

WINOOSKI HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING

4:15 P.M.
February 21, 2024

Zoom
For link please call (802) 655 2360 by
noon of the scheduled meeting.

MINUTES

Present: Chair Owen; Vice Chair Raymond; Commissioner Mace; Commissioner Owen

Officers: ED Decarreau

Meeting called to order by Chair Owen at 4:24

Meeting Called to Order at 4:24 pm

1. Public Comment
2. Approve Agenda – No Changes Proposed by Staff
3. Approve Minutes of January 17, 2024

Motion by Commissioner Mace

Second by Commissioner Raymond

Motion carries 3 - 0

4. Report from Auditor

Auditor Nick Beauchamp from EFPR Group.

The Board appreciated the contents of the presentation and was grateful to Mr. Beauchamp for his work.

Discussion about the funds available in unrestricted cash invested in CDs.

ED Decarreau noted that because of major repairs done through the closure funds that came available as the result of the RAD projects. Bigger projects are coming up.

5. Report on December Financials

ED Decarreau noted that the chart of accounts have changed in order to line up with HUD. Also noted the insurance distribution is likely incorrect. Pest control is very high. Noting that the healthy bottom lines.

6. Report on the Consolidation of Bank Accounts and Banking Security

See Board Notes –

Two issues

- The need to manage the balance sheet issues with bank accounts instead of accounting practices.
- The need to reconcile all of the accounts so that the Interfund Balances are correct.

7. Introduction of Remote Work Policy

Commissioner Mace asked about legal review. ED Decarreau noted that this was the initial review and that it would go to our attorney between meetings.

Chair Owen asked whether working remotely is a regular part of a position. ED Decarreau noted that because tenant files cannot leave the building. Files are not fully available through the software. At this point, there is no plan to make working from home an option.

ED Decarreau is not encountering applicants who expect to be able to work remotely.

The document is ready to go to the attorney.

8. Update on Housing Issues in the City of Winooski

- a. 300 Main Street Issues – situation remains unclear. We are working with tenants and offering our apartments across the street. Discussion about the landlord practices to have people move without issuing eviction notices.

Commissioner Mace noted that the Winooski School District's School Board has passed a resolution.

Commissioner Mace also noted that once an eviction notice is received, help is available. The lack of such a letter is holding their tenants back from getting support.

ED Decarreau noted that the owners have submitted their permits to the City for redevelopment of the site.

- b. Project Based Voucher Release

We have issued fifteen Project Based Vouchers to Heen's Crossing. We have also made sure tenants eligible for the tenant-based vouchers to avoid eviction based on inability to pay rent.

- c. Agreement with The City for Inspections

ED Decarreau noted that the staff is working with the City to roll out the new NSPIRE inspection standards and noted there may be an impact on the budget

ED Decarreau also noted continuing work on the St. Stephen's project, looking for ways to make sure there is a needed outcome on the property.

ED Decarreau also reported work on zoning to try to increase density allowed. The State is likely to force some of the needed change.

ED Decarreau also noted the work that a group of housing providers to try to secure funding for tenant support directly to the operators for housing support. WHA regularly houses tenant who were formerly unhoused and is mostly successful with our support. The group noted that outside support is often unsuccessful after occupancy and that providers have a unique place to work in ways that outside agencies cannot.

Commissioner Mace asked about Evernorth and their support for building more units on Elm Street. ED Decarreau noted that the visited the site and found that it was "tired". They pointed to the new development in Rutland for ideas on projects they want to fund. ED Decarreau noted that it is difficult to make a fifty-year-old development look like a brand new one. WHA is still trying to find a partner. ED Decarreau noted how hard it is for new developers to break into get access to funding without having had received funding before.

9. Update on New Staffing

ED Decarreau noted that training the new staff is both exciting and challenging. There is opportunity to improve the systems, with the challenges of changing very stable, paper-based systems.

10. Other Business

ED Decarreau mentioned that there is a new laundry service, including breaking a contract with the former provider who was not servicing their equipment.

Commissioner Raymond noted the challenge that the machines will not work on coins, but use a card.

11. Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Mace

Second by Commissioner Raymond

Motion carries 3 – 0

Meeting adjourned at 5:25