

Trumbull Housing Authority – March 23, 2021

Trumbull Housing Authority Virtual Meeting
March 23, 2021
4:30 pm

Commissioners Present: Chairman Kathleen McGannon, Maureen Bova, Laurel Anderson, Suzanne Donofrio and Charlene Pederson

Also Present: Executive Director Harriet Polansky and Jason Geel, Accountant

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. McGannon at 4:33 pm. The Clerk took Roll Call noting all Commissioners were present followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Resident Comments

No resident comments.

Past Minutes

Ms. Polansky made one change to the January 26, 2021 minutes. Page 3, #4 should read – March 1 through March 31. Motion was made by Mrs. Anderson to approve the minutes as amended. Seconded by Mrs. Bova and approved by unanimous consent.

Motion was made by Mrs. Bova to approve the March 9, 2021 Special Meeting minutes as written. Seconded by Mrs. Anderson and approved by unanimous consent.

Treasurer's Report and Discussion of Financials

Mrs. Bova presented the financial narrative for July 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021. The overall gain of the Housing Authority was \$180,776, which includes all rental income, services income and Capital Grant Funding provided for the redevelopment – rehabilitation – remodeling efforts.

If the Capital related items are removed, the Housing Authority had an operating gain, before depreciation, of \$79,702 of which \$83,708 was attributable to the Village and \$(4,006) was attributable to Congregate.

The current month's operating gain for Stern Village was \$8,004 compared to the budgeted gain of \$4,578. The higher than projected gain is due to rental revenues exceeding expectations by approximately \$5,000 due to quick lease-up of held vacant units while, overall, expenses are in line with expectations. It is also noted that current month expenses include \$3,057 in costs related to the Food Pantry grant award.

The current month's operating loss for the Congregate was (\$2,473) compared to the budgeted gain of \$301. Vacancies continue to be a problem as revenues fell short of budget by about \$2,000 which accounts for most of the operating loss. In addition, due to annual vacancies, grant revenue is projected to begin running out in March. Utilities are the primary cost over budget likely due to seasonal factors and is expected to fall close to budgeted amounts for the year.

The overall cash position of the Authority, including reserves, was \$1,277,951 which includes \$632,893 reserved for renovations costs at Stern Village. Construction payables total \$30,202.

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A snapshot of program balances are as follows:

Stern Village	6/30/2020	1/31/2021	2/28/2021	YTD Change
Cash	\$ 87,630	\$110,532	\$107,220	\$ 19,590
Accounts Payable	\$ 57,117	\$ 49,993	\$ 46,568	\$ 10,549
Interprogram Loan	\$322,823	\$333,671	\$345,281	\$ 22,458
Reserves	\$506,321	\$506,577	\$506,695	\$ 374
Excess Cash	\$ (3,665)	27,409	27,097	
Congregate				
Cash	\$ 42,376	\$ 18,016	\$ 29,816	\$ (12,560)
Accounts Payable	\$ 22,993	\$ 22,669	\$ 3,410	\$ 19,583
Interprogram Loan	\$322,823	\$333,671	\$345,281	\$ (22,458)
Reserves	\$ 9,462	\$ 9,468	\$ 9,469	\$ 7

Congregate payable to Village was not paid pending receipt of subsidy which was received in February. The \$22,458 year to date increase represents January and February’s cost share to be paid in March. As discussed previously, Stern Village is required to remit a portion of excess cash to DOH as defined in the assistance agreement relating to the Stern Village Redevelopment. Operations has generated \$24,097 in excess cash through February 2021 due to positive operating results. Management intends to utilize any funds to continue rehabbing units at Stern Village.

Mrs. Bova noted that \$22,438 was paid to Stern Village because the subsidy grant was received.

Mrs. Anderson questioned the expenditure for the Food Pantry. A grant was received but it shows an expenditure of \$3,000. Mr. Geel noted it is a timing difference in reporting.

Discussion was held regarding the excess cash going to the DOH. Mrs. Anderson wanted to know if was profit or physical cash. Mr. Geel noted it is on a cash basis. This amount would be paid out on June 30 but you have six months to submit. He noted it is important to have a plan in place to spend the money before June 30. This money is separate from the SSHP money.

Mrs. Anderson requested that the Accounts Receivable number be added to the snap shot for both the Village and the Congregate so that it can be reviewed regularly to confirm that in-house documents agree with the financial statements. Mr. Geel will provide active, inactive and credits in the report for each property, setting it at the beginning of the year and monthly as is currently reported.

Mrs. Anderson requested clarification of the following accounts:

1. Account #32.10 – Vacancy Loss. It is up to \$38,000. How much will be covered by grants? Mr. Geel noted this loss will not be reimbursed. There was a one-time reimbursement during the construction phase as there was a provision for funds to be given back. He stated it has been factored in and should be close to, if not less than, budget.
2. Account #36.10 – Interest Income. Budget was \$8,260 but YTD is only \$374. Requested this account be reviewed for the next budget as the numbers are off. Mr. Geel noted the

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investment fund rates have plummeted this year resulting in this difference. The reduction has been drastic for the last two years.

3. Account #36.20 – Other Income. There is \$6,600 in the account. Mr. Geel noted this is typically charges to tenants for repairs or late fees which could not be collected. Discussion was held regarding the charges to the tenants. Mr. Geel noted the food pantry funds were put in this account by error which brings the account down to approximately \$1,000.
4. Account #44.40 – Maintenance Shop/Equipment. Amount is very high this past month. It was noted the personal use of the truck was stopped and it is on premise each night. It was noted the gasoline prices have increased and there was a repair included for the tractor and snow blower. It was noted the outside contractor was used two to three times for snow removal this year.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Polansky reported the following:

1. Thank you to the Trumbull Knights of Columbus for their generous donation to Stern Village. They hope to use this money to purchase lanterns for approximately half of the residents to use doing a power outage.
2. They started to move forward with rehabbing units in section 1. They are planning on three hotel units. One of these hotel units needs to be rehabbed. Procurement of appliances is difficult. They hope to have refrigerators by the beginning of next month. The residents are given a two to three week notice before moving into the hotel unit. They are given moving supplies and helped to pack, if requested. Some items are stored in a pod while others are brought to the hotel units for use by the resident. This will continue into the fall.
3. There were ten applicants for Stern Village but they have indicated they would like to wait at this time. Applications for Stern Village will be available from April 1-June 15. They will be available at the administrative office, on the website, will be advertised in the CT Post and on social media.
4. Many of the residents have received their second dose of the vaccination, as well as the administrative staff. They hope to open the Community Room on May 1 with COVID-19 restrictions and rules in place.
5. Recertification training was completed.
6. Thank you to Griffin Hospital for vaccinating the congregants last Friday. They are planning to open the Congregate dining room on May 1. By that time, all congregants will have their second shot.

Congregate Updates

Ms. Polansky noted the following:

1. The bathroom rehab for the Congregate is progressing with ten bathrooms completed. The residents love them. Different seats for the showers are being purchased. The seats originally ordered were not appropriate for the space. Same price; no change order required. Installation and management of the blocking will be discussed at the in-person meeting scheduled for Thursday. The contractor will be investigating the fans that have been installed for any problems.
2. Looking into other funding sources for the Congregate. There are not any opportunities currently for the Village because they cannot get the HTTC funds again but they will apply for

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this funding for the Congregate. Whatever is remaining from the SSHP funding will be earmarked for the Village.

3. Mrs. Pederson questioned the number of vacant units to be filled. Ms. Polansky noted two to three units in the Village are vacant. She reviewed the process for applicants for the Village noting the wait list is generated through a specific housing computer program that rates the applications and is a lottery system.
4. Ms. Polansky noted the HTTC funding has less rules and regulations and has a more open scope than the SSHP and Small Cities. She is looking into Neighborhood funding which could be used for some projects. Companies would be able to buy tax credits like in the past with Eversource.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business.

New Business

1. Discussion of Additional Monies – Funding remains from the SSHP and can be used towards the repair of the sidewalk by the Congregate. Working on quotes. Additional monies are also available that need to be spent with regard to excess cash. Discussion was held regarding the funds available which may be approximately \$75,000 at the end of the year. Ms. Polansky suggested the funds be used to rehab three additional units. Mrs. Anderson noted other ideas were discussed at a prior meeting which included radon testing, a rain garden and a beautification program. Now the sidewalk seems to use the \$78,000 instead of the other projects. She noted radon testing is important. Ms. Polansky noted test results for radon should be received shortly and they will know if any additional radon units need to be installed. This would be part of the SSHP (State Sponsored Housing Portfolio) funding. Mrs. Anderson requested that the radon be taken care of first. Updated information will be available at the next meeting and possibly a quote on the sidewalks. There is no hard deadline to close out the project but they must remit excess funding, according to the calculation, on June 30. This is money not obligated to a bill. Mr. Geel noted the Board needs to be aware of this situation and have a plan to spend down the funding within the next three months. Projects do not need to be completed but expenses booked. You must spend the funds within the original scope of the project. Sidewalks and radon are both part of the scope. There is a new asset manager who is aware of the plan and the overall scope of the project. The grant for the smoke detectors was denied. Ms. Polansky noted there will be another round of SSHP money which may also fund Small Cities. She is unsure on how the applications will be rated. More information will be available after DOH meets with the consultants. Mrs. Anderson questioned if Millennium would be involved with the grant process. She is concerned about them being a sole source for the projects. Ms. Polansky is getting quotes from vendors to do the HTCC grant. A decision will be made next month on the expenditure of the excess funding.
2. Discussion of THA Smoking Policy – Mrs. McGannon noted some complaints have been made through the First Selectman's office regarding people disregarding the smoking policy by smoking in their apartments. Ms. Polansky is working on a lease change that would address residents who smoke outside of the designated areas. Suggestion was made to fine the residents per incident. Residents who smoke in their apartments present a problem with cleaning/painting. They will be having mandatory inspections that are noticed to the residents. These are done yearly. They are looking at mechanicals, smoke detectors, hoarder issues or

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residents with an over-abundance of personal items, looking for people living in an apartment that should not be and smoking violations. The lease agreement section was discussed regarding damages. Mrs. Bova felt that everyone should be treated equally with regard to smoking, hoarding and other non-compliance of the lease. Discussion was held regarding the closeness of the residences, the difficulty to abide by the 50 foot requirement in the policy and reporting of violations. Mrs. Anderson felt the non-smoking policy needs to be enforced as this is a health and safety hazard and is costing money to rehab the units when residents leave. This is a non-smoking facility by federal law. Discussion was held regarding a statement in the lease that they will not smoke in their apartment and if they do, that is cause for immediate termination of the lease. This is currently in the lease but difficult to detect. There are no fire extinguishers in the apartments. Reminders are posted within the facility. Legally the facility has the right to tell you what you can do in your apartment. It was suggested that we have more of the covered areas to accommodate smokers.

3. Discussion of Security Deposit – this was originally a discussion about what is not paid by residents when they leave. Many applicants do ask about a security deposit. The problem arises when residents are deceased, they move or go to a nursing home and the rent is not paid either by the resident or by family. Discussion was held regarding a security deposit that would cover these instances. There is currently \$9,000 in accounts receivable for rents not paid which is cumulative over several years. Mr. Geel noted the State does not have to approve a security deposit as long as you are within guidelines for the elderly which is no more than one month's rent. He noted a policy would need to be adopted and have a disposition process as well. State laws require a one month limitation on the charge to the resident, how long you have to close it out, applying balances against it if they owe anything, annually return any interest earned and segregation of funds from operating. Watching the accounts more carefully would catch some of the problems before they go too far.

Ms. Polansky will place the above items on the next agenda under Unfinished Business as discussion and consideration for motion.

Bylaws Review Committee

Mrs. Pederson and Mrs. Bova agreed to review the bylaws to make sure the Board is in compliance and that they are complete.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:56 pm by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk