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**Housing Authority
Of the
Town of Exeter
277 Water Street
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FAX: (603)772-6433**

**M I N U T E S
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, November 2, 2023 – 1:00 PM**

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

Chairperson	Boyd Allen
Vice-Chairperson	Vernon Sherman
Commissioner	Renee O’Barton
Commissioner	Margaret Matick
Commissioner	Pam Gjettum
Maintenance Supervisor	C.J. Harding-Smith
Public Housing Manager	Jill Birch
Housing Choice Voucher Manager	Margaret Dooling

Absent:
Executive Director Tony Teixeira

Item #2. Approval of the Minutes of the October 5, 2023, Meeting

Public Housing Manager Birch noted two spacing and one rewording correction and Commissioner Matick made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2023; meeting seconded by Vice Chairperson Sherman and the minutes were approved with a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays. Commissioner Gjettum abstained from the vote as she was not in attendance last month and the minutes were approved with a vote of 4 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #3. Award Contract to Replace Security System for Main Office, Maintenance Shop, and Electrical Room:

In the absence of Executive Director Teixeira; Public Housing Manager Birch explained that the current security system that provides coverage for the office, maintenance shop, and electrical room needs to be replaced. The current system has provided the EHA with many years of coverage, however due to the age of the system and difficulty in getting replacement parts we feel it is time to replace the system. We requested a proposal from D.M. Burns Security Inc. They have serviced the equipment for many years and provide off-hour security monitoring. A copy of their proposal was attached for board review. Chairperson Allen inquired if we currently pay a monitoring fee and Public Housing Manager Birch noted that we currently pay \$85 a quarter and the new contract would increase this fee to \$100 quarterly. Commissioner Gjettum expressed concern with an internet-based product and Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith explained that most

systems now operate that way and have better “real time” coverage. Commissioner Gjettum made a motion to approve the replacement of the security system and the purchase was approved with a vote of 5 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #4. Fiscal Year End 2023 Financial Report:

Again, in the absence of Executive Director Teixeira; Public Housing Manager Birch highlighted the following items in the year end budget report and the year-end figures:

- Shelter Rent fell \$15,500, short of the amount that was projected. This was the result of an increase in the utility allowances provided to tenants which in turn lowered their monthly rent.
- Operating transfer from the Capital Fund Program was about \$15,000 less than what was budgeted. This was the result of allocating more funds towards Capital Improvement Projects.
- Interest in investments was up by approximately \$4,200. This was simply the result of earning a higher rate.
- Electricity was over budget by nearly \$9,300. This was the result of a significant rate increase in December of 2023.
- Maintenance labor was approximately \$6,300 over budget. This was the result of additional overtime hours preparing for our REAC inspection coupled with overtime for after hour snow removal.
- Materials were under budget at \$7,214. This was simply the result of needing to purchase less materials.
- Contract Costs were up by \$6,553. This was mostly the result of unplanned repairs to the fire alarm system at Portsmouth Ave.

	2023	2022	Change
Public Housing Reserves	\$833,348	\$827,782	Increase of \$5,566
HCV Operating Reserves	\$253,098	\$229,244	Increase of \$23,854

HUD Held HAP Reserves as of 9/30/23 \$72,585.

Item #5. Housing Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) Implementation

Schedule:

Public Housing Manager Birch reported that HUD is granting Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) more time to update their policies, which is welcoming news. Prior to the recent change, HUD was requiring PHAs to have their policies updated before January 1, 2024, and bring their programs into compliance as quickly as possible but no later than January 1, 2025.

Public Housing Manager Birch further explained that this will give us the needed time to sort through the regulatory changes and make decisions that make the most sense for the EHA and residents. This will also give us the time needed to prepare our Annual Plan and hold a Public Hearing to review the changes.

Public Housing Manager Birch announced the following target dates which are based around the start of our fiscal year:

- Begin preparing revisions: March 2024.
- Announce Public Hearing: Mid-May 2024
- Draft EHA Policy available for Public Comment: June 2024
- Policies completed: Mid-July
- Have both programs into Compliance with HOTMA: TBD
no later than 1/25

Commissioner Gjetton inquired what the changes were, and Public Housing Manager Birch explained that there are many relating to income and deductions and that we had not fully updated our ACOP/Admin policies since 2009 and that with the multitude of changes it seems a good time to update both the entire policies.

Item #6. Maintenance Supervisors Report

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith reported a total of 5-unit turnovers at Water Street. There are four 1-bedroom units and one 2-bedroom unit. The first unit is #119 which was leased on Wednesday November 1st. This unit had minor touchups, general maintenance, and carpet cleaning. Unit #313 is an in-house transfer which has a move-in date of November 9th. This unit will receive a fresh coat of paint, general maintenance, and carpet cleaning performed. Unit #204 has a move-in date of November 15th and will receive minor paint touch-ups, general maintenance, and carpet cleaning. Unit #217 is the 2 bedroom and will receive a fresh coat of paint, general maintenance, and carpet cleaning. This unit will be ready for move-in on December 1st and the last unit is #228 which also has a move-in date scheduled for December 1st. This unit will receive a fresh coat of paint, general maintenance, and carpet cleaning.

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith noted that maintenance staff are also preparing for the winter months and performing fall cleanup tasks. The HVAC system cleaning has been completed and the Gazebo winterization will be completed next week.

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith reported that the South Elevator Modernization project has been completed and has operated smoothly since October 20th. The project was delayed a week in reopening for minor inspection findings.

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith noted other projects that are being considered are the Camera Upgrade Project at Linden Fields, Front and Rear Door Replacement Project at Auburn Street, and the Linden Fields Unit Remodeling Project.

Commissioner Gjettum noted that this was a lot of turnover and Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith agreed and stated that he and Paul were keeping up despite being short staffed.

7. Housing Choice Voucher Managers Report

Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling reported the following figures for October:

October Totals as of 1 st of the Month	174	Units	\$156,317
Mid-month lease up	0		<u>0</u>
October Totals as of last day of Month	174		\$156,317

Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling predicted finishing the year with a 99% lease up rate bringing the program over budget by approximately. \$19-20,000, which we have in the reserves. Chairperson Allen inquired if this would make up the difference from what HUD provides and Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling noted that it would and that it would hopefully produce a larger budget next year. Chairperson Allen thanked Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling for her work.

Item #8 Ten Minute Audience Participation

A Water Street resident expressed the need for handicap grab bars inside the shower. Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith explained that breaking the integrity of the wall would put the unit at risk for leaks and mold and that there was not anything behind the wall to secure a grab bar making the request impossible. Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling suggested suction style grab bars that proved successful for a family member. The resident declared that there was nothing to suction to. Public Housing Manager Birch stated that we did not have bathroom upgrades in the plans and suggested utilizing a bench in the shower to utilize the grab bars on the outside of the shower. The resident stated that the suggestion would not work.

9. Executive Directors Report

Part-Time Maintenance Position:

Public Housing Manager Birch explained that the part-time maintenance position is currently being advertised and a handful of promising resumes have been received. The interview process will begin next week with the hope of filling the position as soon as possible.

Fiscal Year 2023 Financial and Compliance Audit:

Public Housing Manager Birch noted it was hard to believe the audit season is upon us as it feels like the FY22 audit was just completed. EHA staff now have a better sense of what the new audit firm is looking for and will begin compiling the information as it is requested.

Flu Shot Clinic:

Public Housing Manager Birch reminded residents that Exeter Hospital is offering a free flu shot clinic for residents of 277 Water Street tomorrow, Friday November 3, from 10:00am – 12:00pm, in the community room. Chairperson Allen commented that it is important to keep everyone safe. Commissioner Gjettum inquired if the EHA would be

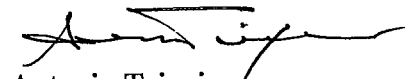
hosting a COVID booster clinic and Public Housing Manager Birch stated that it was not in the plans.

Commissioner Gjettum provided some feedback on the 91-A (Right-to-Know) Training for all Boards/Committees/Commissions she attended. Both she and Chairperson Allen (who attended one of the sessions) felt the board was conducting business as they should, however they did note that draft minutes are required to be posted within 5 days.

Commissioners Gjettum noted that our drafts are typically posted within that timeframe. Chairperson Allen noted that only certain criteria are required for the draft. Chairperson Allen also reported that for the meeting to be considered an actual meeting, a quorum is required. Commissioner Gjettum and Chairperson Allen provided a copy of the materials presented at the meetings to Public Housing Manager Birch.

Commissioner Gjettum made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Matick and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Antonio Teixeira
Executive Director



Boyd Allen
Chairperson

