

# GREAT BARRINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Board Meeting  
January 20, 2011  
Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: William Drumm, Bob Magee, Deborah Salem, Dana DelGrande

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ariane Blanchard

OTHERS PRESENT: Barbara Heaphy

The meeting was called to order by William Drumm at 2:15 p.m.

## Minutes:

Dana was upset about a discussion that took place at the last meeting she did not attend. The board talked about a concern involving Dana and a relative of hers working for Steepleview. Because Dana's nephew working for Steepleview is a conflict of interest, she should have refrained from voting. However, Dana explained that she didn't know her nephew worked for Steepleview and isn't in contact at all with him or his family. She was upset that it was suggested she would deceive the board to try and get a family member a job when she wasn't involved in any of the meetings held prior to awarding Steepleview. Dana never saw any list of Steepleview employees or heard Mark DelGrande's name mentioned as an employee. Bob stated that from now on, it should be asked at every meeting if there is any reason a board member feels another member should step down due to a conflict of interest.

Another issue that came up regarding the snow plowing contract is whether or not we have to go with the lowest bid. Dana went back through minutes up to October and it is unclear. Barbara spoke with her project manager at DHCD who said that we are required to go with the lowest bid.

Deborah pointed out a few grammatical errors in the minutes.

Bob mentioned that minutes should be approved as read. Did they convey what was discussed at the meeting?

Motion made by Dana seconded by Bob and to accept the minutes of the November meeting. All members voted in favor.

## Snowplowing:

Rich spoke about the difficulty he's been having with the new contractor. Steepleview's work isn't up to the standard we expect. The owner, Shaun Tucker is inexperienced and it shows in his work. Shaun has also gotten into arguments with tenants and spoken disrespectfully to Barbara. Barbara said he had a run in with a tenant today whose son also got involved. According to a witness, it was getting very heated on both sides with lots of shouting back and forth. After the tenant involved, called and told Barbara what had happened, Barbara called Shaun and told him his behavior is unacceptable, just do the job you were hired for. This cannot happen again.

Barbara spoke with her project manager at DHCD about our dissatisfaction with this contractor and whether we could terminate in mid season. Nonetheless, it would put us in a bad situation with the upcoming storms if we couldn't get Gary O'Brien or anyone to take over. DHCD said this is a legal matter and should be brought to our attorney. Barbara left a message with Atty. Patricia LaFore, who recently entered into a monthly retainer agreement with the Housing Authority. She has not heard back yet. After much discussion, the board agreed that it would be difficult to change contractors in midseason. However, Shaun Tucker cannot get into anymore arguments with tenants.

Looking into the future, the board wonders if it's necessary to put the plowing out to bid every year.

Barbara stated that Lee and Stockbridge do their own plowing. Lenox puts the sanding only out to bid.

Bob asked Barbara about the payment method and if there were set dates to pay each installment. There never were any set dates but this can be written into next year's contract.

**Check Register:**

Deborah asked who Reinhardt Design was. Barbara explained they are the engineering firm working on the 705 heating system project. Dana asked what the \$50 annual dues paid to WMHAEDA were for. WMHAEDA stands for Western MA Housing Authority Executive Director's Association. Barbara attends monthly meetings with other Executive Directors regarding housing issues. Motion made by Bob to accept the check register for November. Dana seconded it. All members voted in favor.

**Executive Director's Report:**

The two bedroom waitlist increased a little. That continues to be the most popular waitlist. It seems the trend is toward smaller households today. I rarely see an applicant eligible for a four bedroom.

Once Rich is done with 8D at Brookside, he will start on the three bedroom at Flagrock. This unit was occupied by a family for about six years so it will need quite a bit of work: painting and possible carpet replacement in some rooms.

Contract for the heating system replacement needs Bill's signature today and will be sent to DHCD. Then the project will go forward.

The Designer's contract was amended by an increase in award amount and needs to be signed today.

The Carbon monoxide detectors in the units, are checked by Rich annually.

Ann Pruhenski follow up:

Elevator - After the meeting in December, I sent a notice to all tenants regarding the safety of the elevator. It has been thoroughly serviced and the phone line has been re-programmed.

Outside lighting - Rich replaces bulbs as they go out. If ballast needs replacing, he calls Claussen. There is no problem with the electrical wiring.

Annual apartment inspections - I do follow up when necessary.

Wheelchair tenant on second floor - As long as there is an elevator it is allowed.

Ann's son - As far as Barbara knows, Ann's son is not living her.

Barbara will follow up with a courtesy letter to Ann.

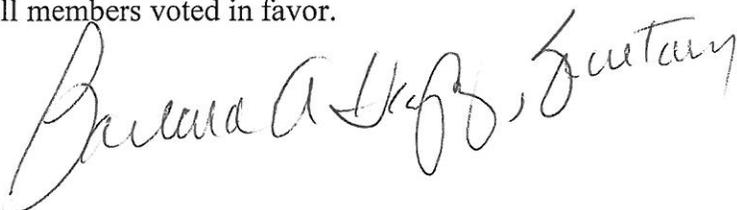
Hidden cameras - Dana brought up an incident that happened recently. A woman who helps certain elderly tenants at Flagrock had her pocketbook stolen when she was helping bring groceries in from the parking lot. It happened so fast and in broad daylight. The police were notified but the pocketbook was never found. After hearing about this, Ann brought up her concern about safety. Would it be possible to install cameras around the property? Not financially possible at this point.

Motion made by Dana to accept the Executive Director's report. Deborah seconded it. All members voted in favor.

The next meeting will be held on February 17th at 2:15.

Motion made by Dana, seconded by Deborah to adjourn at 3:36 p.m.

All members voted in favor.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara A. Skoff, Secretary". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned at the bottom of the page.