

MINUTES – August 10, 2022

The Housing Authority of the City of Meadville met in Regular Meeting in the Community Room at Holland Towers at 2:01 p.m., the 10th day of August 2022.

Members Present: Richard H. Zinn, Chair
Thomas G. Youngblood, Vice Chair
Marcia J. Yohe, Treasurer
James D. Rozakis, Secretary
Sonya D. Logan, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Also Present: Vanessa L. Rockovich, Executive Director
Jon M. Ketcham, Director of Housing Management
Tammy L. Brown, Admin. Assistant/Property Manager
Tommi Jo Davenport, Property Manager
Susan Y. King, Section 8 Coordinator
Charlotte M. Mitchell, Management Aide
Barbara L. Houserman, Resident Initiatives Coordinator
Daniel R. Harris, Housing Inspector
Ronald E. Smith, Maintenance Supervisor
Kyle M. Lynch, Assistant Maintenance Inspector
Christopher D. Ferry, Solicitor
Jaime Kinder, Mayor
Autumn Vogel, Meadville City Council
Gwen Smith, Active Aging
Lee Scandinaro, Housing Coalition
Harriet L. Copeland, Holland Towers Resident
Christine A. Pelc, Holland Towers Resident
Sally A. Starcher, Holland Towers Resident
Robin Milstead, Holland Towers Resident
Francis Stone, Counselor
Rose A. Portfilio, Holland Towers Resident
Sherry L. Brown, Holland Towers Resident
Iris Cole, Holland Towers Resident
Judy A. Steele, Holland Towers Resident
Norma J. Fogle, Holland Towers Resident
Wayne P. Shannon, Holland Towers Resident
Tammy K. Corey, Holland Towers Resident
Nancy C. Petro, Holland Towers Resident
Jacqueline A. Commins, Holland Towers Resident
Mike Crowley, Meadville Tribune

A motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 13, 2022, was made by Mr. Youngblood, seconded by Mr. Rozakis, and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Commins began the comment portion of the meeting with news of a survey she conducted among Holland Towers residents. Ms. Milstead was next with a letter she read to the Board and staff members. It pertained to her living conditions and bedbug issues. Sherry Brown explained she had bedbugs four years ago and the maintenance department sprayed her unit, and she has not had issues since.

CAPITAL FUND GRANT PROGRAM

Ms. Rockovich reported renovations are still in the planning stages and the architect will attend the Board meeting on September 14. Ms. Rockovich stated she is setting up a vacant efficiency apartment as a prototype. She has sample windows and will have more samples for tenants to look at soon. Ms. Rockovich will have flooring samples available for the tenants to vote on for all the apartments and the sample receiving the most votes will be specified in the bid package.

Ms. Rockovich stated that the Housing Authority is still awaiting information regarding the grant applications. She stated that she checks the websites on a regular basis for the status of any awards.

HOLLAND TOWERS

Ms. Davenport reported that there were 13 vacancies and 56 people on the waiting list.

GILL VILLAGE REPORTS

Ms. Davenport reported that there were 16 vacancies.

FAMILY SITE WAITING LIST

The waiting list for William Gill Commons, Elmwood, Morgan Village, and Scattered Sites is One-Bedroom - 42; Two-Bedroom - 11; Three-Bedroom - 2; Four-Bedroom - 4; and Five-Bedroom - 5.

ELM, MORGAN, SCATTERED SITES

Ms. Brown reported that there were 3 vacancies at Elm and Morgan, and zero vacancies at the Scattered Sites.

SNODGRASS REPORT

Ms. Brown reported that there are no vacancies at Snodgrass. Ms. Rockovich advised Board Members of a meeting she and Ms. Brown had with Lee Scandinaro from the Housing Coalition regarding Coalition-owned properties. She introduced Mr. Scandinaro and he made a few comments regarding the goals of the Coalition. Ms. Rockovich provided the Board with the Request for Proposal issued by the Coalition for a future discussion.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Mr. Smith reported 268 work orders were generated during July 2022 with 28 outstanding. Five apartments were completed and 12 are in progress. Other work completed by the maintenance department consisted of removing the sand box at Gill Commons, fencing was removed at 783 Whittier so the yard could be mowed, and mowing.

EXTERMINATION REPORT

Mr. Lynch presented the extermination report. Holland Towers currently has 17 units being treated for infestations with six of those on a 45-day clear. There were 16 units being treated at Holland Towers last month. William Gill Commons currently has nine units being treated for infestations with none on a 45-day clear. There were ten units being treated at Gill Commons last month.

Mr. Youngblood asked, how far in advance were notices being sent out and did they provide instructions to those that needed specific treatments? Mr. Lynch explained that at the initial inspection, the tenants are given instructions as to how to prepare their unit for spraying. The exterminator is on housing authority properties to spray on Mondays. Holland Towers is scheduled for the first and third Mondays with Gill on the second and fourth. When a tenant reports a problem, the exterminator is contacted, and the tenant is put on the schedule as soon as possible.

Ms. Yohe asked Ms. Rockovich how the Housing Authority got to the point they are at this time with the bedbug issues. Ms. Rockovich responded that only one maintenance person was certified to spray. The maintenance person was spraying 40 hours per week for 347 units. She realized within the first month of starting with the housing authority this one person could not do all the units alone. Mr. Ketcham contacted several companies requesting a quote to spray the infested apartments and set up a maintenance program. The Housing Authority sent out for bids for companies in the area to apply to do the spraying. The first company was fine in the beginning, but the sprays became inconsistent and soon we were behind again. Mr. Ketcham contacted one of the other companies that submitted a quote. The new company conducted a full inspection in August 2021 and presented a plan to address the infestation and set up a maintenance program. The tenants are constantly being educated on how to avoid bedbug issues through written instructions and during tenant meetings. Those that do not follow the recommendations made by the housing authority prolong the problem. Mr. Ketcham added that we try to get tenants to comply with the rules regarding infestation, but as stated, some do not. Mr. Youngblood explained that, in order to eradicate the bedbug issues, the tenants have to do their part too, or the spraying is going to continue without being stopped. He also explained that when tenants do not comply with rules and regulations regarding spraying, they can be evicted. It is a violation of their lease.

PUBLIC HOUSING AND SECTION 8 INSPECTIONS REPORT

Mr. Harris reported there were 12 inspections, with one being a new unit, and two failed units.

RESIDENT INITIATIVE PROJECTS REPORTS

Ms. Houserman reported Victory Church will hold their annual "Back to School Supplies Giveaway" at Gill Commons in August but the day and time has not yet been scheduled. Children ages 5-18 will receive school supplies.

The Senior Food Boxes will be delivered to Holland Towers on August 11, 2022, at 9:00 AM for 33 residents. Sean Kerins, from Second Harvest Food Bank, will conduct a site visit at that time.

The Summer Lunch Food Program ends on Friday, August 12, 2022, at all three sites. Approximately 1,400 meals have been served to children ages 2-18. Ms. Houserman expressed appreciation to the Meadville Housing and Will Gill Resident Council officers.

Ms. Houserman stated that the After-School classes will begin on Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at Southwick Kickboxing and Grappling located on Lincoln Avenue in Meadville. The classes will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. for six weeks for children ages 7 through 13.

SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER REPORT

Ms. King reported there were 167 units under contract which includes 4 units administered by other housing authorities. There were 12 families on the waiting list. Ms. King stated there were 10 outstanding vouchers. Ms. Rockovich reported the software company has partnered with a company that provides nationwide criminal reports, credit scores, and income verifications. The housing authority is working towards setting up online applications.

APPLICATIONS

Ms. Mitchell reported 13 applications were received. She stated that seven applications are in process, six are waiting on information, and six still need to be processed.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ferry reported that Diane Adsit has been designated to oversee the Holland Towers Resident Council Election. He stated that the Resident Council may be able to have an election in the fall.

RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Ketcham stated that mileage rate increased in July 2022. Normally it changes at the first of the year. A motion to adopt Resolution No. 7 of 2023 to Approve Mileage Rate for 2022 was made by Ms. Yohe, seconded by Ms. Logan, and unanimously approved.

Ms. Rockovich stated the housing authority has excess funds in the checking account and would like to invest the funds into certificates of deposit to earn better interest. She has secured 15-month certificates at the rate of 1 percent interest at Mercer State Bank. After a brief discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution No. 8 of 2023 to purchase certificates of deposit was made by Ms. Youngblood, seconded by Mr. Rozakis, and unanimously approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Ketcham presented the July 2022 register of bills. After a brief discussion, a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for audit was made by Mr. Rozakis, seconded by Ms. Logan, and unanimously approved.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

There were no committee reports to be presented.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Nothing to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Rockovich stated HUD Pittsburgh Field Office personnel will be visiting the housing authority on Friday, August 12, 2022. The purpose of the visit is to meet the staff and provide any necessary technical support.

Ms. Rockovich reported that the housing authority was notified that all properties will receive REAC Inspections in September 2022. She stated that letters were sent to all tenants that the staff will be conducting Pre-REAC Inspections beginning August 1, 2022. The goal is to make as many repairs in the units during the inspection as possible. The housing authority staff will be addressing housekeeping issues and infestation problems.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications to be presented.

The meeting recessed into Executive Session at 2:59 p.m. to discuss personnel matters. The meeting reconvened at 3:23 p.m. with no action being taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Youngblood, seconded by Mr. Rozakis, and was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

Submitted,

James D. Rozakis, Secretary