

MINUTES... REGULAR MEETING... MAY 18, 2020

The members of the Bethlehem Housing Authority met in a regular session Monday, May 18, 2020 at 4:30 P.M., Teleconference (ZOOM Meeting). Those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT

Mr. Joseph E. Long, Chairperson
Mrs. Iris Linares, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Valerie McLendon
Mr. Rogelio Ortiz

ABSENT

Mr. Greg Solderitch

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

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 13, 2020 were presented. Mrs. McLendon made a motion to accept the minutes of April 13, 2020. Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes -Linares/ McLendon/ Ortiz/Long; Nays - None.

Mrs. Linares made a motion to approve the monthly bills for April 2020.
Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes -Linares/ McLendon/ Ortiz/Long; Nays - None.

Nothing to report under Courtesy of the Floor or Old Business

Under Chairman's report, Chairman Long commended the staff for doing an outstanding job in spite of all the disadvantages that are around us today. He appreciates everything we're doing, and to pass that along to all BHA staff. Mr. Schuster will make sure to let the staff know.

Under the Executive Director's Report, Jay had a few items. First, the staff continues to telework. Some employees are working alternate days at the Central Office and Family Development Office, but most are working from home. We've been able to recall most of the clerical staff. There are only two individuals that we have not yet called back. We've developed remote procedures and things are going smoothly and we're planning on using teleconferencing to proceed with applicant and resident interviews. Second, the 4th floor of the Main Office is now exclusive to BHA staff use. We've moved the residents out of the 4th floor and relocated them to other high rises and to the 6th floor of Monocacy. This was done to prevent interaction between staff and residents. We know of two COVID cases at the Monocacy Tower. Jay can't say who they are, but the staff is aware of who they are so we can take proper precautions. Third, they had a teleconference meeting with BHA community Police officers on Wednesday, May 13th. They reviewed any drug and criminal activity occurring on the properties. Lastly, on March 27th, Congress passed the CARES Act, that's an acronym for the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act. That Act provides additional funding for both Public Housing and Section 8, which is really good. For Public Housing they gave us about two months of operating subsidy to care for additional costs that we definitely have incurred as a result of the crisis. So the funding is there and it's available to use up through December 31st of this year.

Mr. Linares asked if we will be sterilizing the apartments of the tenants who contracted the virus. Mr. Schuster replied no. Mrs. Linares was curious to know because she has a relative and his wife who contracted the virus. He passed away but before the wife was able to return home she had to pay to sterilize the whole apartment.

Mr. Schuster is not sure if its HUD mandated to do that, but certainly we wouldn't go into the unit until they have two negative tests to show that they no longer have the virus. John Ritter reported that we used an outside agency to disinfect the entire 4th floor, surface areas such as floors, desks, handrails, doorknobs and keypads. It's called "fogging", it's a mist spray and it's very expensive. We would probably disinfect a unit where the tenant moved out who had the virus ourselves to protect the staff. But, if the tenant is moving back that would be on the tenant or tenants' family to take care of it.

Chairman Long asked about the disinfecting process. Mr. Ritter stated that it consists of two different treatments. One is like an industrial strength hydrogen peroxide mist and for the floors and hard surfaces they used a Lysol solution that has to sit on the surface for 30 minutes. Chairman Long asked do they just spray the areas or do they physical wipe them down. John stated all hard surfaces are sprayed, desks and doors are wiped down with the Lysol solutions.

Chairman Long asked Jay, how are we doing with our police department cooperation. Mr. Schuster reported that it's almost back to the way it was. We're getting complete cooperation and information sharing. Chairman Long was happy to hear that.

Nothing to report on Committee Reports.

On the Resident Advisory Committee, Roy reported that they're in week ten of serving breakfast and lunch for the children in the school district. They're also giving out meals 7 days a week from the YMCA from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM, serving breakfast and lunch. And they go back to the Center at 3:30 P.M. and serve dinner from about 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM. They're going to continue to provide meals for the needy that depend highly on the breakfast and lunch program during the summer.

RESOLUTION NO. 2508 OF 2020 - APPROVING OF THE HVAC REPLACEMENT AT THE LYNFIELD DEVELOPMENT. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mrs. Linares made a motion, seconded by McLendon, to approve the HVAC replacement at the Lynfield Development.

Roll Call: Ayes -Linares/ McLendon/ Ortiz/Long; Nays - None.

Under New Business Mr. Schuster had one item. He stated that the Summer Program is not going to be operating as normal at the Lynfield Community Center. However, the distribution work at the Center will continue through the summer. Jay requested that we hire two part-time workers for eight weeks as we've done in the past. Chairman Long asked if it similar to how we handle the Boys Club. Mr. Ortiz said they will work from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. with the distribution of food and also cleaning up and disinfecting the area.

Mrs. McLendon made a motion to approve the hiring of two part-time summer workers. Mrs. Linares seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes -Linares/ McLendon/ Ortiz/Long; Nays - None.

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Mr. Ortiz thanked the board for their support.

Under Miscellaneous Reports, Mr. Ortiz thank the board for their continued support to our communities and our BHA families. Roy said they're helping out Parkridge, they need to be recognized. They have needy people over there and they will continue to work with them throughout the summer.

Mrs. McLendon thanked Martha and Roy for the work they're doing at Lynfield and the community. The seniors' in Parkridge are able to get meals. She thanked him and said they appreciate what he does.

Mr. Ortiz thanked Valerie and said he'll continue to help Parkridge. Chairman Long said thank you very much to everybody.

On Public Comments, Attorney Matz commented on the question raised with John Ritter regarding the transition of apartments in the new era of this virus, he suspects at some point HUD is going to come up with some new regulation on that.

Jay Schuster stated that he has been on conference calls with the HUD office on average every two weeks. He will bring up this question because that is a considerable burden to put on the residents. Even like with bedbugs, we know that the tenant is the one who has brought the problem in, but we're not allowed to charge tenants for bedbug treatments because the cost is very high. So he'll bring it up in the meeting.

Mr. Matz replied that it's a significant budgetary concern for whichever direction. He assumes at some point it's going to happen.

Chairman Long said bedbug extermination is about \$850 just for one service. So, you could imagine if they come in and do a complete sanitation, it's probably going to be in excess of \$1000 per unit.

Mr. Ortiz asked when we'll be able to put the two part-time workers on the BHA payroll.

Mr. Schuster will check on the starting and ending dates on our records. Mr. Ortiz thanked Mr. Schuster. Chairman Long said whatever protocol we've used in the past, we should continue.

Mrs. McLendon commented that the police presences at her community has been phenomenal. Chairman Long was glad to hear that.

Chairperson Long noted that the next regular board meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 8, 2020 at 4:30 P.M. (Zoom Meeting)

There being no further business to transact, Chairman Long declared the meeting adjourned.

JD Schuster

Jay D. Schuster
Acting Executive Director