

A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF SALEM

June 25, 2020

A regular meeting of the Salem Housing Authority (SHA) Board of Commissioners was held on Thursday, June 25, 2020. The meeting was held virtually through the Go To Meeting platform. The meeting was convened at 5:00 pm.

Chairwoman Ferguson announced the Sunshine Law requirement had been met, properly posted, and advertised.

Karen Chiarello proceeded to call the roll at this time. Present were: Chairwoman Rebecca Ferguson, Commissioner Cathy Lanard, Commissioner Robert Lanard, Commissioner James Smith, and Executive Director/Secretary Paul Dice. Also present were Solicitor Adam Telsey and SHA staff.

Chairwoman Ferguson asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 28, 2020 meeting. Commissioner R. Lanard made a motion and Commissioner C. Lanard seconded. All present were in favor.

Financial Summary

The SHA posted \$13,900 in positive net income for May 2020. The SHA has \$13,107 in positive net income for the fiscal-year-to-date.

Coronavirus Cases

We have no reports any positive cases.

Ongoing Public Housing and Section 8 Operations

We are in Phase II of the State's re-opening plan. This stage still requests those who are working from home to continue to do so. In keeping with this requirement, the administrative staff is continuing to work from home.

With the opening of Phase II, we are able to start filling vacant units. We have 7 units in the process of being filled. Some of the applicants that were in queue have found other housing. However, we are still working towards the 7 by the end of the month.

We understand that Phase III will continue to encourage those working from home to continue to do so. We will continue will our current operational structure. The only contact with tenants that we will have is to finalize lease-ups.

Accounts receivable are much higher than they should be. There is some concern about what will happen when evictions can be processed again.

CARES Act Funding for Public Housing and Section 8 Programs

As previously reported, the SHA received \$158,567 for expenses related to preparing for, preventing, and responding to the Coronavirus Pandemic. We received another \$5,066 for similar Section 8 expenses. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was initially quite clear that the funds were to be used solely for Coronavirus-related expenses. Then HUD altered its course and authorized the CARES Act funds as supplements to routine operational and capital fund expenses. This was published in its most recent Frequently Asked Questions (Version 4, published 4/29/20) notice for public housing authorities. We have confirmed this information with the Accountants. We will definitely be taking advantage of the relaxation of the allowable spending. The money will be spent on capital projects that enhance our units.

Operational Efficiencies

Betsy Loyle has been working on implementing the following initiatives:

- Direct Deposit for Section 8 landlords in lieu of mailing checks.
- Direct Deposit debit from public housing tenant accounts with would automatically be accounted for in our property management computer program.
- Implementing online signature ability for all our contracts and paperwork through DocuSign
- New phones for the maintenance staff that will provide access to PHA Web for work orders, upload photos and track work progress.
- Looking into document imaging platform to eliminate paper files.

The numbers have not changed at all during the past few months, while working from home, with regard to reporting to HUD. The same amount of work is getting accomplished as when staff was working in the office. Paul stated that everyone is doing a great job. Chairwoman Ferguson thanked all the employees for their hard work.

Commissioner R. Lanard asked about the \$74,000 insurance bill. He wanted to confirm that this was a semi-annual payment. The staff confirmed that this was the case.

Chairwoman Ferguson stated that there were resolutions to approve.

Resolution #8-2020 Resolution Approving the payment of Bills for the Month of June 2020

Roll Call Vote:

Motion: Commissioner C. Lanard

Second: Commissioner R. Lanard

Roll Call: Unanimous

Resolution #9-2020 Resolution Approving a Closed Session

Roll Call Vote:

Motion: Commissioner C. Lanard

Second: Commissioner R. Lanard

Roll Call: Unanimous

Closed session began at 5:30 pm and finished at 5:4pm.

Chairwoman Ferguson asked if there was any old business. There was none

Chairwoman Ferguson asked if there as any new business. Commissioner C. Lanard asked if there was a possibility of having fireworks banned on the SHA properties. There are 9,100 injuries each year in the U.S. and 36% of these are young children. She is concerned that the SHA could be sued if the injuries occur on property. There is a precedence from other housing authorities adding such a restriction to their leases. This is something that the SHA will definitely look into including this in the lease in the future. With more cameras being added to the properties we will be better able to police and enforce this change.

Chairwoman Ferguson asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

At 5:42 Chairwoman Ferguson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Smith made a motion and Commissioner C. Lanard seconded. All present were in favor.

Paul Dice – Secretary

Date