

# BRANFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY

## Minutes

January 26, 2022 ○ 7:00pm

**Location:** Branford Community House, 46 Church Street, Branford

**1. The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 pm**

**2. Roll Call** – Board Members present: Mark Colello, Bob Imperato, Jerry Mastrangelo, Kate Collins (by phone), Jamie Kavanaugh (by phone)

Others Attending – John Elliott, Beacon Properties; Emily Bouton, Beacon Communities (by phone), Anika Singh Lemar, Yale Law School, and Larry Kluetsch (by phone)

**3. The minutes of November 22, 2021 were approved unanimously.**

**4. Tenant Association Update** – Jamie Kavanaugh requested further information about whether or not income from washers and dryers can be allocated to the tenant association. He asked for a percent of the net income, with which the tenant association could go out and either acquire machines or contract with outside vendors to put in types of outside vending machines. He noted that currently there is no management agreement budgeting for this, and money goes to the BHA but not to the tenant association.

Anika Singh Lemar noted that currently the agreement for Parkside I is \$25 per tenant per year, but that Jamie is looking for additional income from the washers and dryers.

Jamie Kavanaugh also wanted to raise the issue of a lottery for vouchers, but this was moved to the Parkside I re-development update.

Motion to approve the report was made and approval was unanimous.

**5. Financial Update** – Kate Collins reported that she has been in contact with Danny Mendez and that they are still working on year-end figures. There are no final figures yet, but she expects them in hand by the end of next week, which is normal timing.

She reported that Parkside I and II are both not much different from the previous budgets. The only significant figure she noted was that in Parkside I the budgeted expense for electricity is over \$30,000 but that through 11/30 they had spent \$15,000. Parkside II is very close to their budget predictions. There was no significant change in accounts payable.

Motion to approve the report was made by Jamie Kavanaugh and seconded by Jerry Mastrangelo. The approval was unanimous.

**6. Update on legal matters –**

- Anika Singh Lemar reported on a proposed mortgage modification to extend the DOH pre-development note of \$300,000 dated 2016 and which matured in 2018. The loan is to be repaid out of the project budget when the project closes.

Motion to approve the item was made by Kate Collins and seconded by Jerry Mastrangelo. The motion was approved with Jamie Kavanaugh abstaining.

- Anika Singh Lemar also reviewed two documents relating to the vouchers going from Housing Authority of New Haven (HANH) to BHA, attached as exhibits below. These vouchers were awarded by HANH to the BHA in 2020 (BHA responded to a Request for Proposals issued by HANH for these vouchers in 2020; the agreement is being executed now because the project is nearing closing.) The first document reviewed was an MOU between the authorities agreeing to the voucher trade (exhibit 1), and the second was a resolution of the board agreeing to the MOU (exhibit 2). She explained that an adoption of the resolution entitled Bob Imperato to sign the MOU. (Exhibits attached below.)

Motion to approve the resolution was made by Kate Collins and seconded by Jamie Kavanaugh. The motion was approved with Mark Colello abstaining.

- 7. Property Management Report** – John Elliott reported that there was an uptick of COVID with 7 cases on-site, but no hospitalizations. He said that there has been community engagement around the holidays for the residents, as well as an effort to get tests, vaccinations and masks to residents.

He reported on payments at the site, noting that they have saved on electric. Building A of Parkside I was emptied over the last year, and there are 2 vacant units in Parkside II. There are two strong candidates looking to move in in mid-February, so it should be 100% occupied by February.

He also reported on an updated safety plan and the availability of two working propane tanks in case of loss of power.

Mark Collelo and Jerry Mastrangelo raised recent tenant complaints involving issues including malfunctioning elevators in Parkside C and safety concerns like items left in stairwells. John Elliott affirmed he would look into these issues.

Motion to fold item 10 on the agenda (emergency status plan update) into item 7 was made by Jerry Mastrangelo and seconded by Mark Colello. The motion was unanimously approved.

- 8. Parkside I Redevelopment update** – Emily Bouton reported on a budget gap that Beacon is working to fill before closing. The solution needs to be approved by the Town, and after that they will be able to move toward closing. She also reported that they got two environmental approvals: one for flood management, another environmental clearance from HUD. The tenant selection plan is still being drafted and circulated, since it must meet the approval of all funding partners and government agencies. It should be in final draft by the closing.
- 9. Update from Parkside II** – Larry Kluetsch reported that they had found an architect for units, structures and ground for Parkside II and have prepared a report on the renovation plan. They had a call with DOH where they went through the ideas, and they were open to a broad strategy for renovating Parkside II. Issues raised included whether or not there was support from the town and CDBG.

In addition, Mr. Kluetsch raised the issue that one of the buildings is on a floodplain. A survey is needed to determine how much of the building is in a floodplain and get an elevation certification. He reported that they are hoping for a funding plan by end of year.

Bob Imperato reported the capital need is roughly \$480,000. He suggested that a long-term plan that might be more costly is preferable to a collection of short-term fixes to the property's issues. He and Larry agreed that renovation would require around 2-3 million dollars in a plan.

Mark Colello asked whether raising the elevation in Parkside I would affect the flood plain in Parkside II. Bob Imperato responded that he thought the runoff would be captured but would look into it. On investigation, Bob reports that the Engineer's flood/runoff control approval report has been sent to all commissioners; the report confirms that the redevelopment project actually leaves Parkside II in an improved state as regards to flooding and runoff.

**10. New business** – No new business was introduced.

**11. Public Comment** – Carolyn Sires raised concerns about current Parkside residents having spots in the new development. Bob Imperato responded that all current residents are guaranteed spots. She also asked to see the tenant selection plan. Anika Singh Lemar responded that it has not yet been drafted. Ms. Sires also asked for more transparency and access to documents prior to meetings.

12. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

**Maryann Amore**

Clerk to the Branford Housing Authority

Assistance from Gabriel Gassmann, YLSC