceeding with construction under the circumstances. Ms. Cohen said that the CHA is grappling with the same issues. She would be happy to connect BHA staff with CHA staff.

Ms. Maffei continued her report:

90 Longwood Avenue

- The restructuring approval (RCC) has been received from HUD. The project is now in closing mode.
- An RFP has been issued for sub-contractors. Bids are due on April 2, 2020.
- A physical walk-through has been cancelled for sub-bidders, and a virtual walk-through has been offered.

Other Redevelopment

- Staff is continuing to advance plans for the relocation of the Maintenance Department office to Kickham Apartments.
- The meeting scheduled with Town staff members related to the potential redevelopment of Col. Floyd Apartments and the meeting scheduled with residents of Col. Floyd Apartments have both been cancelled.

Consent Agenda

On a motion from Ms. Katz and a second from Ms. Cohen, the consent agenda was unanimously approved and authorized the following: the minutes of the Board Meeting held on February 25, 2020; and Final Completion of the contract with Nationwide Construction LLC for the exterior stairs repair project at 1057 Beacon Street.

61 Park Change Order

Ms. Maffei said that Change Order #5, calls for: larger kitchen sinks and matching faucets (the sink originally designed was undersized); a window well for common area blinds; and the relocation of the sprinklers in wheelchair units. This brings the total cost of the change orders to 40% of contingency.

Mr. Jacobs asked if there are any significant change orders expected in the future. Ms. Maffei said that the Building Department is requiring the replacement of vertical risers, with this cost estimated at between \$300,000 and \$400,000. A relevant factor is that Colantonio expects not to need most of the builders' contingency. Ms. Maffei, however, does not know what the financial impact of slowing or shutting down construction will be.

Ms. Maffei said that ABCD's LEAN program has agreed to provide \$950,000 in funding for the energy efficient HVAC system once the work is completed.

Mr. Dober said that the BHA will be asking the investors to share in any potential losses related to the current health emergency.

On a motion from Ms. Dugan and a second from Ms. Sullivan, Change Order #5 to the contract with Colantonio, Inc. in the amount of \$112,228.78, increasing the total contract amount to \$16,721,821 was unanimously approved.

Contract Award

Mr. Dober said that the entrance door and lock replacement project at High Street Veterans and Egmont Street Veterans Apartments will be funded by the BHA's largest ever CDBG award from the Town. Staff will need to discuss the prospect of a delayed start with the contractor and the Town.

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Sullivan, a contract to One Source Construction LLC for replacement doors and locks at High Street Veterans Apartments and Egmont Street Veterans Apartments in the amount of \$373,696 was unanimously approved.

Contract Award

Mr. Dober said that there was one satisfactory bid for services related to the temporary relocation of BHA offices during the renovations at 90 Longwood Avenue. Wakefield Moving and Storage has done good work for the Town. Note that the bid number shown in the table included in the Board package is inaccurate.

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Katz, a contract to Wakefield Moving & Storage Inc., in the base amount of \$15,983 to relocate the BAH staff offices during the renovation of 90 Longwood Avenue was unanimously approved.

Other Business

The Board confirmed that the next two meetings will be held by conference call on March 24, 2020 at 4:30 PM and on April 14, 2020 at 4:30 PM.

On a motion from Ms. Katz and a second from Ms. Cohen, it was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 PM.

**A TRUE COPY
ATTEST**



**Patrick Dober
Executive Director**

