

The **Regular** meeting of the Lenox Housing Authority was held on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 4:30 p.m. at The Curtis, 6 Main Street.

- A. The meeting was called to order by chairman Carol Ramsey at 4:43 p.m.
- B. Roll Call: **Present** – Carol Ramsey, Chairman, Deb Prew, Vice Chairman, Kim Graham, Treasurer, Linda Carroll, Member, Shannon Cella, Executive Director, Jim Mercer, Commercial Property Manager, Tim Wilson, LHA Maintenance, Tenant: Amy Judd

Absent – None

1. **Tenant Forum:** Amy Judd, LTO president, inquired about the automatic door openers at the Curtis. The director gave an update on the other housing authorities that she has heard back from. There were only 3 that responded and they each have something different. Tim Wilson spoke from past experience on installing and maintaining the systems. There are many questions that still need to be addressed regarding cost, maintenance, time, software, computer systems and much more. The director will be reaching out and doing some more research on this.
2. **Minutes:** Motion was made by Kim Graham to accept the December 12, 2023 board minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Deb Prew. Vote 4-0.

Deb Prew made a motion to accept the January 9, 2024 minutes as presented. Linda Carroll seconded the motion. Vote 4-0.
3. **Commercial Space:** Jim Mercer reported that everything is going good with the commercial spaces. He has reached out to the Executive Director and Hugh Mackey (RCAT) regarding the metal railings in the front of the building. The railings are rusting out on the handicapped ramp. We are hoping to get this project going so it can be repaired this spring. Jim also has reached out to contractors for repairs to the Curtis porch and the broken pieces of marble on the stairs. Both of those items are also hoping to be done in the spring. There have been some concerns regarding the cleaning of the commercial bathrooms. It has been noticed that the floors aren't being cleaned, surfaces are not being wiped down, etc. Jim will reach out to the cleaning company, Southern Berkshire Janitorial to address the concerns that were brought to attention.
4. **Accounts Payable:**
 - a. As of December 31, 2023, 689 balance is \$72,834.93. 400-1 balance which includes the commercial financial report is \$116,740.43.
5. **Old Business:**

- a. Rent Collection – There are still 3 tenants on repayment agreements. The tenant who was working with Amanda Koch, our Resident Services Coordinator, should have money coming in within the next few weeks.
- b. Vacancies: There are 3 vacancies at Turnure Terrace – 40-3A, 40-5D & 40-6B, one of which is a capital project. Unit 40-6B was offered January 3, 2024 and the applicant has accepted. She will be signing her lease for March 1, 2024. There are 0 vacancies at the Curtis. 13 Church Street still has a vacant 2-bedroom, wheelchair accessible family unit which is waiting on the bathroom rehab, which is a capital project.
- c. Waitlist: 2195 Total Elderly/Handicapped, 6396 total Family
 Elderly list – 996 Elderly, 785 Handicapped
 15 Local, 5 Veteran
 Family list – 39 Local, 4 Veterans
 3685 2-bedroom, 2151 3-bedroom
- d. Town of Lenox: None
- e. Personnel Issues: A notice was sent to all tenants regarding personal cell phone numbers and maintenance emergencies along with reminders on the quiet hours and smoking on the property. There have been many unnecessary calls after hours and on weekends to Mike Sullivan and the Executive Director for maintenance issues which are not urgent. The notice given to tenants was accompanied with a list of what are considered emergencies. Tenants should be calling the office for any work orders and personal cell phones.
- f. Public Housing Notices: PHN 2024-02 Requirement to consult residents when entering into Management Agreements. This PHN explains that LHA's must consult with LTOs or, where there is no LTO, residents when entering into a management Agreement with another LHA. This applies to both the Owner LHA and the Management Agent.

PHN 2024-03 – Updates to Vacant Unit Policies for 2024. This PHN explains that EOHLC will continue its focus on reducing vacancies in state-aided public housing in partnership with Local Housing Authorities (LHAs); along with policies in effect for the remainder, of state Fiscal Year 2024. Some of the policy and process changes include: Revised list of allowable waiver types and updated review standards. Improved coordination between Housing Management and Capital Bureaus on funding for rehabbing vacant units requiring significant investment. Active tracking of vacancies by LHA on a monthly basis triggering EOHLC offers of technical assistance to LHAs with concerning vacancy rates;

Operating budget exemptions available for LHAs with high vacancy rates and operating reserves below 35% at prior FYE or upon reconsideration of current operating reserve status; Continued availability of certain LHAs and MANAHRO for vacant unit turnovers or CHAMP assistance.

6. **New Business:** Each month the Director has requested a report from our Resident Service Coordinator (RSC), Amanda Koch to see what she has been doing to help the tenants. For the month of January, 7 tenants have benefitted from having a RSC. Tenants have been helped in a range of different ways, for example; recertification paperwork, help with their phones/computers, insurance and SNAP benefits, etc. On February 12, 2024, the RSC held a valentines day gathering with some snacks and live piano music. The tenants who come, really seem to enjoy these parties.

On Thursday February 8, 2024, the LHA had their Performance Management Review (PMR) for the FY 2023. This unpublished PMR was conducted over the phone with Carolina Gonzalez from EOHLC. Due to it being an unpublished year, there was only the desk audit and the CHAMP section to go over. The desk audit had no findings, and only 1 operational guidance on the report. The operational guidance was in the Tenant Accounts Receivable (TAR) report for the 705 (family), which has been explained to the director. The CHAMP section of the PMR had no findings and no operational guidance. Many of the CHAMP portions of the PMR were at 100%. Next year, the PMR will be published, therefore it will have the added maintenance components and it will be done in person.

7. **Adjournment:** Motion was made by Deb Prew to adjourn, seconded by Kim Graham. Vote 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

Next Meeting – April 9, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. at Turnure Terrace, 36 Old Stockbridge Road

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Cella
Secretary/Executive Director