

**Housing Authority
Of the
Town of Exeter
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**M I N U T E S
Board of Commissioners
Friday, October 2, 2020 3:15 PM
Via Teleconference**

Item #1. Roll Call – The roll call was taken. Present at the meeting were:

Chair Person	Renee O'Barton
Co Vice-Chair Person	Vernon Sherman
Co Vice-Chair Person	Boyd Allen
Commissioner	Pam Gjettum
Commissioner	Margaret Matick
Executive Director	Tony Teixeira
Maintenance Supervisor	C.J. Harding-Smith
Housing Choice Voucher Manager	Margaret Dooling
Public Housing Manager	Jill Birch

Item #2. Approval of the Minutes of the September 11, 2020 Meeting

Co Vice-Chair Person Allen made a motion to approve the minutes as presented seconded by Commissioner Matick and the minutes were approved with a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #3. Response to COVID-19 Update

Executive Director Teixeira stated that residents and staff continue to remain healthy with no COVID-19 cases reported. Several residents are feeling the effects of not being able to visit with family members and are very anxious to return to some level of normalcy. Some have asked if we would consider opening the building for a short time to family members only. Although we have concerns with any additional flow of foot traffic entering the building, we completely understand their request and would like to consider granting it. Members of the staff have come up with a system that we feel will allow for family visits while limiting the risk of exposing residents and staff to the virus. Executive Director Teixeira listed the following measures being proposed.

- We would place a cap of 15 visitors per day.
- Residents would be required to submit a visitor request form that would be provided by EHA.

- Visitors would be required to complete a COVID-19 related questionnaire before entering the building.
- Residents would be allowed 1 adult visitor per visit.
- Visiting times would be limited to EHA business hours.
- Visits would be confined to the resident's apartment.
- Visitors would be required to wear a protective mask.
- Visitation period would run from October 13th through October 26th.

Executive Director Teixeira inquired if the board had any input or thoughts on the matter. Commissioner Gjetum inquired if a couple or two family members would be allowed at the same time and Executive Director Teixeira noted that it would be limited to one at a time. Chair Person O'Barton noted that this was good timing with the regular flu season around the corner. Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman inquired if the visitation was only now, or ongoing and Executive Director Teixeira noted that it would only be during this two week time frame and then likely not until the spring again. Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling added that this would be a good opportunity for residents to seek assistance from family members with cleaning, bills, Wi-Fi set up, etc.... Chair Person O'Barton asked the board if any members were opposed to the visitation period and all indicated that they were in favor of it. Commissioner Matick noted that she herself did not use Wi-Fi but that the plan was a good one. Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman added that if problems arise that the visitation could be cancelled.

Item #4. Approval to Expend Operating Reserves to Replace Vinyl Siding on Maintenance Garage

Executive Director Teixeira announced that the EHA will not have the funds needed to replace the vinyl siding on the maintenance garage without deferring other planned projects, which is not ideal. He reported that the contractor selected is doing a fantastic job and that the EHA would like to take advantage of working with a reputable high-quality contractor that can be trusted. The cost of replacing the siding on the maintenance garage is \$15,000 and the EHA is requesting approval to utilize operating reserves to fund this project. Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman inquired which reserves he was requesting, and Executive Director Teixeira noted that it would be Operating Budget. He added that he was unsure when it would get done if it were not completed now. Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman noted that he took a ride out to see the Linden Fields siding and that it looks great. Commissioner Matick stated that she drove out there as well and that it looks great and clarified which building they were talking about. Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith reported that the contractor is both professional and dedicated and takes great care of equipment and safety. He noted that the garage has been worn over the years and could use the new siding. Chair-Person O'Barton took a vote for approval to expend operating reserves to replace the vinyl siding on the maintenance garage and it was approved with a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #5. Approval to Purchase Electric Ranges at Squamscott View Apartments

Executive Director Teixeira reported that this item is now on hold until next month. He reported that there is a possibility that they may have found a less expensive company to purchase the seventy- seven (77) electric ranges from (including new power supply cords). The original scope included having the supplier remove and install the new ranges however, we were not able to attract a supplier that could perform that task. We will therefore be doing the swap out in house and will have more information at the November meeting.

Item# 6. Replacement of Laundry Equipment at Squamscott View Apartments

Executive Director Teixeira reported that new laundry equipment is scheduled to be installed in early November. The new equipment will offer multiple payment options which comes at a good time as obtaining quarters has been challenging for residents due to COVID-19. The EHA will take this time to renovate the laundry rooms which will include applying a fresh coat of paint to ceilings and walls and installing new floor covering. This will result in the laundry rooms being closed for approximately one week.

Item #7. Unutil Grant to Install Mini-Split Heat Pump System at Auburn Street Property

Executive Director Teixeira was happy to announce that the EHA received a grant from the Unutil company to install mini-split heat pumps in the three apartments at the Auburn Street property. The system is very similar to units that were installed at the Linden Fields Property. The new units are expected to lower resident utility costs in the winter months and can provide cooling in the summer months. The project will get underway shortly after a contractor is selected. Both Chair Person O'Barton and Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman thought it was great news.

Item #8. Maintenance Supervisors Report

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith reported that the maintenance staff is currently working on exterior tasks while the weather is still warm to prepare for the possibility of our national R.E.A.C inspection which is yet to be announced and provides only a 14 day notice. This includes general fixes to the exteriors of all buildings and family units. Heating season is also approaching therefore heat pump filters are being cleaned in each unit at Linden Fields. Water Street air conditioning removal, exterior painting, and gutter cleaning are also underway. Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith noted that two trees were removed at Linden Fields by J.T.W. Land and Tree due to deterioration. This company will also remove the bushes in front of the units to provide a cleaner appearance of the newly installed siding.

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith reported that siding has been completed on buildings B and C at Linden Fields and building A siding is being removed for prep.

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith also reported that Unit 224 at Water Street was leased yesterday, and that the EHA will have another vacant at Water Street at the end of the month. Chair Person O'Barton noted that things sounded busy and Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman stated that he was doing a good job.

Item #9. Housing Choice Voucher Managers Report

Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling reported the following figures.

September Totals as of 1 st of the Month	168 Units	\$124,084
Mid-month lease up		<u>230</u>
September Totals as of last day of Month	169	\$124,314

Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling noted that the new FMRs are also in for 2021. Unfortunately, they did not change very much from last year, which will not help our new Payment Standards which will likely be 110% across the board. With continuous increases in the rents from our landlords, this may prove to be a little more difficult to work with this year. We may see the tenant portions of the rent going up. Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling explained that the dollar figures are climbing steadily, and that year end will be better than we thought at about \$20,000 to \$25,000 under budget. Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman inquired if landlords were complaining about rents and if EHA approval was still required. Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling noted that they are not able to refuse the increases when they fall within the rent reasonableness and that it will be felt in the coming year. Vice-Chair Person Allen inquired if the rent reasonableness was based on locality and Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling noted that it was a point system and comparative with other local properties. Commissioner Gjettum notes that rents in Exeter are quite high due to the increased water and sewer charges. Executive Director Teixeira inquired how much over the payment standard were tenants paying and Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling stated that tenants are paying about \$35 over the 30% and that things were becoming increasingly expensive, particularly one-bedroom apartments. Commissioner Gjettum noted that Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling was doing a great job and Co Vice-Chair Person Sherman agreed.

Item #10. Ten Minute Audience Participation:

No audience members joined the call; therefore, no audience participation took place.

Item #11. Executive Directors Report

Financial Report:

Executive Director Teixeira noted that both programs look great through eleven months. He stated that the Fee Accountant will be here sometime in October to close out FY20 and the Year-end figures would be provided at the November meeting.

Employee Evaluations:

Executive Director Teixeira reported that employee evaluations will be completed over the next week and that board members will be notified when they are ready for viewing.

Craft Fair:

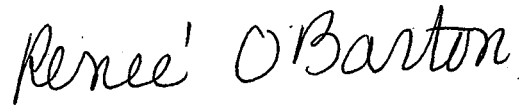
Executive Director Teixeira announced Water Street residents will be holding their annual craft fair on Saturday November 7th from 9:00am-2:00pm. Due to COVID-19 the event will be held outdoors on the front lawn under the cover of tents. Craft tables will be positioned to allow for social distancing and protective masks will be required. One maintenance staff member will be on site. Executive Director Teixeira noted that we have some very talented residents who do incredible work so please stop by and show your support. Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith noted that our part-time employee Kim Lord would be showcasing his cookbooks at the fair and Executive Director Teixeira noted that the cover looked impressive and reiterated that Kim, who was formerly a landscape contractor for the EHA had filled the part-time position.

Chair Person O'Barton adjourned the meeting at 3:50 P.M and noted that the next meeting would be held on November 6th.

Respectfully Submitted,



Antonio Teixeira
Executive Director



Renee O'Barton
Chair Person

