

Brookline Housing Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 17, 2019
90 Longwood Avenue
5:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jacobs at 5:30 PM. Those present included Ms. Katz, Ms. Sullivan, and Ms. Cohen.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- An appreciation breakfast will be held on January 30, 2020 at Brookline High School to honor Ms. Katz for her six years as Chair of the Steps To Success Board.
- At Town Meeting, a fossil fuel ban warrant article was passed and included an exception available to the BHA due to its limited ability to raise capital funds. The real estate transfer tax warrant article passed with strong support. It includes a funding preference for BHA capital projects. For this tax to go into effect, the legislature would need to approve a Home Rule Petition, and it would then need to be approved by Town voters.
- The Brookline Community Foundation announced last week that it has generously awarded the BHA \$60,000, one of the largest annual operating grants to a single organization.

Board Reports

Mr. Jacobs said that he attended a meeting of a newly formed organization known as Housing Justice in Brookline. Sixty people attended, which was well over the number they anticipated. This seems to reflect the growing support in Brookline for affordable housing.

Construction Report

BHA Director of Capital Improvements, Sharon Cowan, reported the following:

- A notice to proceed was issued for the Egmont Street Veterans bathroom fan ventilation project.
- The High Street Veterans and Egmont Street Veterans Apartments front door and lock replacement projects are in the schematic design phase. Construction is expected to begin in March of 2020 at Egmont Street Veterans Apartments.
- Concrete balconies are being tested for hazardous materials in preparation for the balcony repair project at the Walnut Street Apartments senior buildings.
- The BHA is preparing work project proposals for the next round of CDBG funding.
- Three Sussman House residents expressed their concern at the November BHA Board meeting that the new electric lines installed in their units and common areas as part of the fire alarm upgrades are unattractive. Unfortunately, due to the solid slab ceilings in apartments, the electric lines cannot be concealed. The first-floor hallway is scheduled to be painted once fire alarm work is complete. This should improve the appearance of the common area fire alarm conduits.

Consent Agenda

On a motion from Ms. Katz and a second from Ms. Cohen, the consent agenda was unanimously approved and authorized the following: the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on November 20, 2019; and a contract with BWA Architecture for 90 Longwood Avenue to increase the base fee by \$5,600 as further described in the memo attached from Maria Maffei.

Resident Services

Mr. Dober said that the Springwell Care Coordinator for O'Shea House has been promoted to a new position within the agency. A new Springwell Care Coordinator was quickly hired, and on-site cross training is taking place.

Highlights of the BHA Resident Services Quarterly Report include:

- A great deal of support is being provided to BHA residents.
- Program case studies reveal that initiatives such as Healthy Lives, which links residents to critical medical services, can have a transformative effect on their lives.
- The data section of the report indicates over 4,600 service instances during the quarter. These numbers are somewhat inflated due to the fact that they include data such as the total number of meals served to residents. Staff will work to break out these statistics differently in future reports so that they are more meaningful.
- Springwell is continuing its attempts to engage the smaller populations of seniors on Walnut Street and Amory Street, but so far there is very low utilization.
- January will see the start of the following programs: tax preparation services; ESOL classes; Tech Goes Home; and a new Brookline Food Pantry location at High Street Veterans Apartments.

RAD Update

BHA Director of Redevelopment, Maria Maffei, reported the following:

61 Park Street

- The highest current priority is delivering the tax credits and fulfilling reporting requirements by the January 1, 2020 deadline.
- The first group of residents will be moving back into their refurbished units in January.
- A finished unit on the 9th floor will be made available for viewing by residents, staff, and Commissioners in early January.
- Work in the multi-service section of the first floor should be completed in January.
- The BHA is looking at the option of scheduling 16 units at a time (up from the current 12 units) to accelerate the construction schedule.

90 Longwood Avenue

- Mass Housing approved Official Action Status for tax exempt bond financing.
- The BHA is bringing a request to HAB for financial support.
- The BHA has conducted demolition in one unit.
- There has been a good response to the RFP for sub trades.
- The BHA has received reimbursement from the Town relating to their line of credit.
- A meeting was held with staff from the Somerville Housing Authority to learn from their experience with the transition from public housing to tax credit property.

Ms. Maffei said that a preliminary zoning analysis to determine the feasibility of additional units in future redevelopment projects determined that Col. Floyd Apartments could add at least 25 – 30 units and the Walnut Street Apartments could add at least 45-55 units.

Ms. Cohen said that if Chapter 40B is factored in, these numbers could go beyond current zoning parameters. DHCD is looking to support additional density.

Mr. Jacobs said that this zoning exercise was intended for HAB, pertaining to the potential use of linkage money. Ms. Cohen expressed interest in learning more about this conversation with HAB.

Approve 90 Longwood Equity and Debt Financing

Ms. Maffei reported the following:

Equity Financing

- Four strong bids were received.
- Consultant Sharon Loewenthal assisted in the selection process for both equity and debt financing.
- Boston Financial Investment Management made the best offer in pricing, total equity contribution and terms.
- The BHA has had a very good experience with Boston Financial at 61 Park LLC. There are advantages to using the same investor/lender for a second redevelopment project.
- Boston Financial identified Santander Bank as the investor. The BHA's experience with Santander at 61 Park LLC has been very positive.

Lender

- Six bids were received.
- Boston Private Bank and Trust made the best offer in terms of: lowest fees; lowest interest rates; and longest amortization and loan terms.
- Boston Private was the lender for 86 Dummer Street and 61 Park Street LLC and performed very well.

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, the following was unanimously approved and authorized:

- A. An operating agreement and related documents with Boston Financial Investment Management, L.P. to provide equity financing for the renovation of 90 Longwood Avenue, and**
- B. A loan agreement, note, mortgage, and related documents with Boston Private Bank & Trust Company to provide construction and permanent debt financing for the renovation of 90 Longwood Avenue with terms as described in the attached memo.**

Both the equity and debt to be provided according to the accompanying memos prepared by BHA Redevelopment Director Maria Maffei.

Mid-Year Budget Review

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- He is pleased with the mid-year status of the budget.
- The budget is on target for a modest surplus.
- The year to date surplus is somewhat inflated due to several factors, including: the first six months of the year incur less utility costs; a non-recurring developer fee was applied; and some capital funding was converted into operating funding.
- Costs of operating old buildings are increasing, including: maintenance materials: maintenance contracts; and equipment replacement.
- The recent reprocurring of trash removal services will result in a cost savings.

Amendments to Union Contracts

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- The BHA has historically sought to maintain similar wage rate increases between its two unions and exempt staff.
- The budget assumed a 2.5% increase; however, it can support a 3% increase this year and next.
- Considering the anticipated income resulting from 61 Park LLC, revenue will be higher next year.

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Sullivan, the amendments to the Collective Bargaining Agreements between the BHA and Teamsters Local 122 and the BHA and AFSCME Local 93, providing for wage increases of 3% for FY 2020 and 3% for FY 2021 as further detailed in the attached memo from Patrick Dober, were unanimously approved.

Other Business

The Board confirmed that the next meeting will be held at Morse Apartments at a date and time to be determined.

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, it was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 PM.

**A TRUE COPY
ATTEST**



**Patrick Dober
Executive Director**