

A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF SALEM

May 28, 2020

A regular meeting of the Salem Housing Authority (SHA) Board of Commissioners was held on Thursday, May 28, 2020. The meeting was held virtually through the Go To Meeting platform. The meeting was convened at 5:00 pm.

Chairwoman Ferguson announced the Sunshine Law requirement had been met, properly posted, and advertised.

Karen Chiarello proceeded to call the roll at this time. Present were: Chairwoman Rebecca Ferguson, Commissioner Cathy Lanard, Commissioner Robert Lanard, Commissioner James Smith, and Executive Director/Secretary Paul Dice. Also present were Solicitor Adam Telsey, Accountant Ralph Polcari and SHA staff.

Chairwoman Ferguson Asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 23, 2020 meeting. Commissioner C. Lanard made a motion and Commissioner R. Lanard seconded. All present were in favor.

Financial Summary

The SHA posted \$13,600 in positive net income for April 2020. The SHA has \$802 in negative net income for fiscal year-to-date (10/1/19 through 4/30/20).

Occupancy Rates

Our occupancy rate remains at 93%. We expect that it will continue to fall until we can safely start filling units.

Coronavirus Cases

We have no reports of any positive test results.

Ongoing Public Housing and Section 8 Operations

The administrative staff is continuing to work from home and will continue to do so while the Governor's stay-at-home order is in place. We will re-evaluate following relaxation of that order.

CARES Act Funding for Public Housing and Section 8 Programs

For public housing, the SHA received \$158,567 for expenses related to preparing for, preventing, and responding to the Coronavirus pandemic. We received another \$5,066 for Section 8. The following are just a few of the expenses that we will be able to cover with this funding:

- Uncollected rent from existing tenants,

- Lost rent in the cases of units that we could have leased up, but did not in order to keep tenants and staff safe,
- Installation of touchless faucets and toilets,
- Computers, printers, and other office supplies purchased to get staff set up for working remotely,
- Installation of cameras to remotely monitor social distancing and the overall safety of the tenants,
- Mail expenses for Coronavirus related communications,
- Janitorial expenses,
- Cleaning supplies,
- And more

We must draw down from HUD accounts for each expense we incur. If we do not use the funds by 12/31/20, HUD will re-capture any remaining balances.

Opening of Section 8 Waiting List

We will be opening our waiting list soon. Everyone will apply online. We will then have a lottery select 50 applications. In the interest of fairness, our property management computer program – PHA Web- will electronically and randomly select 50 applicants. Those people will then be added to the waiting list in the order of selection by PHA Web. This should open in July.

Commissioner C. Lanard asked if our current residents are eligible to apply and how that would affect occupancy. Betsy Loyle explained that anyone can apply. If they are already participating in Public Housing they already qualify for HCV. Salem only recycles 1-2 vouchers per year, so it would not really impact our occupancy rates. Paul stated that the online application process allows for much better access to applicants. On the audit and legal side of the matter we have a full paper trail to document the fairness of the process.

Operational Efficiencies

Betsy Loyle has been implementing the following systems at all three housing authorities:

- Direct deposit for Section 8 landlords in lieu of mailing checks,
- Direct debit from public housing tenants which would automatically be accounted for in our property management software program,
- Implementing online signature ability for all our contracts and paperwork through DocuSign.

Betsy said the current situation has been advantageous in the implementation of online processing. We will also be using Work Number for income verifications.

DocuSign allows for remote access for all document compilation. The applicants will not have to take time from work to apply, file annuals or interim evaluations. We should start using the program in mid-June. Chairwoman Ferguson asked if we would still be accepting paper applications. Yes, we will.

Chairwoman Ferguson advised that there were resolutions to approve.

Resolution #6-2020 Resolution Approving the Payment of Bills for the Month of May

Roll Call Vote:

Motion: Commissioner R. Lanard

Second: Commissioner C. Lanard

Roll Call: Unanimous

Chairwoman Ferguson asked if there was any old business. Commissioner R. Lanard asked what the final cost of the emergency electrical repairs was. The final cost was \$6585. Betsy stated that we are very fortunate to have Sparks Electrical as they are very reasonable.

Chairwoman Ferguson asked if there was any new business. There was not.

Chairwoman Ferguson asked if there was any public comment. There was not.

At 5:28 pm Chairwoman Ferguson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner C. Lanard made a motion and Commissioner Smith seconded. All present were in favor.

Paul Dice – Secretary

Date