

ALLENTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

November 18, 2020

The Board of Commissioners meeting was called to order by Mr. Senderowitz, and upon Roll Call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT:	Mr. Donald Senderowitz (by phone)	Chairman
	Mr. Fred Bañuelos (by phone)	Vice Chairman
	Mr. Julio Guridy (by phone)	Treasurer
	Ms. Sandra Barnes	Secretary
	Mr. Zachary Matthews (by phone)	Assistant Treasurer

Also participating in the Board Meeting were Mr. Daniel R. Farrell, Executive Director; by phone were Ms. Melissa Aclo, Social Services Director; Mr. Eric Reinert, Comptroller; Ms. Aida Núñez, Director of Housing Management; Mr. Lou Day, Director Maintenance Operations and Mr. Christian Perrucci, Esquire. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most participated in the meeting via Zoom conference call. The meeting information was posted so members of the general public could participate.

The board meeting started at 9:05 am with Mr. Senderowitz asking for the roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Mr. Senderowitz explained the call in number for the meeting was posted in the office for anyone who wanted to participate and there were no responses. Ms. Margarita Freytes and Ms. Nidia Santana were present by phone for the meeting as tenants of the Gross Towers building. Ms. Freytes expressed concerns about people coming into the building with COVID19 virus and getting a unit to live in, while she is still waiting for a transfer to another unit for health reasons. Mr. Perrucci answered her concerns regarding the AHA policy for wearing masks and keeping social distancing in the building. Mr. Farrell added that even with these policies in place, it is difficult at times to enforce it. We clean apartments before new tenants move in, but we do not require testing prior to moving in. The other concern they discussed was being on a list to transfer to another unit. Ms. Núñez stated she would look into their requests for reasonable accommodations.

APPROVED MINUTES

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 28, 2020 Board meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Matthews and seconded by Mr. Bañuelos to approve the Board minutes.

Ayes 5 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Guridy, Matthews, Barnes
Nays 0

BILLS AND TREASURER’S REPORT

Mr. Guridy reviewed with the Board the October financials for this meeting. He began with Conventional Housing which had a net income and Central Office had a net loss. He said the NSA’s had net income as did Section 8. He reviewed Cumberland Phases 1, which had a net loss; Phase 2 had net loss and Phase 3 had a net income. He next reviewed year to date financials and reported that Conventional Housing had a net income and Central Office had a net loss. He said the NSA’s had net income and Section 8 also had net income. Cumberland Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 had net incomes. Mr. Reinert discussed the operating loss in Central Office that was due to software and computer support for the software issues. Mr. Guridy reviewed the cash and investment report and the check register with the Board. Mr. Bañuelos asked about the Boys and Girls Club and what they are doing since COVID19. Ms. Aclo discussed their Cumberland Gardens site and stated they are allowing 9 members in the building at one time with one staff as their limit. At Little Lehigh their capacity is 5 members with one staff as their limit. The Board discussed looking into possibly shutting down for the winter months and opening when things get better due to this limited service.

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to approve the financials for October and the motion was made by Mr. Guridy and seconded by Mr. Matthews to approve the reports.

Ayes 5 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Guridy, Matthews, Barnes
Nays 0

COMMUNICATION REPORT

Mr. Farrell started his report by discussing the vacancy report stating we are down to 24 vacancies from 33. He continued we have not had many vacancies at Little Lehigh. The Board discussed the vacancies at Little Lehigh being taken off line with HUD approval. The Board reviewed rent collection for the month and discussed having a goal of 95% rent collection. Mr. Farrell continued with the income certification report and stated we are 98% complete with December certifications, 77% for January and 26% for February. He told the Board he included with his report the Housing Coalition’s report on ending homelessness for the Biden Administration. He told the Board they would be receiving feedback on the strategic plan that was developed in response to their October meeting and it would be presented to them for their approval. Mr. Farrell discussed Little Lehigh and stated we don’t have an updated site plan at the moment, but the comments from the Board for Phase 2 have been given to the design team and look different now. We have also submitted an application for HOME funds from the City for Phase 2 as we had for Phase 1. We are also setting up relocation meetings for Phase 1. The Board discussed putting out an RFQ for getting a new bank to replace our accounts at Wells Fargo. The Board proposed setting up a timeline to start the

process for getting this done.

Mr. Day presented his report and discussed the elevator replacement at Gross Towers is ongoing with parts and equipment being ordered. He continued that we have completed the HVAC and landscaping at Gross Towers. He added that the alarm system replacement with carbon monoxide detectors has been put out to bid. The Majestic Building storm water system project is underway. He added that the Gross Towers awning replacement is also underway and it's anticipated being completed by mid December.

Ms. Núñez gave the Board her report stating that the voucher program is doing really well; we have 1640 vouchers and our dollar amounts have increased so we have requested more money so we're not in shortfall.

Ms. Aclo gave her report starting with our partnering with PA Non-profit Votes and Muhlenberg College that provided 3 students to canvass the Cumberland Gardens property and residents at all the high-rise buildings providing voting information which resulted in 13 people registering to vote and 23 mail-in ballot applications.

Mr. Perrucci discussed his report and told the Board we received the release agreement from Constellation Energy relative to the settlement we were able to reach. Hopefully we should be getting that final check soon. We also received the signed agreement of sale for Little Lehigh and the transfer of the vacant lot needed for that development from the Mayor. Mr. Perrucci discussed the agreement for asbestos remediation at the Reid Hotel.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Farrell discussed the Reid Building and told the Board we are working on an application to do a "pass through" application which will allow AHA to move residents to Episcopal House and pass the money through the Housing Authority to Episcopal House and allow us to sell the building. This would also enable us to have the building vacated by late this month.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2601 – Approve Operating Budget for Cumberland Gardens Phase 3 FYE December 31, 2021

A motion was made by Mr. Matthews and seconded by Mr. Bañuelos to approve the resolution. Mr. Farrell said there really is nothing to discuss, it's a standard budget.

Ayes 5 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Guridy, Matthews, Barnes
Nays 0

Resolution 2602 – Approve Application for PHARE Funding

A motion was made by Mr. Matthews and seconded by Ms. Barnes to approve the resolution. Mr. Farrell explained this is a good source of funds for unique and creative activities because it doesn't have a lot of rules. Since we have been having problems with rent collection at Cumberland Gardens, and there is no one educating the residents on their rights and guidance in good financial practices, this is more of an eviction mitigation program that includes financial education and working with the residents. CACLV is preparing the application and we are providing the resident population for the program.

Ayes 5 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Guridy, Matthews, Barnes
Nays 0

A motion was made by Mr. Matthews to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Ms. Barnes and the meeting adjourned at 10:45am.

Ayes 5 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Guridy, Matthews, Barnes
Nays 0

ATTEST _____