

Wellesley Housing Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 15, 2025- 9:00am
Weston Road Community Room
315 Weston Road, Wellesley, MA 02481

1. Roll Call ~ The meeting was called to order at 9:01 am with the following Commissioners present:

Maura Renzella, Chair
Janice Coduri, Vice Chair
Odessa Sanchez, Commissioner
Renee Spencer, Commissioner
Lisa Heyison, Commissioner, Treasurer

Absent: None

Also Present: Steve Merritt- WHA, James Sullivan - WHA, Brian Drainville – WHA, Jen Healy- WHA

2. Citizen Speak – Ann Terrio – offered comments about neighbors parking in the space, which is marked for WHA staff only, next to her unit due to noise interference. Board noted concern, asked the IED to reach out and attempt to mitigate situation.

3. Approval of Minutes:

April 17, 2025 Minutes

No questions or corrections were voiced.

Motion: Janice Coduri, Second: Odessa Sanchez

Unanimous

Vote 4-0

4. Financial Reports

a. Approval of Bill Payments/Check Warrants

On a motion by Commissioner Janice Coduri and seconded by Commissioner Odessa Sanchez to approve the Bill Payments/Check Warrant in the amount of \$ 97,154.19, Commissioner Coduri asked for clarification for the shortened time frame of the report. It was explained that the April meeting was late in the month, (4/24) and this meeting is as early as the third Thursday can be, so that shortened the report period.

The Motion was passed unanimously by a voice vote.

Vote 4-0

Noted: Commissioner Heyison joined the meeting at this point, (9:15am)

b. Monthly and Quarterly Financial Statements

Mr. Merritt explained that the Monthly and Quarterly numbers are the same due as March is the end of the first quarter. The FY2025 budget is now carried on the financial reports.

There were several questions concerning the budget items listed on the Extraordinary Expenses page. The bike shed at Weston Road, the parking lot resurfacing and a few others were asked about. The board would like to see an updated priority list. The Chair noted that the bike shed at Weston Road is particularly important. Mr/ Merritt explained that some items may not get done this Fiscal Year due to unexpected additional expenses, such as the two recent vacancies that took more resources than expected.

c. Quarterly Mod Financial Statements

There were many questions about the older jobs, that have been done for years. Our Fee accountant is working on closing out those units. The board asked for less paper in the future.

5. TAR Report by Development (Tenant Accounts Receivable) 4/30/2025

Mr. Merritt reported that the gross arrearage amount is \$ 62,316.53. This amount is up since last month, not a good trend. While the trend is negative, the availability of write offs this month is a demonstration of progress being made on defining the TAR issues and getting a handle on it. The progression of the legal process to collect was explained after questions were asked. The process for rent changes was also explained for members' edification.

Bad Debt Write Offs:

A memo was presented to the board for approval to write off nine accounts with arrears. Eight of the accounts are from vacated tenants and one is from a tenant whose son vacated and had caused the arrearage.(There were questions about small amount on the arrears.

Motion by Commissioner Lisa Heyison and **seconded** by Commissioner Odessa Sanchez to approve the write off of bad debts in the amount of \$ 29,585.50 as detailed in Mr. Sullivan's memo.

The Motion was passed unanimously by a voice vote.

Vote 5-0

6. Vacancy Report

Mr. Sullivan gave the report and said that we have 17 vacant units as of today. One unit at Linden St. is being held for contractor for use by the crew replacing the stairs, a waiver has been applied for. Some transfers are coming up. Commissioner Spencer asked about the overhoused/underhoused situation. Mr. Merritt reported that we are inching along in the effort to offer appropriate size units to those that are over housed with very slow acceptance. The Chair asked what happens if someone is completely overhoused and doesn't want to move. Mr. Merritt and James spoke of the regulation that allows a penalty monthly to those who refuse to move. Commissioner Spencer asked about the Overhoused/Underhoused listing/policy, do we have one? Chair Renzella does not believe that we do. Discussion about different types of family situations also took place. Mr. Merritt and James will look into whether we have such a policy and bring the issue back to the board. Further discussion also mentioned that Waldo Court is not really appropriate for young children due to its location on the main road. Chair Renzella spoke of the benefit of creating a policy on how to handle the overhoused and underhoused situations. Historically there was a paper wait list maintained in house, then CHAMP was initiated, and transfers were to go through that process. Now the process has been changed back to local lists. It is important that the WHA work on developing a process for addressing the OH/UH situation and starting the notification process 3 – 5 years in advance of any anticipated change in a family composition.

Mr. Merritt brought up the cost of recent vacant turnovers. Both were long term residents, and the units were in difficult shape. One had a traumatic event that required specialized cleanup and there were long term smoking issues in the other. Brian Drainville offered that the lack of consistency over many years in enforcement of the lease and maintenance has contributed to the problems with expensive turnaround

7. Modernization Updates and CAP HUB Report

a. Update of Capital Projects

Document provided.

Chair Renzella asked about the Intercom Panel Replacement at Weston Road and it was reported that we have the name of a vendor who is on the State Vendor list. We have an appointment for the company to come out send a proposal on repair.

The Barton Road sidewalk repair preconstruction meeting was held on April 29. The concern about the site security and machinery being left overnight is being addressed by the contractor. Safety will be a priority. James Sullivan is the office lead on this project and brought the concerns to the preconstruction meeting, Brian will be on site as well for much of the time. .

- b. The work that was funded by Town Meeting in 2023 with 40R funds has been added to this monthly report. We are still waiting for clarification from EOHLC on how this should progress. We are also waiting for clarification on the possibility of changing the FACP replacement from River St. to Weston Road.

Mr. Merritt referred to a meeting with Wellesley Executive Director Meghan Jop and Assistant E.D Corey Testa about breaking through a couple of units to add space. EOHLC would have to agree due to the potential decrease in the number of units. We will investigate this in more depth.

8. Interim Executive Director's Report

The HUD Income Limits and Fair Market Rent were disbursed for informational purposes.

Mr. Merritt reported on the May 1 meeting with Weston Road residents. There was considerable discussion on the nonfunctioning intercom system at Building 2 and it was reported that we have the name of a vendor who is on the State Vendor list. We have made an appointment for the company to come out and send a proposal on repair.

There was a discussion of passes for seniors to Morses Pond which may be available through our RSC. The Library may be a resource for passes. The RSC budget may be available for purchase of passes.

The flooring at Weston Road common areas is old and worn, we will look to add replacement to our CIP for future replacement.

Mr. Merritt announced that EOHLC issued a work order for roofing at Washington Street, the Kilmayne House

Clarification on the Weston Road Fence replacement and landscaping. Allen & Majors is working on a new design for the site. We should have some suggestions soon which will offer some ideas on how to improve the site. It is hoped that we could add a couple of parking spots. There is also an issue with grading as the HP apartment floor is not at the same level as the parking lot. There was discussion on changing the trash handling from the dumpster to totes. More discussion continued with more concern about the possibility of a curb cut from Worcester Rd. The curb cut will also help with emergency vehicle access.

Painting Apartment doors – the resident meeting raised the issue about unit doors need repainting. Commissioner Spencer asked about refrigerator magnets with WHA address, phone # etc. Office staff will look into this.

CPA Proposal formation – Community Rooms at, Barton Road, and Weston Road and River Street in particular.

What are our priorities. Community Needs Assessment for Community Rooms. Commissioner will check with CPA committee. She suggested bringing a package of bundled projects to them for consideration. Should we do an updated community needs assessment, and one in particular for community rooms.

Announcements: James Sullivan has been with the WHA two years today. He will also be walking in his Bridgewater State College Graduation tomorrow.

Outdoor Policy: The Outdoor policy was included in the packet for the board to begin the consideration period. The board asked staff to discuss and bring back to the board the process for enforcement.

9. Chairperson Report

Chair Renzella reported that she has sent Cambridge Housing Authority the WHA budget and has spoken with staff about any concerns that they might have that she could bring to them.

Citizen Speak Policy: The chair announced that she will introduce the policy at the start of each meeting, particularly as the meetings go to different sites.

Rotary Contact: The Chair was contacted by the Rotary about a Farmer's Market and their "Taste of Wellesley" event. They will be offering food to WHA residents, more details to follow. The Chair will meet with them.

10. Deputy Executive Director's Report

James reported that EOHLC has asked LHAs to have a procedure for Law Enforcement requests. Warrants should be offered.

He also reported that we have "refunded" some rent overpayments to several residents. These do not show up on our check register as that is the vendor listing only.

11. Committee Reports (if any)

12. Resident Community Meeting Update

- a. Waldo Court/Linden St. – To be scheduled

13. Old Business

- a. **Transition to Rockland Trust-update**

Jen Healy updated the board on the progress, as of May 1st we now have confirmation that the Federal Section 8 money is going into Rockland Trust. We will look to close out the Eastern Bank account in July after all monies have been moved to Rockland Trust.

- b. Mr. Merritt brought up the changes to the Open Meeting Law regarding making meetings up as easy as possible. We would have to step up our Zoom subscription to allow for persons to watch our meetings without logging in.

- c. **The Wellesley Public Library vending machine** will be delivered in June; original date was June 17th now will be June 26th.
Our IT company, Intellbeam has been working with the vendor and is ready to go.

14. New Business

Personnel Policy – Commissioner Coduri raised the thought that the policy is really a personnel handbook with several policies toward the end, that should be brought to the board separately for readings and approvals.

The board would like the IED to issue this to all employees for comments. The chair suggested that the policy be addressed so that it refers to this document. There also should be an index provided in the document.

Signatories for State Contracts:

Mr. Merritt passed out the signatory paperwork needed to accept the state payments.

Motion by Commissioner Sanchez made the motion that the Wellesley Housing Authority approves the following authorized signatories as legal representatives of the Wellesley Housing Authority who can sign contracts and other legally binding documents related to the contract on the WHA's behalf.

Authorized Signatory Name

Steve Merritt	Interim Executive Director,	Signatory
James Sullivan	Deputy Executive Director,	Signatory
Maura Renzella	Chairperson,	Signatory
Jennifer Healy	Director of Finance – Responsible authorized officer to certify that the names of the signatories are current as of the date of contract signing.	

Seconded By Commissioner Lisa Heyison

The Motion was passed unanimously by a voice vote.

Vote 5-0

Smoke Detection Equipment: Mr. Sullivan spoke about the proposal from WYND concerning the purchase of detectors which will verify smoking and vaping. These units would be deployed in units where residents are under notice of violation of smoking. Resident permission would be required. Commissioner Coduri asked about putting them in all units. The cost would likely be prohibited. Commissioner Spencer had been at a session where the attorney had used this method successfully as the court accepts the results. The numbers of possible residents was discussed. Commissioner Coduri noted that deploying these in all units could be brought to the CPC for funding. Some further discussion went on, the idea of a pilot program was looked at favorably. This item is in our approved budget.

Motion by Commissioner Coduri made the motion to approve entering into a contract with WYND for the purchase and servicing of smoke detection equipment

Second by Commissioner Heyison.

Vote 5-0

Commissioner's Speak Out:

Commissioner Sanchez wanted to make sure that residents over 60 are aware of the Almira M. Simmons Fund – a private fund for Wellesley residents that provides one time only financial assistance to persons aged 60 and over who are in need. Home repair, adaptive equipment, medical bills, and limited home care are just a few examples of the kinds of things with which the fund can help. Contact person is Kate Burnham at the Council on Aging, 781-235-3961 kburnham@wellesleyma.gov

Chairwoman's Circling Back on Action Items:

1. Commissioner Coduri will have discussion with CPC on potential funding in the future and based on that conversation the Chair and Commissioner Heyison will talk about a survey.
2. Everyone will read the Outdoor Policy and suggest changes at the June meeting.
3. We will confirm whether we have an underhoused/overhoused policy
4. Discussion among staff about projects
5. Chair Renzella to follow up with Building Inspector about ADA requirements

6. Chair Renzella will circle back with Farmer's Market information

15. Adjournment

- a. Upon a duly made motion by Commissioner Sanchez and seconded by Commissioner Spencer, the motion to adjourn was passed unanimously by a voice vote at 11:08 AM.

Adjournment at 11:08am

Next Meeting: Thursday June 26, 2025, at 9:00am at the Barton Road Community Room.