



Chairman
Charles Duzy

TOWN OF LEDYARD

Housing Authority Meeting Minutes - Final

60 Kings Highway
Kings Corner Manor
Gales Ferry, Connecticut 06335

Regular Meeting

Monday, October 2, 2023

7:00 PM

Kings Corner Manor

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Duzy called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Board Member Thomas Cassabria
Board Member Dayna Waterhouse
Chairman Charles Duzy
Board Member Paula Crocker
Excused Board Member Margaret Boyd

In addition, the following were present:
Colleen Lauer - Housing Director
Naomi Rodriguez - Town Councilor
Tenants Present - 2, 3, 9, 13, 19, 24, 26, 27
Nicole Cruz-Glacken - Resident
Nina Diaz - Resident
Eleanor Murray - Resident
Ed Murray - Resident

III. OPENING AND CLOSING THE FLOOR TO TENANTS, RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS

Comments limited to (3) three minutes. Total Time (30) minutes

Ms. Nina Diaz, 1546 Route 12, Gales Ferry stated during the September Town Council and Community Relations Committee meetings, Councilor Paul suggested the Housing Authority Board meetings be moved to the Town Hall Annex. This would be in alignment with how all other public meetings are held. This would create an equal opportunity to attend and/or participate in monthly meetings by way of virtual or in person options. Ms. Diaz stated the word compromise should not be a bad word, what could be and is a bad thing is the danger that some residents have been forced into by having to be in the road or on someone else's private property. Ms. Diaz added how terrible it would be for a resident to get hurt or worse killed while trying to cross the road at night. There are no street lights on Kings Highway or sidewalks just darkness

and opportunity. Ms. Diaz stated compromise would be the difference maker in regards to the residents safety and compromise would also decrease legal ramifications between the residents and the Housing Authority and Town. Ms. Diaz added according the ADA reasonable accommodations can be submitted orally, however it is suggested to be in writing for the record and this should not be seen as a problem. Per the State of Connecticut, there are only two types of housing exempt from ADA accommodations, the first is an owner occupied dwelling with two or less rentable unites, the second is the rental of a room or rooms in an owner occupied dwelling. The refusal to address a request for accommodation can be discrimination and the failure to respond is discrimination both, of which can lead to civil rights violations. Ms. Diaz added this issue has been discussed by many including Town Councilors and Board Members. The safety and rights of our seniors and disabled residents should be a priority to all. Ms. Diaz stated suggestions and potential solutions have been voiced and asked the Board to participate in conversation and compromise in the best interest of all Kings Corner Manor residents.

Chairman Duzy thanked Ms. Diaz for her comments.

Ms. Sonn, Unit #19 stated she had three quick points. Ms. Sonn stated she asked for an ADA accommodation over a year ago due to her hearing and vision. She stated all are aware she is going deaf and blind. Ms. Sonn stated she asked this to be taped and nothing was ever done. Ms. Sonn requested that this be taped and she does not believe a year is an appropriate time to have an accommodation linger. Ms. Sonn asked another question regarding ADA accommodations she had in her apartment before the renovations that were perfectly fine and have now been removed. Ms. Sonn stated she has put in writing ten pages inclusive of the accommodations she needs put back for her various medical conditions. Ms. Sonn stated her apartment was started in April and it is now October and they have not been addressed. Ms. Sonn notified the Board that she will be formally charging the Board for violations of her rights with the Department of Justice. Ms. Sonn added that when her apartment was worked on her voice activated electrical system that runs her lights, microwave and television were destroyed. Ms. Sonn stated she was told by Lou to order new and he will take care of it and nothing has been done other than Lou and Ms. Lauer fighting over who is going to pay for it. Ms. Sonn stated she is out hundreds of dollars and she has no intention of remaining out hundreds of dollars and she would like to know when she is getting her money back, also for the items that were removed and damaged from her property. Ms. Sonn stated if there is going to be scripting she would advise having someone trained because words on that board were attributed to her that she did not say. Ms. Sonn added you are looking at legal ramifications if those stay up as said by her when they are not what she said. Ms. Sonn added learn how to script or start taping everything. Ms. Sonn stated we do have a tape of the last meeting and have compared it to what was written and it is lies. Ms. Sonn stated it is not what she said and she would like it removed and jobs to be done appropriately.

Chairman Duzy thanked Ms. Sonn for her comments.

Ms. Fernandez Unit #3 stated she would like to respond to some of the things Ms. Crocker stated last month. Ms. Fernandez stated they were told the Executive Director has no vote and she is well aware of that fact, she also has eyes and ears and tape recordings that clearly show the Executive Director, Ms. Lauer telling the Board President what to say at Board meetings. Ms. Fernandez added that secondly there are no lights along the driveway and there will be snow and ice during the winter when you come to the stop sign at the end of the driveway. Ms. Fernandez stated look to your right and tell her if you can see anything but blackness. Ms. Fernandez noted here are no lights or sidewalks on Kings Highway were they are being sent to smoke. Ms. Fernandez added please don't tell her the health and well being of the residents were considered. Ms. Fernandez stated that two weeks ago they were told they were State owned to call CHFA and the Board told them they don't know who owns Kings Corner and the grant states we are owned by an LLC, someone or everyone is lying. Ms. Fernandez added the quote Ms. Crocker made from the employee handbook only relates to the Town owned and managed properties and the Town claims no responsibility for Kings Corner, these points of Ms. Crocker's speech are mute. Ms. Fernandez stated she is not an employee, she lives here and pays rent, please do not tell her how to dispose of her butts when she is off property. Ms. Fernandez stated the comment about the tiki torches being addressed as soon as it was mentioned was not true. Ms. Fernandez added she has a comment/suggestions form that was typed and dated April 5, 2021 where she made mention that she had concerns about tiki torches at that time. Ms. Fernandez stated she did not believe Ms. Crocker was on the Board at that time. Ms. Fernandez stated she will reiterate Ms. Crocker's own words from the last meeting and address them to the Board, giving misleading or false information is never appropriate.

Chairman Duzy thanks Ms. Fernandez for her comments.

Ms. Murray, 16 Chapman Lane, Gales Ferry stated freedom of information is a law and the meeting minutes come under that law, it is absolutely unlawful to say anything in the minutes that did not occur or to make editorial comments like deciding to say the last comment is from me personally and not necessarily from the Board and go off on a tangent. Ms. Murray added there are a number of comments people have stated that are listed in the minutes and did not happen or were listed as opinion and did not occur and it is unlawful to do that in a public meeting. Ms. Murray stated this was a warning that minutes cannot be done like that and are not appropriate. Ms. Murray asked for the minutes to be taped and if there was a tape from the last meeting use that for the minutes. Ms. Murray added that she understood people had to move out of their apartments for renovations and move back in. Ms. Murray stated that many of these senior citizens have health issues and are being required to move themselves. Ms. Murray stated she would guarantee that and she would be happy to spend the money or do research herself, but does not think it should be her job to find out if there is money in the grant to move the

residents. Ms. Murray added that she does not believe the senior citizens are required to take the stuff out of their apartments and move the stuff back in. Ms. Murray stated she bets there is money to do that and she understood that other people got help. Ms. Murray added the last thing she would like to point out is people in this community have oxygenators and they need to be able to replenish the power to those oxygenators. They cannot carry those 40 pound units to the community center where there is a generator, power packs are needed. Ms. Murray stated the power packs are not dangerous and are batteries to have in the apartments and have been disallowed for no good reason. Ms. Murray suggested that this be reconsidered.

Chairman Duzy thanked Ms. Murray for her comments.

Mr. Murray, 16 Chapman Lane, Gales Ferry stated the question he has for the Authority is have they taken the time to educate or explain to the tenants that they have an opportunity to create their own tenant organization which allows them to speak as a group and choose their own tenant commissioner. Mr. Murray added this is part of CSG8-41 where it talks about all of the commissioners that are to be part of the organization.

Chairman Duzy thanks Mr. Murray for his comments.

IV. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Crocker stated that LHA would like all the tenants to fill out and vote as to where the tenants would like the meetings to be held, at Town Hall Annex and recorded or stay at the King's Corner Manor and recorded. Ms. Crocker stated to please put them in a sealed container and they would be opened by at least two board members.

Ms. Murray asked if arrangements could be made for the Senior Center van to drive the tenants to Town Hall Annex.

Ms. Crocker stated the Senior Center is not open during that time of the evening.

Ms. Murray suggested that they would try to make those arrangements or tenants could zoom from their apartments.

A group of tenants stated they would not know how to do that and Ms. Murray and Ms. Diaz stated they would come to the community center to teach the tenants.

Ms. Crocker added the ability to use zoom was a big issue during COVID.

Ms. Fernandez asked if there is an option to having the meeting at Kings Corner and have it recorded.

Ms. Crocker stated that may be problematic and LHA may be able to get the video equipment on loan but would not know how long that loan would be for.

Ms. Sonn stated that she was a member of the Library for the Blind and she may be able to get a recorder.

Chairman Duzy stated that LHA was going to work on that.

Ms. Crocker shared a letter dated October 2, 2023. On September 5, 2023 at the Ledyard Housing Authority Board meeting, Ms. Eleanor Murray handed a document to LHA Board Secretary Paula Crocker with the following issues and/or complaints listed. Each issue and/or complaint has been addressed individually by the LHA. They were addressed as a courtesy, not out of any obligation. In the future, such issues and/or complaints will be reviewed by the LHA board to whether a response is warranted.

ISSUES BROUGHT TO SEPTEMBER 5, 2023 MEETING BY MRS. ELEANOR MURRAY

ISSUE:

First public meeting public space allow citizen to speak or violation of ACLU

LHA RESPONSE:

There have been meetings every month, with the exception of a few. The agendas and minutes to these meetings can be found on the Town of Ledyard website. These meetings have always been public and we would have allowed tenants and residents to speak, however, there has not been a resident in attendance for at least the last five years, so eventually the residents speaking has been left off the agenda. LHA will remedy that and put a section for resident comments on the agenda. Votes at a meeting are posted within 48 hours as a draft and the final minutes are posted within 7 days after the meeting. This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

Cameras in common area do not allow privacy.

LHA RESPONSE:

Cameras were installed for the safety and wellbeing of the tenants and the Ledyard Housing Authority. Cameras are only placed outside, in the common areas and the community room. Tenants should not have an expectation of privacy in those areas. This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

Addendums to lease cannot be anticipated and cause anxiety: please limit to 4x per year.

LHA RESPONSE:

Addendums and rules and regulations may be worked on throughout the year, however, the tenants of KCM are asked to sign the lease annually. This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

The tenant rep is not legally elected: needs to be remedied.

LHA RESPONSE:

LHA will not remedy anything based on your request. Ordinance #100-010 by the Town of Ledyard states:

“The Housing Authority shall consist of five (5) members appointed by the Town Council who are electors of the town, each of whom shall serve for a term of five (5) years. Members shall commence to serve their terms immediately upon appointment and shall serve until their successor has qualified or they have been reappointed or removed by The Town Council.

“At least one member of the Authority shall be a tenant who lives in the housing owned or managed by such Authority and has resided in such housing for more than one (1) year. This member shall not have the authority to vote on any matter concerning the establishment or revision of the rents to be charged in any housing owned or managed by such Authority.”

The term expiration dates for the current LHA board are as follows:

- Mr Charles Duzy, 3/31/2025
- Ms. Dayna Waterhouse, 3/31/2027
- Ms. Margaret Boyd, 3/31/2026
- Ms. Paula Crocker, 3/31/2028
- Ms. Thomas Cassabria, 3/31/2024

This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

Smoking policy on Ledyard Street is dangerous and unsafe. Must be rectified. 25 feet from buildings is still adequate in Groton.

LHA RESPONSE:

This subject is closed as per the LHA Non-Smoking Policy

ISSUE:

Please be kind enough to leave furniture where tenants place it. This is their home.

LHA RESPONSE:

LHA is unclear as to what furniture you are speaking of. The only furniture LHA knows of that has been moved is the chairs that were in the former smoking area. These were moved to clear that space for its intended purpose, a parking space.

This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

The law requires a greater frequency of Open Mtgs.

LHA RESPONSE:

See above where we addressed meetings. This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

The Director is in violation of the CT Wage and Hour Law

LHA RESPONSE:

The private earnings, income, or confidential payroll information of the Director of LHA/KCM will not be addressed in reference to the CT Wage and Hour Law, Title 31 Chapter. 558.

This Subject is closed

ISSUE:

Asking for a return of larger sheds as residents have no other storage. No reason to require small sheds.

LHA RESPONSE:

The rules and regulations/addendum does not state the size of sheds, it does state the tenants advise LHA what they want to purchase and where they want to put it. As of this date, no one here has been denied the ability to put in a shed.

This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

Asking for Doc prescription for reimbursement for OTC items against HUD regulations. Cease and desist. It costs money, time and needless energy.

LHARESPONSE:

LHA will not cease and desist anything based on your request. OTC drugs are not considered without a doctor's note and sometimes they are still excluded. Tenants can only claim valid medical expenses that are not reimbursed. LHA works closely with DOH and these are the rules for recertification. This subject is closed.

ISSUE:

Wreaths on doors on door hangers is a small accommodation that does absolutely no harm and is a simple example of over control. Allow wreaths on hangers as a gesture of good faith at this time.

LHA RESPONSE:

As of this date no tenant has been told they cannot hang anything on their door with a hanger. Tenants are not allowed to deface the door, such as putting in nails, screws etc. This subject is closed.

In closing, we have responded to all the issues you have brought forward but will not do so in the future. We are not obligated nor required to respond to you. In the future we will take your issues under advisement.

Ms. Lupeinski, Unit #2 asked if she could comment.

Chairman Duzy stated that the public/tenants cannot comment after the comments section of the meeting, fill out a grievance/comment form or bring it up at the next meeting.

V. REPORTS**1. MOTION to accept the payment of Bills and Financial Report**

Chairman Duzy asked for the amount in the STIFF account. Ms. Lauer responded \$60,653.00

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Charles Duzy

SECONDER: Paula Crocker

AYE 3 Cassabria Duzy Crocker

EXCUSED 1 Boyd

ABSTAIN 1 Waterhouse

2. Reports of the Executive Director

- o The Laundry Room survey started 9/21, of the 27 units, 12 people said they want to keep the sign up sheet, 2 people said they did not. The majority of tenants prefer to have a sign up sheet so LHA will continue to do that.
- o If residents did not get a chance to connect with Kathy Green from TVCCA regarding energy assistance, call 860-464-3222 at the Town Hall.
- o Ledyard Social Services will be providing holiday baskets again this year in November and December to Ledyard Food Pantry guests. If currently a guest fill please fill out the forms when they come out. If you are not currently a guest of the Ledyard Food Pantry, please fill out an application (in the community building hallway) and return to Kristen at the Town Hall. You do need to recertify every year.

- o Dog Scouts helping to be here later this month, waiting on a day/time, will put up a notice when we have it.
- o October Newsletter was walked around.
- o There will be four units available beginning in 2024. If you would like to transfer units, please be sure to put in a transfer request form which will also be in next months newsletter.

RESULT: .**3. Reports of the Chairman**

Chairman Duzy stated the newsletter mentions that if a resident has a problem to fill out a suggestion/work order form and reiterated that if you have a problem, submit it and don't put it on Social Media, use the forms. Mr. Duzy stated that some of the Board went to the Community Relations meeting at Town Hall and liked it. Mr. Duzy reiterated to all that this meeting is like a Town Council Meeting where you can comment during the comments section and you do not get to comment again. Mr. Duzy like the meeting because people go to comment. Mr. Duzy added the Board is not changing this meeting but suggested every two or three months he would like to hold a meeting in this room and not take votes or make decisions but take input and go from there. Mr. Duzy added voting would take place at regular meetings but this way everyone would get a chance to have input. Mr. Duzy stated the comment was already made about recordings and he would like everyone to fill out a slip. Mr. Duzy stated that no matter where the meeting is held, obviously if held at Town Hall everything could be recorded and video but most people and he was one of them would not want to drive up there especially in the winter. Mr. Duzy added if the meeting was still held at Kings Corner like he hopes he not only wants it audio recorded but video recorded. Mr. Duzy added if they cannot borrow video equipment they will buy it and there will be a video system in this room and every meeting will be recorded. Mr. Duzy noted that this was his position and he has not discussed with the Board and would like to bring it up at the next meeting based on results form the tenants. Mr. Duzy added he did not want to make any kind of decision without all of the Board member present.

RESULT: .**4. Tenant Representative Comments**

None

RESULT: .**VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES****1. MOTION to approve the Housing Authority regular meeting minutes of September 5, 2023.**

Ms. Sonn Unit # 19 disagreed with the minutes, stating the minutes were not correct and utilized her name incorrectly. Chairman Duzy stated the Board will look at these minutes next month.

Mr. Duzy added the minutes will not be approved until the Board receives something in writing stating specifically what Ms. Sonn disagrees with in the minutes.

RESULT: NO ACTION

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Suggestion Box

None

RESULT: CONTINUE

2. Renovation Updates

- This renovation is being completed following certain processes of arch punching units, multiple arch working on deal for us/CHFA. Please fill out a tenant renovation issue form for new items not working/damaged items. I forward those forms for BRD to address. BRD has been asked for their process to replace damaged items two weeks in a row, still waiting on the process, I will ask again and should have the process this week, it is being worked on.
- We just got the dates - the laundry room will be started this week Thursday, October 5th. You will not be able to use the laundry room from 8am-5pm on Thursday the 5th and Friday the 6th, you can use it in the evening of the 5th and 6th. You will be able to use the laundry room the weekend of the 7th & 8th then the laundry room will be unavailable from Monday-Friday October 9th-13th.
- Gutters, siding & concrete have been completed, just waiting on MNS Mechanical for AC enclosures and then the architect will go around and punch the buildings. They are backing up sidewalks and hope to lay seed later this week.
- Still waiting on the front community building door hardware, and rear door auto door - shipping issues.
- Handicap parking areas will be started this week, looks like Wednesday/Thursday
- BRD completed 4 units Sept. 29th and started 4 units today. Adding the extra day should be done November 10th there will still be punch list items, but bulk of having people moved out will be before the holiday.
- Nicer weather coming through hope for no weather hold ups.

- Window manufacturer was onsite and completed repairs. If there are any new issues please report them.

RESULT: CONTINUE

3. Discussion and possible action regarding the Smoking Policy

Ms. Lauer stated she is working with the Town for a sidewalk and the contractor was present last Friday and is working on an estimate.

RESULT: NO ACTION

4. Any Old Business to come before the Housing Authority

None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible action on the Housing Authority monthly meeting location

Discussion continued to the next meeting pending tenant responses from the survey.

RESULT: CONTINUE

2. Any New Business to come before the Housing Authority

Discussion:

The washing machines are getting old and more expensive to fix. Other Housing Authorities have companies to maintain machine and charge \$1 .25 - \$2.00 to wash and \$1.25 - \$2.00 to dry, the majority are \$1.50 - \$1.75. The current fees are low, \$1.00 to wash and \$1.00 to dry. There would be no cost to the Housing Authority, the Housing Authority and company would split the revenue. The company takes care of the machines. Average revenue is \$225 - \$275. The company will be asked to charge \$1.25 a load with an increase to \$1.50 in time, if not able to do \$1.25 then \$1.50.

Ms. Sonn, Unit# 19 asked what is an ADA accommodating washer and dryer.

Ms. Lauer replied front loading with front controls.

Ms. Sonn asked if they were voice activated?

Ms. Lauer replied no.

MOTION to hire a new company for the washer and dryer and split the revenue with that company.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Charles Duzy

SECONDER: Thomas Cassabria

AYE 4 Cassabria Waterhouse Duzy Crocker

EXCUSED 1 Boyd

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Duzy moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded Ms. Waterhouse.

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

VOTE: 4 - 0 Approved and so declared

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.