

MINUTES – March 13, 2024

The Housing Authority of the City of Meadville met in the Regular Meeting in the Community Room at Holland Towers at 2:00 p.m., the 13th day of March 2024.

Members Present: Thomas G. Youngblood, Chair
Marcia J. Yohe, Treasurer
Richard H. Zinn, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer
Cena M. Kneubehl, Secretary

Members Absent: Sonya D. Logan, Vice Chair

Also Present: Vanessa L. Rockovich, Executive Director
Jon M. Ketcham, Director of Housing Management
Tammy L. Brown, Administrative Assistant/Property Manager
Tommi Jo Davenport, Property Manager
Daniel R. Harris, Section 8 Inspector
Charlotte M. Mitchell, Management Aide
Barbara L. Houserman, Resident Initiatives Coordinator
Christopher D. Ferry, Solicitor
Randall S. Brannon, Holland Towers Resident
Jacqueline A. Commins, Holland Towers Resident
Kathleen A. Dunlap, Holland Towers Resident
Maryland Hicks, Jr., Holland Towers Resident
Christine A. Pelc, Holland Towers Resident
Wayne P. Shannon, Holland Towers Resident
Marion Sherwood
Gretchen Myers, City of Meadville
Cassandra Gonzalez
Gwen Smith, Active Aging
Mike Crowley, Meadville Tribune

A motion to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024, meeting as amended was made by Ms. Yohe, seconded by Ms. Kneubehl, and unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Pelc expressed her concerns about the upcoming renovations and the utilization of the public spaces.

SOLICITORS REPORT

Mr. Ferry discussed the letter received from the Holland Towers Resident Council. He explained that eviction actions are an unpleasant fact at all sites of the Housing Authority and do not only occur at Holland Towers. Mr. Ferry stated the ones that he is involved with, those filed at the magistrate office, are severe cases. Evictions that do go to court that involve non-payment of rents are considered pay and stay, which mean if the tenant pays the back rent due, they will be able to keep their apartments. He stated that tenants that are behind on their rent are offered a Promissory Note to make payments before any actions is taken. Other violations are those that pertain to the quiet enjoyment clause in tenants' leases, which includes but is not limited to bedbug non-compliance issues and poor housekeeping conditions. The Housing Authority does not generally evict on a first offense in most situations. Those tenants are sent an Eviction Notice which includes the Notice to Quit and are given five business days to request an Informal Hearing to discuss the issue and have a chance to explain. Mr. Ferry commented that Mr. Ketcham is the Hearing Officer and is the best person to take care of the informal hearing issues because of his experience and fairness. Ms. Rockovich stated that evictions are issued as a last resort. She listed the steps in the process from the eviction notice to a hearing at the magistrate's office.

Mr. Ferry explained the lease that the housing authority is using is approved by the Attorney General's Office and is included in the Pennsylvania Landlord/Tenant Law. He stated that landlords are permitted to add rules to the Plain Language Lease.

CAPITAL FUND GRANT PROGRAM

Ms. Rockovich stated that the Board will pass a resolution later in the meeting to approve contractors to renovate 66 apartments at Holland Towers in this phase. She anticipates that the contractors will mobilize within the next couple of months. Ms. Rockovich stated that a tenant meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2024, to discuss updating the tenants in the renovation project.

Ms. Rockovich stated that the architect is finalizing the plans and specifications to bid the replacement of the gas ranges with electric ranges and the required service upgrade.

ELM, MORGAN, & SCATTERED SITES

Ms. Davenport reported that there were eight vacancies, with five new leases signed in February 2024. There were eight annual and two interim recertifications conducted. There were seven evictions served that were rescinded. There were no housekeeping inspections conducted. Tenants Accounts Receivable totaled \$69,341.63.

GILL VILLAGE

Ms. Davenport reported that there were 11 vacancies with two new leases in February 2024. There were 11 annual and three interim recertifications conducted. There were no eviction notices served and she received two notices to vacate. There were not any housekeeping inspections conducted. Tenants' Accounts Receivable totaled \$40,163.43.

FAMILY SITE WAITING LIST

The waiting list for William Gill Commons, Elmwood, Morgan Village, and Scattered Sites is One-Bedroom - 3; Two-Bedroom - 3; Three-Bedroom - 3; Four-Bedroom - 3; and Five-Bedroom - 4.

HOLLAND TOWERS

Ms. Brown reported there were 37 vacancies and 52 people on the waiting list in February 2024. There were 11 annual recertifications and no interim recertifications conducted. She also stated there were not any eviction notices served and there were not any notices to vacate received. There were not any housekeeping inspections conducted. Tenant accounts receivable totaled \$21,557.10.

Ms. Rockovich reported we have hired a new elevator company effective March 1, 2024, to service the Holland Towers elevators. There were issues over the weekend after the new contract was signed. The new company was on site that Monday for most of the day and it appears was able to correct the issues. Mr. Smith scheduled the elevator and generator companies to evaluate the frequent error message that the elevators were being run by the generator when it was not warranted to do so.

SNODGRASS REPORT

Ms. Brown reported that Snodgrass is at full capacity, with two people on the waiting list. She stated that there were not any new leases signed in February 2024. There were no annual recertifications or interim recertifications conducted. There were not any eviction notices served, nor notices to vacate received. There was one housekeeping inspection conducted. The total accounts receivable amount for February 2024 totaled \$1,801.54.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Mr. Smith reported 298 work orders were generated during February 2024 with 50 outstanding, including 12 tenant work orders, 24 management work orders, 0 inspection work orders and 14 for vacancy fixups. Total vacant units totaled 15, with 6 completed. There were 10 inspections completed with 3 being move-outs and 7 being move-ins. Ms. Yohe commended the maintenance department for their turnover on work orders and vacant units.

EXTERMINATION REPORT

Mr. Lynch reported that during the month of February 2024, Holland Towers had 13 units being treated for infestations, with none on a 45-day clear. William Gill Commons had four units being treated, with none on a 45-day clear.

SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER REPORT

Ms. Rockovich reported 187 units under contract of which there were four port-outs and 18 VASH vouchers for February 2024. There were 12 outstanding vouchers. She stated that there are 447 families on the waiting list. The Housing Assistance Payment expenses for February were \$73,808.92.

SECTION 8 INSPECTION REPORT

Mr. Harris reported that there were 15 inspections completed in February 2024, of which four were new and three failed.

APPLICATIONS

Ms. Mitchell reported ten applications were received. She is processing the applications received in November 2023.

RESIDENT INITIATIVE PROJECTS REPORTS

Ms. Houserman gave an update on Kilted Kiln. The owner came to William Gill Commons on Monday, February 19, 2024, at 1:00 PM for children to design their plates. He explained and demonstrated various techniques to use. Children ages 3 and up participated, as well as the parents. The plates will be returned soon as they had to be fired in the kiln.

Ms. Houserman stated that Summer Lunch Food training will be held at Northwest Tri-County in Edinboro on Thursday, May 23, 2024, starting at 2:00 p.m.

Ms. Houserman is presently looking into several field trips. One of those is a dinosaur exhibit at the Pittsburgh Museum of Natural History and the Great Lakes Science Center in Cleveland.

Children ages 4 and up will be attending the MARC starting April 15, 2024, for swimming classes after school. The class will run every Monday until May 20, 2024.

RESOLUTIONS

A motion to approve Resolution No. 16 of 2024 to award contracts for the Holland Towers Apartment Renovation Project, was made by Mr. Youngblood, seconded by Mr. Zinn, and was unanimously approved.

After a brief discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution No. 17 of 2024 to approve the write-off of vacated tenants' accounts receivable at Elm/Morgan/Scattered Sites in the amount of \$48,779.70, was made by Ms. Yohe, seconded by Mr. Youngblood, and unanimously approved.

A motion to adopt Resolution No. 18 of 2024 to approve the write-off of vacated tenants' accounts receivable at Holland Towers in the amount of \$6,375.25, was made by Ms. Yohe, seconded by Mr. Youngblood, and unanimously approved.

A motion to adopt Resolution No. 19 of 2024 to approve the write-off of vacated tenants' accounts receivable at William Gill Commons in the amount of \$25,343.46, was made by Ms. Yohe, seconded by Mr. Youngblood, and unanimously approved.

Mr. Ferry clarified that the purpose of the previous resolutions is a bookkeeping action. Ms. Rockovich stated that the housing authority's auditor required the write-off of the stale-dated checks as well as HUD requires yearly write-offs of vacated tenants' accounts receivable.

After a brief discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution No.20 of 2024 to approve the write-Off stale-dated checks was made by Ms. Yohe, seconded by Mr. Youngblood, and unanimously approved.

After a brief discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution No. 21 of 2024 to approve the Code of Conduct – Anti-Harassment Discrimination Policy was made by Mr. Youngblood, seconded by Ms. Kneubehl, and unanimously approved.

After a lengthy discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution No. 22 of 2024 to extend the MOU for the Meadville Housing Resident Council was made by Ms. Yohe and seconded by Mr. Youngblood, with three ayes and one nay vote cast by Ms. Kneubehl. The resolution passed.

After a lengthy discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution No. 23 of 2024 to extend the MOU for the Holland Towers Resident Council was made by Ms. Yohe and seconded by Mr. Youngblood, with three ayes and one nay vote cast by Ms. Kneubehl. The resolution passed.

After a lengthy discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution No. 24 of 2024 to extend the MOU for the William Gill Commons Resident Council was made by Ms. Yohe and seconded by Mr. Youngblood, with three ayes and one nay vote cast by Ms. Kneubehl. The resolution passed.

A motion to adopt Resolution 25 of 2024 to approve changes to investments at Marquette Bank was made by Mr. Youngblood, seconded by Ms. Yohe, and unanimously approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Ketcham presented the Treasurer's Report. After a brief discussion, a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for audit was made by Mr. Youngblood, seconded by Ms. Yohe, and unanimously approved.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

There were not any committees to report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Yohe acknowledged that all board members received a copy of the letter from the resident council in February 2024. She stated that board members understand the concerns of the tenants regarding the renovations and the relocation of tenants while the renovations are being completed. The housing authority is not permitted to evict tenants to create vacant units. Ms. Yohe affirmed that the housing authority is preparing the relocated apartments as if a new tenant off the street was moving in. If tenants prefer to remain in the relocated unit, they may be given that option not to move into a renovated apartment until the next phase. This gives the tenants the option to remain in an older unit longer.

Ms. Yohe stated that the reason for the change in the lease was due the recommendations of the magistrate as the previous one was not detailed enough for him to favor the housing authority during the hearings. The new lease provides the details to enforce more effectively.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Kneubehl discussed the online board training made available through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. She requested work sessions to review policies and tenant concerns. The board members directed Ms. Kneubehl to prepare a list of items and email them to Ms. Rockovich. Once she receives the information, she will develop an agenda. Ms. Rockovich will provide the agenda to the board with a list of dates and times to poll the board on their availability. After a consensus on the date and time is established, she will advertise the work session. Mr. Ferry stressed the Sunshine Law states that work sessions are considered public meetings.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications to present.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ms. Yohe, seconded by Mr. Youngblood, and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 PM.

Submitted,

Cena Kneubehl, Secretary