

**BRANFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**Board Meeting 1-21-2025**

**Draft Meeting Minutes**

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*Nad Matta*  
BRANFORD TOWN CLERK

Lori Lynn recorded the meeting minutes.

The meeting was held at 3 Block Island Rd., in the Community Room.

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm.

Branford Housing Authority Board Members present: Nadim Matta, Chair, Jerry Mastrangelo, Vice Chair, Lori-lynn Ross, Treasurer, Holly Hackett, Tenant Commissioner, and Bonnie Ballantyne

Guests present: Ellie and Jen from Beacon, Larry Kleutsch (consultant to BHA Board), John Hartwell District 5 RTM and Ways & Means, Abigail Adams District 5 RTM and Community Forestry, Sharon Hutner Branford Clean Energy and Planning & Zoning, and several residents and members of her team.

**1. Review and Approval of the Last Meeting Minutes**

The meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was unanimously passed.

Jerry pointed out that one of the dates for the Board meeting was not on a Tuesday. A revised schedule of meetings is attached, with the August date switched from the 18th to the 19th.

**2. Election of Officers**

As was planned when the current officers were elected, a motion was passed unanimously to accept the resignation of all the officers from their positions. Several motions were passed unanimously after that:

- Motion to elect Nadim Matta as Chairman
- Motion to elect Jerry Mastrangelo as Vice Chairman
- Motion to elect Bonnie Ballantyne as Treasurer
- Motion to elect Lori-Lynn Ross as Secretary.

**3. Status of Open Items from Previous Meeting**

A. **Management Contract** - BHA Board still hasn't received a finalized contract.

John Elliott will meet with Nadim and Holly and other interested Board members on January 30 at 4 pm to discuss this.

B. **Restoration of the area between Shoreline Grove and Parskide II** -

This issue is closed. Beacon's contractor will reseed the area and will handle the water accumulation issues as appropriate.

C. **Lifts** - CHFA now has the architectural agreement just waiting on the contractor agreement in order for the lifts to be ordered. Lead time is 6-12 weeks.

**Next Steps:**

- The Board needs to make a decision on whether to get battery charging units for Lifts in buildings A and B, at a total cost of \$3360. The Board will wait for a recommendation by the management company on whether there is a prudent use of BHA funds, taking into consideration the following factors:
  - An assessment of the the gravity of the problem for the residents - and especially safety risks associated with it
  - The fact that new lifts will be installed by May 1, 2025 at the latest
  - The possible resale value or salvage value of these batteries if they de-commissioned by May 1

D. **Concrete Decks** - Capasso is wrapping the rebar under the concrete that is broken on the 2nd floor and putting down plywood in its place until Spring. Larry will check with Capasso to see if this is an acceptable and safe solution until then. They also made sure that no one would get hit with any falling concrete by wrapping the concrete "headers". Building C is done. Amaya Architects said that structurally everything is sound.

**Next Steps:**

- Larry will ask Centek to do a safety assessment for the railings and the decks. Based on this, we will decide how best to proceed.

#### **4. Tenant Commissioner Report**

The report is attached. Overall, it appears that much progress has been made in terms of responsiveness to maintenance and repair issues. .

#### **5. Management Report**

The report is attached. There was appreciation for the work that Jen has been doing to secure donations for the residents from Amazon, and for the care and attention she is providing to residents, especially during and after being hospitalized. It was also noted that there is a strong sense of community and residents regularly assist each other.

##### **Fire Alarm Issue:**

A meeting was held prior to the Board Meeting with the fire alarm contractor to clarify how the system works. The issues were resolved in a manner satisfactory to the residents.

- The alarm now is set off in a specific unit, except when smoke is detected in common areas.
- The fire department will be deployed any time the alarm goes off.
- The management company and the Tenant Commissioner will be immediately notified by the monitoring company.

##### **Next Steps**

- The contractor will explore the cost of reestablishing the blinking light system outside the unit that sets off the alarm, so neighbors are alerted.
- The management company will visit with the “frequent flyer” residents to help them with the discipline of cleaning the stoves to avoid grease sparks.

##### **Utility Study:**

No progress was made on this as Holly has been sick. She will prioritize this, and she will seek help from Ellie, if needed.

#### **6. Financial Report**

Bonnie now has a better understanding of the financial reports.

**Petty Cash System:** Still to be developed. Bonnie is the lead on this.

**Tax Exemption status:** BHA is a tax exempt entity

## 7. All Other Matters

- Branford Garden Club grants for gardening as therapy (Lori Lynn): we will pause on this, for now.
- Blue Earth program: We will not pursue this for now.
- Energy Efficiency Assessment: Ellie will follow up with Sharon on this, with the intention of getting the trial assessment completed in a handful of units by the end of February

January BHA meeting  
Management Report

Management received no resident complaints.

Maintenance work order reports were submitted to the board. The elevator had 3 issues over the month, Building A and Building c (1 time) which were resolved within 48 hours by the lift contractor. Maintenance staff was able to clear out extra debris around the buildings and haul away, cleaned up broken glass in the enclosure near the community room, ladder removed behind A building, metal ramps removed, broken flashing removed from B building, and metal piece removed from B building. Maintenance had to replace one hot water heater for a resident. Management received estimates for sidewalk repair in B building and passed along to the board and have exchanged emails with BHA to best resolve this issue and make sure the building are safe for all residents. We had 2 snow events and overall the feedback from the residents was positive in regards to the landscape contractor. Maintenance went through the punch list of removing some siding that was falling off and changing some lights for residents. Management has received estimates from Elite Landscaping and Concrete and has been forwarded to the board and there are a few items that proposals are pending. Some requested painting, upkeep, and projects that were listed on the walk through inspections will be complete in the spring when the weather is better.

FINANCIAL REPORT- Financial report was sent to the board for review. Management is working with accounting to adjust all ledgers for residents whos rent has changed.

There is still one vacancy and management has reached out to our law firm to contact Probate on best ways to proceed.

We have one resident on a re-payment plan for back rent owed.

RSC report- Jen and her husband dropped off over 20 boxes of donations from Amazon for the residents to take what they needed and wanted. There were some great items in the boxes! We had a great time meeting Amy from Snuggles for Seniors who dropped off an additional 40 blankets to make sure that all residents had some comfort during the cold winter. Jen delivered blankets to all who were unable to be present for the event. Amy enjoyed meeting the residents and seeing how impactful her donations are to communities like ours. The Beacon van will continue to be here 2 times monthly and residents are encouraged to go shopping and utilize the van. Jen is working with Nancy from Canoe Brook to assist residents with gathering their ledgers and making copies for their Energy Assistance. Jen worked with a few residents and their support systems during and after their hospitalizations, I truly love the care and compassion that I see the residents share with one another when someone is not feeling great, it is wonderful to see the community assist one another.

## Tenant Commissioners Report

January 21, 2025

- The fire alarms went off in Building C again in every unit – Jack from Early Warning came back and fixed the programming.
- A smoke detector went off in Building C for no reason.
- A tenant approached me about not getting an immediate call back from maintenance – I made the phone call and maintenance was on-site within minutes.
- I put together several memos for neighbors Re: upcoming changes and for releases we will need for the energy audit and for energy efficiency in our units. Please look out for them in the community room. It is too cold for us to deliver them to the doors.
- I have had people ask me when we will start movie nights – We prefer to wait until the community room has been updated to do this so we are all more comfortable.
- I have been approached with several complaints Re: a tenant and that has been resolved.
- I had a very productive meeting with Ellie Re: the walk-through inspections that Lori-lynn and I did as well as other things for the future good of our community – Please know that we are doing our absolute best, as a team to get every issue addressed. We may not see immediate change because of the time of year it is. Let me know if there are any issues or concerns you are having.
- I have received complaints about parking issues with a few tenants – I have addressed these and hope it will be resolved.
- There is an issue with a tenant's rent – We are hoping to meet with management to resolve this in the next 2 weeks.
- PLEASE PAY ATTENTION to these memos / flyers there is a lot of very important information on them. There are also some actions that need to be taken to make things better in the long run for all of us. My contact number is on there as well. If for any reason you cannot reach me by phone feel free to stop by and see me. I am in Building C until 29.