

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE GROVELAND HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD ON November 17, 2021**

The Commissioners of the Groveland Housing Authority (GHA) met in a regular meeting in a conference call format using the GoToMeeting application. This was in response to the resurgence of the Covid-19 virus and its variants. Chairperson Prunier called the meeting to order at 4:37 P.M. and called the roll with the following responses:

Present

Kathleen Prunier
Elaine Davey
Inger Burke
Kimberly Jackson
Elizabeth Gorski

Absent

Also present at the meeting was Joseph A. Hart, Managing Director, Clara Ruiz Vargas and Bruce Moody.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of October 20, 2021

The board members reviewed the minutes of the meeting of October 20th. Ms. Prunier clarified that the statement of people cropping the doors with rocks came from the Fire Chief of Groveland, not from her. Ms. Davey made a motion to accept the minutes. She received a second from Mr. Jackson. All were in favor and the motion passed.

3. Review and Approval of Accounts Payable for October 2021

Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve the accounts payable for October and received a second from Ms. Burke. Ms. Prunier then began the discussion asking if the exterminator charge was for the bees at Gardner St. Mr. Moody replied yes, and that this is the first time we've used them this year besides their annual routine. Mr. Jackson asked if the fee for the June 2020 audit was a standard audit. Mr. Hart replied yes, required by State Family Housing. He also informed them the auditors were behind schedule due to COVID19. Ms. Prunier questioned vendor GCG Associates. Mr. Hart replied this vendor was part of the paving project. Ms. Davey questioned if the fire extinguisher inspection performed by, Keane Fire & Safety, if it was for every unit or the complexes. Mr. Hart responded, inspection was for the complexes only which, is a requirement. Ms. Prunier asked if the Groveland Fire Department can, do these inspections. Mr. Jackson replied no, they cannot. Ms. Burke informed the board that Bldg #4 water bill was missing. Mr. Hart replied he would have the bill for the next meeting. Mr. Jackson asked how many residents resided at 82A Garden because the water bill for 82A was much lower than 82B Garden by 3x's the amount. Ms. Gorski suggested contacting the water department to have the meter checked out. In addition, she added we should compare water bills for the same period. Ms. Prunier asked how can this be fixed. Mr. Hart replied he would have Marilyn, our tenant selector, call the tenant and the water department. Mr. Moody stated the water department can detect if there is indeed a problem. Ms. Prunier asked if we knew of any water leakage at 82B or 16 Cannon Hill Road. Mr. Moody said, no and Mr. Hart added we would need to find out. Ms. Davey stated that usage of water in the summer months is usually much higher. Ms. Prunier questioned vendor MGR, the door amplifier replacement for Unit 2B. Mr. Moody explained the door had problems with the buzzer unable to open door. Mr. Moody explained that it was too expensive to replace the door. A vote was taken and all were in favor of approving the October accounts payable.

4. Review of Work Orders for October 2021

Ms. Prunier stated many issues with Bldg #4, same as last month, water leaks. Mr. Moody replied, this was just a coincidence. As this is an informational report, no vote was necessary.

5. Review and Approval of Reasonable Accommodations (RA) and Reasonable Modifications (RM) Policy

Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve the RA and, RM policy and Ms. Burke seconded. Mr. Hart explained the policy is a requirement by DHCD. He also informed the board of the training held by Mr. Ben Stone, DHCD Public Housing Director, informing all Public Housing, this will be part of our Performance Management Review and requires board adoption.

Ms. Prunier asked if the policy was only for DHCD. Mr. Hart replied it's for federal units and applicants as well. Ms. Prunier asked if we were approving them separately, State and Federal.

Mr. Hart replied the approval is for both, the majority of the language comes from federal law.

Ms. Davey asked if there was going to be any staff training, and how do we go about getting the staff trained.

Mr. Hart replied the first step is to have the policy in place.

He also informed the board this is something we deal with every day and that the agency will never let the process prolong to every step addressed in the policy handbook. Ms. Prunier asked if we had addressed these requests right away. Mr. Hart responded as long as the proposed request suits reasonable.

Ms. Davey emphasized we need to make sure we are treating everyone equally and, the staff is trained and informed to provide consistent communication.

Additionally, she added that The Resident Service Coordinator would be a great asset to this policy. Ms. Prunier asked if this should be tabled until the next meeting.

Ms. Prunier asked Ms. Ruiz Vargas what were her thoughts on this matter. Ms. Ruiz Vargas explained that the agency handles a hand full of these cases monthly and, we respond immediately to everyone's request and, have been very successful fulfilling the needs of the majority of RA requests from all of our programs.

Ms. Ruiz Vargas informed the board HUD Exchange provides this kind of training and, she will look into it for the staff.

Therefore, she advised the board not to table this item and proceed with a vote.

Ms. Davey suggested we revisit at our next board meeting.

Ms. Prunier requested to be put on the agenda for the next board meeting.

A vote commenced and all were in favor of approving the RA An RM policy.

Mr. Jackson made motion to approve the RA and RM policy and Ms. Burke seconded. Mr. Hart explained the policy is being required by DHCD. He also informed the board of the training that took place with Mr.

Ben Stone, DHCD Public Housing Director, informing all Public Housing this will be part of our Performance Management Review and it requires board adoption. Ms. Prunier asked if the policy was only for DHCD. Mr. Hart replied, it's for federal units and applicants as well. Ms. Prunier asked if we were approving them separate, State and Federal. Mr. Hart replied, approve once for both, the majority of the language, comes from federal law. Ms. Davey asked if there was going to be any staff training and how do we go about in the training the staff. Mr. Hart replied, the first step to is to have the policy in place. He also informed the board this is something we deal with every day and that the agency will never let process prolong to every step addressed in the policy handbook. Ms. Prunier asked, if we had addressed these requests right away. Mr. Hart responded, as long as the proposed request is reasonable. Ms. Davey emphasized we need to make sure we are treating everyone equally and, staff is trained and informed to provide consistent communication. Additionally, she added that, The Resident Service Coordinator will be a great asset to this policy. Ms. Prunier asked if this should be table to until the next meeting. Ms. Prunier asked Ms. Ruiz Vargas what are her thoughts on this matter. Ms. Ruiz Vargas explained that the agency handles a hand full of these cases monthly and, we response immediately to everyone's request and have been very successful fulfilling the needs of the majority RA request from all of our programs. Ms. Ruiz Vargas informed the board HUD Exchange provides this kind of training and she will look into it for the staff. Therefore, she advised the board not to table this item and proceed with a vote. Ms. Davey suggested we revisit at our next board meeting. Ms. Prunier requested to be put on the agenda for the next board meeting. A vote commenced and all were in favor of approving the RA An RM policy.

6. Review and Approval of State Contract for Financial Assistance 5001 in the amount of \$3,826 for FY24

Ms. Prunier made a motion to approve CFA 5001 for FY24. Ms. Davey seconded her motion. Mr. Hart explained to the group that this is the annual formula funding grant for our three state-aided family housing units. He added that it is difficult to spend due to low capital need at these two buildings. The money cannot be banked until there is enough to do a significant project either, he said. A vote was called and all were in favor of approval. The motion passed.

7. Review and Approval of Roofing Project Change Order 1 for Shutters in the Amount of \$44,700

The board reviewed the change order for the shutters as part of the roof project. Mr. Hart explained that the shutters had been discussed but we may not have formally approved the change order. He wanted to make sure it received a board vote. Mr. Jackson made a motion to approve the shutters change order and Ms. Burke seconded his motion. Upon a roll call vote, the measure passed unanimously.

8. Report of the Managing Director

Mr. Hart briefed the board on MassNAHRO's efforts to secure some of the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding granted to Massachusetts for deferred capital needs at state public housing developments. He said he had contacted two state senators and four representatives whose districts include Groveland and Haverhill. A plan to allocate those funds is still working its way through the legislature. He also informed them of a vacancy at #107 in River Pines, the status of the hiring of a resident services coordinator and the recent DHCD Property Management Review (PMR) at the family housing units.

Comment Period for Commissioners and Public

Ms. Burke told the group that she would prefer to meet in person. Ms. Prunier replied that the board was exercising caution due to the resurgence of Covid-19. Mr. Jackson stated that he has not heard of any resurgence in Groveland. Ms. Davey said she had a family member with Covid, that it's still out there. Ms. Prunier said that she too had a family member with Covid. She also would prefer to meet in person but the conference call format was safer for now. Ms. Davey said that we should be flexible and

the safest thing to do is take it month by month. Ms. Burke said she missed the face-t-face meetings. They are more effective. Mr. Hart told the board that he currently has two maintenance people out with Covid-19 and it slows things down. Ms. Prunier said the memo about the common halls and balconies went out. People are still propping doors open with rocks though. The hallway temperature should not be as hot now with the new thermostats installed.

Mr. Jackson told the group that he had met with Leeah Crane the day before who is trying to get the tenant group functioning again. He said he would be glad to receive comments from their group if needed. He said that Ms. Crane would like the new exterior doors to be equipped with electronic operators for handicap accessibility. Two of our (58) residents use wheelchairs for mobility and it would be helpful when residents are burdened with bundles or packages, she was reported to have said. Ms. Prunier asked when this project could be put out to bid and asked about the project to install hatches to the attics. Mr. Hart said it could not go out to bid for a while but the design could be started. Mr. Jackson said the doors are original from 1985. A project would involve more than one trade. We would need wiring for the door openers, he said.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Mr. Jackson made a motion to adjourn at 5:23 P.M. Ms. Davey seconded his motion and the meeting was adjourned.