

COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING, JUNE 16, 2021

The Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority held its regular meeting on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 by a Zoom Meeting pursuant to Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7B. The meeting was called to order by Chairman James Kate at 1:35 p.m.

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

Absent was Commissioner John Carella.

Also present were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director; Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director; Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR Director; Ralph Alexander, Legal Counsel and Esther Clarke & Connor Martin, Town Council Liaisons.

2. **Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes, May 19, 2021**

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 19, 2021. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present with one abstention (Commissioner Cook).

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one from the public present to address the Board.

4. **Request for Additional Agenda Items**

There were no additional agenda items.

5. **FINANCE REPORTS**

- a. **Payment Vouchers, May, 2021**

Chairman Kate asked if there were any questions on the May, 2021 payment vouchers. In regards to the payment voucher for May, 2021: #62064 Reno & Cavanaugh – Ms. Bouchard stated they are attorneys that the Housing Authority hired to assist us with the VT redevelopment process and they are familiar with HUD regulations and we have been conversing with them regarding the PBV transfer along with the vouchers that are coming out of the development to make them market rate units. #62031 ATC Group Services LLC – Mr. Pliszka said they do environmental air quality testing so where we are doing abatement they test the air samples and one was the lead base paint unit at Hockanum Park and the abatement of the hallway at Heritage Gardens. #62038 – Pullman & Comley – Ms. Bouchard said that is our legal counsel for the Summerfield Townhouse Project where we are issuing bonds but we have received the funds from Vitus & Belveran Group to pay her. She stated that the Housing Authority does not really pay her we received \$30,000 from them and we pay her out from that. #62102 Marcum LLP – Mr. Pliszka said that is the Housing Authority auditors.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Payment Vouchers, May, 2021. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

b. Aged Receivables, May, 2021

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Aged Receivables for May, 2021. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto stated this looks horrible and asked if it is as bad as it looks or is it due to COVID. Mr. Pliszka said it is not great. He stated that we have been doing everything we can we have sent notices out every month during COVID reminding the residents of their rent. Fortunately, it seems like a lot of residents are only a month or two behind so it is not like a lot of them are six or more months behind. Since we are getting towards the end of the pandemic, it seems to have gotten worse. Ms. Bouchard stated that it is up \$24,000 this month. Mr. Pliszka said it looks like they are going to have to start to come current next month. Ms. Bouchard said that we did start doing NTQs for people that were six or more months behind in their rent, which started in the beginning of June. Commissioner Cook said that it will come around and it will get better.

The motion made and seconded was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

c. Rent Collection Reports – May, 2021

Vice Chairman Yamamoto said that Veterans Terrace is down quite a bit and does that reflect the units that are offline. Ms. Bouchard said that does not. Mr. Pliszka said that the units that are offline will have zero rent so this is only the rent that is charged to the tenants so if the unit is vacant there is no rent charged. Vice Chairman Yamamoto said thank you for the clarification.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Rent Collection Report – May, 2021. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

d. Monthly Actuals for Period Ending – May 31, 2021

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Monthly Actuals for Period Ending – May 31, 2021. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Reports (May, 2021); b. Occupancy Reports (May, 2021); c. Section 8 Voucher Reports (May, 2021); d. Scattered Sites Properties Reports (May, 2021); e. Attorney's Report (June, 2021) and f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT (May, 2021). Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion.

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

- a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Reports – April, 2021 – Vice Chairman Yamamoto stated she questioned the Central Office Hearing Room. Ms. Bouchard said the old hearing room was behind the receptionist desk. For security reasons, the hearing room is now moved to the office in the back and there is an outside vestibule where residents used to drop off their rents. She stated that we are converting so residents can come in and sit. In the vestibule, they are going to be opening up the doorframe to allow more room to get into it.
- b. Occupancy Reports – There were no questions on this report.
- c. Section 8 Housing Voucher – Ms. Bouchard asked Commissioner Cook if her Housing Authority was having trouble leasing up in Section 8 due to the eviction moratoriums. Commissioner Cook said yes, they are just not leasing up. She stated that her Housing Authority has a very large portable program and they are pulling from the portable program and that is the only way they can do it at this time. Ms. Bouchard said that we are having a very hard time leasing up especially Mainstream and we have a lot of vouchers on the street. There was a discussion of going up on the payment standards.
- d. Scattered Sites Properties Report – There were no questions on this report.
- e. Attorney's Report – There were no questions on this report.
- f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT – There were no questions on this report.

The motion previously made and seconded was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Summerfield Townhouse Project – Ms. Bouchard said we held the public hearing June 9, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. and no one was there for public comment. This was needed as part of the process in order to issue bonds and that was the Housing Authority's responsibility to do that. Housing Related Hazards Grant – Ms. Bouchard informed the Commissioners that there was a Housing Related Hazards Capital Fund Grant that was put out by HUD. She said that we received last minute notice so we tried to put in something quickly and tried to get some money. We decided to put in to upgrade the alarm panels and sprinkler heads at Meadow Hill and the Highlands for \$170,000. Open Positions – We just filled the receptionist position and hired Jessenia Martinez and she is doing a great job so far. There is a Site Assistant position open since Sherley Roman left us to move to Florida with her family. Interviews were held on Monday and had two good applicants and are struggling to decide to hire.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review and Approval of the PHA Board Resolution for the Operating Budget for FY 2022

Ms. Bouchard stated that Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if there were any significant changes to the budget. There was a discussion with the Board of the possibility of hiring both individuals and Ms. Bouchard explained the two new positions she will be looking to fill and it is in the salary and benefit schedule. We also increased our maintenance contract cost because HUD is beginning to do inspections

of the properties, so there will be repairs that will be needed to be done. The legal expense was also increased because we are going into negotiations for both the clerical and managers bargaining units. There also was an increase in development costs. Mr. Pliszka said that we increased the insurance since that always goes up and we felt we were lacking in some of our policies so we hired Security First to assist us with our policies and make sure we have the correct coverage. Mr. Pliszka stated that our subsidies seem to be going up this year and we hope that it maintains that level next year. He said that Veterans Terrace was reduced quite a bit due to being down a third of the property and hope by the beginning of next fiscal year we will be down another third of the property. Mr. Pliszka stated the pension is also increasing again this year.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Resolution CT013-188-06-2021 for the Operating Budget for 2022. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

b. Review and Approval of the Management Plan for the State Housing Development – Veterans Terrace & Extension

Mr. Pliszka stated this is just the Veterans Terrace part of the budget and it needs its own form that goes over to CHFA.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Resolution CT013-189-06-2021 for the Management Plan for the State Housing Development – Veterans Terrace & Extension. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

c. Review and Approval of the Capital Fund Plan

Ms. Bouchard said this is a draft plan which we do every year and had a Public Hearing on this on Monday and no one attended, therefore, there was no public comment. The major renovations that we will be doing is at Elms Village similar to what was done at Rochambeau replacing all the sidewalks and the lighting. Ms. Bouchard said we need new boilers at Meadow Hill and they need to be replaced and we will be getting some efficient ones. The Housing Authority did a nice flooring job at Heritage Gardens and we are planning to do the same thing at Meadow Hill. She explained that there is also a percentage you can take for operations, management and administration which are built in there. She stated that those are the major projects going on for next year. Ms. Bouchard said if funds are available depending on the costs of the projects we may be able to add some additional projects.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Resolution CT013-190-06-2021 for approval of the Capital Fund Plan. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

9. OLD BUSINESS

There was nothing to discuss under this heading.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Discussion of FY 2022 Union Negotiations

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to go into Executive Session for the purpose of Discussion of FY 2022 Union Negotiations. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present to go into Executive Session at 2:04 p.m. Also in attendance were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director; Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director and Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR Director.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to come out of Executive Session and Commissioner Cook seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present to come out of Executive Session at 2:26 p.m.

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 Cook said motion being carried by the unanimous vote of the commissioners' present and the meeting was adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James Kate
Chairman of the Board

ATTESTED BY:

Debra Bouchard
Executive Director