

COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING, MARCH 20, 2019

The Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority held its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at the Authority's central office building located at 546 Burnside Avenue, East Hartford, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order by Chairman James Kate at 1:34 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL:** Commissioner Hazelann Cook
Commissioner John Carrella
Commissioner Kathleen Stephens
Vice Chairman Prescille Yamamoto
Chairman James Kate

Also present were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director; Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director; Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR; Attorney Ralph Alexander, Legal Counsel and Jason Van Allen, Asset Coordinator.

2. **Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes, February 20, 2019**

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 20, 2019 as distributed. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one from the public that wished to address the Board.

4. **Request for Additional Agenda Items**

There were no items to add to the agenda.

5. **FINANCE REPORTS**

- a. **Payment Vouchers, February, 2019**

Chairman Kate asked if there were any questions on the payment vouchers. In regards to the payment vouchers, the following questions were raised: #58464, #58489 & #58556 ADB Construction - Vice Chairman Yamamoto stated there seems to be a lot of sewer work being done at Veterans Terrace and asked if this is about average. Ms. Bouchard stated that it is high. There have been issues at Veterans Terrace with clogging in the drain pipes, which will get resolved in the redevelopment, but for now we had to take care of it. Mr. Pliszka explained that the roots are growing in the pipes and we were having them break the roots but they suggested that the pipes be jetted and it seems to be working since we have not received any more calls. Chairman Kate asked if there is a long-term solution to the problem. Ms. Bouchard said it will be taken care of in redevelopment of the property. #58565 Debra Crockett-Hatzidakis – Money was given to help Ms. Crockett put on an Easter Party at Meadow Hill. It was noted that she puts on these parties and we try to help her when we can.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Payment Vouchers – February, 2019. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

b. Aged Receivables, February, 2019

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Aged Receivables Report – February, 2019. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

c. Rent Collection Report, February, 2019

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Rent Collection Report – February, 2019. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

d. Monthly Actuals for Period Ending February 28, 2019

The motion was made by Commissioner Carella to accept the Monthly Actuals for the Period Ending – February 28, 2019. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Carella said we received or are entitled to receive \$1,374,376 of subsidy and we had a budget of \$780,000 to date. Mr. Pliszka said that the Housing Authority had a little extra money in subsidy that was not drawn down from the year before in December. With that drawn down, the over budget in subsidy will remain constant for the remainder of the fiscal year. He explained that going forward this year with the HUD shutdown we are doing our 2019 subsidy form in the next month and we will not know what our subsidy will be until the end of summer and then they adjust their numbers and at the end of the year that is how you get the extra subsidy. Ms. Bouchard said that HUD is on a calendar year and we are on a fiscal cycle 10/1 through 9/30. She said that the Housing Authority starts operating and we don't know what our money is until about April. Since the government shutdown, Ms. Bouchard said HUD just opened the operating subsidy calculation website to do the forms and it is a new website so there will be some issues with that too. Commissioner Carella said we are receiving \$593,000 more than we anticipated. Mr. Pliszka said that is correct and it will probably be around that number at the end of the year or a little less. Commissioner Stephens thanked Mr. Pliszka for always bringing this information to the Board and explaining it to us.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Report (February, 2019); b. Occupancy Report (February, 2019); c. Section 8 Voucher Report (February, 2019); d. Scattered Sites Properties Report (March, 2019); e. Attorney's Report (March, 2019) and f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT (February, 2019). Commissioner Cook seconded the motion.

Chairman Kate asked if there were any questions on the following:

- a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Report – Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked about Mechanical Maintenance in the amount of \$18,440. Mr. Pliszka responded that Mechanical Maintenance is doing work on our high efficiency boilers and they were procured by our Facilities Manager. The boilers are now being checked quarterly to make sure there are no issues and are operating correctly. Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if all our boilers are high efficiency. Mr. Pliszka said

they are at most of our sites, Veterans Terrace and Rochambeau do not have high efficiency boilers. Commissioner Stephens asked how the security system is coming for Hockanum Park and Shea Gardens. Ms. Bouchard said we do have a bid scope together and the estimate was about \$160,000 and an RFP has been put together for that. She stated she just received notification that they are putting out another grant for the \$250,000 but if we wait for the grant we cannot do the work until we get the award. At this time, she is not sure if we should wait and reapply for the grant and we will be asking for only the \$160,000. Commissioner Stephens said can we do part of the work and then ask for additional grant money. Ms. Bouchard stated there is already many cameras that will be out there included in the original design but it will be expandable. Commissioner Stephens said can we still apply and see if it goes through for the \$160,000. Ms. Bouchard said if we get it that would be great we would not have to take it out of our capital fund money and noted the deadline for the application is June 5, 2019 and by the end of the summer we would know and begin the work in the fall. There was a discussion regarding the use of the capital fund money. There was further discussion regarding the number of cameras that are needed and whether or not to spend the capital fund money or wait to hear if we get the grant. Ms. Bouchard's concern with spending the capital fund money or operating subsidy is that the Housing Authority has aging properties that were built in the 1950s.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto made a motion to add Hockanum Park/Shea Gardens security project to the agenda under New Business item b. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto said under Meadow Hill you were able to upgrade and improve the reliability of the cab but not the freight elevator. Mr. Van Allen said that is correct. He said the freight elevator is a different task. Mr. Van Allen said in the main elevator all the buttons were broken and have had problems with the mechanical parts in the shaft. He said that we are going to be resolving the problems with the shaft and update the interior of the cab.

- b. Occupancy Report – Vice Chairman Yamamoto said that this is a great report.
- c. Section 8 Housing Voucher – There was no questions on this report.
- d. Scattered Sites Properties Report – Ms. Bouchard said that we have been having a hard time renting the third floor at June Street. She said that every time we have an applicant something happens with their background checks. Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked what is happening at Olmstead. Ms. Bouchard said we are having a hard time renting the one bedroom unit and it is spacious but we had to convert the other bedroom into a laundry room because the room is so small. Vice Chairman Yamamoto commended the Housing Authority for keeping the scattered sites clear during snowstorms.
- e. Attorney's Report – There were no questions on this report.
- f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT – Ms. Bouchard stated she did not include the scattered site report because no one has moved in or moved out in the last year.

The motion previously made and seconded was unanimously voted by the Commissioners.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Veterans Terrace Redevelopment – Ms. Bouchard said that this Thursday at 6:00 p.m. there will be a resident meeting at Veterans Terrace and in attendance will be: the architect; Glendower, relocation specialist; Carabetta and East Hartford Housing Authority. Ms. Bouchard stated that on the notice that went out she listed all the phasing so that people know they should attend the meeting. Ms. Bouchard said she had Gregg Burton, the attorney for the project, do a title search on the Veterans Terrace Columbus Extension road and it is owned by the Town. She said we turned it over to the Town for \$1 many years ago. Ms. Bouchard said that we still have to go through the entire abandonment process but found out that there are no abutters to the road because the Town owns the cul-de-sac plus the road and believes that will expedite the process but it will still take some time. She said she needs to make sure that the attorney has reached out to Rich Gentile about the process so that we can go back to the real estate committee. Commissioner Stephens asked if that piece of road will remain there. Ms. Bouchard said no it will be dug up for the redevelopment and there will be greenery planted so that you will not be able to get through to Michael Avenue. Ms. Bouchard said that Mr. Dumas has been working with Capital Studio Architects and management staff has met as a group to talk about things needed at the main office and Mr. Dumas will return to the office on March 28 and will continue working on that to get a cost estimate for this building to figure out how much it will cost to renovate. Ms. Bouchard said we had a phone call with HUD to discuss the trifurcation of the Section 8 HAP contract. Currently, even though Veterans Terrace is two projects, the extension and the circle, it is one whole HAP contract and all 150 units are under the PBV contract. She said that we need to figure out how to separate the contract into three pieces for each phase. There was a discussion regarding the PBV vouchers and what is involved. There have been many conference calls with Carabetta's attorneys and the Housing Authority's attorneys and explained the documents that need to be done to make this project move forward and each firm has been tasked with different things. **Hockanum Park Lead Grant** – Ms. Bouchard said due to the government shutdown they changed the deadline date from February 19, 2019 to March 14, 2019 and it was submitted on time and are waiting to see if we will receive the award and hopes to hear by May or June. She said that we have been working with the State of Connecticut and the Town Public Health Department on the three units with children under six where lead was found on the sills. The Housing Authority did have our lead certified maintenance person go over and take care of the sills to abate that issue until we can get a grant and do some more abatement in the units. Commissioner Stephens said that the company that is installing the windows at Hockanum Park is doing a great job. **Site Assistant Posting** – Ms. Bouchard said the last thing is that we hired a Site Assistant, Marisol Petersen, a former retired HUD employee.

2018 Annual Report

Ms. Bouchard said she included the 2018 Annual Report, which is required for CHFA. Vice Chairman Yamamoto questioned why it was for September 30, 2018 and the Board is just receiving it now. She said usually what happens is that the auditors are in by now and they do the financials and we have the numbers to put in for 2018. Unfortunately, due to the government shutdown the auditors were not here and in the financial section she is quoting numbers from the previous year but informing them that we are going to do the audit. Ms. Bouchard said that we had to do an extension with CHFA

because their audit is due the end of March so we will get them in before the end of April. Vice Chairman Yamamoto said on page 10 under State Scattered Site Project it states that "East Hartford Housing Authority did not limit its housing search to the target neighborhood ..." Ms. Bouchard said originally when we applied for the flex grant that was part of what we said we would do so she leaves it there.

Commissioner Cook wanted to state for the record that the Bond Commission continues to cancel their meetings and she is concerned that they are not going to do any bonding for a while and Ms. Bouchard said there is a Bond Commission meeting scheduled for the end of this month. Commissioner Cook said they could cancel it but Ms. Bouchard said maybe they would do it in April. Commissioner Cook informed the Board that last year none of the people got funded who were given that because the meeting continues to get cancelled and they also cancelled all the SSHP grants for this year. Commissioner Cook is concerned if the Housing Authority will receive the money or not in a timely manner. Ms. Bouchard stated that CHFA is supposed to meet at the end of the month to award the 9% tax credits which we put in for Phase 2 and we will be hearing about that as well.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review and Approval of the Professional Services Contract for Housing Authority's General Counsel

Ms. Bouchard said that she put out the RFP to procure legal services in the newspaper twice for two consecutive weeks and put it on our website and emailed law firms beginning on January 29, 2019 with a closing date of February 28, 2019 since Attorney Alexander's contract expires March 31, 2019. She said that the only proposal received was from Attorney Alexander, therefore, she is recommending that we hire Attorney Alexander for another two-year term at his rate of \$155 an hour for two years and with three optional one-year extensions under mutual agreement.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve hiring Attorney Alexander for another two-year term at his rate of \$155 an hour for two years and with three optional one-year extensions under mutual agreement. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

b. Hockanum Park/Shea Gardens Security Project

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve to move forward on the Hockanum Park/Shea Gardens security project. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

Ms. Bouchard stated that once the amount goes over \$100,000 she will have to bring it to the Board for approval.

9. OLD BUSINESS

There was nothing to discuss under this heading.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Real Estate Matters Regarding Veterans Terrace

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Real Estate Matters regarding Veterans Terrace. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners to go into Executive Session at 2:13 p.m. Also in attendance were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director; Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director; Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR and Attorney Alexander, Legal Counsel.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to come out of Executive Session and Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners to come out of Executive Session at 2:18 p.m.

11. POST EXECUTIVE SESSION

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Real Estate Matters – Veterans Terrace

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the Resolution #CT013-167-09-2019 approving the Executive Director or her designee to go before the Town Council authorizing the Town to continue the certain PILOT Agreement Dated May 6, 2016 and related cooperation agreements for the benefit of Veterans Terrace & Extension. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to hereby move to accept the requested extended medical leave absence from the Executive Director and to further accept the suggestion of her temporary replacement by Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR Director to oversee the day-to-day operations at the authority and Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director to oversee everything financial, development decisions as well as acting as the contract administrator of the authority. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Commissioners, Chairman Kate entertained a motion to adjourn which was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto and seconded by Commissioner Stephens said motion being carried by the unanimous vote of the commissioners, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



James Kate
Chairman of the Board

ATTESTED BY:



Debra Bouchard
Secretary/Executive Director