

Housing Authority
Of the
Town of Exeter
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M I N U T E S
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, March 7, 2024 – 1:00 PM

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

Vice-Chairperson	Vernon Sherman
Commissioner	Pam Gjetum
Commissioner	Margaret Matick
Executive Director	Tony Teixeira
Maintenance Supervisor	C.J. Harding-Smith
Public Housing Manager	Jill Birch
Housing Choice Voucher Manager	Margaret Dooling

Absent:

Chairperson	Boyd Allen
Commissioner	Renee O'Barton

In the absence of Chairperson Allen, Vice Chairperson Sherman ran the meeting.

Item #2. Approval of the Minutes of the February 1, 2024, Meeting

Commissioner Gjetum made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2024, meeting, seconded by Commissioner Matick and the minutes were approved with a vote of 2 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #3. Seeking Approval to Award the Contract for Security Camera Replacement at Linden Fields Apartments:

Executive Director Teixeira explained that this is a Capital Grant 2023 project with a \$15,000 budget. The project will consist of replacing the existing security camera system which includes nine (9) exterior cameras and two (2) interiors along with viewing and storage equipment. Sealed bids were opened on January 31, 2024, with three contractors submitting bids. They are as follows:

Hampton Technical Services Somersworth, NH	\$10,787.92
Peregrine Networks Dover, NH	\$8,871.04

Navco Security
Edison, NJ

Rejected -Late Submission

Executive Director Teixeira recommended the contract be awarded to Peregrine Networks for the price of \$8,871.04.

Commissioner Gjetum made a motion to award the bid to Peregrine Networks in the amount of \$8,871.04, seconded by Commissioner Matick and the bid was awarded with a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #4. Seeking Approval to Award the Contract for the Replacement of the Entry Doors and Auburn Street Apartments:

Executive Director Teixeira noted that this is also a Capital Grant 2023 project with a \$20,000 budget. The project will consist of replacing a total of six (6) exterior doors and associated work. Sealed bids were opened on January 31, 2024, with three (3) contractors submitting bids.

They are as follows:

Exeter Glass LLC Northwood NH	\$18,576
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Bangor Abatement Bangor ME	\$16,800
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Schroeder Construction Nashua NH	\$27,326
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Executive Director Teixeira recommended the contract be awarded to Bangor Abatement for the price of \$16,800.00.

Commissioner Gjetum made a motion to award the bid to Bangor Abatement in the amount of \$16,800.00 seconded by Commissioner Matick and the bid was awarded with a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #5. FY2024 Annual Plan and Annual Statement:

Executive Director Teixeira announced that a draft copy of the Annual Plan and Annual Statement for fiscal year 2024 was attached for commissioner's review and that a copy is also posted on the bulletin board in the maintenance hall. He noted that the Resident Advisory Committee will be meeting on March 14, to review the plans and a public hearing will be held on March 27. He hopes to have the plans back to the board in April for approval.

Item #6. Seeking Authorization to Share Expense for Chair Yoga:

Executive Director Teixeira reported that Chair yoga is held weekly in the community room and has been fully sponsored by Exeter Hospital in the past. He explained that the EHA has been asked if we could share the annual expense which amounts to

approximately \$1,300. This expense was not in the budget and therefore we are requesting approval. Commissioner Gjettum inquired as to what expenses were associated with chair yoga and Executive Director Teixeira noted that it was for the instructor who is already providing a discount. Commissioner Matick made a motion to approve the expense in the amount of \$1300.00, seconded by Commissioner Gjettum and the Chair Yoga was approved with a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #7. Seeking Approval for Utility Allowance Rates

Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling reported that the utility rates have increased which will assist with the budget by reducing HAP payments. Commissioner Gjettum made a motion to approve the new utility allowances, seconded by Commissioner Matick and the rates were approved with a vote of 3 ayes and 0 nays.

Item #8. Housing Choice Voucher Managers Report

Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling reported the following figures.

February Totals as of 1 st of the Month	175	Units	\$163,127
Mid-month lease up	0		<u>0</u>
February Totals as of last day of Month	175		\$163,127

Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling noted that we are currently over leased with the expectation that a couple of voucher holders will fall off the program. She reported that HAP payments are increasing with the payment standards allowing for increased rents. She noted that she has had some success with asking some landlords to take a gradual approach with the rent increases. Some landlords, however, will not budge. The program seems to be a balancing act and if funding does not come through and this trend continues, we may not be able to serve as many people. Executive Director Teixeira noted the lack of affordable housing. Vice Chairperson Sherman inquired if these rental increases were nationwide and how much the rents were increasing. Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling stated that the rents were going from \$1000 to \$1500 and in some cases from \$1500 to \$2200. Executive Director Teixeira noted that with this the landlord can somewhat name their price. He also explained that we utilize a software program to determine if the rent is in fact reasonable and out of the approximate 200, she has done she has only had a couple that were not deemed reasonable. Margaret noted she tries to point out to landlords the benefit of working with the EHA as it provides for consistent rent. Vice Chairperson Sherman asked who we were using for inspections and Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling noted that the company name is HQS Inspections. He also inquired if the EHA was using reserves to cover the HAP excess and Housing Choice Voucher Manager Dooling noted that we have to.

Item #9. Maintenance Supervisors Report

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith reported that during the month of March, the Maintenance Department will be getting two units ready for move-in on April 1st at Water Street. Unit #225 is a one-bedroom and will receive a fresh coat of paint, general

maintenance, general cleaning, and carpet cleaning. Unit #316 is a two-bedroom unit and will also receive a fresh coat of paint, general maintenance, general cleaning, and carpet replacement.

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith announced that with the unseasonable weather with higher-than-normal temperatures, maintenance may be able to get outside and repair some minor plow damage throughout the properties and get an early start on raking any debris that this mild winter has created.

Maintenance Supervisor Harding-Smith reported that the minor preventative maintenance on the generator at Water Street was scheduled for Monday, May 22. This preventative maintenance happens yearly and may take a few hours for completion. It does not affect the buildings' power. On the same day, the Exeter Fire Department will conduct a yearly inspection of all Emergency Backup Lighting and Fire Door operation throughout the communal areas.

Item #10. Ten Minute Audience Participation

A Water Street resident explained that her former landlord had raised the rent dramatically and felt that the rent increases should only be allowed at certain times of the year.

Two Water Street residents expressed their appreciation to the director and the board for the yoga funds.

Item #11. Executive Directors Report

Financial Report:

Executive Director Teixeira reported that both programs look good through four months. The EHA is currently operating under a continuing resolution which is set to expire on Friday March 8th. Congress is expected to pass the HUD budget along with five other federal agencies before Friday's deadline. Congress Released the final FY24 HUD appropriations bill over the weekend with the following moderate increases:

Public Housing Operating Fund	\$367 million increase
Capital Fund	Level funding.
Voucher Renewal Funding	\$760 million increase
HCV Administration Fee	\$7 million increase

Financial and Compliance Audit FY23:

Executive Director Teixeira explained that the auditors were in last month and spent the day reviewing tenant files for regulatory compliance and further review of EHA financials. The indication we received is that the audit went well with no anticipated findings. A draft copy is expected to be available sometime towards the end of March.

Update to Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA)

Executive Director Teixeira reported that HUD recently announced that Public Housing Authority's (PHA's) will be given discretion on how to enforce the \$100,000 asset limitation. PHA's will be given four options as follows:

- **Total Non-Enforcement:** PHA's may choose to not enforce the asset limit. As a result, PHA's would not terminate households that exceed the limit, however, PHA's do not have this flexibility for new admissions.
- **Enforcement:** PHA's may choose to enforce the asset limit and must begin terminating within six months of non-compliance as determined at an annual or interim recertification
- **Option to Cure:** PHA's may provide non-compliant families with up to 6 months to dispose of or convert assets so they come back into compliance.
- **Exception Policies:** PHA's may choose to exempt certain families for example, families with an elderly or disabled household member.

Executive Director Teixeira indicated that the EHA would be selecting the total non-enforcement and Commissioner Gjettum questioned if we had residents with that amount of assets. Executive Director Teixeira noted that there is a handful that would be impacted, and it seems unfair as they are already housed.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Antonio Teixeira
Executive Director

Vernon Sherman
Vice-Chairperson