

Willington Housing Authority
Monday, January 25, 2021 – 4 p.m.
Via ZOOM meeting accessible to the public

Present – Chairman Don Berg; Treasurer Claudia D’Agata; Member William Bunnell; Executive Director Laurie Bradley (property management); Maintenance Supervisor Peter Kasacek; Recording Secretary Brenda Sullivan. Absent: Member Jack Moskus.

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

2. Present to speak – Button Hill Senior Housing residents Wilbur Gangaway and Ruth Gilman.

W. Gangaway said he would have preferred that the discussion about changes to the Resident Handbook could have been postponed until warm weather, when an outdoor meeting could be held and more residents could have participated.

L. Bradley explained each of the changes the Housing Authority would be discussing at this meeting.

She said the lockout fee is meant to cover some of the costs to management. W. Gangaway said the fire department has a master key to the Button Hill complex. L. Bradley said that it’s not the fire department’s job to respond to a lockout situation.

She said the directive to not feed birds by putting seed on the ground is because the seeds attract rodents that then can cause damage to the buildings and to equipment, such as the AC units. She said the change also addresses not putting birdfeeder supports in the mowing path.

She said the late rent fee to be included in the handbook actually isn’t a change, it just reflects what’s in the lease.

She said she is recommending changes to the transfer policy so that it limits transfers to residents who need “reasonable accommodation” for health or safety reasons. Transfers result in loss of rental income and there is potential for conflict with the resident whose request is denied if the policy isn’t clear and consistently applied. There’s also the potential for a Fair Housing lawsuit, she said.

W. Gangaway (formerly a member of the Housing Authority) said he was opposed to a loose transfer policy from the start. He asked if there will be a transfer fee. L. Bradley said any costs would be covered by the Housing Authority if the transfer is for a “reasonable accommodation.” W. Gangaway asked her to define “reasonable accommodation,” since all of the units are handicap-accessible. L. Bradley said this refers to special circumstances concerning health and safety as defined by Fair Housing definitions..

L. Bradley said changes to the handbook take 60 days before they go into effect.

3. Old Business – Senior Housing “Button Hill”

A. Director's Report

As part of the Executive Director’s report on maintenance, questions were raised about why 4 batteries were replaced in all panels in response to one battery going bad in a fire alarm panel in Building 10, and about the cost of the batteries.

D. Berg noted that former management, ACCESS, had to contest the previous company’s bill for overpriced batteries as well as being charged at the “emergency” service rate. L. Bradley said her vendor charged \$150 an

hour, billed for two hours, and that the four 12-volt batteries cost \$82.90 each. She said the total bill was \$726.92. W. Bunnell said that \$80 per battery is about the normal list price, and that the charge should have been closer to \$25 per battery for batteries of this type.

Asked why all four batteries were replaced, since ACCESS replaced them just two years ago, Maintenance Supervisor Peter Kasacek said the batteries came from a company the Coventry Housing Authority has worked with, ITS, and that this company's batteries have worked well. He said all of the batteries were "hot," and that it made sense to replace all four at one time, versus having to make four service calls.

D. Berg said that since the Housing Authority plans to change the fire alarm monitoring service to a different company, L. Bradley might also want to research better prices for the batteries, as well.

B. Expenditures

D. Berg read through the list of expenditures for the benefit of the public present (Housing Authority members had a copy emailed to them by L. Bradley).

D. Berg asked about an expenditure for locks. P. Kasacek said four deadbolts were installed.

C. Button Hill Treasurer's Report

L. Bradley read the report aloud for the benefit of the public present. After discussion about paying the balance on the Housing Enterprises bill, D. Berg asked L. Bradley to reverse a transfer of funds to checking to cover the amount so that D. Berg could write a check from the development funds, instead.

D. Income and Expenses

D. Berg read the report aloud for the benefit of the public.

E. Modifications to the Resident Handbook

1 – Item 5, "Locks and Keys," D. Berg made the following motion to add:

There is a \$25 lock-out fee during regular business hours of 8-4 and a \$35 lock-out fee for after hours, weekends and holidays. This is due and payable by cash or check to the Property Manager.

The motion was seconded by C. D'Agata. The motion passed unanimously.

2 – Item 10, "Feeding the Wildlife," D. Berg made the following motion to add:

Ground feeding is not permitted and keep shepherd's hooks out of the mowing path. If you have questions about where to put the bird feeders, shepherd's hooks or birdbaths, please contact the Property Manager.

W. Bunnell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3 – Item 8, "Rent," D. Berg made the following motion to add:

You may drop your rent off in either of the "Rent Payment boxes" located next to each mailbox. The late rent fee is \$35.00. The rent is considered late after the close of the business day on the 10th of the month. If the 10th of the month falls on a non-business day, the rent will be considered late after the close of business on the following business day.

L. Bradley noted this addition matches what's in the lease. C. D'Agata seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4 – Item 9, "Transfer Policy," D. Berg moved to make the following changes to the policy as currently stated in the handbook:

A transfer request will be considered with a reasonable accommodation request only, to the Property Manager, and only for the following reasons:

*- When a transfer is needed to alleviate verified medical problems of a serious or life-threatening nature, or,
- When there has been a verified threat of physical harm or criminal activity. Such circumstances may, at the Property Manager's discretion, include an assessment by law enforcement indicating that the resident is the actual or potential victim of a criminal attack, retaliation for testimony or hate crime.*

W. Bunnell seconded the motion. There was continued discussion.

D. Berg said he wasn't happy with these changes since he researched other housing policies and some allow for other conditions for a resident to request a transfer to a different unit.

C. D'Agata and W. Bunnell voted in favor of the updated transfer policy. D. Berg voted "no." The motion passed. D. Berg asked L. Bradley to update the Resident Handbook to reflect the changes voted on at this meeting and to give notice to the residents that the changes go into effect in 60 days.

F. Second opportunity for public to speak

W. Gangaway said he felt L. Bradley had explained the handbook changes clearly and reiterated that he was opposed to "random" transfers from the start.

G. Housing Authority Chairman's Report

D. Berg discussed the need for caulking the shower-tile joint in Unit 10F because it affects 10C and noted that there's still other shower caulking and AC condensate drain work to be done, but this work will have to wait until it can be done safely, because of the pandemic.

D. Berg asked resident R. Gilman to remove her car and truck from the parking area. R. Gilman said her nephew is working on removing the vehicles. L. Bradley asked if they could be moved before the upcoming snowstorm. R. Gilman said this would depend on whether the batteries are working. D. Berg said auto repairs shouldn't be made to vehicles in the parking area, other than charging batteries.

There was discussion about the cost of a financial review requested by Centreville Bank, which would be more expensive than an audit. L. Bradley said she would talk to the bank about what information they need and why.

D. Berg made a motion to pay Housing Enterprises, Inc. in full, a total of \$9,965.80.

C. D'Agata seconded the motion. D. Berg said this represents Housing Enterprise's final bill, and that the bank has approved the release of funds to pay this bill. He also noted that Housing Enterprises did not charge interest.

The motion passed unanimously.

D. Berg asked L. Bradley to install the public billboard once the ground isn't frozen. He also noted that L. Bradley is researching fire alarm monitoring systems. He also briefly explained the advantages of upgrading to a networked fire panel system.

4. New Business – None.

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159 **5. Correspondence** – D. Berg said there was a notice from TN meant for Willington Woods, and there was a bill
160 for bonding insurance that he passed on to L. Bradley, who said she contacted the company and paid the bill, and
161 had them update the mailing address for future correspondence.
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163 **6. Approval of Minutes**
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165 D. Berg noted a typo on the agenda for listing minutes to be approved at today's meeting – the date should have
166 been December 12, 2020; so those minutes were tabled for approval at the February meeting.
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168 *D. Berg made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2020 regular meeting.* C. D'Agata seconded
169 the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
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171 *D. Berg moved to approve the minutes of the July 29, 2020 Special Meeting.* W. Bunnell seconded the motion.
172 The motion passed unanimously.
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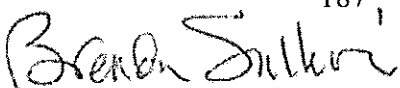
174 **7. Housing Authority Treasurer's Report**
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176 C. D'Agata reported a current balance of \$3,316.97 after deducting secretarial expenses.
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178 **8. Adjourn**
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180 D. Berg moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:16 p.m. C. D'Agata seconded the motion. The motion passed
181 unanimously.
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183 *Respectfully submitted by Recording Secretary Brenda Sullivan. Please note that minutes are posted prior to*
184 *being officially approved – changes/corrections are normally indicated in the subsequent month's meeting*
185 *minutes.*
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TOWN OF WILLINGTON, CT

Received for record February 10 2021
At 10:14 AM 