

WATERTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes
Regular Meeting: Wednesday, June 9, 2021
VIA Zoom Meeting – 7:00 P.M.

1. Roll Call.

Members Present: Janelle Wilk – Chairwoman/Acting Executive Director
Dan DiVito – Vice Chairman
Sharon Pratt – Resident Commissioner
Denise Russ - Commissioner
Carmine Verno - Commissioner

Other Present: Russell Antonacci – Manager
Lori Finke – Property Manager

2. Chairwoman’s Report – Acting Executive Director

Janelle Wilk: I hope everyone is staying cool and enjoying the very warm weather we are having right now. Again, I want to thank everyone for their patience and understanding with the transition that is happening. I am happy to say we now have a signed contract between PropertyWorx and the Watertown Housing Authority.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Special Meeting VIA Zoom – April 28, 2021

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Daniel DiVito to approve the minutes for the Special Meeting for April 28, 2021.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

4. Approval of bills paid for:

- a. May 2021
- b. June 2021

Denise Russ asked about bundling Eversource to save time and paper.

Russell Antonacci, Property Manager: We can give you three lines stating this is the Eversource bill for Buckingham Terrace, Country Ridge and this is the total for Truman Terrace without giving the individual breakdown for each meter. We will always have the breakdown internally on what the meter reading is.

A motion was made Daniel DiVito, and seconded by Carmine Verno to approve bills for May 2021.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Sharon Pratt to approve bills for June 2021.

Denise Russ did not see the line for plumbing for the new tub in Unit A4 at Truman Terrace.

Lori Finke, Manager: It will be in the next month's bills.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

5. Property Manager's Report

Russell Antonacci reported:

- a. Planning – We started the process of assessing each property consistent on what we discussed. We will be able to provide you with a detailed report next month on our findings.
- b.
 - i. Truman Terrace Exterior walk-around – performed May 12th
 - ii. Truman Terrace Interior Inspections – performed June 7th
 1. Information gathering – call to aide issue
 - iii. Next – Exterior walk-around Buckingham Terrace

Russell Antonacci, Property Manager: Mr. Antonacci noted that there is a call to aide issue specific to Truman Terrace which was abandoned. The call to aide system has switches in the back bedrooms and bathrooms, it is a switch if somebody falls the switch can be hit and an alarm system goes off on the door. I want to talk a little bit about what the Housing Authority responsibilities is in regards to the call to aide switches. The fact is the system existed and at some point in time there was an issue and instead of rectifying the issue the choice was made to abandon the system and I don't know how many years the system was abandoned. It provided a false sense of security for the residents of Truman Terrace in the sense of these switches were there and I don't know if there was any communication to the residents that the system did not work. The switches are there on the wall and if someone hit it, it would not do anything. We recently hired a contractor to go in and with a little bit of effort we reactivated the system. With that said we are going to send out a communication to the residents of Truman Terrace giving them more details about the system. But I do want to state in this meeting and it will also be communicated in a document notice to Truman Terrace that the call to aide system that is in place at Truman Terrace has recently been reactivated. It is not a substitute for lifeline service or another personal alert system that may be required for a resident's personal safety. This system is a courtesy system that the Housing Authority has in place but it is not our obligation to respond to the call to aide that would come from the switches. There is no specific entity or individual or organization that would be required to respond to these switches. It is really a courtesy and to give the residents a sense of security because if these switches are pulled the alarm does go off and people will hear it but nobody has a specific obligation to answer the system. With that said if the system is in place, it should be functioning, there is no

point in having these systems on the wall if they are not working. If you are going to abandon the system you might want to remove the switches and communicate what you are doing with the residents.

Lori Finke, Manager: When I did the internal audit today, P J Electric went through the whole thing to make sure that everything was working 100%. When I went through each individual apartment, I did both the bathroom and living room just to double check and everything was working very well. Some of the lights that were over the doors were just lights and they were not working. It also has a buzzer now, which is nice because when you are not looking for the white light with the bell at the end of the building going off. It is in a much better status right now with the newer technology.

Janelle Wilk: Thank you for following through and getting this corrected. I do have one request now that it is up and functioning. I think we should do a test at least a couple times a year to make sure that we don't have this false sense of security and that they are working.

Russell Antonacci, Property Manager: The next phase is Buckingham Terrace on the exterior walk around and I will notify in advance when that date is going to be.

- c. Vacancy Update – A tracking sheet will be supplied to the commission with ongoing vacancies to see activity and status.

Lori Finke, Manager reported:

Truman Terrace – 5 open apartments with 3 of them ready to go. With a recent passing there will be 6 open.

Buckingham Terrace – New tenants started at Buckingham on May 1st and June 1st which filled the 2 open vacancies.

Country Ridge – No vacancies.

Waiting List Update – Ninety-eight applications were filled out and 58 have been returned. I have already exhausted all of the folks that were already on the list and that was closed. Now we are moving into the new names, I have a spread sheet in the order that they have been received.

- d. Maintenance Update – A report was submitted from April 30th through June 9th with 48 work orders serviced and completed.

Denise Russ noted a lot of bathroom repairs were done.

Lori Finke, Manager: What we are finding with the shutoffs they are so rusted and, in some cases, they are afraid to shut them off. The toilets are getting very old and that is

why this is happening and, in some cases, we replace them. It is the same with the bathroom sinks as well.

Russ Antonacci, Property Manager: We will be implementing a preventive maintenance program.

1. Flagpole - Lori Finke checked back with the companies about questions asked from the past meeting.

The commission reviewed the figures and had discussions on the company's paperwork submitted.

The consensus of the commission is to go with A & A.

Lori Finke, Manager: Will contact company to see if there is a warranty

A motion was made Sharon Pratt, and seconded by Daniel DiVito I make a motion that we hire A & A to put up the flagpole.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

6. Old Business

- a. Discussion on opening community building – We did open the Community Room since the middle of May with the kitchens still closed. We are asking if people can wear their masks, be socially distant and to wash hands.

Discussions with the commission members on opening the kitchens.

Sharon Pratt wanted to congratulate and thank Russ and Lori for the time they put in at Truman Terrace and the tenants do appreciate it.

The consensus of the commission to keep the kitchens closed will remain.

7. Executive Session: In at 7:46 p.m.

- a. Discussion of receipt of CHRO Complaint
- b. Discussion about contract between Resident Service Coordinator and WHA

Janelle Wilk, I move we go into Executive Session for the purpose of a discussion about CHRO complaint and a discussion about contract between Resident Service Coordinator and WHA. Attending executive session will be Dan DiVito, Carmine Verno, Denise Russ, Sharon Pratt, Russ Antonacci, Lori Finke and I, Janelle Wilk.

Time out of Executive Session 8:27 p.m.

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Daniel DiVito I make a motion to go back into regular session.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

Back into regular session 8:27 p.m.

8. Regular Session

- a. Possible action to refer to WHA insurance company for defense – We will file an insurance claim for defense.
- b. Possible action on contract between Resident Service Coordinator and WHA.

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Denise Russ I make a motion to table.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

9. Adjournment

A motion was made Dan DiVito, and seconded by Carmine Verno to adjourn the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

Janelle Wilk, Chairwoman/Acting Executive Director
Watertown Housing Authority