



**MINUTES OF THE APRIL 16, 2009
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Domenico Chieffalo
Raymond Yamin
Stanley Watkins
Mary Teicholz
Jim Zeh

ATTENDEES:

Lorraine Coffey	Zoe Lozado
Kevin Barry	Suzanna Palmares
Irene Hernandez	Brian Duncan
Helen Wright	Richard Knapp
Laveda Brooks	Julie Arrington
Alan Durnin	Jazmine Arrington
Ella Fraser	Santa Mason
Peter Green	Jessie Marengo
Gladys Coffee	Ruth Hoggard
Jackie Elam	Colleen Madson
Ruth Cardwell	John Ward
Bobby Poole	Venecia Mercedes
Kim Nolan	M. Carolyn Sistrunk

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting for the Housing Authority of the City of Danbury was called to order at 5:45 p.m. at Laurel Gardens, 385 Main Street, Danbury, Connecticut. Upon motion by Stan Watkins and second by Ray Yamin the meeting was called to order.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Zoe Lozado would like to know when an opening for Section 8 would be. Chairman referred the question to Jackie Elam, Section 8 Director. Jackie Elam advised her that the Section 8 list is closed right now and we do not anticipate an opening until next year. If Zoe Lozado would like to give Section 8 a call in about 6 months to check back on the status if anything changed.

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
DANBURY TOWN CLERK

2009 APR 23 P 3:20

BY:



PUBLIC COMMENTS cont'd: I had called the Executive Director about an issue at her office but she never called me back and she had the property manager send me a letter in the mail instead. The Chairman asked for the person to state her name for the record. My name is Julie Arrington, 18 High Ridge Road. I have lived up there for nineteen (19) years. The Chairman asked if Julie Arrington had a letter or something that she could submit right now to him. Julie Arrington replied that no she did not have a letter right now. Julie stated that she has never met her and I just want to talk to her about the issue. The Chairman asked what type of issue it is. Julie Arrington stated that she lives in a three (3) bedroom and I want to downsize to a two (2) bedroom. I got an answer and the answer was no, that I can't move for about two or three years. Carolyn Sistrunk interjected that she would be happy to meet with Julie to explain why. The Chairman introduced Carolyn Sistrunk to Julie Arrington and asked Julie to make sure that Colleen got her name and phone number before she left at the end of the meeting.

Santa Mason, 30 Mill Ridge High Ridge Road, about Violence against women voucher emergency transfer, Venecia interjected that the paperwork was given to her already.

Section 8, Suzanne Palmares, registered income adjustment participant, waiting for resolution. Referred to Jackie Elam, Section 8.

My name is Ruth Hoggard and I just want the Board to know that my family has been displaced three (3) times. We used to live in Scattered Sites, my husband is seventy-eight (78) years old, we are raising, a grandson who is twelve (12). We were put in one house, put in another house and we were put in a third house but it was infested with mold we had to live in a hotel for two and a half weeks. And I was told that when I called your office that you were very well aware of the problem and that you didn't want to speak to me. Carolyn asked "is that me?" Ruth told her yes. Carolyn explained to her that she is aware of Ruth Hoggard's case and reports from the staff are these: 1) the family was at 15 Lake Avenue when the Housing Authority purchased the property. There were major capital issues and HACD did relocate you and pay for the relocation. Mrs. Hoggard interjected that at 35 Morris St HACD did not pay relocation. We moved it in our cars. The only time the Housing Authority when we were at 19 Terre Hauterd. Ms. Sistrunk stated that the Executive Office will review the relocation benefits.

HelenWright: yes I'm Helen Wright and would like to speak to Ms. Sistrunk. How come my documents that were sent to my house were forged? Ms Sistrunk responded: "I got phone call to the Executive Office making that claim but I have no idea where that claim is coming from. The documents that you requested were 1992 forward. My understanding is that your advocate has indicated that those were forged documents. We need more information, I have no idea what that is about.



Yuberquiz Espinal: I'm with Section 8 and I've been writing letters about every month to Section 8 to see what's going on and the progress. I went up one day to Section 8, but I don't remember her name, but she was telling me that they don't have to write back when we write to them with what is going on. They don't give us any information where our progress is. All they give us is the date we applied which I know that already. I just want to know they don't give us that information and with what is going on with that. I find that it is rude that they don't write back to us. Referred to Section 8, Jackie Elam.

Helen Wright asked why she has been denied her recertification this year for her lease. The Executive Director answered her question with "You know I don't mind answering general questions, but you have a claim in front of HUD. We are in the process of answering that now and you are also in the informal hearing process, I think it would be the better part of prudence that we discuss in private. For example we had a hearing scheduled for this afternoon that we continued and have those hearings unless you're willing to have the Housing Authority talk about your private record in front of all these folks. I certainly would not want to do that. Helen Wright states that "she doesn't mind." The Executive Director stated that it seems that this is inappropriate place. The Chairman also adds that this meeting is not the right place for this. The Chairman continued to say that they did have a hearing schedule today. Helen Wright explains that she had an emergency. The Chairman proceeds to say that we need to get another hearing scheduled and we will get it going. We need to get it on the docket and get this case settled. It has been around for a long time. One way or another we need to get your case resolved.

Peter Green: at the last resident councils meeting and nobody from the Executive Directors office showed up or from the Board showed up. The Public & Safety officer showed up. He took a beating from the complaints, at least he showed he cares. He is going to video tape the next Board meeting in May and put on Comcast Channel 23. The Executive Director and the Board a preview in front of it. He needs to know when and where the next meeting is. The lease I am going to make available to the press. I have a problem with it. The last resident council that there are police checks done on residents, but what I understand is that there are no police checks done on managers and I think that it is unfair to ask the residents to do an annual police check. Last Jorge Pasada from the Yankee catcher made the first home run in the new Yankee Stadium. Thank you.

February 17, I wrote on letter to Carolyn Sistrunk to meet with her. The Chairman stated that he could not understand her. Brian Duncan stepped in and told the Chairman and Board of Commissioners that she said that she sent a letter to the Housing Authority and has not heard back. Brian Duncan also stated that there was a translator coming. Carolyn Sistrunk interjected that we have actually have a translator from our office. Melana Cuevas 131 Mill Ridge Road, started to speak in Spanish. Melana Cuevas stated her name and said that she sent a letter February 17th to the Housing Authority for an informal hearing. Carolyn Sistrunk proceeded to



state that normally we schedule a hearing in 10 days upon request. Executive Director also asked if she was an applicant or tenant. She is a resident. The Chairman asked her what the hearing was for. The Executive Director asked to get her information.

The Chairman asks if there are any other public comments. There are none, we continue on with the meeting.

RESIDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Ms. Ella Frazer, President of Resident Council, commented that they having been meeting constantly to straighten some of our members out. Ella Frazer has not received any complaints, but have been giving her harsh calls about other things. I would appreciate that whatever has to come across that it comes across to me with your complaints from the tenants instead of harassing her about other things. Ella Frazer also stated that she appreciates the Housing Authority for sending us to learn more about what goes on. Thank you.

The Chairman interjected that the Resident Council serves a very important function in this Housing Authority. If, for instance a tenant puts in a work order of mold or broken window, whatever and the work order is not addressed in a timely manner for whatever reason, slips through the crack, ignored, I do not care what the reason, if it becomes a lengthy issue and is not resolved in a reasonable amount of time it is up to the resident leadership to get that complaint to the us. You have a liason, Jim Zeh, he is your resident commissioner. There is a chain of procedure that we need to follow and the procedure is established and needs to be followed. If a complaint is not addressed through the work order in maintenance, then it needs to go to resident council, resident council needs to talk to Jim Zeh, and Jim Zeh needs to make a phone call to me and we will address it. That is how it is supposed to be done. So the systems are there, the procedures are there to address things that don't get addressed in a timely fashion. It's a matter of everybody learning what those procedures are and following them and the chain of communication. Bottom line at the end of the day is that the tenant's needs are met and if they have a problem and it needs to be corrected. Lets' work together, communicating through the proper channels and getting things done correctly. We know what the procedures are, this meeting tonight we know what they are, let us start to work on getting them focused and communicating properly. Thank you and I appreciate the effort you guys are putting in and I know that it is not easy.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Stan Watkins the minutes of the March 19, 2009 regular meeting were approved.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS - None



EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

The Authority Management Report was submitted for the month of March 2009 by the Executive Director. All is going fairly well.

We have closed out 2008 with our financial reports. We have closed out Ives Manor financial Audit 2008.

HACD received notice last week that our state grant for the new roofing at the State Moderate Rental has been reduced from \$800,00 to \$600,00, but as the contract on the agenda tonight will show, the actual bid came in at \$552,000 for all 290 roofs. We still will be able to get them all done. You will see a lot of activity in June and that the anticipation is that all of the State Moderate Rental properties will have new roofs by July. It will be a duplex a day.

HACD has completed what is called a capital needs assessment on the state moderate rental units. It is no secret that these 1953 buildings have serious capital issues. The estimated amount is \$20 million dollars, but let me be clear that there is no intention to tear down state moderate rental property. I don't know where that started. This issue come up in the last property meeting for State Moderate Rental. The intention is that as good property managers we are starting repair outside and then inside. Outside meaning fix the roofs and then we have been told that all the bathrooms need to be redone and all the kitchens need to be redone. These units have exhausted their shelf life since 1953. As you know with the State housing program, the only income is rent. There are no capital dollars. The first infusion of cash is a glorious thing for the Housing Authority and it is going to do some good.

The second announcement we received which is this afternoon, we have been asked to appear in Hartford, the 28th of April. The Governor will be making an announcement that includes that the City of Danbury has been awarded some Neighborhood Stabilization money. We applied for \$900,000 back in February we intend to combine that with \$500,000 that we have as replacement housing money. We have made an application to the City for \$134,000 with a grand total of \$1.3million. That is 10 new units that we are looking to add to the inventory over the next year. That is 5 units will go to work force housing, 2 units will go to elderly, 2 of the units will go to disabled persons and 1 unit will go to veterans. It is again money sorely needed in an economic time when we need more units. We are not looking to buy any rehab needed properties. We are looking for units that are ready to go and that we can put back on the inventory and get families into 30 day turn around. More to come. Not sure if we got the whole \$900,000. This is an important grant for not only the Housing Authority but also the City of Danbury.

We have Officer Steve here tonight and we wanted to recognize him and he is part of the police departments Community Conditions Unit. The police assists us with our resident meetings. If you have ever heard of police jargon COMSTAT, the idea of solving housing problems and



looking at crimes and preventing them, we have been tracking our crime stats since 2004 and there is no question that we are now getting into quality of life issues. That does not mean that the under belly does not have issues, but the kinds of crimes and calls we were receiving in 2004 to what we are receiving now suggests that there is a turn. We want to recognize him here tonight.

The Chairman added that he is happy to see that we are now in the position at expanding our housing stock and getting rid of these scattered sites and capital issues and getting them off our books and buying new units that will need less capital dollars.

Financial show cash flow budgeted of \$87,000 cash flow of \$18,370. We are operating on a shoe string still, but which is a good thing positive cash flow. Biggest variance, is the utilities. Budgeted \$269,000, actually were \$302,000. Federal properties are performing to budget and there is nominal cash flow. State properties still, because of heavy capital needs and without capital monies coming from the state except on the grant application basis, are not profitable, but it is not just this Housing Authority. It is every housing authority that have state programs in Connecticut. Four states that have state housing programs and we all have the same problem. There are no capital dollars to fix the units and we still serve and we should serve well over 70% of our participants in our state properties and federal properties with less than 30% of area median income. We have the flexibility to go up to 80% of area median income on state properties, but our demographics say that we still serve that population less that 30%.

RESOLUTIONS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Chairman added that motion to amend the agenda and add Resolution 789. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Stan Watkins the motion to amend the HACD agenda was adopted and approved.

A. Resolution 784 authorizes the Executive Director to award the roof replacement project at Mill Ridge, Mill Ridge Ext., Fairfield Ridge and Coalpit Hill Apartments MR22A, MR57, MR22, MR-41A to BRD Builders, LLC of Hartford, Connecticut in the amount of Five Hundred Fifty Two Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Five dollars and zero cents (\$552,375.00). Upon motion by Stan Watkins and second by Mary Teicholz the Resolution was adopted and approved.

B. Resolution 785 authorizes the Executive Director to execute an agreement with GIKI to receive and distribute donated household goods in accordance with GIKI's guidelines to residents. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh the Resolution was adopted and approved.

C. Resolution 786 authorizes the Executive Director to implement its updates to its Reasonable Accommodation Policy effective May 15, 2009. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Stan Watkins the Resolution was adopted and approved.



D. Resolution 787 authorizes the Executive Director to submit to HUD the FASS report for the 2008 assessment year. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Stan Watkins the Resolution was adopted and approved.

E. Resolution 788 authorizes the Executive Director to execute and implement the changes to the current State of Procurement Policy effective immediately. Upon motion by Stan Watkins and second by Ray Yamin the Resolution was adopted and approved.

F. Resolution 789 authorizes the Executive Director to execute all documents in the acceptance of the DECD Assistance Funds in the amount of Six Hundred Seventy Two Thousand Three Hundred Twenty (\$672,320) for the purpose of roof replacement at Mill Ridge, Mill Ridge Ext., Fairfield Ridge and Coalpit Hill Apartments MR22A, MR57, MR22, MR-41A. Upon motion by Stan Watkins and second by Mary Teicholz the Resolution was adopted and approved.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Stan Watkins, it was approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:37p.m.