REVISED Minutes of the Meeting of the
Board of the Alliance of Cambridge Tenants
August 15, 2009 3:00 – 5:30 at Inman Square Apartments


1. Cheryl-Ann presented the ground rules for today’s meeting (and there was a consensus to follow them)
   a. Raise hand to be recognized by chair to speak
   b. Don’t interrupt
   c. Limit comments so that all can be heard
   d. No personal attacks
   e. OK to ask questions if, for example, too fast or confusing

2. Minutes of the 6/20 Board meeting were distributed and accepted without change or comment

3 Committee Reports

   A. Tenant Assistance and Outreach Committee (Bill C)
      the committee met yesterday; did not set another meeting date
      formed subcommittee on tenant councils (which is having its second meeting on
      Monday, August 17 in Sonia’s apartment)
      8/31 Jackson Garden organizing meeting (to form tenant council) – A & O
      committee members to attend meeting
      9/24 LBJ meeting – need to find out purpose
      8/25 2:00 – 6:00 tenant council elections at Burns Apartment
      Sothea says he is working with tenants at Roosevelt Towers to form tenant council
      Jeff Park elections happened but the Board hasn’t met yet (A & O needs to clarify
      what assistance/advice, if any, A & O should offer)
      The Voucher rent calculation training was held
      A Board subcommittee on voucher tenants was set up. Struggling with how to
      organize voucher tenants given that scattered throughout many buildings. Board
      members provided some suggestions
      Kathy to get cost information for ACT business cards (which could help Board
      members with organizing and outreach efforts)

   B. Technical Assistance Committee (CAPZ)
      Survey (to find out what issues tenants are facing) was distributed (ACT board
      members may see if they can attend public housing council meetings to have
      surveys distributed)
      There will be a tour of public housing developments in September
      Discussion of trainings/workshops that TAC should plan

      There will be a “preview” meeting with CHA on the Annual Plan
      At some point the Section 8 Admin Plan (including proposed changes to the
      medical and child care deductions) will be discussed
Analyzing federal legislation SEVRA and how it could impact CHA policies re rent simplification, resident participation and MTW

C. Hearing Panel Committee (CAPZ)
Jackie is convening Hearing Panel Committee once MOU is done (MOU will hopefully have a provision to allow ACT to suggest tenants for the CHA’s various hearing panels (grievance for public housing, conference for applicants and voucher, hardship review committee for rent simplification exceptions))
No voucher holders have served as representatives on these panels because, according to CHA, no tenant has requested it
Linda M has the CHA’s training packet which she will provide us with
Linda M and Bill C have sat on CHA panels in the past and could share their experiences with us

D. MOU Committee (Kathy)
Committee is finishing a draft MOU & at its next meeting will be setting priorities, discussing our power, etc.
Community Dispute Settlement Center gave a hands-on training
Greg Russ wants to meet prior to the MOU process
Kathy read a list of documents the Committee would like CHA to provide (and there were no additions made at the meeting)
James made a motion to have a general Board discussion on the MOU process (Bill seconded). There was discussion, after which James withdrew the motion

E. Finance Committee (LV)
See 2 handouts (one of which was for Board members to fill out indicating what ACT can do for you and what you can do for ACT)
Finance Committee has not yet met but has been gathering information from Jack and Board members as to what money has been spent & how and each committees anticipated need for funds
They have business software and two computers (one for ACT finances and the other as back up)
By show of hands, LV determined the # of Board members with computers at home, internet access at home, etc. ACT and CHA can apply for money for internet access and training. Communicating by email will save money in the future.

4. Filling ACT Board Vacancies
See updated list of Board members which indicates those who resigned

Susan explained the by law provisions for filling vacancies & the officers recommendation to fill the vacancies now (with those “next in line” from the April elections) rather than wait
Of the 6 tenants next in line, Natalie reached only one who said would attend today’s meeting but didn’t
Natalie, Cheryl-Ann, and Susan will try to reach those who are next in line and those who have not attended any meetings or attended only one meeting. Get phone numbers from CHA. Send letters. Will report back at next meeting.

5. ACT office

A few Board members met with Ethel and her tenant council members in the Manning Tenant Council office re: space and needed equipment. (See minutes distributed at meeting). Victoria and Ethel then met with Greg.

Motion to accept sharing Manning Tenant Council office space on a temporary basis (see Bill’s written motion, with friendly amendments). Approved. 11 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 did not vote

A second motion was then approved to have an office committee to follow up with Ethel and CHA (committee is LV, Victoria, James)
[at some point, a motion was made and approved to extend the time of the meeting]

6. City Council Candidates Night

James might be running for city council so would recuse self from ACT activities related to this

Motion approved for officers to investigate co-sponsoring candidates night with CEOC (and maybe others) and (given the timing) to let officers decide whether to proceed with co-sponsoring the event. Officers will report back at the next Board meeting. ACT is not endorsing any candidates. 9 or 10 in favor, 1 recuse, 2 abstain.

7. Board of Commissioners Meeting

There was a very brief description of the 8/12 event. A sign up sheet is available for those to indicate when they can attend future Board of Commissioner meetings.

8. Getting the word out about ACT

We ran out of time, but briefly talked about the need for a new ACT brochure, getting notice of ACT to the public housing tenant councils (A & O to do this), and having the telephone recording list meeting information

An article about ACT will appear in the CHA leased housing newsletter in late fall
ACT is listed in the city’s new brochure of housing resources
Forming an ACT media group should be taken up at the next Board meeting

9. Upcoming Meetings

See agenda for list of upcoming meetings.
CHA will pay for 3 members to attend the Resident Empowerment Conference in Phila from 8/26 - 8/30. Sonia and Bob are interested

Motion made to adjourn. There was some further discussion and then a heated discussion about the applicability of Robert Rules of Order. Motion to adjourn eventually approved. Heated discussion among some Board members continued.