

MINUTES ... REGULAR MEETING ... APRIL 13, 2020

The members of the Bethlehem Housing Authority met in a regular session Monday, April 13, 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
Mr. Greg Solderitch

ABSENT

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 February 10, 2020 were presented. Mrs. McLendon made a motion to accept the minutes of February 10, 2020. Mr. Solderitch seconded the motion.

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

For the record we did not have a March meeting.

Mr. Solderitch made a motion to approve the monthly bills for February and March 2020. Mrs. McLendon seconded the motion.

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

Under Old Business, Chairman Long mentioned that he is so pleased with our staff dealing with the COVID-19 situation that we're in right now.

Jay thanked the staff and said we are doing a very good job and he appreciates our gratitude.

Under the Executive Director's Report, Jay had a couple of items. First, he asked Attorney Matz to comment on the method we're using today to conduct the meetings.

Attorney Matz stated for the record, that he understands that all that we're discussing today is being recorded for posting and for our records. Matz also announced the meeting by way of advertising to the website, allowing for folks to know what the agenda was in advance and an opportunity to speak to the agenda. So as far as he's concerned, reasonable efforts have been made to appropriately, in light of the circumstances, comply with the meeting rules currently in place for these public meetings.

Mr. Schuster thanked Attorney Matz.

04/13/2020

(2)

In addition, Jay stated that we will have a teleconference with the community police on Wednesday of this week to review any drug and criminal activity on the property.

He also mentioned that because of the stay at home order, we did have to reduce staff, there's 20 of our employees now furloughed. Many are taking their accrued leave, some have applied for unemployment. I'm hoping to get the staff back as soon as possible. Even if need be, have more working from home.

Lastly, HUD did come out with a waiver for many of our regulatory programs so that they have extended many of the deadlines through July, some October, and some they're waiving completely. We're thankful for those waivers that have been given. One waiver has not been addressed, and it won't be, because rent must be paid if the tenants can. But no one for 120 days can be evicted or charged any kind of late payments until four months down the road. But if tenants can pay their rent, they should.

Attorney Matz asked Jay has the waiver indicated no eviction for any reason, or just non-payment of rent. Schuster replied eviction is a 120 day moratorium for non-payment only. If there is criminal activity, we can continue to file any evictions that we would need to. But they want tenants to be able to stay in their apartments, just because they might not be able to pay their rent. HUD is giving them a lot of latitude in that area.

For the Scholarship Committee, Ms. Moreno stated that she sent out letters before the COVID-19 happened. Unfortunately, this year we might have to pass on the scholarship because the schools are closed and they won't be able to obtain their records. So as a Committee we can decide in May. We may just have to wait until next year.

Chairman Long said he can understand that because of the inactivity in the school districts across the state of Pennsylvania, we may have a problem.

Mrs. Linares said the poor kids aren't even going to have a graduation.

There was nothing to report on the Finance and Personnel Committees.

On the Resident Advisory Committee, Roy reported that they continue feeding the kids that are heavily depending on the breakfasts. Every Monday, they're giving them two breakfasts and two lunches for Monday and Tuesday. Then they're giving them three breakfasts and three lunches from Wednesday to Saturday. The YMCA is also providing dinners for free. They give it out between the hours of 10 and 1. The dinners are between the hours of 4 and 6. Students from K-12 they're giving them their work packets so they can catch up on their schoolwork.

RESOLUTION NO. 2506 OF 2020 - APPROVING OF THE WRITE-OFF VACATED TENANTS ACCOUNT RECEIVABLES TO COLLECTION LOSS. NOTE: Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mrs. McLendon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Solderitch to approve the write-off vacated tenants account receivables to collection loss.

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

The Wage Adjustments for Clerical and Administrative Employees was presented to the Board.

04/13/2020

(3)

Mr. Solderitch made a motion, seconded by McLendon, to approve the Wage Adjustments for Clerical and Administrative Employees.

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

The Renewal of the Lease with Northeast Community Center was presented to the Board.

Mrs. McLendon made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ortiz, to approve the Renewal of the Lease with the Northeast Community Center.

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

The Renewal of the Lease with Hogar Crea Women's Center was presented to the Board.

Mr. Long asked if we talked about any rent changes on that.

Mr. Schuster replied that he attempted to do research to get information back on comparable properties but that's when the whole COVID-19 ordeal started. So, he was not able to get any comparable rents for facilities like that to make a comparison. So in view of the circumstances, he thought it would be best to leave the rent at the current level.

Mr. Ortiz made a motion, seconded by Mr. Solderitch, to approve the Renewal of the Lease with Hogar Crea Women's Center.

RESOLUTION NO. 2507 OF 2020 - APPROVING THE REVISION OF PERSONNEL POLICY LEAVE SECTION II. H.2 (p) PANDEMIC LEAVE. NOTE: Resolution is entered separately as a part of these minutes.)

Mrs. McLendon made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Linares, to approve the Revision of Personnel Policy Leave Section II. H.2 (p) Pandemic Leave.

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

No New Business.

Under Miscellaneous Reports, Mrs. Linares asked have we heard of any of our residents contracting the virus.

Mr. Schuster stated that, we had one definite person who tested positive in the Northeast area, and that is the only one he know of. He said he's certain there are other individuals who have tested positive in our developments, but the health bureau will not share that information with us because it would be a HIPAA violation. The only way we became aware of it, the family members reached out to Ms. Rodriguez for comfort because the family member was very ill and was hospitalized. That's the only way we became aware of that. It's a very difficult situation.

Mr. Linares asked are our employees all safe and healthy?

Mr. Schuster said to his knowledge, that all of our employees are healthy, none of them have tested positive or are experience illness at this time.

Mr. Linares replied that's good.

04/13/2020

(4)

Chairperson Long noted that the next regular board meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 11th, 2020 at 4:30 P.M.

Attorney Matz stated the resolutions should indicate the process and procedure for the announcements for the meetings is consistent with what we've done here, anticipating the May 11th meeting may have similar problems with our ability to meet.

Mr. Long stated that if we have a problems with the meeting next month under normal conditions, we will meet again with the same situation as were dealing with today, we'll follow the same procedure.

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

Jay D. Schuster

Jay D. Schuster
Acting Executive Director