

MINUTES . . . REGULAR MEETING . . . MAY 9, 2022

The members of the Bethlehem Housing Authority met in a regular session Monday, May 9, 2022 at 4:00 P.M. (HYBRID Meeting). Those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT

Mrs. Iris Linares, Chairperson
Mrs. Susan Acevedo
Mr. Rogelio Ortiz

ABSENT

Mrs. Valerie McLendon, Vice Chairperson

Also present were: William W. Matz, Jr., Esq., Solicitor; Jay D. Schuster, Secretary-Treasurer; Diana Moreno, Assistant Secretary; Staff Members and members of the general public.

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 11, 2022 were presented. Mr. Ortiz made a motion to accept the minutes of April 11, 2022. Mrs. Acevedo seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes - Acevedo/Ortiz/Linares; Nays - None

Mrs. Acevedo made a motion to approve the monthly bills for April 2022.
Mr. Ortiz seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes - Acevedo/Ortiz/Linares; Nays - None

Under Old Business Mrs. Schuster reported that the BHA Board held an Executive Session on Monday, April 18th at which time they finalized our decision as to helping the Northampton County Housing Authority with their Section 8 and Maintenance programs. BHA has officially declined to enter into such an agreement at this time, and that was forwarded on to them.

Under the Executive Director's Report, Mr. Schuster reported several items. First, Robert Gehringer, one of our maintenance aides will be retiring on May 13, 2022. He has been with BHA for over 23 years. We wish him the best. Mr. Gehringer is a good maintenance employee. Second, we continue to have a Board vacancy, and he's been communicating with Mayor Reynold's office in the last couple of weeks. They're in the process of making a recommendation. Third, as of May 2nd, all BHA staff is now working in the office. The public is seen by appointment only in an interview room. Last, the Northeast Community Center and food bank that is located in our building on Fritz Drive, their lease for that property expired on March 31st, they had asked for some minor changes to be made for language. Their Board has yet to review it. Everything's fine, we're just revising the terms of our old lease at this time.

Chairperson Linares asked what changes are being requested.

Mr. Schuster replied one of the things they asked for is to extend the 30 day notice if we were to discontinue their lease just because of the food bank that they have there. That they would be given a longer period of time if we did want to discontinue the lease. Secondly, they wanted some reassurance of any property damage, that BHA would cover if any problems that they would have, like flooding in the building, which has happened several times. They asked for some devices to be put on the heating system, because that severely changed the program over a couple of months during two winters that we've had breaks in the heating lines. They asked if we would make those changes and put them into the lease. And that BHA would be the only one in control of the HVAC system in the building so that they are not accountable, which it's a reasonable request. There's other minor changes that I don't recollect right now on the spot, but nothing major.

Chairperson Linares asked was it a plumbing problem that caused the leak.

Mr. Schuster replied it was the freezing of the lines that carry water for the heaters that froze. We since have made adjustments.

Under Committee Reports, Scholarship Committee, Ms. Moreno reported that the high school scholarship applications were due at the end of April, and unfortunately we didn't get any back. She contacted the Bethlehem Area School District and they did recommend an honors' student that lives in housing, so she is going to be a potential applicant. Mrs. Moreno spoke to the student last week and she is going to submit an application.

Under Personnel Committee, Chairperson Linares asked Mr. Schuster if we'll be replacing Mr. Robert Gehringer. Mr. Schuster replied that we'll post the job and the union contract says we have to hire internally for the position, and if no one wants it we'll get someone from the outside.

Under Resident Advisory Committee, Mr. Ortiz reported that the summer program camp is starting on June 20th thru July 29th. Everything is free of charge. They'll be going on trips, to the pool, fishing, hiking, and they're going to travel to a few museums. Last, the Resident Advisory Board meeting is scheduled to be held at noon on Thursday, August 11th at the Monocacy Tower Community Room. At that time our goals and objectives for the BHA's Five Year plan will be discussed in detail.

Chairperson Linares asked how the baseball team coming doing. Mr. Ortiz reported that they're doing well. They're going to start in mid-June thru November. They have teams ages 18, 16 and 14 and under, signed up. All free of charge. It's the best of the best in Bethlehem, Easton, and Allentown. They're combining the best kids in the area to give them an opportunity to play organized baseball. Mrs. Linares asked if they're a traveling team. Mr. Ortiz replied that they are but that all the games will be at home. They'll be playing a team from Canada this year.

Under the Deputy's Executive Director's report, Mr. John Ritter reported that the monthly meeting with the BHA Community Police officers will be held on Wednesday, May 11th. At that time they'll review any drug or criminal activity occurring on our properties.

RESOLUTION NO.2546 OF 2022 - APPROVING THE AMENDMENT TO THE PUBLIC HOUSING ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY PLAN, RE-EXAMINATION OF THE INCOME. NOTE: (Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mr. Ortiz made a motion to approve the amendment to the public housing admissions continued occupancy Plan, Re-examination of the Income. Mrs. Acevedo seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Ayes - Acevedo/Ortiz/Linares; Nays - None

Under New Business Chairperson Linares reported that she and Mrs. Acevedo were talking about the marked numbers in the parking lot, and asked are tenants going to get assigned parking spaces? Mr. Schuster replied that due to the high demand for parking, individuals will be receiving assigned spaces if they need one based on their disability or handicap need.

Mr. Kichline reported that if a resident is in need of a closer spot due to a disability (ADA request), in addition to the sticker on their car, we're issuing them a little permit so that there is no questions about the fact that they are permitted to park in those specific spots. Mrs. Acevedo commented that it makes sense. She asked if it would it be a problem if she parked there when here for meetings. Mr. Kichline replied if the spot has been reserved for somebody, it will have a sign that says "reserved". The numbers themselves don't necessarily mean that it's assigned, if it's assigned it will have a reserved sign.

Mr. Schuster commented that the Board, and Attorney Matz, should know that there is parking available along Old York Road, if they want to park there. We worked it out with the City to get at least one side of Old York Road as parking for anyone. It's the building side. In the past, we were able to park there, and they took it away for reasons that were uncertain to him. But they never gave it back to us until we requested it back and they agreed, which has really been a blessing. We have an issue here with limited parking, and there are so many spots. So it's working out good.

Under Public Comments, Chairperson Linares welcomed City Council Hillary Kwiatek to the meeting.

Chairperson Linares noted that the next regular board meeting will be held on Monday, June 13th, 2022 at 4:00 P.M. at the Monocacy Tower, community room.

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

J. D. Schuster

Jay D. Schuster
Executive Director