



**New England**

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

Office of Public Housing  
Boston Hub  
Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building  
10 Causeway Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02222-1092

Board of Commissioners  
c/o Kathleen Prunier, Chair  
Groveland Housing Authority  
7 Harvard Rd  
Groveland, MA 01834

**DEC 15 2017**

Dear Commissioners:

This follows up the November 29, 2017 correspondence signed by Kathleen Prunier, Chairperson for the Groveland Housing Authority (GHA) Board of Commissioners. It also incorporates items discussed between Robert Cwieka, Deputy Director and the Chair, in a followup call on Tuesday, December 5, 2017. The GHA was responding to our correspondence of November 20, 2017.

- On December 4, 2017 this office received correspondence signed by the Maintenance Mechanic at the Groveland Housing Authority. The letter addressed concerns that this individual has about his safety at the Groveland Housing Authority. The concerns that he raises must be addressed in an appropriate manner by the leadership at the GHA. It is not the responsibility of this office to address his concerns. A copy of the letter is enclosed for your information. This office is requesting your action relative to this personnel matter.
- Our November 20, 2017 letter describes engagement made from a resident with allegations about activity at the Groveland Housing Authority. That same day, and on numerous occasions since, staff from this office has requested confirmation that the GHA has initiated an investigation and that contact with the resident was made to discuss the allegations. To date, we have not been advised of such a meeting. Initial contact should have been made and recorded and reported back to this office. It is the responsibility of GHA leadership to respond to residents and this office in a timely manner. More than 4 weeks have elapsed and neither initial contact nor any subsequent meeting have been scheduled or completed as far as we know.
- The November 20, 2017 letter from this office referenced the GHA's Common Area Use Policy and its enforcement. The reason for inclusion in the letter was that one resident reported that they were not permitted to hang items on their door or to store items in the hallways. The resident shared photos with staff from this office. The photos reflect that residents have items hung on their apartment entry doors and shows items in common hallways. We advised that until such time as the policy has been revised to prohibit items from being hung on apartment entry doors the residents should be advised in writing that the policy does not prohibit them hanging items on the doors. We requested a copy of a notice sent to residents. To date, no documentation has been provided. Further, if the policy does not allow for storage of any items in the hallways the policy should be applied uniformly and consistently. We have repeatedly requested that the GHA staff contact the resident that shared the photos to discuss the policy and respond to this office advising the result. No response has been received. The GHA must ensure that its policies are consistently applied with all residents to avoid the appearance of disparate treatment.

- We acknowledge that your November 29 letter indicates that the GHA is making progress in addressing the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) item relating to the resident council and outreach designed to encourage a Resident Advisory Board (RAB). Further, as mentioned to the Chairperson in our call on December 5, your correspondence does not address our suggestion that Board Meetings be held in the Community Room which is a more appropriate setting than the Executive Director's office. We discussed that a more inclusive and appropriate room be considered if acoustics are a problem in the community space. Modification could be made to the community room or alternatively, another location could be used for the meetings. The GHA is reminded that Board Meetings must be accessible to the public.

Our office also recommends that the GHA consult with its attorney for advice about appropriate actions that the GHA may be considering to address issues of concern at the agency and with its residents. Our primary concern is the safety of all residents and employees at the GHA. We are also concerned about the lack of timely responsiveness to repeated requests for information made by our office. The size of an agency and its staff does not mitigate responsibilities in this regard.

This office issued a Take Action Letter to the GHA on January 13, 2017. The purpose of such correspondence is to elicit response from leadership of a local housing authority to address substandard performance under the Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS). As a result of the Take Action Letter and a site visit by staff from this office we executed a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) with the GHA. The CAP requires monthly reporting. Please be advised that this office finally received the required monthly submissions for October and November. Those reports, which were due on October 31 and November 30, 2017 were sent to our office on December 11, 2017. The Boston Office of Public Housing is reviewing this submission and will follow up under separate cover. The termination date for the CAP is June 30, 2018 and there are 10 items in it that remain open.

Please be advised that continued or repeated failure by the Groveland Housing Authority to comply with HUD requirements and its Annual Contributions Contract under the United States Housing Act of 1937, as amended, may result in a more formal Recovery Plan with the Department which would involve state and local elected and appointed officials with public participation. All efforts are intended to avoid referral of your agency to HUD's Departmental Enforcement Center, which may seek any remedies, including, without limitation, Limited Denial of Participation, debarment, suspension, contraction of operation activities, consolidation, receivership, and delivery of possession and control of projects to HUD.

If there are questions regarding this matter you may contact Robert Cwieka at (617) 994-8418 or [robert.p.cwieka@hud.gov](mailto:robert.p.cwieka@hud.gov) or myself at (617) 994-8420 or [marilyn.b.osullivan@hud.gov](mailto:marilyn.b.osullivan@hud.gov).

Very sincerely yours,

  
Marilyn B. O'Sullivan  
Director

Enc.

cc:

Linda Anderson, Commissioner, Groveland Housing Authority  
Elaine Davey, Commissioner, Groveland Housing Authority  
Elizabeth Gorski, Commissioner, Groveland Housing Authority  
Valerie Osbourne, Commissioner, Groveland Housing Authority  
Joseph Hart, Executive Director

December 1, 2017

US Department of Housing & Urban Development  
Office of Public Housing – Boston Hub  
Thomas P. O’Neill, Jr. Federal Building  
10 Causeway Street  
Boston, MA 02222-1092

Attn: Marilyn B. O’Sullivan  
Director

Re: Recent Incidents at Groveland Housing Authority

Dear Ms. O’Sullivan,

I am a Maintenance Mechanic at the Groveland Housing Authority and following is a chain of events that recently occurred here that concern me and the safety of my work place.

November 7, 2017

Joe Hart the Executive Director of Groveland Housing Authority called me into his office and showed me a formal police report that he received from the Groveland Police Department (see attached). The report was about a conversation between Officer Joseph McMains, Officer Richards and Jocelyn McMahon (a resident at GHA). Jocelyn McMahon had accused me of some crazy and untrue things that I supposedly did, and also stated if these issues aren’t handled, she would handle it herself. After reading the report, I said to Joe Hart “Are you kidding me?!” and then replied that these things DID NOT HAPPEN. His response to me was laughter and said “Don’t worry about it, she’s looney, I understand these things aren’t true”. I replied to him that to someone who does not know her these accusations are very serious.

At the end of the work day I felt the need to go to the police station where a detective named Josh came out to speak to me about my concerns. He explained to me that they did not believe her accusations and to stay away from her and not go into her apartment. He also said he would make a notation in the report that I came to the police station and denied the accusations in the report.

November 8, 2017

The GHA answering service called and left a message for me stating I needed to call a psychiatric nurse named Isabelle Cantu regarding a client that is actively psychotic right now and has a hatred towards one of our maintenance employees, and has a plan to murder him (see attached). I asked Tina (the admin assistant at GHA) to listen in on the call I made to the psychiatric nurse. The nurse explained to me that Jocelyn McMahon was planning to get Dan Prescott (the part-time maintenance mechanic at GHA) into a headlock and to drown him like he did to her fish. The nurse said Jocelyn McMahon was a very dangerous person right now and could do damage to someone very soon. After the phone call was over, Tina, Maggie (Joe Hart’s assistant from Haverhill Housing Authority who happened to be working in our office at the time) and I went to the Groveland Police Station and told Detective Josh our concerns for the employees and residents at GHA. Detective Josh said not to worry and that the police have a “plan” or “something in the works” that would start tomorrow, and that Dan Prescott and I need to stay away from Jocelyn McMahon and her apartment.

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Re: Recent Incidents at Groveland Housing Authority

November 14, 2107

Another letter came from Jocelyn McMahon stating things are missing and damage has been done to her apartment and belongings and that Joe Hart needs to discipline Jim (me, James Burnham). She also stated that I (James Burnham) have been “watched and documented”. She ended the letter by saying “Laugh, it is not he who laughs first that laughs best, but he/she who laughs last” (see attached).

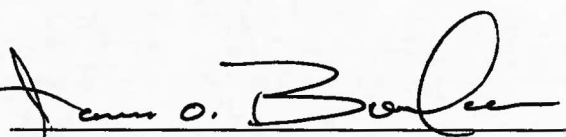
November 29, 2017

I have not heard anything from the police or Joe Hart regarding her status. She has however posted a notice on her apartment door stating the fulltime maintenance personnel is banned from working or entering her apartment (see attached).

It seems as if the police, her medical providers and the GHA have failed to do anything about this situation, or if they have they neglected to inform me, my coworkers, or the other tenants who live here, particularly the elderly residents in her building who are scared and concerned as well.

I am at a loss as to what I should do to protect myself from this woman who has threatened to harm and murder me as well as my co-worker Dan Prescott, is stalking me, and is harassing me with false accusations. I am the only fulltime employee at GHA, and feel as if I need to constantly look over my shoulder to make sure Jocelyn McMahon is not waiting to sneak up on me. This no longer seems to be a safe work place, and I would appreciate anything you can do to help me with this situation.

Thank you,



James O. Burnham  
Maintenance Mechanic  
Groveland Housing Authority  
10 River Pines  
Groveland, MA 01834  
Cell: 978-891-7015

cc: Ellen Bradley  
US Department of Housing & Urban Development  
Office of Public Housing – Boston Hub

REGARDING *JIM* YOUR FULLTIME MAINTENACE PERSONNEL

And  
Apartment 407 – Joslyn McMabon's flat  
November 14, 2017

I have requested Dan the part-time maintenance personnel **ONLY** to see to **ALL** my work orders in my first letter to you, for Jim not to ever enter my apartment again to perform any work in my flat for as long as I reside here a Groveland Housing, Groveland, MA.

I find, missing items taken from my apartment, my things have been gone through, my pets harmed one killed; urine odor under my bed. A nickel wing less angel hanging on my calendar given to me by a friend gone, and much more, he has been visiting my flat, for sometime while I am away on appointment, etc; he believes I will become afraid or go mad. The opposite reaction is occurring, why do you thing I request for him to stay from me?

You Joseph Hart the manager, will not discipline him, because he does your bidding, I know that it is why he gets away with so much. Any other decent manager would make him realize he is an employee, and to act with professionalism in all he do here at all times; not you!

I want my things back, and compensation for my pets he damaged and the one he killed.  
Phoenix, the one he killed with tax is \$16.00  
Dragon, the one he damaged its eye with tax is \$18.00  
Flame, the tail he cut off with tax is \$ 14.00  
**Total of \$48.00**

Not including, my watch, and the other items taken, **well over \$200.00**, and the washing of the carpet under my bed to get rid of the urine stain he put there. He is been watched and documented. And now the matter has been reported to all who need to know what is going on here, including your lack of action. Laugh, it is not he who laughs first; that laughs best, but he/she who laughs last.



# ALERT!

*Jim Braun*

The fulltime maintenance personnel is banned from working or entering apartment # 407 period.

No **Resident** has access to a key for apartment # 407. Should *either be seen entering apartment # 407, please call the Police straight away, they are breaking and entering!*

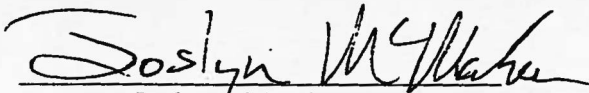
**MY DECISION REGARDING MY PERSONAL SPACE AND PRIVACY**  
**Pertaining to Flat number 407 in building number 4**  
**Miss Joslyn McMahon**  
**May 18, 2017**

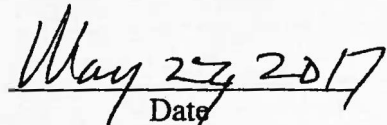
Let it be made known on this day of May 18, 2017, I Joslyn McMahon resident of Groveland Housing building 4, apartment 407, request from this date forward no one should enter my flat unless I Joslyn McMahon give a verbal approval. And it is witnessed for an individual to enter my flat accompanied with our Groveland property maintenance personnel only. He, the maintenance personnel - is to stay with that person shadowing him/her into every room, he/she may need to go; observing what is being done making sure that person do not disturb my things, or take anything of mine while there. After leaving my flat, the maintenance personnel will secure my flat locking my door behind him.

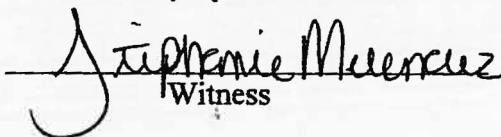
In the event of an emergency, example - water damage, or fire, and I am not present. I will give the verbal okay for Jim or Dan our local complex maintenance personnel to enter my flat and repair the problem (s). If a professional is required to join them, that person must at all times be in sight of our maintenance personnel at all times; my things or not to be disturbed only the area work is being done, they must be cleaned up after. My things put back, causing no damage to it or them. Jim or Dan is to see what this person is doing every step until the work is completed. At which time Jim or Dan is to escort the professional out of my flat and lock my door securing my flat. If an item is broken during the repair I expect money to replace the item (many of my items are not replaceable please be very careful handling them if necessary).

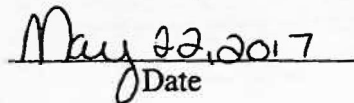
Whenever HUD comes for an inspection, I welcome them at all times, I will try to be available for the inspection at all times. If however, it is not possible due to an appointment I will inform one of our maintenance personnel, and ask for a new time or day. If that is not possible I will give a list of things, I would like to be noted in my flat to our maintenance personnel for the HUD inspector to look for when inspecting my flat. Then give verbal permission to accompany the HUD inspector in my flat shadowing him until the inspection is over, after lock my flat door behind them.

Other than the above permissions, at no time should anyone enter my flat, for as long as I live here in 407 it is my private space, I do guard my privacy fiercely. This is my decision and it is final.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joslyn McMahon

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date