

**MINUTES  
WELLESLEY HOUSING AUTHORITY  
SPECIAL MEETING  
JUNE 7, 2018 : 3:00 P.M.  
COMMUNITY ROOM- 315 WESTON ROAD**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT :**

Chairperson Maura Renzella  
Vice Chair Tanya Morel  
Treasurer Kathy Egan

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Paul Dumouchel  
Sandra Amour

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

Commissioner Don Kelley  
Commissioner Michelle Chalmers

Also Present: Selectwoman Ellen Gibbs

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the Secretary of the Wellesley Housing Authority by preparing a Public Notice dated June 5, 2018 setting forth the date, time and place of this meeting. Said notice was filed with the Clerk of the Town of Wellesley and provided to persons requesting it.

**CHAIR ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**DISCUSSION ITEM**

- Review and Comment on the Recently released State Audit Report

Chair Renzella opened the meeting by indicating that the DHCD audit has been released and this meeting is for the WHA Board to address each finding and to give the Executive Director the opportunity to respond to each. She went on to say that several years ago, there were changes made in the law pertaining to housing authority audits. ( An Agreed Upon Procedures audit was conducted for 2015 and 2016 which were meant to supplant the regular state audits. The WHA fared well in those audits. An independent audit company, Guyder Hurley, found nothing wrong in 2016 and in 2015, results were equally as good.)

ED Dumouchel handed out hard copies of the final audit report, last year's AUP audit and his responses.

Regarding Finding #1, unaccounted for assets in the inventory, the ED noted that there were staff issues at the office in 2016 but that Bob had all the records. At present, there are steps in place to rectify the issue. The bookkeeper has been tasked to work with maintenance to keep the inventory on an Excel spreadsheet, available to the public. He also noted that fee accountant, Rich Shaw spent 3 or 4 days with the auditors and matched up every appliance.

Responding to Finding #2, the improper procurement of appliances and water heaters, the ED responded that the WHA does not have enough space to order in bulk. Chair Renzella noted that the WHA has a procurement policy (2017). The ED noted that the heaters died, and on an emergency basis, the procurement policy can be waived. As for the refrigerators, he said Bob did get quotes.

Commissioner Egan remarked that this audit was for the time period of January 2014 through June 2016 and we are just getting it now? That snapshot is very far in the rearview mirror. Paul didn't even start until March 2015 and only became Interim ED in June 2016.

About Finding #3, improperly maintained inspection reports, the ED explained that in the past, unit inspections were being done in a very compressed time frame. Now inspections will be held over a 6 month period,

allowing the property manager and a maintenance representative to inspect and report, for the work order to be generated immediately, and giving maintenance 30 days to close out the work order. He went on to say that he's not saying that everything is perfect, but we are definitely improving. The Chair asked if the WHA has an inspection policy. When the ED responded that there is not, that this is addressed in each tenant's lease, Maura said that the Board should expect an inspection policy for their approval.

On Finding #4, improper administration of rent determination, the ED said that a handful of tenants do not comply with recertification requests and we had not been getting legal involved. He said that representatives from Execu-Tech sat with our files, a one time thing, and went over rent determinations with staff. Residents are required to get a notice of upcoming recertification. When no response, a second notice needs to be sent informing the tenant that they are late. If no compliance, on to legal. He said that Wage Match is not always kept up by staff, but that DHCD is aware of the discrepancies in the Wage Match system.

About Finding #5, improperly maintaining the waitlist and incomplete applicant information, the ED said there are many reasons why information is not always a smooth transition between applicants and the office, citing homelessness, transience, cell phones dying to name a few. He also said that in this period of time, an employee was terminated, a temp was brought in, and a receptionist worked for only 5 months. The present staff has been together nearly a year now. He also went on to say that in January 2019 DHCD will be rolling out the electronic waitlist, making each HA's waitlist obsolete. He also made sure that the staff knew that an emergency application must be filled out with a regular application in case of emergency. Not either/or.

Commissioner Egan expressed frustration that Auditor Suzanne Bump gave no contact information and that is very troubling to me.

Regarding Finding #6, that the Board did not properly administer it's management agreement with the NHA, Commissioner Egan responded that DHCD has repeatedly never returned contacts when the WHA has reached out to them. I am a volunteer, appointed by the Governor. I am extremely disappointed with them. This one doesn't make sense to me. I tke issue with it.

Commissioner Renzella reiterated that since she joined the board, DHCD did not respond while she was doing the due diligence with NHA. She went on to say that 13 years ago, under a different director, there were problems. This agreement should have been sent annually to DHCD. No other towns that I have spoken to knew about that.

The ED took issue with the time frame, saying that the feedback he's getting in town is very positive, The WHA has made positive relationships in town. Many projects that were not getting done are getting done. He said that Asst. ED Patricia Edmond is very hurt by this. This doesn't at all reflect the level of effort that has been put into it.

Commissioner Egan said this is a monumental waste of taxpayer monies. Why were they not auditing Chelsea? The State police? There are much bigger issues than this to spend time and taxpayer money on.

Selectwoman Ellen Gibbs asked if anyone else gets this scrutiny. Chair Renzella said no one else has experienced this. Commissioner Egan said this is a small housing authority. This makes no sense from a strategic standpoint.

Chair Renzella said that she had a conversation with Amy Stitley and Laura Taylor from DHCD and they asked for her thoughts on this. Commissioner Egan interjected that we're supposed to speak as a Board, it is not appropriate for them to ask you. Maura said she was dumbfounded.. Paul and Patricia have made significant improvements. She said that DHCD has recommended that WHA hire their own Executive Director. She urged each board member to look into this on their own and meet as a board to discuss it in June.

Commissioner Egan said that under prior administration, DHCD wanted us to pair with the NHA. Our financial stability is markedly improved and more stable than they have ever been. That speaks to something. The financial improvement is nowhere in the audit. This will be the 4<sup>th</sup> Director in 8 years. It takes time to get up and running. This takes all momentum away.

Chairman Renzella got the approval of the board to work with staff to draft a statement to the staff.

It was noted that the ED and Asst. ED met with Representative Alice Peisch earlier in the month.

Selectwoman Gibb said that she will support the WHA going forward.

Chair Renzella said she hopes that the statement that DHCD gives will give the reasons why they make this recommendation.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner \_ and seconded by Commissioner \_, the motion was (approved/not approved by the following vote \_\_MR \_\_DK \_\_KE \_\_TM \_\_MC:

WELLESLEY HOUSING AUTHORITY MEETING DATES

Thursday	June 28, 2018	525 Washington Street	Great Hall	5:30pm
Thursday	July 26 , 2018	525 Washington Street	Great Hall	5:30pm