



**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 21, 2010
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Domenico Chieffalo
Jim Zeh
Raymond Yamin

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Mary Teicholz
Stanley Watkins

ATTENDEES:

Carolyn Sistrunk
Colleen Madson
James Sabo
Deborah Gottschalk
Cristiane Hernandez
Kevin Barry
Vinaldo Green
Rose Morrison
Kathleen Russo
Patti Cohen-Hecht
Jacqueline Elam
Everette Spencer
Dick Short

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2010 JAN 25 P 12 09

BY: 

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting for the Housing Authority of the City of Danbury was called to order at 5:41 pm. at Wooster Manor, 86 West Wooster Street, Danbury, Connecticut. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Ray Yamin the meeting was called to order.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Kathleen Russo states that she has some questions. The shopping van comes twice a week, but when it doesn't show up we don't get a phone call or any notice. Cristiane Hernandez states that HACD has a shopping van and that she believes last Friday, when she was on vacation, the van didn't come. Jessie was not here either, and he might have called out sick, we are looking into it. Chairman Chieffalo states that we will get it resolved.



Also Ms. Russo states that a few months ago the paramedics came before the ambulance came, the paramedics couldn't get in. Ms. Sistrunk apologized to her for that happening and told her that they should have been able to get in. Also, Ms. Sistrunk asks Ms. Russo to let HACD know and HACD will re-communicate with those departments of the City. They work very well with us. I'm sure that there are very few occasions where they can't get in. Why don't you let Kevin Barry know of the incident that you are talking about and we will reinforce. Chairman Chieffalo asks Ms. Russo if she knows which paramedics it was. Cristiane Hernandez states that she has already spoken to the fire department. Also Ms. Russo wants to know about the house keeping and that it is very bad here and something has to be done. Ms. Sistrunk states that she will let the Asset Manager, Jessie Marengo know and ask for a status report.

RESIDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Jim Zeh, Resident Commissioner, states that he will be giving the report for Ella Fraser, Resident Council President as she is unable to make it. Mr. Zeh states that there is a meeting setup for Monday, January 25th at 6:00p.m at Ives Manor. It will be our first official meeting for this year. We had our elections for housing in November 2009. They went smoothly and we have two new people; one representing Wooster Manor, Phyllis Tiso and one for Fairfield Ridge and that is Anne Hutwohl. Monday we will be getting together with them and the rest of the people. We have setup our yearly calendar and it will be going up on the website and in all the community centers. Chairman Chieffalo confirms with Mr. Zeh that all the residents will have a copy of that meeting so they will attend the meetings. Mr. Zeh states that they are setting up a strategic planning session at the Volunteer Center on February 11th, that is working with our consultant. We have a yearly calendar that we are going to be setting up all special training dates. I would like to introduce to the staff and residents, our new consultant, Executive Director of the Volunteer Center for Western Connecticut, Ms. Patti Cohen-Hecht. Chairman Chieffalo asks how we are doing. It is a good group of people and they are involved. Ms. Cohen-Hecht states that they are doing great and she has been meeting with Jim and Ella to move things forward and look forward to Monday night having elections for officers for the council. Then setting an agenda to do strategic planning sessions so that we have a good 12 month planning period to get the foundation solid before we start taking on projects.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion by Ray Yamin and second by Jim Zeh the minutes of the December 17, 2009 regular meeting were approved.

At 5:48 p.m. upon motion by Ray Yamin and second by Jim Zeh the Board of Commissioners broke out into Executive Session. Chairman Chieffalo states that Executive Session is for the reason of contracts, personnel contracts.



Chairman Chieffalo entertains the motion for the record to come back out of Executive Session at 6:08 p.m. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Ray Yamin the motion was accepted. The regular session was reconvened.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

Kevin Barry, HACD's Director of Public Safety, will do a recap to our public safety of 2009. There was a change from the normal, we did not go down in stats it was the first year we went up, which kind of terrified me. We didn't go up to any degree which I was afraid of because the economy. We had 5 more cases last year than the previous year. Last year we had 707 calls for services at Public Housing. Of those 707 only 13% are actual incidents involving a crime of any nature. The largest amount of calls, over 50%, are classified as other. Those are calls that would be lock-outs, illegal parking, traffic incidents outside the property etc. We have seen an increase in the lock-outs because some of our residents have found that it is cheaper to call emergency services to get into their apartments or units than maintenance because if maintenance comes they will be charged a fee. Somewhere along the line someone has figured that out and now they are getting an increasing number on those. Peaceful enjoyment which is a serious consideration for us because of the area that the neighborhood the resident lives, and we want to be an excellent neighborhood, those calls went down last year. Fire and EMS calls went up slightly. We only had one actual fire call. Good thing about new fire alarms, they are effective and in some cases too effective. Most of our fire calls are around meal time as a result of excessive smoke and the units being so small it doesn't take much to do it. We have worked with the alarm to cut down the sensing time as far as we thought was reasonable and it is only a matter of seconds. The units will sense the smoke and before they trigger the alarm they will sense it a second time. This year we also started tracking for the first time, tracking arrests of our residents both on and off our properties. Last year 65 of our residents were arrested for various crimes. Most of them were misdemeanors but some were serious including drugs and cause to take action. I am a visual person so along with the written report there are several charts that you can take a quick look at them at your leisure. It is remarkable that our largest number of calls for services was in the month of May, 94 that month. December, which normally, from our experience, would be a good number because a lot of domestic calls occur around the holidays. The rationale I don't know, but we will compare it this year to see if there is some significance to it. One the other charts compares the crimes to the base year 2005 which is the year we started the program which was obviously our highest. Another one of the charts is by site, and the last one is the overall sheet outlines all the calls for service and types. Chairman Chieffalo ask what is assists EMS/CI. Kevin states that CI is for crisis intervention. Again the past year, the cooperation of the Danbury Police and Fire Departments has been excellent. The Fire Department transmits once a month to my office a list of calls to public housing to answer the billing. Every time you have a call for service for an alarm you are billed by the City for it and you have to prove to them that it was not a false alarm, or faulty system that it was an actual fire alarm. Obviously with the police department we continue to have great cooperation. Last but not least without the cooperation of our residents, our job would be much harder. Kevin is now going to have Commissioner Zeh briefly updates us on the CERT Team at his site. Commissioner Zeh states that for the past six and a half years, Crosby Manor has had a CERT Team (Community Emergency Response Team) trained by the police and fire departments, hospital, and red cross. We answer the emergency calls at our site for the first responder. For the first half of 2009 (July – December) we have had seven 911 calls where we assisted our



neighbors. A couple of them were where the person felt they were having a heart attack. We hooked up the portable oxygen mask. We talked to the 911 people who told us where to set the oxygen at for them and perform CPR if necessary. The call for aid and smoke detectors we have had 7. We will be working with Fire Marshall Jim Johnson and have talked to Sissy Green, Property Coordinator and will probably be having a training session for our neighbors at our site in February. Kevin adds that Jim's unit saves us money because the alarms at Crosby Manor are local alarms, they are not connected to the fire department and the residents respond first. Chairman Chieffalo states that they have only had 16 calls all year. Kevin states that was an increase attributed all to one unit, which has been taken care of.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT/FINANCIALS:

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Ms. Sistrunk states that we have our first cut at the year-end operational results for the federal and state programs as well as the first cut at the financials for December, closing out 2009. This is the first time that we have closed this quickly, both on the operational side and financial side. I am now questioning the heck out of everything and by the time it is due in March my questions will be answered on the financial side. On the operational side, it looks like on the Section 8 we will be a standard performer this year for 2009. Congratulations to Jackie and her staff once again and it looks like on the federal side, the Housing Authority will be a standard performer. We are going through REAC inspections right now for the federal properties.

On the financial side it looks like we have a net over last year, decrease in our operating expenses of \$104,000, but the cash flow from our state properties total a negative \$670,000 primarily rent billings are down as well as grant revenues are down compared to what we projected. We projected a budget of \$15.1 on the revenue side last year and we actually realized \$14.8, a net difference \$291,000. Along with that on the expense side, I am pleased to say that utilities, insurances and taxes came under what we budgeted for last year, but still pretty hefty for our state properties. Total operating expense we budgeted \$5.9 but experienced \$16.3. Primarily overtime related to state and federal properties and budgeted utilization for our Section 8. If you look at the particulars for each of the properties it does stand out quiet clearly that each one of our state properties, the state elderly cash flow is negative, \$379,000, Mod Rental \$204,000, and State 25 is \$36,000 for a total of \$620,000 net negative on the cash flow side and operations. Some of that is management and we have had discussions as to how we will respond to that and some of it is the economy and some of it is a reduction in subsidy from our funders. We think though that once we look at our scattered site sales, Everette just told me something quirky, that we had \$1.1 million amortized back from 2004 that were on the book, although our sales should take it off the books, we took it all in December so that overstated our deficit based on the property sales being offset by the property book value that we had to take in December 2009. I think that is an error, and that is just my operational mind because the amortization of \$1.1 million should be reduced concurrent with the negotiated reduction of the debt of the bond. Everette is going to talk to our auditors. For example, if you remember it was \$6.5 million when we first started. We negotiated it down to \$3.5 million and there should have been a give of \$3 million somewhere in there. We will have them take a look at it between now and our next board meeting to reflect our, I believe accurate financial numbers. No question that 2010 is going to be a rough year.



I am happy to say that we have relief for one property and that is good news. Crosby Manor has been given initial acceptance into the federalization program. We have contractors, engineer and architects that are now looking at the property and the upgrades for the plan includes a new parking lot, new doors, the gutters and the icing issues, fixing the down spouts, making two units ADA 504 accessible, making the management office ADA 504 accessible, upgrades to the community room and upgrades to the kitchens and baths. The total price tag right now is \$475,000. With HUD approving the federalization of Crosby that property is eligible for federal capital dollars and we will get permission to use federal stimulus dollars to do it, which is a good thing but we have the money. There is a lot of work to do between now and when the federalization finally occurs. Chairman Chieffalo confirms with Ms. Sistrunk that the proper procurement will be used for all that work. Ms. Sistrunk states that Steve Ball is shepherding the procurement for us and the architect on the ground here at Crosby and we will continue to use him for the large ticket items related to the federalization of the property. He has worked with us on putting together the development proposal for the federalization and so I feel very comfortable and he is very capable. With that I will take any questions and ask for your acceptance of the financials. Chairman Chieffalo states that somehow we have to balance this budget. We will bring in as much money as we spend every year without having a deficit every year. The biggest issue is that until the Section 8 debt is off the books, is now close to \$900,000 left, every dollar that we have that is free is going to that debt. I actually had a conversation with our HUD folks yesterday in Hartford, I would love to keep the money that we gain from the sales of these properties. It kills us every month to send that money out of here, but consider that we were at \$2.9 million and it is now down to \$900,000. Chairman Chieffalo states that it would be nice enough if they would forgive it, the rest of it. Ms. Sistrunk states that they won't forgive it because it is Section 8 dollars. Any questions or discussions on the financials. Thank you Carolyn.

RESOLUTIONS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Resolution 831 authorizes the Executive Director to renew the current expiring Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Contract for 25 units, to be effective July 1, 2010.

2 bedroom \$766.00

3 Bedroom \$840.00

Effective July 1, 2010

Ms. Sistrunk explains that Resolution 831 is a standard yearly Resolution for our State Section 8 Moderate Rental properties, 25 units Fairfield Ridge. It is our contract with HUD and Jefferson County Assistance Housing Corporation with regard to approving the operating cost adjustment for 2010. We are asking that 2 bedroom rentals go to \$766 and 3 bedrooms rentals go to \$840 effective July 1, 2010. Based on our conversations and some issues we found some of the rent increases from last year were not put into effect. We will fix that but we need to have the flexibility going to the maximum allowed for 2010 in order that we can maximize the subsidy we get for the 25 unit property. Your adoption is recommended. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Ray Yamin the Resolution was adopted and approved.

B. Resolution 832 authorizes the Executive Director to procure #2 fuel oil from Norbert E. Mitchell Co. Inc. at a rate of \$2.4990 per gallon for the period of October 22, 2009 through May 31, 2010 at a cost of (\$92,463.00).

Ms. Sistrunk explains that Resolution 832 is an annual contract for fuel, for heating and hot water usage for Putnam Towers. We operate through a cooperation agreement with the City of



Danbury with Norbert Mitchell. With the City's bid for the 2009-2010 heating season, they have extended the contract. HACD re-bid with the successful bidder on October 22, 2009 and the cost of \$2.4990 per gallon from October 22, 2009 to May 2010 and the total price of \$92,463. Chairman Chieffalo asks how we know if would use that much fuel. Ms. Sistrunk states that we don't know it is an estimate based on prior consumption. Upon motion by Ray Yamin and second by Jim Zeh 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 Ray Yamin, it was approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:29 p.m.