**MINUTES**

The Board of Commissioners of the Dracut Housing Authority met at a regular meeting on January 25, 2016 at 971 Mammoth Road, Dracut, MA 01826. Chairman Russ Taylor opened the meeting and upon roll call vote those present were as follows:

**PRESENT:** F. Russell Taylor

 Jesse Forcier

 George M. Nangle

 Debra DeWitt Ahern

**ABSENT:** Matthew J. Sheehan

**PRESENT:** Kelley Szymanski

 Mary T. Karabatsos

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern made a motion to approve the minutes of the 2016 Board Meeting. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Forcier and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**BILLS & COMMUNICATIONS**

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern made a motion to approve the January 2016 warrant. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Forcier. Under discussion Commissioner Forcier asked if the housing authority has a sander. Brian Martin stated that the town does our sanding. The amount on the warrant for the ice melt is bags of ice melt that we put on the walkways.

Commissioner DeWitt Ahern made a motion to put the November 2015 and December 2015 Financial Reports on file for audit. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner Forcier and upon roll call vote passed unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

1. **A discussion on the implementation of a housing authority wide “No Smoking Policy”.**

The Director informed the Board that HUD is in the process to mandate that all housing authorities be totally smoke free. This includes apartments, community rooms, grounds, etc…. They are allowing that residents can smoke 25 feet away from buildings, etc…. There are many housing authorities that have implemented this program. Currently, the Dracut Housing Authority has a policy for new residents moving in sign a lease addendum that states that they cannot smoke. At the time, we grandfathered in individuals that were already residents. That has been our policy for the last few years but with this new mandate we must officially implement a no smoking policy for all our residents. Once the Board votes on this policy all existing residents must sign a lease addendum to this matter. Commissioner DeWitt Ahern stated that this is a policy that is mandated so it is pretty much out of our hands and we will have to implement this. One resident asked if medical marijuana would be permissible. Chairman Taylor stated that any form of lit tobacco is not permissible so medical marijuana would fall into that category. The Director stated that she would like to get information out to all the residents on this new policy and have the Board vote next month.

1. **Update on Net Solar Program.**

The Director informed the Board that the solar program is a little behind schedule. We have recently been notified that the solar farm should be up and running spring 2016. Initially, we were told that it would be running last summer.

1. **Work Order Report.**

The Director informed the Board that currently there are four work orders open.

1. Vacancy Report.

The Board received the work.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

* **Housing Sub-Committee:**

The Director informed the Board that an application has been submitted to the Lawyer’s Clearinghouse. If approved we will be assigned an attorney who will do some of our work pro-bono.

The Request for Proposals for Architectural Services is in the process of being reviewed. The RFP should be advertised in February with proposals received by the end of the month of February.

The housing authority also has to hire a zoning attorney. Two quotes have been sent to firms in Westford and in No. Andover.

* **Heating Sub-Committee:**

No update.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

 The Director stated that she would like to know when the Board would like to have a meeting in

 February. The third Monday is a holiday. It was decided that the meeting would be on the 22nd.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

 None.

**RESIDENT & PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Cecile Hinxman requested that no parking signs be put in front of the gazebo. It is very difficult for residents with wheelchairs, etc… to access their mail when cars are parked there.

Don Jean asked what the surveyors have been doing on the property. The Director informed everyone that National Grid is doing work on the property.

Rita Giguere asked if it is possible to replace the current heaters in the units. The Director stated that we are currently looking at replacing the heaters with air source heat pumps.

Rita Giguere also stated that the maintenance is doing a great job and it is nice to see everyone get along.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Forcier made a motion to adjourn. Said motion was seconded by Commissioner DeWitt Ahern and upon roll call passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 6:30 p.m.