

Brookline Housing Authority
Special Meeting Minutes
March 24, 2010
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 said that due to the Coronavirus health emergency and Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order pertaining to the state's open meeting law, this meeting is being conducted by conference call.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- Ms. Dugan is the only person who filed papers to run for the BHA Board of Commissioners before the deadline.
- Mr. Dober has informed the Board of his willingness to extend the mid-June date at which time he planned to end his employment at the BHA. He is committed to providing transition support to the new Executive Director (Board Members and staff expressed their appreciation to Mr. Dober).
- BHA ESOL Director, Danielle Mendola, will represent the BHA in the upcoming virtual Town Hall meeting hosted by the Brookline Community Foundation and Select Board Member Heather Hamilton.
- BHA Assistant Executive Director, Matthew Baronas, and BHA Director of Subsidized Housing and Applications, Carlos Hernandez, will speak at tonight's meeting about ongoing communications with staff and with residents during the coronavirus health emergency.

Mr. Baronas reported the following regarding BHA resident communications:

- On March 12, 2020, staff distributed a notice to all BHA residents informing them: that BHA offices were closed to the public until further notice; that Maintenance Department staff were focusing efforts on cleaning and disinfecting buildings and emergency work orders; and that group activities for residents were being suspended. Residents were given information on how to effectively communicate with BHA staff and Town and State Health Departments and were instructed as to protocol for staying healthy, including social distancing.
- On March 18, 2020, community rooms were closed at all sites.
- On March 23, visitors, other than health care workers and BHA service partners, were advised to not enter elevator buildings for seniors.
- Brookline Health Department coronavirus advisories are being posted at BHA developments.
- The BHA website is updated regularly with COVID-19 information and links.

Mr. Hernandez reported the following regarding BHA staff communications:

- Senior BHA staff and others participate in daily meetings by conference call.
- Staff are learning to communicate remotely with each other, checking email, and responding to phone messages.
- A rotating, on-site front office staff schedule to cover such tasks as answering switchboard calls and sorting mail has been implemented.

- Client communications are occurring through email, fax, US mail, and telephone.
- A priority has been placed on keeping up with interim rent adjustments resulting from residents losing income. Resident self-certification of income is being utilized to expedite these rent changes.
- Remote work technological capabilities are being expanded rapidly with BHA smart phone and laptop distribution to key staff, and implementation of remote access to work station PCs.

Mr. Jacobs asked if BHA's cyber security is adequate for the expanding remote work. Mr. Dober said yes and that strong security tools are being utilized to connect remotely to the BHA server.

Mr. Dober continued his report:

- The BHA is not aware of any coronavirus cases at BHA developments. Staff are preparing protocols, communications, signs, etc. to use as the situation changes.
- Maintenance staff are sanitizing all public touchpoints, such as doors, handrails, elevator and intercom panels, etc.
- Hand sanitizers have been installed in all elevator lobbies.

BHA ESOL Director, Danielle Mendola reported:

- Resident services are continuing with adjustments.
- The Brookline Food Pantry successfully opened its new High Street Veterans Apartments location today. They are home delivering food to elderly and disabled BHA residents. School nutrition programs are supplying lunches to students twice weekly.
- The free tax preparation program is continuing by mail and fax.
- The Brookline Center has expanded their Safety Net fund to BHA residents for emergency financial needs. Their counselors have shifted to a remote work model utilizing mental health telephone and video conferencing.
- Springwell Care Coordinators are reaching out remotely to BHA residents and have continued their meals delivery programs.
- BHA's Next Steps and ESOL programs are continuing to communicate with program participants though group classes and in-person meetings are suspended
- The Brookline Select Board's Complete Count Committee is continuing their census outreach efforts. Danielle Mendola has been appointed to the Committee by the Select Board.

Consent Agenda

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Dugan, the consent agenda was unanimously approved and authorized the following: the minutes of the Board Meeting held on March 17, 2020; and the annual write-off of tenant accounts receivable for BHA Fiscal Year 2020 in the amounts stated in the attached memo.

Redevelopment Report

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

61 Park Street

- Construction was suspended as of March 20, 2020.
- Resident relocations were suspended as of March 21, 2020. As such, there are four renovated but vacant units.
- Staff is consulting with legal counsel, its construction contractor Colantonio, and its lender and investor, as these are unprecedented circumstances.

Mr. Jacobs asked how many months are left on the construction schedule. Ms. Maffei estimated that seven months remain. All units are scheduled to be leased by the end of the calendar year according to the current projections. The hope and expectation are that the federal government will extend tax credit deadlines.

Mr. Dober said that the BHA has assembled a good team of staff and consultants to navigate through these uncertainties. The construction team is prepared to remobilize but as time goes by, there will be additional expenses to the project.

Ms. Maffei continued her report:

90 Longwood Avenue

- Bids for the sub-contractors are due on April 2, 2020. An addendum to the contract will include language regarding the construction moratorium in Brookline and a caveat to incorporate a delay of up to 90 days.
- The BHA has received the restructuring commitment from HUD and the process for closing has been initiated.

Architect Contract Amendment

Ms. Maffei said that as part of planned 90 Longwood Avenue office renovations, the BHA Maintenance Department office will be relocated to 190 Harvard Street. The 190 Harvard Street renovations will need mechanical and electrical design services beyond what was originally anticipated

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, the contract with BWA Architecture for the renovation of 90 Longwood Avenue and the BHA's offices by increasing the total fee by \$18,175 as further described in the attached memo was unanimously approved.

Operating Budget Approval

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- It is a good time to be a public agency and the BHA finances are in good shape, however, the FY 2021 budget was prepared without sufficient time to account for the coronavirus factor.
- The combined surplus for FY 2021 is projected to be \$562,148.
- All programs are expected to at least break even with the exception of a slight deficit in the federal public housing program.
- The reserves at the end of FY 2021 are estimated at \$5.6 million. This represents five to six months of operating expenses.
- Factors contributing to the estimated surplus include: the development fee and cash flow for 86 Dummer Street and 61 Park Street; Section 8 administrative fees; and tight cost controls.
- BHA is projecting approximately \$500,000 in RAD and Real Estate Activity income if 90 Longwood Avenue closes at any time in the fiscal year 2021.
- Budget reserves support the expansion in staff necessary for the ongoing RAD activity.
- New this year in the budget presentations is 61 Park Street finances broken down as a separate entity.

Mr. Jacobs asked what the cash flow figure would be without the development fee factored in. This is important to the long-term support for BHA operating expenses. Ms. Maffei said that annual stabilized operating cash flow for 61 Park is projected to be \$135,000 per year.

Mr. Dober continued his report:

- The effect of the coronavirus will most likely have a negative impact on the budget.
- The \$4.6 million in projected rental income could go down significantly because of residents' lost income.
- BHA-paid insurance and health care expenses for employees could go up.
- The negative coronavirus effect is tempered by the fact that extra funding help is expected from HUD and DHCD and the fact that the BHA has strong reserves.

On a motion from Ms. Dugan and a second from Ms. Cohen, the FY 2021 operating budget projections for the BHA's state and federal programs and for 61 Park LLC were unanimously approved.

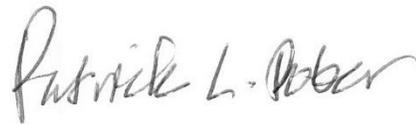
Other Business

Ms. Katz suggested that there might be a better method for posting the public Board meeting conference call access number.

The Board confirmed that the next meeting will be held by conference call on April 14, 2020 at 4:30 PM.

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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ATTEST**



**Patrick Dober
Executive Director**