

MINUTES . . . REGULAR MEETING . . . DECEMBER 13, 2021

The members of the Bethlehem Housing Authority met in a regular session Monday, December 13, 2021 at 4:00 P.M. at the Monocacy Tower, Community Room, 645 Main Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. (Hybrid Meeting) Those present and absent were as follows:

Those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT

Mrs. Iris Linares, Chairperson
Mrs. Valerie McLendon, Vice Chairperson
Mrs. Susan Acevedo
Mr. Rogelio Ortiz

ABSENT

Mr. Greg Solderitch

Also present were: William W. Matz, Jr., Esq., Solicitor; Jay D. Schuster, Executive Director; Diana Moreno, Assistant Secretary; Housing Authority Staff Members; members of the general public.

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 8, 2021 were presented. Mrs. McLendon made a motion to accept the minutes of November 8, 2021. Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes – Acevedo/McLendon/Ortiz/Linares; Nays – None

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the monthly bills for November 2021.
Mrs. Acevedo seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes – Acevedo/McLendon/Ortiz/Linares; Nays – None

Under Old Business, Jay Schuster's reported one item. On the Monocacy parking along Old York Road, they were notified that the City intends to post the signage this week for parking along one side of Old York Road. Tenants have requested more parking, and we should have eight spaces.

Under the Executive Directors' report, Mr. Schuster reported two items. Firstly, Jay thanked everybody for cooperating with the hybrid meeting. He said it's a little challenging because we have a combination of staff that's both vaccinated and unvaccinated so the masks become necessary. He thanked everyone for their cooperation. Secondly, we had two high rise booster shot clinics, one at Monocacy and one at Litzenberger. They have two more scheduled for this week, and it's going well. Lastly, effective December 23rd, our Section 8 inspector, Jim Harell, is retiring after 42 years of service. We wish him the best. We have partnered with an agency to do the Section 8 inspections. This company is used by other local housing authorities, namely Easton and Lehigh County Housing Authorities. Once again, Jay thanked Jim for all he's done for the housing authority.

Chairperson Linares asked if there is possibility we would hire someone to fill the inspectors' position. Mr. Schuster said that is a possibility but at this time the financial condition of the Section 8 and our under-utilization, this retirement comes at a very timely time. Not that the Section 8 department is in trouble, but this will help us care for all the other administrative expenses. Our decision is to go outside of the agency for an inspector at this time. It will substantially reduce the cost of inspections.

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Under the Resident Advisory Committee, Mr. Ortiz reported that unfortunately it's been a bad year with COVID, but they were able to receive over 200 turkeys along with trimmings for the residents of our community. With the help of the Backpack Pals of Bethlehem, they have served over 2,500 bags of groceries within six months. On behalf of Nikki Tesla, the Second Harvest donations have been shared with other residents throughout the community. He thanked Nikki Tesla. Mr. Ortiz commended Roberto Santiago, who has been very helping with the Lynfield Community Center and the little league. They gave him a round of applause. Roberto would like to bring youth sports to the Pfeifle area, some football, baseball, and basketball programs for our children. In addition, this Friday they should be receiving some pork roasts and ham for the families in need during the Christmas holiday. They were given a donation of 150 bicycles to be given out to be shared between the Lynfield Community Center, Parkidge and Donegan Elementary.

Chairperson Linares said what a great job.

Under the Deputy's Executive Director's report, Mr. John Ritter reported one item. Our monthly meeting with the BHA Community Police officers will be held Wednesday, December 15th. At this time we'll review any drug and criminal activity occurring on our properties.

UNDER RESOLUTION - APPROVING OF THE ANNUAL ADUIT OF FISCAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 31- 2021. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the annual audit of fiscal year ending March 31, 2021.
Mrs. Acevedo seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes – Acevedo/McLendon/Ortiz/Linares; Nays – None

RESOLUTION NO. 2539 OF 2021 - APPROVING OF THE 2022-2024 BARGINING AGREEMENT WITH THE TEAMSTERS #773. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the 2022-2024 bargaining agreement Teamsters #722.
Mrs. McLendon seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes – Acevedo/McLendon/Ortiz/Linares; Nays – None

RESOLUTION NO. 2540 OF 2021 - APPROVING OF THE ANNUAL FIVE YEAR PLAN 2022.
NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the annual Five Year Plan 2022.
Mrs. Acevedo seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes – Acevedo/McLendon/Ortiz/Linares; Nays – None

Under New Business, Chairperson Linares recommended to the board that in lieu of the BHA Christmas luncheon that we give all BHA staff a gift card and a half day off on Christmas Eve.

Mr. Linares made a motion to approve a gift card and half day on Christmas to all employees.
Mrs. McLendon seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes – Acevedo/McLendon/Ortiz/Linares; Nays – None

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Mr. Schuster thanked the board on behalf of the staff for their generosity. He apologized that we couldn't have a get together, due to the circumstances.

Mr. Ortiz requested that we continue to support the Backpack Pals of Bethlehem. He recommended that we make a donation to HSI, which is Humanitarian Services Innovation. They work with Backpack Pals of Bethlehem, which is operating out of the Lynfield Community Center. It's for Lynfield, our other developments and they do take care of other areas in our neighborhood.

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve a \$2,000 donation to the backpack pals of Bethlehem. Mrs. Linares seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes – Acevedo/McLendon/Ortiz/Linares; Nays – None

Mr. Ortiz thanked the board.

Under Miscellaneous Reports, Other Business – Board Members, Solicitors, and Staff. Mrs. Acevedo reported that she attended a Commissioners Fundamentals training online. "It was nice, there were people from all across the country so you could see how different authorities handle different programs they have." She obtained some websites to look into to see how they operate, and how they're funded. It was interesting to hear how they handle their business and issues. It was a little disheartening to hear that some of the authorities have a lot of strife in their Boards, it was hard to hear that the Commissioners that were on it, were the ones that were having the problems and there was nobody there to speak for the other side, so we only got one side of the story. She said it was not great to hear that they have all the fighting amongst themselves. So her plan going forward is to review some of the other housing authorities' programs and look for possible ideas. She will update the board via email.

Chairperson Linares thanked Mrs. Acevedo.

Under Public Comments Mrs. McLendon, once again thanked Roy for all the resources out there helping our community. Second Harvest has given out so much food. She took pictures and we'll send them to Jay. The people were just so happy, our whole community appreciates what Roy is doing.

Attorney Matz stated that our next regular meeting is our reorganizational meeting. Typically, he knows that people have concerns with the COVID situation. He asked the Board to consider having an entirely virtual meeting versus at hybrid meeting, because it puts a lot of strain on the staff with the back and forth. Mr. Schuster also suggested that we make it virtual with respect for those who are vaccinated and those who are not, masking. The Board agreed.

Chairperson Linares noted that the next regular board meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 10, 2022 at 4:00 P.M. (Zoom Meeting).

There being no further business to transact, Chairperson Linares declared the meeting adjourned.

J.D. Schuster

Jay D. Schuster
Executive Director

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**RESOLUTION NO. 2539 OF 2021
APPROVAL OF LABOR AGREEMENT
WITH
TEAMSTERS LOCAL NO. 773**

Mr. Linares introduced the following resolution:

WHEREAS. The Bethlehem Housing Authority has negotiated a three (3) year labor agreement with Teamsters Local No. 773 and the Authority's Maintenance Personnel (1/01/2022 to 12/31/2024);

BE IT RESOLVED, that the above mentioned Union Agreement is hereby approved.

Mr. Ortiz moved, Mrs. McLendon seconded by that the foregoing resolution be adopted as read, and upon roll call, the Ayes and Nays were as follows:

AYES

**Mrs. Iris Linares
Mrs. Valerie McLendon
Mrs. Susan Acevedo
Mr. Roy Ortiz**

NAYS

NONE

The Chairman thereupon declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted as Resolution No. 2539 of 2021.

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**RESOLUTION NO. 2540 OF 2021
APPROVAL OF FIVE YEAR/ANNUAL
PLAN UPDATE**

Mrs. Linares introduced the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Bethlehem Housing Authority's Five Year/Annual Plan has complied with the requirements of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) of 1998, wherein the Resident Advisory Board, Resident Councils and Tenants were involved with the formulation; and

WHEREAS, the required Certifications and attachments will be completed and forwarded to HUD by the required deadline;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the requirements of Section 511 of the QHWRA of 1998 will be satisfied by transmitting the updated plan as set forth in this law.

Mr. Ortiz moved, seconded by Mrs. Acevedo, that the foregoing resolution be adopted as read, and upon roll call, the "Ayes" and "Nays" were as follows;

AYES

**Mrs. Iris Linares
Mrs. Valerie McLendon
Mrs. Susan Acevedo
Mr. Roy Ortiz**

NAYS

NONE

The Chairman thereupon declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted as Resolution No. 2540 of 2021.