



**PRINCETON MUNICIPAL
AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOARD
REORGANIZATIONAL & REGULAR
MEETING MINUTES
January 12, 2021**

The Re-Organizational Meeting of the Princeton Affordable Housing Board was called to order by Ed Schmierer at 5:30 pm. He recited the announcement in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: *“In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice was provided of the date, time and location of this regular meeting by posting a copy with the Clerk’s Office and by emailing copies to the Princeton Packet and the Town Topics.”*

ROLL CALL

Present: Carol Golden, Dosier Hammond, Maria Juega, Lex Kochmann, Lance Liverman, Mary Agnes Procaccino, Colin Vonvorys, Kate Warren, Dwaine Williamson

Excused:

Also present: Maureen Fullaway (PAH), Ed Schmierer, Esq., Ed Truscelli, (PCH) and Gabby Michel (PCH)

Oath of Office

Mr. Schmierer administered the oath to swear in new members, Kate Warren and Lex Kochmann.

Election of Chairperson

Mr. Liverman nominated Kate Warren as Chair. Seeing no other nominations, Mr. Schmierer closed the floor for nominations. Mr. Hammond seconded the nomination.

Roll call in favor: Hammond, Juega, Kochmann, Liverman, Procaccino, Vonvorys, Williamson and Warren

Mr. Schmierer turned the meeting over Chair Warren and she continued to chair the meeting

Election of Vice-Chairperson

Mr. Liverman nominated Dosier Hammond as Vice-Chair. Seeing no other nominations, Chair Warren closed the floor for nominations. Ms. Procaccino seconded the nomination.

Roll call in favor: Hammond, Juega, Kochmann, Liverman, Procaccino, Vonvorys, Williamson and Warren

Public Attendees: Wilma Solomon, Matt Mleczko and Juan Polanco

Mr. Truscelli introduced Gabby Michel; she is part of the PCH team.

Mr. Mleczko will be joining the Board as an Alternate at a future meeting.

New Board Member

Lex Kochmann is new to the Board; she introduced herself and provided her background.

2021 Meeting Dates

Mr. Williamson made the motion to adopt the 2021 meeting dates, second Tuesday of the month beginning at 5:30 pm, seconded by Mr. Hammond, all in favor by voice vote.

Public Comment – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the regular meeting minutes dated November 10, 2020 as submitted was made first by Mr. Liverman seconded by Ms. Procaccino, all in favor by voice vote.

Abstain: Chair Warren and Ms. Kochmann

A motion to approve the closed meeting minutes dated November 10, 2020 as submitted was made first by Ms. Procaccino seconded by Ms. Juega, all in favor by voice vote.

Abstain: Chair Warren and Ms. Kochmann

Overcoming Obstacles to Inclusivity Committee

Mr. Hammond reported on the *Overcoming Obstacles to Inclusivity Committee*; this group originated in this Board and evolved into a collaboration with Human Services and Civil Rights Commissions. Within the Overcoming Obstacles to Inclusivity Committee, three separate subcommittees were formed: Best Practices, Financial Counseling and Legislation. Meetings have taken place to discuss Best Practices, which included Mr. Truscelli and Susan O'Malley in their discussions. A meeting with RPM, an affordable housing developer in Princeton, also occurred. At the meeting, RPM explained how they process applications using alternative methods of obtaining credit status. Mr. Hammond reported that the Legislative Subcommittee has not met yet. Chair Warren requested the three subcommittees provide her a summary to get her updated.

Ms. Juega stated that we may want to request the Board to authorize a contract with ISLES. Ms. Fullaway responded that she has not received the ISLES proposal yet; only a verbal statement. Ms. Fullaway will have to contact other groups for comparable pricing for the Municipality to review. Mr. Schmierer explained why the Municipality is requesting additional pricing; although it is not a lowest price bid. Ms. Juega knows non-local organizations that can provide similar program services. Ms. Kochmann has a resource for Ms. Fullaway to contact.

Mr. Liverman raised the issue of how to get people to participate in counseling; he has offered counseling in the past and only a limited number attended. Incentives were discussed. Ms. Juega explained how they plan to utilize the program. The plan is to target occupants in specific properties; both affordable housing applicants and current renters. Financial Counseling will be individualized and tailored to each household's situation. The program will be offered to residents at risk for eviction as well as to applicants on the waiting lists. Ms. Procaccino stated that Arm and Arm ran a similar program, and if participants attended three sessions, they would receive a monetary incentive; but it was not successful. Mr. Liverman opined Ms. Juega's program sounds great, but we need to concentrate on getting participants into the program. Chair Warren agrees that marketing will be key. Ms. Juega stated this would be one-on-one counseling tailored towards their specific situation; not group sessions. Ms. Juega explained that ISLES is hosting the same program at Princeton University. Ms. Procaccino explained that the organizations she works with counseled clients on an individual basis and followed



them for a year, but it was still unsuccessful. Councilman Williamson asked if a policy can be introduced so that residents that come before this Board requesting funding can be mandated to participate in Financial Counseling. Board will consider and further discuss at another meeting.

Status Reports from CGP, PCH and PAH

Princeton Community Housing Development Corporation (PCH)

Mr. Truscelli introduced Gabby Michel, who is PCH's regional Property Manager. Ms. Michel provided her background and what her responsibilities are at PCH.

Mr. Truscelli explained the PCH vacancies and status of vacant units. Ms. Juega questioned the issue with Palmer Square units and why it remains vacant; parking fees are too high. Past attempts to negotiate with the management team have been unsuccessful. Palmer Square Management is strictly following their policy and regulations.

Community Grants & Planning (CGP)

Ms. Fullaway reported that CGP currently has one vacancy but an applicant has already been approved. There are 5,829 on their waiting list; numbers are based on entire state, not just region. There are 1,358 on the wait list from our region which includes Mercer, Monmouth and Ocean.

Princeton Affordable Housing – Maureen Fullaway

- Hamilton Avenue – 2 middle income units were sold
- 213 Brick House Road is on the market; issues with unit
- 231 Brick House Road is under contract
- 225 Brick House Road we purchased; renovations needed
- 134 Brick House Road is rented to HIP
- 38 Billie Ellis, we will purchase and will renovate
- 31 Billie Ellis under contract, will close soon
- 274 Griggs Drive – no update; owner returned to Haiti
- 414 Brick House Road – owner hired realtor

Legal – Ed Schmierer – nothing to report

Councilman Williamson provided an update on the compliance hearing; we passed with flying colors. Judge Mary Jacobson issued Judgement of Compliance and Repose, which means we are insulated from builders' remedy until 2025. Councilman Williamson reported on the number of units:

Several different projects will occur and provide the number of affordable units:

- Terhune: 6 for sale units
- Eden Shopping Center: 44 rental units
- Franklin Avenue: 3 lots (2 lots are owned by the Municipality, 1 by Princeton Housing Authority) has been rezoned for up to 160 units; will start with a minimum of 80 affordable units.
- Former Save site: 64 affordable units



- Thanet site: 6 affordable units; 5 will be reserved for the developmentally disabled; Avalon contributed 2.1 acres of land for an additional 80 age-restricted affordable units in a separate structure in the same complex
- Princeton Community Village: 25 rental units

Princeton Community Village

Mr. Truscelli reported that PCH has made an application before the Planning Board for Princeton Community Village; PCH proposes a new 3-story building with 25 units.

Eviction Policy Update

Mr. Hammond provided up an update on the eviction moratorium. The moratorium was extended until end of March/April 2021. Ms. Golden reported on the CDBG funds, which should be issued soon. The funds that HIP will administer will be used for rental assistance for tenants in danger of eviction. In order to be subsidized with CDBG funding, tenants must have a lease, and landlords must agree to enter mediation with the tenants to negotiate the amount of delinquent rent that will be paid. Funds are not in hand to date; should be in about 2 weeks. Per Ms. Kochmann, issues regarding utility payments are arising.

Matt Mleczko explained what Princeton Mutual Aid (PMA) is doing for the University, municipality and residents. They started with helping residents pay for grocery, utilities, etc. Most of PMA's funding comes from donations. Per Ms. Kochmann, there is a currently a utility shut off moratorium but eventually residents' utilities will have to be paid. This will present a challenge in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 pm was first moved by Mr. Vonvorys seconded by Mr. Liverman, all in favor by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted by:

Julie M. Moy
Recording Secretary