

Westwood Housing Authority/Westwood Affordable Housing Associates, Inc.

October 26, 2015

Selectmen Meeting Room, Westwood Town Hall

Meeting Minutes

President/Chairman John Cummings called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

President/Chairman Cummings welcomed Members. All Members present.

President/Chairman Cummings then requested approval of September 14, 2015 minutes. Member Christine Previtera made a motion for approval and member Frank Jacobs seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

President/Chairman Cummings then introduced Nora Loughnane, Director of Community and Economic Development and Mike Jaillet, Town Manager, to discuss the Housing Administrator role and the future of WAHA and Westwood Housing Authority.

All Members & Guests received a copy of tonight's Agenda information.

Nora Loughnane and Mike Jaillet:

Ms. Loughnane explained that the current job responsibilities for Jill Onderdonk's former position was temporarily being split (prior to Spring 2016 town meeting) with Nora taking on Housing Authority responsibilities and Jane O'Donnell taking WAHA responsibilities. Jane O'Donnell passed the draft job descriptions which Ms. Onderdonk had created. (Please see attached job descriptions.)

Mr. Jaillet then presented a brief history of the creating of WHA and WAHA in the town of Westwood. He also explained how a lottery works. Mr. Jaillet went on to explain that after consulting 121B Massachusetts General Law Section B – Housing Law, he believes that WAHA & WHA should be run as separate entities. Mr. Jaillet also believes that the statute allows for the town to pay a straight fee for the WAHA to employ an administrator.

Some WHA/WAHA member comment/questions:

To Ms. Loughnane: How are you getting up to speed on the Housing Authority job? How are you qualified to be doing this job?

- I have met with Jill on several occasions. I also have access to all materials from the state and all the files that Jill has been using for years. I am finding my way and managing as each issue comes up.

How does the lottery work and how will we do one going forward?

- A list had been kept over the years, but the list goes stale after a time and the regulations have changed over the years. If need be, we would create a new lottery.

Where are we in meeting state requirements for low income housing?

- We are between 10-13% depending on how we come out with University Station.

How do you see WAHA working going forward?

- It would be run completely independently by the Board including administrative costs and all other aspects like all housing costs including maintenance, landscaping etc.

Members expressed concern about the direction of WAHA & WHA being split and wondered what would happen to WHA after the Spring Town Meeting and what would the role of WAHA be in town?

- Mr. Jaillet: Look at it as an opportunity to keep an Administrator and advocate for affordable housing any time there is any meeting in town regarding housing. That is when you would have the most impact. An example is the linkage that has been done with SRD & Reynolds Farm.

Will you be attending our monthly Board meetings?

- I will not be attending on a regular basis but I am happy to attend if there is something specific that you need from me.

President/Chairman Cummings thanked Ms. Loughnane & Mr. Jaillet for attending.

President/Chairman Cummings then asked **Members Privetara & O'Sullivan** to look at the law that was distributed and report back at the next meeting.

The Board members also discussed the importance of establishing a Permanent Housing Trust Fund. President/Chairman Cummings suggested that **a Board member speak with Town Counsel Tom McCusker**.

They also discussed establishing an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

President/Chairman Cummings then turned discussion to the need to purchase a laptop and Quick Book to sort out and manage fiscal affairs of WAHA. The Board voted unanimously to spend up to \$1,000.00 on a laptop and purchase Quick Books.

Acting Administrator Jane O'Donnell then reported **on high level maintenance issues**. The Board agreed that a priority list needs to be created. Ms. O'Donnell will create a draft and report at next meeting.

Ms. O'Donnell then updated members on **Tenant Communication issues**. President/Chairman Cummings then updated the Board on issues related to maintenance issues that had not been started or finished in the last 12 months. He introduced plans to hire Westwood One Construction to perform routine maintenance going forward. The Board unanimously agreed to approve hiring of Westwood One Construction.

President/Chairman Cummings then discussed terminating the former maintenance worker. The Board unanimously voted to approve.

Ms. O'Donnell also gave an update on Lathum Answering Service and the need to **tighten & control tenant issues and track resolution**. Ms. O'Donnell will research and update at the next meeting.

Treasurer Dave Atkins expressed continued concern regarding the lack of ability for the Board to record & track **financial performance**. The Board unanimously approved that the Administrator meet with Board-hired CPA James Galvin to work on Quick Books to get fiscal house in order and provide the ability to track and create timely fiscal performance.

Board agreed to meet on Monday, November 23rd.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:48 PM