Penns Grove Housing Authority

40 South Broad Street

Penns Grove, NJ 08069

Minutes of the Meeting June 3, 2020

The meeting was opened with a reading of the Sunshine Law. A motion was made by Karen Wright and seconded by Ignacia Washington. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

ROLL CALL

Present: Karen Wright, Ignacia Washington, Laverne Hill, John Washington, Carolina Valdez, Catherina Rutland, James K. Grace, Esq.

Absent: Margie Pollard, Hersell Smith, and Dorraine Robinson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the regular minutes of the May 6, 2020 meeting was made by Ignacia Washington and seconded by Laverne Hill. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

**OLD BUSINESS**

STATUS REPORT

Catherina went over the status report. She stated we currently have one vacant unit at Penn Towers and three vacant units at Silver Run Park.

Catherina reported that we had one case for eviction for non-payment of rent and a harassment case scheduled with the courts for May. However, due to the Coronavirus courts are closed for non-essential legal matters. She stated that when courts are hearing cases again, they will reschedule those cases.

Catherina presented the monthly maintenance and unit report.

Catherina stated that we will be hosting a video conferencing homeownership class through Zoom which is scheduled for Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 6:00PM. She asked the Board to please spread the word!

Catherina was pleased to announce that each senior received a free hot dinner on Tuesday, May 12, 2020 from United Way and distributed from the Riverview Success Center. She wanted to thank Dorraine Robinson who delivered the meals to our seniors.

Catherina stated that she was contacted by the South Jersey Food bank to see if we would be interested in joining their senior food program. She stated she was given applications to complete to be placed on a waiting list.

Catherina was pleased to report that in addition to the $98,213 in CARE stimulus monies for our public housing program, we received Section 8 stimulus monies in the amount of $5,554. She also provided the Board with PIH notice 2020-07 with guidance on how the CARE Stimulus monies may be used.

RAD UPDATE

Catherina stated all RAD plans are on hold until this pandemic is under control. There was some discussion on the matter.

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Catherina stated that the PGHA staff has been working diligently to make sure all work is being completed and that she has been updating the Board and tenants on a regular basis on housing matters.

She updated the Board on items that she was working on to prepare the office for when we open which included the installation of plexi-glass for the front office and a new lock system to prevent transmission of the virus.

She updated the Board on plans to open the office with new regulations and procedures including by appointment only for the public and minimized staff at one at a time to reduce exposure to the virus to staff, tenants, and the public once HUD has provided guidance and the Governor has instructed us to begin to re-open. Catherina stated the staff will continue to work in shifts in the office and at home until the threat has been diminished.

There was some discussion about the matter.

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL OF FEE ACCOUNTANT CONTRACT

An advertisement had been placed in the paper for proposals for Fee Accountant Services for the fiscal year 2020-2021. The only response was from Hymanson, Parnes and Giampaolo, CPA. Catherina stated that we have worked with their firm for fee accounting services for a few years and have used their auditing services in the past. They are experienced with HUD accounting as well as Federal procurement requirements and laws and have a sound reputation. A motion to appoint Hymanson, Parnes and Giampaolo, CPA from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 was made by John Washington and seconded by Ignacia Washington. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

APPROVAL OF LEGAL SERVICES FOR GENERAL SOLICITOR CONTRACT

An advertisement had been placed in the paper for proposals for Legal Services for General Council for the fiscal year 2020-2021. The only response was from our present Solicitor, Grace, Marmero & Associates, LLP. Catherina and the Board commented that they are satisfied with our current solicitor, Mr. James Grace. There was a discussion on the rising cost of legal fees and how we can reduce costs. Mr. Grace stated he was willing to make adjustments based on our needs. A motion to re-appoint Grace, Marmero & Associates, LLP was made by John Washington and seconded by Laverne Hill. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

APPROVAL OF AUDITOR FYE 6/30/19 CONTRACT

An advertisement had been placed in the paper for proposals for the Auditor for the June 30, 2019 audit. The only response was from the auditing firm Francis J. McConnell. Catherina stated the auditing firm has all of the necessary credentials and has been performing Housing Authority audits in New Jersey for many years. A motion to appoint Francis J. McConnell at the proposed rate for FYE 6/30/19 audit was made by John Washington and seconded by Ignacia Washington. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

APPROVAL OF EXTERMINATOR CONTRACT

The advertisement was placed in the paper for proposals for Exterminator Services for the fiscal year 2020-2022. Catherina stated that they received two responses one from Western Pest Services and the other from Pest-A-Side Exterminating. Catherina stated that the lowest bidder was Pest-A-Side Exterminating. However she noted that we had used the company in 2010 and were not satisfied with their services. Catherina stated we can award the contract to Pest-A-Side Exterminating again and cancel with a 30 day written notice if we are not satisfied with their services or we can re-bid. After some discussion, a motion to appoint Pest-A-Side Exterminating was made by John Washington and seconded by Ignacia Washington. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

APPROVAL OF ELEVATOR CONTRACT

An advertisement had been placed in the paper for proposals for Elevator Services for the fiscal year 2020-2022. Catherina stated that they received three responses one from our current service provider ACE Elevators, Brandywine Elevator Company, and Otis Elevator Company. She stated that ACE Elevator has been prompt on all service calls and in completing repairs. Ace Elevator was also the lowest bidder. Her recommendation was to re-appoint Ace Elevator. A motion to appoint Ace Elevator was made by John Washington and seconded by Ignacia Washington. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

PET POLICY

Catherina explained to the Board that she has had several complaints about pitbulls and large dogs. She stated she had the attorney review our pet policy, HUD Polices, American Disability Act and other laws to check for compliance in regard to breeds and large dogs.

She reviewed the pet policy with the Board in regards to the differences between a pet under the pet policy, a service animal, and an assistance animal. One of the main distinctions she and Mr. Grace brought out was that we cannot turn down a service or emotional needs animal unless one of the following is proven to be true:

1. Animal is not to be a threat to the health and safety of others
2. Animal has caused substantial physical damage to the property
3. Animal is out of control and the tenant does not take effective action to control it
4. Animal is not registered and licensed at the Borough
5. Animal is not properly vaccinated
6. Paperwork is not submitted to the PGHA office on the animal and any additional follow-up questions that staff may have in regards to the animal have not been answered.

There was some discussion on the matter.

HUD WAIVERS RESOLUTION

Catherina stated that she provided PIH Notice 2020-05 at the last meeting for Board review. The notice went over HUD regulation waivers that housing authorities across America could request due to COVID-19.

Catherina stated she would like the following waivers approved at this time:

1. Our PHA 5-Year and Annual Plan
2. All HQS inspections
3. Tenant Community Service Requirements

John Washington made a motion to approve Resolution 9-2020 which would waive the above regulations during COVID 19 until HUD removes the waivers. It was seconded by Ignacia Washington and unanimously approved by all present.

APPROVAL FOR ADOPTION OF STATE BUDGET FYE 6/30/20

Catherina presented an e-mail reflecting that the State Budget for FYE 6/30/20 was approved for submission. John Washington made a motion to approve the State Budget for FYE 6/30/20 for adoption and it was seconded by Ignacia Washington. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

A motion to approve the bills listed below was made by Ignacia Washington and seconded by Laverne Hill. The motion was unanimously approved by all present. General Fund checks 14919 thru 14945, and no check for MOD, Congregate or Dial-A-Bus. Also Supplemental Bill Lists were approved for General Fund, Security Deposit, Rental Checks, Payroll Checks, Mod, Section 8, Congregate, and Dial-A-Bus, representing checks issued after the May Board meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION

There was no public present.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by John Washington and seconded by Laverne Hill. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.