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2 **Willington Housing Authority**
3 **REGULAR MEETING**

4 Monday March 18, 2024 – 4 p.m. (in-person meeting)

5 Location: Willington Senior Center, 20 Senior Way, Willington, CT 06279
6
7

8 Present – Chairman Don Berg; Vice Chairman William Bunnell; Secretary/Treasurer Claudia D’Agata, Tenant
9 Commissioner Arthur Blaskey; Executive Director Laurie Bradley (property management), Resident Services
10 Coordinator/Assistant Director Sharon Boisvert (property management), and via conference call, Recording
11 Secretary Brenda Sullivan
12

13 **1. Call to order** – The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.
14

15 **2. Present to speak** – opportunity for members of the public to speak. There was no one present from the public.
16

17 **3. Old Business** – Senior Housing “Button Hill”
18

19 **A. Director's Report**
20

21 *This report was emailed to members prior to the meeting; a copy is available to the public from*
22 *management upon request. **
23

24 L. Bradley reported that Air Temp will be installing a zone valve in 14A and 14B, to address heating and
25 cooling issues, once the weather warms up, because the system will have to be drained and the heating
26 will be shut off. Work will be done on 14A and 14B on the same day.
27

28 She also reported that she is collecting financial information from the residents in order to complete the
29 recertification process by the May 1 deadline.
30

31 She also reported on other maintenance activities concerning installation of mixing valves, replacing two
32 smoke detectors, and changing a thermostat to a non-programmable type to address a heating issue.
33

34 **B. Expenditures**
35

36 *This report was emailed to members prior to the meeting; a copy is available to the public from*
37 *management upon request. **
38

39 L. Bradley noted that “annual support fee” refers to computer software services, and that “mechanical”
40 refers to repairs for heating issues.
41

42 **C. Button Hill Treasurer's Report**
43

44 *This report was emailed to members prior to the meeting; a copy is available to the public from*
45 *management upon request. **
46

47 L. Bradley noted that reserves now total \$134,000, that \$4,000 is added each month, and that the account
48 is accumulating 4.8 percent interest versus keeping those funds in the checking account.

49 **D. Chairman's Report:**
50

51 *The documents discussed below were emailed to members prior to the meeting; copies are available to*
52 *the public from management upon request. **

- Update Board on Call for Aid system

D. Berg reviewed documents that he emailed members prior to the meeting.

L. Bradley noted that the Housing Authority passed a motion at its February 26, 2024 meeting to accept the ITS bid for new fire panels and a Call for Aid system for up to \$68,500. She suggested emailing the ARPA Committee to let them know the Housing Authority has chosen a contractor and would like to join their April 8 meeting to request funding.

There was discussion about whether to wait to make a decision on whether to go with a cellular system or fiber optic system for emergency call phone service until there is more information about whether there will be ARPA funding for this phase of the project. D. Berg added that he wasn't sure if ITS would allow running fiber optics for the fire panels with other fiber optics for other systems. He added that ITS doesn't want wireless internet used for phone service, because it could be unreliable,

- Update Board on American Microgrid Solutions' solar and resiliency analysis

D. Berg reviewed documents that he emailed members prior to the meeting.

There was discussion about the pro's and con's of back up batteries and a fuel cell option, in the event of a power outage. D. Berg said his analysis is that installing a fuel cell and battery backup doesn't make sense financially.

D. Berg gave an overview of his discussions with CT Green Bank about various financial resources that may be available to the Housing Authority and how these resources would reduce the estimated \$143,000 cost for the additional solar panels.

He said the project might be eligible for another 20 percent tax credit (for a total of 50 percent), which would bring the cost to about \$80,000. He noted that AMS's report states that the system would pay for itself in 9 years, but the report doesn't factor in the cost of borrowing.

He said the additional panels are expected to generate approximately 55,000 kilowatt hours of power, which would be about 63 percent of the total energy output of the proposed and existing PV power at Button Hill.

He questioned the report's estimate of \$1,200 a year for maintenance. He said that, based on maintenance history to date, this figure seems excessive.

He added that the report uses 2023 numbers, and that it doesn't reflect the 2024 increase in incentives. He said the way this incentive program works, Eversource pays the Housing Authority for all of the electricity generated by the panels and then those funds are used to pay the Eversource bill.

He said the report estimates the system will be \$110,000 on the positive side in 20 years. However, if the Housing Authority borrows the full amount of the new system, interest could actually end up putting the costs into the negative side.

He said AMS concludes that the Housing Authority owning the solar array would save the most amount of money. However, there may be more savings with grants, and this isn't included in the AMS report. For example, the Rural Electricity for America Program may offer rebates that could potentially bring down costs.

.06
.07 D. Berg reviewed the section of the document that compares the costs of different resilient configurations
.08 of the system (batteries and/or fuel cells). He said he feels the figures provided justify purchasing
.09 emergency generators instead of either of the resiliency solutions provided
.10

.11 There was further discussion about the report's financial calculations. D. Berg said the analysis is correct
.12 in that the Housing Authority is currently paying Eversource about 26 cents per kWh. He added that the
.13 Eversource incentive rate needs to be updated for 2024 from about 29.43 to 31.89 cents per kWh and
.14 needs to include a 5.5 cent low-income adder.
.15

.16 He noted that the requirement for sharing 20 percent of the revenue generated by the solar panel system
.17 is problematic because it refers to housing projects where the residents pay their own utility bills,
.18 whereas at Button Hill the electricity is included in the rent.
.19

.20 D. Berg reviewed Slide 21 of the analysis (a Conceptual Diagram of what AMS proposes to do). He
.21 noted that the diagram doesn't show the size of the system, or show that the inverter is on four buildings,
.22 not one.
.23

.24 He pointed out that the system would include between 115 and 129 panels, depending on whether the
.25 Housing Authority decides to omit 2 panels over each unit's entry, in order to prevent snow sliding and
.26 falling in front of the entries. On the other hand, that problem could be addressed by installing additional
.27 snow guards, he said.
.28

.29 D. Berg discussed the Federal Investment Credit incentive that refunds 30 percent of the system costs,
.30 but noted it would take a year for those funds to be paid to the Housing Authority. So, the Housing
.31 Authority would probably pay \$42,000 up front from its own budget, and then replace those funds when
.32 it receives the 30 percent grant.
.33

.34 L. Bradley asked if the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston (FHLBB) and Centreville Bank loans have
.35 any restrictions regarding taking out loans on the property. D. Berg said if the loans go through C-Pace,
.36 the bank would have to give up its first priority ranking. L. Bradley said it's not likely Centreville Bank
.37 would agree to that.
.38

.39 D. Berg reviewed his discussion with CT Green Bank. He said it's not clear whether the Power Purchase
.40 Agreement would meet requirements to be eligible for a Rural Electrification of America (REAP) grant.
.41

.42 He said it's also likely that the project is eligible for inclusion in CT Green bank's Solar MAP
.43 (Marketplace Assistance Program), which offers loans for up to 18 years, power purchase agreements
.44 and leases. He said that program is expecting to accept the first round of applicants by June, 2024.
.45

.46 He added that the University of Connecticut's solar plans could impact the Housing Authority's
.47 eligibility if it is unable to get an inter-connection due to the UConn putting in a large solar system and
.48 consuming line capacity. Failure to obtain an Eversource inter-connection agreement wouldn't be
.49 determined until after submitting an application to Eversource. He added that the RRES (Residential
.50 Renewable Energy Solutions) program considers allowable PV system size based on a history of energy
.51 use, plus 5 percent, plus additional PV if charging stations or heat pumps are planned for in the future.
.52

.53 D. Berg noted the report suggests installing solar panels could potentially add \$18,000 of income to
.54 Button Hill's budget, although paying back the loan to construct the PV system would reduce that
.55 income amount significantly during the life of the loan
.56

- .57 • Update on water heaters
- .58

(See Director's Report earlier in the meeting).

D. Berg also said he'd like to see some stainless steel heaters included in future. He said they pump out 130,000 BTU's versus the new heaters' 100,000 BTUs, and the water heaters currently being installed don't have modulating burners. He said stainless steel heaters cost about \$1,800 more, each.

- Discussion on above items

W. Bunnell asked if the Housing Authority should plan for providing connections for electric vehicles at some point in the future. He also suggested possibly purchasing portable emergency generators. He noted that given how infrequently Button Hill has experienced power outages, a smaller generator might be sufficient.

4. New Business – None.

5. Correspondence – None.

6. Approval of Minutes

W. Bunnell made a motion to approve the January 22, 2024 minutes as written. C. D'Agata seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Feb 26 – A. Blaskey made a motion to approve the February 26, 2024 minutes as written. W. Bunnell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Housing Authority Treasurer's Report

Per the Town of Willington financial office FY 2023-2024 Housing Authority report dated 3/15/24, a payroll check was issued on 2/8/24 and 3/7/24, each for \$65 plus deduction for Medicare of \$.94 and Social Security of \$4.03 deducted from the Housing Authority account, leaving a balance of \$2,825.87.

8. Motion to Adjourn

C. D'Agata made a motion to adjourn at 5 p.m. A. Blaskey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Recording Secretary Brenda Sullivan. Please note that minutes are posted prior to being officially approved – changes/corrections are normally indicated in the subsequent month's meeting minutes.

**(For copies of documents mentioned in the minutes, please call management at 860-498-0268.)*

Brenda Sullivan

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WILLINGTON, CT.

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[Signature]
TOWN CLERK