

MINUTES . . . REGULAR MEETING . . . SEPTEMBER 13, 2021

The members of the Bethlehem Housing Authority met in a regular session Monday, September 13, 2021 at 4:00 P.M. Teleconference (Virtual Meeting). 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 August 9, 2021 were presented. Mrs. Acevedo made a motion to accept the minutes of August 9, 2021. Mrs. McLendon seconded the motion.

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

Mrs. McLendon made a motion to approve the monthly bills for August 2021.
Mrs. Acevedo seconded the motion.

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

Chairperson Linares thanked Mr. Richard Snyder for providing an explanation along with all bills presented for signature.

Under the Executive Directors' report, Mr. Schuster reported two items. On August 26th, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned the CDC's Eviction Moratorium. So BHA, despite that there is no longer an eviction moratorium, we're going to make every effort to establish repayment agreements with those who are delinquent and direct them to what is called ERAP, Emergency Rental Assistance Program, a program available that they can apply for right here in Bethlehem. Eviction will be our last resort, and that is in harmony with just good judgement at this time and HUD's guidelines. We have a lot of people responding to the program, probably upwards of \$50,000 in delinquent rent was received by our tenants from this fund so far. Mrs. Linares commented that is good news.

The second item, on Wednesday August 25th, BHA met with HUD staff to review the potential usage of the Marvine Recreational Building that we've discussed numerous of times. We talked about the possible conversion of the building, if that would be possible, and they said yes. So the preliminary meeting, met with their approval, and we're going to have a follow up meeting as to exactly how the project, if any project, how it would be funded. So, this is in the infancy, to figure out how we can utilize the building, but HUD is on board with converting the building. The Bethlehem Housing Authority has about \$7 million in reserved funds, they said we can use those funds. It certainly won't cost that much, but those funds might be available under new programs, so there would be no lending necessary, we simply would be borrowing from our own savings account. He'll see how things proceed and we'll make any proposals to the Board as we get more information.

It was noted that Commissioner Ortiz joined the meeting.

Chairperson Linares said that she drove by the old Boys & Girls' Club on 4th Street, and noticed that the building is empty. She asked does anybody know the plan for that building. Mr. Schuster replied he personally does not know but he can find out. He'll report back to the board.

Chairperson Linares commented that she's surprise Indio Rodriguez is not interested in that building. Mrs. McLendon replied maybe he doesn't know about it. Chairperson Linares said I don't know, it's been empty for a while.

Under Committee Reports, Scholarships, Ms. Moreno reported that one of our 2021 scholarship recipients requested money for school.

Chairman Linares reported that she received an email from Mr. Schuster regarding vacate committee positions. Mrs. Acevedo's interested in being appointed to a committee.

Attorney Matz commented that would be an executive decision to be made by the Board, either by Chairman Linares or the collective body, to who is going to serve on each of the committees or be a part of that. A willingness to serve is helpful, so you don't appoint someone to something they don't want to do.

Chairperson Linares asked Mrs. Acevedo if she is interested. Mrs. Acevedo was interested in knowing more about the committees, which Mr. Schuster provided her with information. She would like to be active where she can be the most helpful. Chairperson Linares tabled the appointment until further discussion with Mr. Schuster.

Under Committee Reports, Resident Advisory Committee, Mr. Ortiz reported three items. First, they're going to be opening up the Homework Club within the next two weeks. Second, The Elite Championship Tournament Baseball, is the third largest baseball association in the nation which charges about \$2000 for each child to get in to that tournament. He spoke to the owner and he's willing to take thirty-six players from Lynfield, any child that wants to play tournament baseball, they're going to sponsor them free of charge. That's like a \$72,000 gift that he's giving to our kids for the whole season. Plus, they also could join the academy, which is \$700 per child, and they're going to wave that fee, so they could be practicing during the winter months. We're going to have a T-Ball team, a junior team, and a senior team. So, not only are they using our field down at the Southside Little League, he's giving back to our Southside and our kids who are less privileged. We want our kids to be involved in that tournament, we don't want to just lease the park to them. In the upcoming months, he'll be doing registration for them. Whoever wants to coach, manage a team, any kid that wants to play baseball, they can be involved. All the home games will be at the Southside Little League Field. Different teams that come play down here, they usually put themselves up in a hotel, like New Yorkers will come out here for a tournament. We don't need to go through all of that, all our games are going to be home. That's a beautiful thing. Lastly, on October 10th they're planning on bringing a truck full of food from Second Harvest to Parkridge to serve the community for people in need.

Chairperson Linares said that's fantastic, all good news. Mrs. McLendon ask Roy to make sure she gets information for the boys in Parkridge.

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Mr. Santiago, Bodder House resident, asked Roy if he needed any help with the kid's activities that he would be willing to help. Mr. Roy said he will be in contact with him.

Under the Deputy's Executive Director's report, Mr. John Ritter reported that the monthly zoom meeting with the BHA Community Police officers will be held on Wednesday September 15th. At that this time they'll review any drug or criminal activity occurring on our properties.

RESOLUTION NO.2534 OF 2021 - APPROVING OF THE WRITEOFF VACATED TENANT ACCOUNT RECEIVABLE TO COLLECTION. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mrs. McLendon made a motion to approve the write-off vacated tenant receivable to collection. Mrs. Acevedo seconded the motion.

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

RESOLUTION NO. 2535 OF 2021 - APPROVING OF THE HUD SECTION 3 POLICY FOR THE BETHLEHEM HOUSING AUTHORITY. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mrs. Acevedo made a motion to approve the HUD Section 3 policy for the Bethlehem Housing Authority. Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

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

APPROVING OF THE CONTRACT FOR THE EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the contract for the employee health insurance renewal. Mrs. McLendon seconded the motion.

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

APPROVING OF THE CONTRACT EXTENSION FOR THE ELEVATOR MAINTENANCE. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mrs. McLendon made a motion to approve the one year contract extension for the elevator maintenance. Mr. Acevedo seconded the motion.

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

Chairperson Linares asked if the elevator contract is for the Main Street elevator knowing that the elevator was completed and redone with new parts. Mr. John Ritter reported that the elevator at Litzenberger was replaced this year as well. In addition, we need a service contract for the elevators in case if anything breaks down they can come out immediately and fix it for us. Some parts are under warranty, but we still need the maintenance contract for all four buildings, Bodder, Bartholomew, Monocacy, and Litzenberger.

Under New Business, Mr. Schuster had an additional resolution that was put on the agenda today. The board members received information on the contract extension for the heating and ventilation and air conditioning service contract.

APPROVING OF THE CONTRACT EXTENSION FOR THE HEATING, VENTILATION AND AIR CONDITIONING SERVICE CONTRACT. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mrs. Acevedo made a motion to approve the one year contract extension for the heating, ventilation and air conditioning service contract.
Mrs. McLendon seconded the motion.

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

Under Miscellaneous Reports, Other Business – Board Members, Solicitors, and Staff. Mrs. McLendon reported two items. First of all, she thanked BHA for helping Parkridge with their Community Block Party. Second, she has been to PAHRA conferences, and has heard some horror stories, and it is really a pleasure to work with all of us, a bunch of credible people full of integrity. For example, how Mr. Snyder explains everything that's happening with the finances. She just loves working with us, and they don't have to worry because we are so full of integrity and she really appreciates that. Lastly, she commended Roy not only that he is a friend, but he is really a mover and a shaker and doing an amazing job within the community and, not just with Lynfield but with Parkridge. All that he's doing for Lynfield and the recognition that housing gets because of all that he does. Chairperson Linares and Mr. Schuster also thanked Mr. Ortiz. Mr. Ortiz replied thank you.

Chairperson Linares questioned since Field Day was cancelled is there a possibility of having anything similar to it. Mr. Schuster replied we had planned to have Field Day, during the summer when COVID cases were almost non-existent. We were hoping that things were wrapping up with the pandemic, but that was not the case. So from his perspective, he didn't think it was a safe thing to have it with the amount of COVID cases that were getting reported in our developments almost regularly and the staff that has been effected. But it doesn't mean it's cancelled forever. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

Chairperson Linares noted that the next regular board meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 11, 2021 at 4:00 P.M. There being no further business to transact, Chairperson Linares declared the meeting adjourned.

J.D. Schuster

Jay D. Schuster
Executive Director