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*Lori Lynn Ross*  
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**Branford Housing Authority  
September 17 Meeting  
Draft Minutes**

**Participants**

- BHA Board members: Andy Wight (by phone); Jerry Mastrengelo; Lori-Lynn Ross. Nadim Matta
- Past BHA Board members: Kate Collins
- Several Parkside II tenants & neighbors
- Beacon Management staff: John Elliott; Ellie Nunez (Eli) ; Jennifer Foito
- Legal advisor: Anika Singh Lemar
- Several community members

The meeting was called to order by Jerry at 4:05 pm.

There were no minutes from the previous meeting, as there was no quorum.

**1. Orientation to new Board members**

- Anika went over the history of the BHA, and she explained the complex ownership structure of Parkside Village I.
- Anika went over the legal status of the BHA and explained its by-laws. There was special emphasis on handling conflict of interest by Board members, and also compliance with the freedom for information act.
- John advised that there is a Directors & Officers (D&O) insurance policy that is currently in force.
- Anika advised that the current management contract with Beacon is very complex, and that there is a need to develop a simple version that exclusively covers the management and maintenance of Parkland Village II. She advised that there is no requirement to put out this management contract for open bidding since it is technically a renewal, but that it is good practice to do an open RFP for management and maintenance services every 5 years or so.
- Andy advised that we should proceed with the process to appoint a Tenant Commissioner, using elections supervised by an independent intermediary. Anika advised that we need clarity on whether residents of Shoreline Grove Apartments should participate in the vote. This needs to be determined by checking how other, larger Housing Authorities have handled similar situations.

**Next Steps**

- 1.1 Board members will set up dedicated BHA gmail accounts ([name.BHA@gmail.com](mailto:name.BHA@gmail.com)). Lori-Lynn will make sure this is done before the October meeting.
- 1.2 John will share with the Directors the D&O insurance declaration page, before the October meeting.
- 1.3 John will share with the Directors a proposed simple contract for management & maintenance of Parkland Village II, by end of September.
- 1.4 Nadim will check with the Bridgeport and Fairfield Housing Authorities how they handled voting with tenants in different types of housing.
- 1.5 Lori-Lynn will contact the League of Women Voters to line them up to supervise the vote for Tenant Commissioner.

**2. Financial Orientation**

- Kate went over the rhythm and requirements for meetings, notice requirements, and so

on. She also shared a sample financial statement that is submitted monthly by Beacon Management.

- Eli briefed the Board about the decision of DOH to reduce the subsidies to Parkland II rentals, which necessitates resubmission of the budget to reflect these changes. She requested a Board resolution to enable Beacon to do this. She further reassured everyone that this will not impact the out-of-pocket rent payments of residents, but it will reduce the projected and actual net operating income of Parkland Village II in 2024. The Board asked Beacon management to advise on what needs to be done to avoid these types of setbacks and surprises in the 2025 budget submission.
- Andy briefed the rest of the board about the status of the \$500,000 emergency grant that was awarded by the State to BHA, for purposes of implementing improvements in Parkland Village II (primarily lifts and walkways). Once the paperwork is completed, the funds will flow to the designated contractor to perform the improvement work. BHA will have supervisory and fiduciary responsibility to ensure the funds are used efficiently and appropriately.

#### **Board Resolution**

By unanimous vote of Board members present at the meeting, a resolution was passed to authorize Beacon Management to submit a revised budget to DOH, with a total subsidy request of \$106,178 instead of \$231,134 as originally requested.

#### **Next Steps**

- 2.1 Beacon Management will resubmit the 2024 budget to the state, and once that goes through, they will prepare revised 2024 rental contracts for Parkland Village II tenants. The aim is to have these contracts signed by November 1.
- 2.2 Beacon Management will prepare a budget for 2025, and they will share this with the Board by October 1. This will be discussed and hopefully approved at the October meeting.
- 2.3 John will set up, asap, a call for the Board with the contact person in CHFA to discuss steps needed to expedite the release of the emergency grant, with the aim of starting the major repair work before the end of 2024.
- 2.4 John will share, by the end of September, the arrangement in place for contracting for the repair work under the emergency grant, so the Board can set up mechanisms to exercise its fiduciary duties.
- 2.5 Jerry and Nadim will follow up with the First Selectman about the appointment of someone to fill the Treasurer role on the Board, as this is a matter of great urgency.

### **3. Other Business**

Andy informed us that this will be the last BHA board meeting that he will be able to participate in. Jerry expressed deep gratitude for all for the service and dedication of Andy in his role as Chairman of BHA.

#### **Board Resolution**

By unanimous vote, the Board adopted a resolution to officially recognize the great contributions of Andy as chairman of the Branford Housing Authority, and to declare Andy Wright a “Hero of the Branford Housing Authority and a Champion of its mission.”

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.