

**Minutes of Regular Meeting
of the Gardner Housing Authority
July 27th, 2023**

A regular meeting of the Gardner Housing Authority was held on Thursday, July 27th, 2023 at 10:15 AM in the conference room of the Housing Authority, 116 Church Street, Gardner, MA. Upon the call of the Chairman, those present and absent were as follows:

Present: Stephen Cormier, Vice Chairman, Stephen Hancock, Treasurer, Jeanne May, Resident Board member, Leonette Roy, Vice Treasurer, and Krishonna Murray, Executive Director.

Absent from the meeting: George Ouellet, Chairman

The Vice Chairman, Stephen Cormier, opened the meeting at 10:38 AM. A Motion was made by J. May and seconded by L. Roy to begin the meeting.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the regular meeting held on June 20th, 2023. A Motion was made by S. Hancock and seconded by J. May to approve the minutes of the June 20th, 2023 meeting. Voted unanimously.

The Board was presented with the Annual Plan earlier in the morning of July 27th, 2023. A motion was made by L. Roy and seconded by J. May to approve the Annual Plan. Voted Unanimously.

Executive Director Report

1. K. Murray discussed current construction projects and reported updates:
 - a. FISH #103133: 16 Cypress Street Renovation was discussed. A Motion was made by J. May and seconded by L. Roy to approve the Certificate of Substantial Completion. Voted unanimously.
 - b. FISH #103115: Sliders and Balconies were discussed. A change order request was presented to furnish and install approximately 16 years of Shaw Carpet tile or equivalent. The Board discussed various options and decided that the rug shall be addressed when the GarWest common area's rug is addressed. The Board discussed concern with having mismatched carpet tile.
 - c. FISH #103130: Entryway renovation for Congregate entry was discussed, with K. Murray explaining that the contractor withdrew from the contract. K. Murray presented the Board with options as to how to proceed with the project. The options were: to change the door to be ADA compliant, and disregard the awning, or re-bid the project. S. Hancock discussed the need for ADA door as it spoke to accommodation. S. Hancock made the motion to dismiss the contract, J. May seconded the motion. Voted unanimously. L. Roy made the motion to only construct the door, J. May seconded. Voted unanimously.
 - d. K. Murray discussed summer projects that the Maintenance Dept. were working on including but not limited to parking lot repainting, amongst other projects.
2. K. Murray provided the Board with financial updates related to resident accounts:
 - a. Assessed late charges and miscellaneous charges related to court and maintenance fees were discussed.

- b. Issued Notices related to Non-Payment of Rent was discussed.
3. K. Murray provided the Board with program and office updates:
- a. K. Murray presented the Board with Logo options, explaining the Mayor asked GHA change their logo so that it did not resemble the city's. The Board picked a logo.
 - b. K. Murray discussed vacancies and a recent meeting held with EOHLC. K. Murray explained that EOHLC and A. Clinton of CHAMP recognized the need for additional staff to address larger list pulls and screening. EOHLC discussed possible budget exemptions for additional staff. EOHLC recommended GHA utilize a mail vendor as a means to alleviate front office from printing and mass mailing of applications.
 - c. K. Murray discussed upcoming resident events: Senior BBQ and Block Party at the family site for back-to-school supplies. K. Murray explained that with RSC funds, they were able to collaborate with Gardner CAC on providing back packs and supplies. The Board discussed ideas for donations, party supplies, rental of tents and chairs along with ways for residents to RSVP.
 - d. K. Murray explained the Maintenance Mechanic I/II position was filled with the employee who previously held a temporary position.
 - e. K. Murray explained the part-time Administrative Assistant position had been posted and interviews continued to be held.
 - f. K. Murray explained that Union Negotiations had been held earlier in the week and the Board would need to meet at a later date to vote on the new contract conditions. K. Murray negotiation lasted one hour and ended well.
 - g. K. Murray discussed the new office phones as the phone system needed to be replaced. Residents were informed of new office extensions.
 - h. K. Murray provided and discussed Commissioner Stipends in the amount of \$899.49.
 - i. K. Murray discussed the posting of meeting minutes and asked if the Board preferred she post to the City website or GHA website. The Board agreed that it was best to continue posting only on GHA website.

Invoice History Report Reporting Period June 2023:

- 1. K. Murray presented the Expense report/Invoice history report accounting for Housing Authority expenses in the month of June 2023. A Motion was made by J. May and seconded by S. Hancock to approve. Unanimous Vote.

Executive Director Report

- 1. Murray presented the Board with a power point presentation itemizing the following:

- a. Initial observation/challenges: Office of the Inspector General Investigation, Personnel, back log of work order system, no inventory kept, outdated or missing protocols, high tenant account receivables, lack of enforcing lease regulations, a delicate CIP Electrical project, and staff shortage.
 - b. GHA Accomplishments:
 - i. In-house promotions & defined job descriptions/roles, team-building activities and events for staff, monthly staff meetings (not previously held), weekly department meetings, maintenance department's increase in staff, administrative department increase in staff.
 - ii. Public Housing Residents benefited from new handbooks, updated forms, 5 policies created and Board-approved, Police Dept. collaboration for public safety, Housing Stabilization manager from Elder services after the position sat vacant since 2019, etc.
 - iii. Property enhancements: mold/mildew prevention plan, updated maintenance preventative plan, bed bug treatment policy, snow removal policy, recipient of ARPA funds for Federal Pacific Panels, Grant applications for abandoned GHA properties, utilization of discovered land, contract with MOC for weatherization services, update to Ch. 489 Lifeskills units.
 - iv. HCVP accomplishments: internal audit conducted, participant files updated, all new forms and HCVP handbook, collaboration with Landlord Association for HCVP education and awareness purposes.
 - c. Timeline of Events: community meetings held with the residents. The timeline reflected 10 meetings held in the year.
 - d. GHA goals were discussed.
2. Executive Session was held amongst members. K. Murray was excused.
 3. Meeting resumed: The Board expressed statements regarding their written statement that was provided to K. Murray on June 23rd, 2023.
 - a. The statement reflected "Contract will be for 1-year, additional week vacation (total of 3 weeks), vacation time may be carried over for 1 year, Contract talk for next contract will begin in February 2024." Furthermore, the statement reflected: "Things to address: (1.) More contact with residents. Quarterly meeting with residents, quarterly newsletter to residents, either or both. (2.) If you are going to be out of your office for any length of time, please let someone know how you can be contacted. (4.) Must not take things personally." [there was no #3.]
 - b. The Vice Chair expressed on behalf of the Board that they wanted to continue with what was presented to K. Murray on June 23rd, 2023: one year contract for the term of October 1st, 2023 to September 30th, 2024, with the intention to discuss the renewal of the contract in February 2024, six months prior to the expiration of the contract being discussed. The Vice Chair expressed that the salary would remain the same and K. Murray would be given three weeks' vacation time as opposed to the allotted two weeks.
 - i. K. Murray asked for feedback behind their decision, requesting clarification and recommendation of what she should do between the date of the meeting and February 2024, stating she wanted the max term for contract.
 - ii. Vice Chair stated they were only allowed to give a year, as per state regulations.

- iii. K. Murray referred to meeting minutes from May 2017 where the previous Director was approved for three years for her second term. K. Murray stated she wanted to be held to the same standard as prior Directors.
 - iv. S. Hancock confirmed that the Board felt comfortable giving the previous Director three years as they knew her. S. Hancock stated K. Murray spent too much time presenting details that are presented monthly via Board meetings. S. Hancock used vehicle repairs and costs associated as being an example of information that may not be deemed necessary. K. Murray explained she is obligated to be transparent with the Board and State but would be mindful of the details shared and mindful of the time spent sharing details. She said vehicle repair costs were high hence reporting the detail.
 - v. L. Roy explained to K. Murray that she needed to utilize her time going forward to get to know GHA residents and have fun. L. Roy stated as a new Board member, she wanted to see more done with residents and more interaction with residents. K. Murray reminded the Board of the upcoming Resident events and that the Resident Service Coordinator was a new position that would assist with this.
 - vi. S. Hancock explained that enough changes had been done for the year on the administrative level and recommended K. Murray be more personable with residents and the community, stating to K. Murray “be you.”
4. The Vice Chair announced the renewal of the Executive Director’s contract for one year, term date October 1st, 2023 to September 30th, 2024, with three weeks’ worth of vacation time, and with the already-approved salary of \$116,931.00. S. Hancock made the motion to approve, the motion was seconded by L. Roy. Voted unanimous.

Adjournment of Meeting:

The Board discussed the next meeting date tentatively scheduled for Thursday, August 24th, 2023 at 9:30AM. Members discussed their availability in August for a Special Meeting on the Union Contract. A Motion was made by S. Hancock and seconded by L. Roy to adjourn the regular meeting at 2:02 PM. Voted Unanimously. Meeting adjourned.