

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE MOLINE HOUSING AUTHORITY**

May 18, 2020

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Moline Housing Authority was held at 5:30 PM via teleconferencing due to COVID-19.

Board members present were Chairperson Leslie Stange-Crotty, Vice-Chairperson David Parker, Jr., Diane Fox, and Jay McCowan. Staff members present were Executive Director John Afoun and Recording Secretary Maria Nino. Board Counsel was in attendance.

1. **Call to Order:** Chairperson Leslie Stange-Crotty called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 20, 2020:** Minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 20, 2020 were reviewed. Motion was made, and seconded, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 20, 2020, as presented. All voting members present voting "aye", none against; the Chairperson declared the motion carried.
3. **Executive Director's Report:** Verbal report provided by Mr. John Afoun.
 - a. **Resolution #945:**

Resolution #945 was to approve/authorize the Bad Debt Write Offs. All voting members present voting "aye", none against, the Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.
 - b. **Approval of Financial Report:** The Board reviewed the financial reports as presented.
 - c. **Section 8 Report:** The Board reviewed the Section 8 Report as presented. Mr. Afoun said there was really no movement in the Section 8 program. We are just doing administrative work and adjusting income as people lose their jobs. We are doing inspections, but we ask questions before we go in and wear protective gear when going into homes. There is not a lot going on in the program due to the coronavirus pandemic.
 - d. **Public Housing Report:** The Board reviewed the Public Housing Report as presented. There was a report for each AMP as well as one showing the information for both AMPs combined. This report gives a data analysis to track and report the statistics to the Board. Commissioner McCowan asked how long it takes to turn an apartment around. Mr. Afoun responded the target is 14 days for maintenance, but we are required by law to turn it by 30 days from the day the key was given to us to the day the unit is leased.

Mr. Afoun said that bedbug treatments have all been conducted, but one resident does not want to allow maintenance in the unit so we cannot verify that the treatment has worked, but we are confident it has worked.
 - e. **Development/Maintenance Reports:** The Board reviewed the Capital Funds & Maintenance Progress Report, which showed current and future projects. The report also addressed work orders which had all been completed for the month.

Mr. Afoun said that the security camera project has been extended until June because we want to add additional cameras. All cameras can be viewed from here now and we are working with the police to give them access to view cameras from the police station. We are just waiting for change orders, but overall we are happy with the project.

Mr. Afoun said that the contracts have been signed for the Hillside Heights Re-roofing Project and the Hillside Heights Intercom project.

Mr. Afoun stated he had been in contact with S.E. Clark and Associates and they have not been about to come due to COVID-19. Once we are able to figure out the ins and outs of a new project proposal we will bring that to the board.

Mr. Afoun stated that offices are still closed due to the Governor's Stay In-Place order. We are still doing emergency maintenance at this time. Since the last board meeting there have been a total of 41 people that have reported lost income. One or two people from Spring Brook and Spring Valley have tested positive for COVID-19.

MHA was awarded funds from the CARES Act which must be spent by December 31, 2020.

Commissioner Fox said that FEMA is able to provide facemasks for free. Where she lives is an apartment complex for seniors and they came to each of their apartments to give out masks. Mr. Afoun said once we learn further information we will communicate that to the board in regards to acquiring free masks from FEMA. Chairperson Stange-Crotty asked if we do not spend the money if it goes back to the government. Mr. Afoun responded yes. He said the other thing we have identified is Chromebook for children fourth grade and under as far as how to spend these funds. He said all students in fifth grade and above already have one. When we spoke to the school they said that children from kindergarten to fourth grade are only provided one Chromebook per household. The school district said they can help us purchase these. They said they have hotspots through a provider for families who do not have internet access. Mr. Afoun said Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. is working with the City and Project NOW to provide internet access to those in need through Mediacom.

Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. said that CDBG money was given to the City of Moline for similar things as what we have and they will be providing internet access for Moline students. He suggested allowing the City of Moline to spend their money first and then we can spend our money after that so that we do not duplicate services. Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. asked if we have an active enough RAB board where they can present us with what they feel they need. Mr. Afoun said he wanted to call a resident meeting, but it is challenging given the shelter in place order. He said he asked HUD if we can use the money to help people who have fallen behind on rent and late fees. Mr. Afoun said that HUD has not given a response on this. They haven't given a clear directive on whether we could or could not.

Commissioner McCowan asked if they gave any type of guidelines on what you can or can't use the CARES Act funds for and within that what do our residents need and want. Commissioner Fox said she has the answer for some of those questions. She went to see Ms. Tammy Jones on Friday and her and several other people were there. Ms. Jones said they are supposed to wash their clothes more to combat COVID-19 and asked if we can give them some money towards the laundry card or give free laundry services. Mr. Afoun said the health of our tenants is something we are able to use the funds for and we want to make sure our tenants are able to wash their clothes. He said we can assist with laundry cards and will discuss this with HUD to make sure this is eligible.

Commissioner McCowan said HUD is very general in what the guidelines are. Chairperson Stange-Crotty wants to know if the masks that FEMA has might be useful to other people. If they have other needs we want to at least consider us taking care of ourselves if they need to use those somewhere else. Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. takes a little bit different view.

FEMA covers the entire nation. They are another pot to help from. He thinks it would be a disservice to us and our residents if we do not take advantage of the help they are giving us. Chairperson Stange-Crotty said if it is local then it is a limited resource and if it is federal then that is something different. She then said that if FEMA doesn't have enough masks for our residents, we will buy them. She said it has to be prioritized because today is the day when we need them. We have until the end of the year to spend the money. We could prioritize the masks, internet, Chromebook for now.

Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. said regarding internet and Chromebooks for the kids that they are almost done with the school year at this point. He thinks it would be a wise idea to hold off on allocating money on the majority of the residents' needs. He said the laundry idea was brilliant or if anyone is struggling on other things such as groceries that might be something to look into. He said since there will be a couple of months where kids will be out of schools we should wait.

Commissioner McCowan said we may need to get a call in to the schools sooner so that we can get them ahead of time for fall semester. He said his children go to Moline and that there is a huge need for kids to get the Chromebook. Chairperson Stange-Crotty said the thing is when you are coordinating with the school district, she would be probably asking that we might end up using any funds we have for some sort of summer school. That would be including K through 4.

Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. asked when a kid gets one in 5th grade do they keep it. Commissioner McCowan responded yes. Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. feels we should let the schools run the schools and we should run the housing authority. He feels internet access is more important than providing a Chromebook. Chairperson Stange-Crotty said the thing is that we have kids that are already 2 months behind in their education. The most important area, the kids in our housing are already going to be behind in the education. When they have the ability to work on their skills when they get back in school they won't have gotten behind 6 months. Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. feels we are not solving the problem. Commissioner McCowan said when the whole thing came up giving to families K through 4. It's just the kids who didn't have any type of way to sign in and do their homework. That being said he is wondering how many kids we would have that would need one or more than one and what is the school going to do to fill in that gap so this may not even be an issue for us because the school district may be looking for a way to provide a Chromebook to the kids who do not have one. Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. reiterated that this is a school system problem, not something that can be sustainable for us. A lengthy discussion followed in regards to this topic. It's a school district issue to help the children and our job to help house people said Commissioner McCowan, who agreed with Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr.

Mr. Afoun said we can have a special meeting since we are doing teleconferencing anyway once he ascertains the information we can do everything online. Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. said he likes that better than phone polls. Mr. Afoun said that one of the things coronavirus has done for us is enable us to use technology. He said we could do another online meeting to discuss this more next week.

Chairperson Stange-Crotty wants an email with the results of Mr. Afoun's conversation with the school district. Vice-Chairperson Parker, Jr. wants Mr. Afoun to contact Ms. KJ Whitely at the City of Moline to see what they are using their funds for so we have a full picture on what we are looking at.

Commissioner Fox said at Hillside they need a weekend maintenance person to wipe down the common areas on the weekends. Ms. Tammy Jones told Commissioner Fox that the weekend person only does the garbage.

Mr. Afoun let the board know that our previous employee, Ms. Nysha Conroy is back with us.

4. Resident Advisory Board (RAB) Report:

No report provided.

5. Any other business that may come before the Board including comments from the general public:

No other business to come before the Board.

6. Adjournment:

There being no further business, a motion was made, and seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All voting members present voting "aye", none against; the Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 6:36 P.M.

Leslie Stange-Crotty, Chairperson