

Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Housing Commission
Regular Meeting
March 7th, 2011
3:30 p.m.
Conference Room 312, LTBB Government Complex

Closed Session: No

Call to Order: 3:35 pm

Roll call: Chairman, Ray Kiogima – Present; Vice Chairperson, Arlene Naganashe – Present; Secretary, Patrick Wemigwase – Present; Commissioner Larry Stead – Present; Commissioner – Vacant

Staff present: Executive Housing Director John Givens

Guests present: Gwen Gasco and Thomas Teuthorn

Opening Prayer: Ray Kiogima

Motion made by Ray Kiogima and supported by Larry Stead to approve the agenda for the March 7th, 2011 meeting.

Vote: 4 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 – Absent, 0 – Abstained, 1 – Vacant

Motion Carried

Motion made by Arlene Naganashe and supported by Larry Stead to approve the agenda for the March 7th, 2011 meeting.

Vote: 4 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 – Absent, 0 – Abstained, 1 – Vacant

Motion Carried

Housing Director Report:

Murray Road Housing: We have 100% occupancy at the Mtigwaakiis Development. All the tenants appear to be very pleased with the units, although we have had some small issues to work out with the mechanical components. Our contractors have been very responsive and the problems are handled as they arise.

3533 Wah Be Noong: We have received a written offer to purchase the home located at 3533 Wah Be Noong. If the purchase goes as planned we could close the loan by May 2011. We would then want to use the sales proceeds to construct another home at the Wah Wahs Noo Da Ke Village.

New Construction Ideas: If we are able to re-coop enough money from the sale of our house we will be looking to build another home. If there are features of the new home that the Housing Commission would like to see installed in the plans, now would be a good time to discuss them.

Motion made by Arlene Naganashe and supported by Larry Stead to accept the verbal and written report of the housing director.

Vote: 4 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 – Absent, 0 – Abstained, 1 – Vacant

Motion Carried

Motion made by Arlene Naganashe and supported by Larry Stead to table the housing Department Tribal Code of Regulations and Statutes to the April 4th, 2011 meeting.

Vote: 4 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 – Absent, 0 – Abstained, 1 – Vacant

Motion Carried

FYI:

Gwen Gasco and Tom Teuthorn Speak to Commission:

We would like to report the unfair and unreasonable treatment that we have received while dealing with the LTBB Housing Department. It has been no secret that Tom and I want to live out on the LTBB Housing Development, Wah Wahs Noo Da Ka. We truly believe that the strength of our community lies in building strong Anishinaabe communities and living with Anishinaabek.

We were instantly excited when we heard the news that the Tribe would be building a house in the Tribal Housing Development and that it was going to be sold to Tribal members. We felt this would be the perfect opportunity for us to finally buy a house with the assistance of the Tribe. We had met informally with the Housing Department staff on different occasions after the building was complete. As we understood during these discussions, Tom and I were candidates to buy the house. We had discussed options to buy and even made an offer.

However, we heard through the grapevine that we are no longer being considered for the house. When we checked in with the Housing Department, we were told that we would have to resubmit our paystubs and paperwork and that we were over-qualified to purchase the home. When and how did this change? At the time that the Housing Department was asking us and discussing the purchase of the home, it is no secret that Tom and I both had jobs with the Tribe. Yet, in the beginning they still discussed the purchase than as if we were qualified to purchase it. We even made it to the point of making an offer for the house. Not at any point during these discussions did the Housing staff tell us that we were over-qualified of that we were not going to be able to purchase the home. In fact, we were told that since this was entirely different type of grant that funded the building, any Tribal member would be able to purchase the home.

We are deeply saddened that we were passed over for this house. We are willing to accept that our Tribe wished to help those people who are less fortunate than us.

Everyone deserves to have a good home, but that's only if you make less than a certain amount and qualify for help/assistance. Our whole Tribal community doesn't fit in the 'low-income' category; yet we only offer assistance to those who are categorized as such. In order to build a strong Anishinaabe community, you need Tribal members living together in one area. The LTBB Housing Department could be a good starting point to begin building those strong communities but instead they continue to close the door on 'over-qualified' Tribal members. They have become an obstacle for the first time home buyers instead of an asset.

We would like to thank the Housing Commission for their time and consideration in this matter.

4:45 p.m. Tribal Chairman Kenneth Harrington enters

5:00 p.m. Tribal Chairman Kenneth Harrington leaves

Public Comment Opens: 5:34 p.m.

Arlene Naganashe was asking about the Michigan Conference on Affordable Housing in Lansing from April 11 – 13th, 2011. She has shown interest in attending, need to see if we have funds to send her.

Public Comment Closes: 5:55 p.m.

Motion made by Patrick Wemigwase and supported by Larry Stead to adjourn at 6:04 P.M.

Vote: 4 – Yes, 0 – No, 0 – Absent, 0 – Abstained, 1 – Vacant

Motion Carried

Next meeting is on April 4th, 2011 in room 312 @ LTBB complex.

Date: 3/7/11

Patrick Wemigwase, Secretary

Minutes approved on April 4th, 2011.