Penns Grove Housing Authority

40 South Broad Street

Penns Grove, NJ 08069

Minutes of the Meeting July 1, 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, Hersell Smith, Margie Pollard and Dorraine Robinson, Carolina Valdez, Catherina Rutland, James K. Grace, Esq.

Absent: John Washington and Laverne Hill

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the regular minutes of the June 3, 2020 meeting was made by Ignacia Washington and seconded by Hersell Smith. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.

**OLD BUSINESS**

STATUS REPORT

Catherina went over the status report. She stated we currently have two vacant units at Penn Towers and two 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 stated she contacted Richard Boultinghouse, Salem County Court Officer who has the authority to do lock-outs, about our one pending warrant for removal case that has not taken place due to COVID. She explained that he said that the Stay-At-Home Order for New Jersey has been lifted but not the State of Emergency. She went on to mention that he stated that he cannot continue with a lock out until 60 days after the State of Emergency ends.

Catherina reported that we have several cases that need to be processed for eviction for non-payment of rent. However, she stated that we do not believe that with HUD COVID guidelines and the State of New Jersey COVID restrictions that we will be able to process any new evictions until August 24, 2020.

Catherina presented the monthly maintenance and unit report.

Catherina presented a letter to our residents detailing information on our re-opening beginning June 30, 2020 as discussed at our last meeting. She also stated that they scheduled a tenant’s meeting for June 30th at 11AM via Google Meet for us to answer any questions or concerns from our tenants.

Catherina was pleased to report that we are going to start a volunteer program at Penn Towers called “Tenant Community Watch Program”. It will mirror a Neighborhood Watch Program but for the building where tenants can empower themselves to report and document violations and report them to us and the police. There was a notice enclosed in their packet. Catherina mentioned that if the program is successful it will deter people from both criminal and lease violations.

Catherina reported that the classes for commissioners are now being offered on-line by Rutgers and that Dorraine Robinson was signed up for an on-line class in June.

Catherina stated that our video conferencing homeownership class through a zoom class on Thursday, June 4, 2020 went well and we may schedule another class in the future.

Catherina reported that many organizations and churches have been donating fruit, eggs and other products to our seniors. She acknowledged that we appreciate the support of our community during this time.

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 presented print outs from HUD about COVID and HUD regulations.

The Board approved an air purifier system for the office to help combat the spread of viruses, bacteria and mold. There was some discussion on the matter.

After some discussion about the Coronavirus, the Board approved for us to purchase masks for all tenants and their households. Catherina stated she would order the masks for tenant distribution.

Police security was also discussed to help tenants feel at ease during this global pandemic. The Board gave Catherina permission to contact the police department and ask about any community funding and if there was no funding available then the pricing for security.

There was some discussion about the matter.

NEW BUSINESS

CARE STIMULUS FUNDS

Catherina stated that she would like to use some of the funds for additional indoor and outdoor seating in a effort to practice social distancing. The Board agreed to review options for seating. There was some additional conversations on the use of CARE stimulus funds.

UNIT TRANSFERS

Catherina reported that unit transfers are becoming increasingly expensive for the housing authority especially when large purchase items such as carpet replacement are needed. She stated that the accountant wanted our unit transfer policy to be discussed with the Board. Catherina relayed to the Board that in Mr. Giampolo’s professional opinion that some of our transfers are not mandatory and therefore cost should be considered a factor when determining whether a unit transfer should be approved. There was a discussion on the matter.

After some discussion, it was mentioned that Catherina will add unit transfer requests to the maintenance report for the Board to review.

MISCELLANEOUS

There was some discussion about pet complaints. Catherina stated she will send out a tenant memo about pet reminders and contact tenants who are allegedly feeding stray animals. In addition, the Board discussed issues with smoking and designated smoking areas.

Ignacia Washington reported that Councilman Carl Washington would be donating N95 masks to our seniors and they also had additional fans left from the Annual Fan Drive as well. Catherina thanked Ms. And Mrs. Washington and stated she will send out a letter to our tenants.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

A motion to approve the bills listed below was made by Margie Pollard and seconded by Ignacia Washington. The motion was unanimously approved by all present. General Fund checks 14951 thru 14993, 2518 check for MOD, and no checks for 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 June Board meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION

There was no public present.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Margie Pollard and seconded by Dorraine Robinson. The motion was unanimously approved by all present.