



Low income housing- supporting independence, creating opportunities

Regular Meeting Notes September 23, 2024

TO: Patricia Green Commissioner
Gary Stroud, Commissioner
Elisha Underwood, Chair
Suzie Walker, Commissioner
Michelle Wright, Vice Chair

The meeting was noticed on Facebook, BHP website, and the Brattleboro Reformer.

You are hereby notified that the September 23, 2024, regular meeting of Brattleboro Housing Partnerships Board of Commissioners will be held at 4:30 at the Samuel Elliot Apartments Community Room, 107 Elliot Street, Brattleboro, VT

1. Call to order: Chair Underwood called the meeting to order at 4:30. Also in attendance were Vice Chair Wright, Commissioner Green, Commissioner Stroud, Commissioner Walker, Executive Director Hazzard, BHP staff member Jeanette White, a number of residents and a BCTV representative.
2. Resident/citizen participation and questions: A resident asked for an explanation of what being a Commissioner means. Chair Underwood explained that BHP has a five-member Board of Commissioners who are appointed by the Brattleboro Selectboard. They are responsible for overseeing BHP's policies, finances and strategic planning.
3. Review Minutes from the July 22, 2024 Meeting:
 - a. **Commissioner Stroud motioned to accept the minutes of July 22, 2024 meeting, Commissioner Walker seconded the motion approved 5-0.**
4. Board business:
 - a. Policy: Board reviewed draft of proposed new 2024 Weapon Policy
 - i. Board requested additions to policy including the prohibition of weapons in staff offices, an addition assuring the safety of animals on the site.
 - ii. There was considerable discussion by Commissioners and the public to understand the current laws of Vermont and what BHP policy enhances safety and can be enforced.
 - iii. With the changes noted above, it was felt that the new policy offers more clarification and brings the BHP policy as close as possible to a compromise between offering clear guidelines while complying with the law.
 - iv. **Commissioner Stroud motioned to accept 2024 Weapon Policy as amended to be effective immediately Commissioner Green seconded the motion, approved 5-0**
 - b. Board reviewed Draft of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Moving To Work Supplemental Plan
 - i. The three requests for waivers to HUD policy were discussed including the exclusion of paid child support from income for rent calculation purposes, allowing BHP to do its own

It is the mission of Brattleboro Housing Partnerships to ensure the provision of quality low income and affordable housing within viable communities to support independence and create opportunity

Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections for RAD properties, and changing the medical deduction policy. No action was needed. All residents will be notified of the changes, there will be a public hearing at the October 28th meeting and the Board will act on the Supplemental Plan at the December meeting.

- c. BHP Employee Celebration discussed
 - i. The Board will host a celebration of employees at 8:30 on October 11th.
 - ii. Details will continue to be developed by the committee
- d. BHP Board retreat discussed
 - i. ED Hazzard shared notes from the retreat with the Commissioners.
 - ii. The board will discuss board development at a later meeting.

5. Staff Reports Review:

- a. Executive Director report reviewed.
 - i. ED Hazzard reported on the shooting incident at AW Richards in August.
 - ii. Support was given to staff, residents and community members.
 - iii. She has been meeting with BPD monthly for about 15 months which has helped them to focus on potential problems and as much as possible address them before they become critical. BPD has been very helpful.
 - iv. She felt that the One Brattleboro Team will also be helpful in addressing potential problems.
- b. Property review and Property Managers report reviewed
 - i. Proposed write-offs:
 - AWR- \$1,223.80 (lease terminated)
 - HC- \$348.77 (deceased)
 - SEA- \$30.38 (deceased)
 - ii. **Commissioner Stroud motioned to approve the three write-offs totaling \$1602.95, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Wright, approved 5-0.**
- c. Resident Wellness and Services Report reviewed
 - i. Resident Services Newsletters Again the Board thanked staff for keeping them informed.
 - ii. There was a question about whether a request for weights in Bellows Falls could come through BHOI. ED Hazzard explained that BHOI is meant for the residents/participants of BHP and that Canal House is a separate entity, so it was not applicable.
- d. Section 8 Administrator: Housing Choice Voucher Program, Shelter Plus Care Report reviewed
 - i. Board reviewed Fair Market Rents (FMR) for 2025 with an increase of 10% over the HUD determined FMR for 2024
 - ii. **Vice Chair Wright motioned to accept the Fair Market Rents for 2025 with a 10% increase to the HUD determined Fair Market Rent for Windham County VT, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Stroud, approved 5-0.**

6. Financial Review:

- a. July and August 2024 check listings were reviewed
- b. Review July 2024 financial comparable was reviewed
- c. ED Hazzard explained some of the comparable and felt that BHP is right on track for this fiscal year, over in some instances, under in others. Several items were built into the budget with increased expenses such as legal and insurance.

- d. Check signing assignments: October – Commissioner Walker, November – Commissioner Stroud, December – Commissioner Green.
7. Projects in progress:
 - a. Melrose Terrace Re-Development:
 - i. A historic preservation assessment is in process. This is a requirement to qualify for historic tax credits.
 - ii. Civil engineers are working on evaluating the designs.
 - iii. A geothermal unit is being considered for the HVAC system, feasibility studies are being completed.
 8. BHOI- Brattleboro Housing Opportunities Inc. update given by ED Hazzard
 - a. Five BHOI Board members have been chosen to participate on the BHOI board.
 - b. A meeting will be scheduled for later in October.
 - c. A resident asked what BHOI was and ED Hazzard explained its relationship as a non-profit entity which raises funds for resident related projects.
 - d. BHOI Financial statement reviewed
 9. Executive Session: Board Member Skill Development
 - a. **Commissioner Walker motioned to move into executive session was, seconded by Commissioner Green, approved 5-0.**
 10. Adjourn
 - a. **Commissioner Stroud motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Walker, approved 5-0 at 5:50 pm.**

Christine Hazzard

BHA Secretary

10/13/2024