

WATERTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes
Regular Meeting: Wednesday, July 14, 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

Chair Janelle Wilk: I hope everyone had a great fourth of July. I hope everybody and mother nature will be kind to us for our picnic. From 11:30 to 1:30 we will have some hotdogs, hamburgers and chicken and I hope we have a great time. I just want to reiterate if anyone has any questions or concerns and wants to reach out to any of the commissioners, we all have email addresses, it is located on our website. Please understand that we are all volunteers and we do care but you would have to give us a couple of days or up to a week because we do not check it all the time. If it is something that is urgent it needs to be taken care, Lori Finke is in the office all the time and you can call or stop by the office. If you have question or concerns or want to say hi to us, please feel free to email anyone of us. Again, please understand we are all working and we are volunteers it will take a couple of days up to a week to respond back to you.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting VIA Zoom – June 9, 2021

A motion was made Denise Russ, and seconded by Dan DiVito to approve the minutes for the Regular Meeting for June 9, 2021.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

4. Approval of bills paid for:

a. July 2021

A motion was made Dan DiVito, and seconded by Denise Russ to approve bills for July 2021.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

5. Property Manager's Report

Russell Antonacci, Manager reported:

- a. ACH/Direct Debit of Rent becoming available. – It is a convenience for residents, instead of writing out a check. We are working with Thomaston Bank, if the unit owner supplies us with their bank account number, a routing number and signs the agreement we have drafted, it will allow us to automatically debit their rents on a monthly basis. It is an optional offer; the residents do not have to participate into it. I would like to present this to the communities with a September 1st start date.

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Sharon Pratt to approve ACH/Direct Debit 2021.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

- b. Financial Audit – New Auditor proposed – David Cappelletti with Clermont & Associates, LLC, Previous auditor – Jason Geel with Maletta & Company, CPAs.

Russell Antonacci, Manager reported: The Housing Authority has an audit every two years and is up for another audit in 2021 which was due last month. We got an extension from CHAFA, they understand the transition that is taking place. The former auditor never reached out and contacted us, I have not spoken to him, there has been no effort to contact me. I was contacted by an auditor who was made aware, I had not worked with before they have great referrals and great recommendations. They manage many Housing Authorities in the State of Connecticut and asked if they could do the 2021 audit. I have met with him they are reputable and eager to go. If approval is given, they would have our audit completed on or before the day the extension will expire which is July 31st. The former auditor gave a verbal estimate of \$7,500 and the \$7,500 is the same price the Clermont Associates can do it. It is a professional service we do not need to bid it out.

A motion was made Denise Russ, and seconded by Carmine Verno to hire Clermont & Associates LLC as the auditors for 2021.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

- c. Community Interior/Exterior Inspections – Reserve & Budget Planning
Russell Antonacci, Manager: It is a progress report showing the efforts being taken doing the assessments for the properties with interior and exterior inspections. Once we have the reports done, we would put a proposal together on how we envision moving forward with a budgetary standpoint for operations and capital reserves plan.

Lori Finke, Property Manager: I have reached out to contractors and I am working on getting pricing on a few of the different line items. As soon as I have that I will present that to the commission.

d. Vacancy Update

Lori Finke, Property Manager reported:

Truman Terrace – 7 open apartments with one being rented by August 1st.

Buckingham Terrace – Unit #A6 we are leaving alone right now.

Country Ridge – No vacancies. One will be open soon and will be ready to show.

Waiting List Update

Lori Finke, Property Manager reported:

There are 117 applications filled out and 62 have been returned and I am working off that list.

e. Variance Request Form

Lori Finke, Property Manager: In your packets we have put together a variance request. If someone wants to do a modification it is for the commission to know what their intentions are and to make sure it will be safe. I will need to distribute if it is approved from the commission.

Russell Antonacci, Manager: The idea of the variance request is we want to have a process where the tenants need to come through management and the commission before they do the modifications. It is a way of managing and controlling it to have a better understanding of what is going to take place so we are protected from an insurance and liability standpoint. The tenants will submit the variance request, the request will be in your report and a portion of the meeting will be dedicated to reviewing and discussing the variances, then you vote in favor of or deny. It is a great way to tract the history.

f. Maintenance

Lori Finke, Property Manager reported:

Updated Report from June 9th to July 13th with 59 workorders assigned and 8 still open.

- i. Possible Speed Bumps at Buckingham Terrace – concerns with speeding vehicles at all 3 sites. They would be removable so they will not get hit by the snowplows.

- ii. Possible purchase of storage containers for Truman Terrace – Truman Terrace is in need of storage containers in the common area for tenants to store their shovels and rakes.
- iii. Flagpole – Complete – the job was done nicely.
- iv. Country Ridge Patching – Complete – patching done in front of the dumpsters.

6. New Business

a. Discussion about upcoming projects

- i. Discussion about Truman Terrace window project
- ii. Discussion about new roof project at Country Ridge
- iii. Discussion about Buckingham Terrace window project.

Chair Janelle Wilk: In March of last year, projects were discussed and approved but due to COVID it was halted.

Vice Chair Dan DiVito: Supply availability is low with lead times long and prices are astronomical. Roof shingle colors are reduced focusing on the most popular colors.

Russell Antonacci, Manager: Once the assessment is done, I will have a proposal for all 3 communities with timelines and cost. At Country Ridge we do have a few roof leaks and it is something we can go in and patch, stop the leak and then we can move on. I think the roof at Country Ridge could probably wait another year it is not an emergency. The windows at Truman Terrace I know is a pre-approved project and is something that would affect our ability to move forward on any funding, if we could not use our own capital, we would like that.

A letter will be sent to all tenants at all three sites letting them know that the commission is working on the projects and it is delayed due to COVID.

Chair Janelle Wilk will contact the State Representatives for any thoughts on giving the commission some directions on funding.

b. Discussion and possible action to terminate contract with Scholar Painting.

Lori Finke, Property Manager: In November they were in the middle of the job and they thought the job was done. I went into the apartments and it was not done. Projects were scheduled and they were not showing up and this was a continuous pattern for months. They have not been here for a month and a half now. We have apartments coming up shortly that need to be painted.

Chair Janelle Wilk: This is a constant problem they do not show up, delaying other contractors work needing to be done. There were other concerning issues that were documented.

Lori Finke, Property Manager: There has been multiple complaints on every job.

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Daniel DiVito to terminate the contract with Scholar Painting.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

Chair Janelle Wilk: We will terminate the contract with Scholar Painting on July 14th.

- c. Discussion and possible action to award interior paint contract for all three sites to the next lowest bidder.

Chair Janelle Wilk: You have in your packet the next qualified bidder; it would be 3 J's Painting and they will hold the prices they bid on.

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Sharon Pratt to award interior painting contract for all 3 sites to 3J's painting.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

- d. Discussion and possible action to increase hours and hourly wage (per national minimum wage increase) for Pastor Estrada.

Chair Janelle Wilk: We had discussions to increase hours, by two extra hours on Tuesday and two extra hours on Wednesday with a total of 19 hours for the maintenance person.

Lori Finke, Property Manager: It would be great to have him for the apartments to try to get them open due to the maintenance person running with all the calls. It would be nice to have Pat for a few extra hours to get him started on cleaning.

Chair Janelle Wilk: The next part of it he will get an increase August 1st due to a Federal National Minimum Wage Increase. Pat right now makes \$12.50 for minimum wage he will get \$13.00 an hour starting August 1st. He would get 4 more hours from 15 to 19.

The consensus of the commission is that he does a good job, he works very hard, he is very reliable and has a great personality.

A motion was made Carmine Verno, and seconded by Sharon Pratt Pastor Estrada would get 4 more hours.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

7. Old Business

a. Discussion on Community Buildings.

Chair Janelle Wilk: They are already open but right now with masks on.

The consensus of the commission there is no way of patrolling the wearing of masks and will have signs put up that say masks are optional if you are fully vaccinated.

Lori Finke, Property Manager: Will look at other signs put up by businesses for verbiage.

Chair Janelle Wilk: With the extra hours Pat can sanitize the community rooms.

Sharon Pratt asked about opening up the kitchens. The residents want the kitchens open. I think before we start stocking the refrigerator with food it needs a thorough cleaning and also the coffee pots.

Chair Janelle Wilk: If we sanitize the kitchens, cleaning everything up we can open up the kitchen with a start of August 1st.

Sharon Pratt: If we could put a sign up if you are handling food stating "Please put on gloves" and have boxes of gloves in the kitchen.

Chair Janelle Wilk: All 3 kitchens will have signs with restrictions for August 1st.

8. Executive Session

9. Regular Session

10. Adjournment

A motion was made Denise Russ, and seconded by Daniel DiVito to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

By voice vote the motion was passed unanimously

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Janelle Wilk, Chairwoman/Acting Executive Director
Watertown Housing Authority