

COMMISSIONERS' SPECIAL MEETING, JUNE 28, 2019

The Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority held a special meeting on Friday, June 28, 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 10:08 a.m.

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

Also present were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director (by phone); Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director; Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR Director; Attorney Ralph Alexander, Legal Counsel; Helen Munez and Nicole Kufa from Carabetta.

Chairman Kate asked for a motion to suspend the rules in order to go directly into Executive Session.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to suspend the rules and go directly into Executive Session. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

9. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Real Estate Matters – Discussions Regarding Negotiations for Acquisition of Real Estate

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to go into Executive Session for the purpose of Real Estate Matters – Discussion Regarding Negotiations for Acquisition of Real Estate. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners to go into Executive Session at 10:09 a.m. Also in attendance were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director (by phone); Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director; Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR Director; Attorney Alexander, Legal Counsel and Helen Muniz and Nicole Kufa from Carabetta.

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 to come out of Executive Session at 10:35 a.m.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to go back into open session. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to enter into a traditional Right of First Refusal with the Town of East Hartford and a one-time payment of \$5,000 for the discontinuance of the road. If the Town refuses this offer, the Housing Authority will abandon going in the direction of obtaining the Columbus Circle Extension and redesign the development for phase three of the project. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

2. **Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes, May 15, 2019**

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of

May 15, 2019 as distributed. Commissioner Carella 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. FINANCE REPORTS

a. Payment Vouchers, MAY, 2019

Chairman Kate asked if there were any questions on the payment vouchers. In regards to the payment vouchers, there were no questions.

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

b. Aged Receivables, May, 2019

Vice Chairman Yamamoto was concerned when she saw that AMP 1 had \$28,646.32 outstanding. Mr. Pliszka explained that a good amount of that is maintenance charges. The Housing Authority was charging for taking in and out trash bins and found that there were still many people who didn't care if they were charged and it stays on their account and doesn't get paid. Invoices are sent out every quarter to those individuals who owe the Housing Authority and sometimes we do get some people who do send money in the next month's check. Mr. Pliszka said that there is not much more we can do to collect the money except for keeping on top of the residents. Ms. Bouchard said if they go to court for non-payment of rent the Housing Authority will get half the balance at court and enter into a repayment agreement and that is usually the only time we recoup the money. There was further discussion in regards to the trash bins. Ms. Bouchard explained that if we continue to charge the residents and they don't pay that increases the aged receivables and your PHAS scoring goes down. Commissioner Stephens strongly feels that letters need to go out to the residents about the trash issues and other issues involving summer activities. Commissioner Stephens noted that last Tuesday the maintenance did the most stupendous job and that development looked marvelous. She stated by Wednesday there is garbage all over the place again. Chairman Kate said that it sounds like we are doing everything we can. Commissioner Cook explained what she does at her Housing Authority.

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

c. Rent Collection Report – May, 2019

Vice Chairman Yamamoto stated she would like to see a letter go to Ilda Rosa for the great job she does in collecting the rents. The Board commends her for her effort.

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

d. Monthly Actuals for Period Ending May 31, 2019

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the Monthly Actuals for the Period Ending May 31, 2019. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Report (May, 2019); b. Occupancy Report (May, 2019); c. Section 8 Voucher Report (May, 2019); d. Scattered Sites Properties Report (June, 2019); e. Attorney's Report (June, 2019); and f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT (May 31, 2019). Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion.

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

- a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Report – There was a discussion regarding the Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Report and the pending status, which should include why items are pending. Per Board recommendation, we will have the Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Report modified.
- b. Occupancy Report – There was a question on the Elms Village count. Mr. Pliszka said that is correct because there was a move-out and move-in.
- c. Section 8 Housing Voucher – There were no questions on this report.
- 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.

6. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) – Ms. Bouchard stated that we usually receive the SEMAP score in February but due to HUD being shutdown we reached out to HUD and received the letter that we are High Performer with a score of 100% in Section 8. The Board congratulated the Housing Authority on a good job. HUD Safety and Security Grant – Ms. Bouchard said we did apply for the HUD Safety and Security Grant for Elms Village. She stated that we do have issues at Elms Village with the squatters that were there and we still have one of them still around that development. The Housing Authority is in the process of issuing a KAPA on the individual that we believe he may be residing with but need extra cameras over there. Currently we only have them facing the parking lots and in the Community Room and we need to get them viewing the buildings and the back parking lots. Ms. Bouchard said we did submit an application for \$171,000, which is less than the \$250,000 max and hopes that the Housing Authority will have a good chance. She received a confirmation from HUD that they did receive it and now we are just waiting to find out if we are going to be awarded. Audit FYE 2018 – Ms. Bouchard said we submitted our Audit for FYE 2018 to CHFA and it went through the HUD Clearinghouse. Veterans Terrace Redevelopment Bond Commission – Ms. Bouchard said that we went

through Bond Commission on Wednesday and that was approved and received \$3.6 million. She said there will be a couple of months before we close and start groundbreaking as soon as possible.

Glendower – They are finishing up their phase I for the relocation assessments by meeting with the households. There is a relocation plan that is being reviewed. The development team made comments to the plan and sent back to Glendower and are waiting to hear back from them. Ms. Bouchard said once we receive that we will have to meet and discuss in more detail and then bring it back to this Board for approval. Commissioner Cook said Glendower will handle everything involved with relocating the residents and it will not cost residents anything. Ms. Bouchard said that is correct. There was a discussion regarding the relocation of residents, the relocation plan, the revision of the General Information Notice and potential timing of the relocation. Mr. Pliszka said that we currently have 11 vacancies and could even be up to 13 or 14. Ms. Bouchard stated that all 45 families will not be moved out at the same time because a new building will be built that has 13 units and we can take those families and put them in that building and can move the remaining people within the property or off the property. Commissioner Cook asked when you move the families out of their unit do they have the right to move back to their original unit. Ms. Bouchard said they have the right to move back to the property but not necessarily the same unit. Commissioner Cook said wherever you place them will be there new home. Ms. Bouchard said that is correct because the buildings are not going to be configured the way they were before and explained that unit mixes are going to be different with some residents currently being over-housed or under-housed. She stated this has been made clear to the residents at all of the meetings and during the resident participation and explained we will try to accommodate residents as much as possible in the same area but we may not be able to accommodate the same unit.

Commissioner Cook asked about the hookups such as cable, etc. does that get paid out of the project. Ms. Bouchard said yes. There was a discussion regarding development meetings and application screening, the Qualified Application Plan and how to obtain a better score for future applications.

Larson Center - Ms. Bouchard included in the package a Site Plan Modification for renovations and remodeling of the Larson Center and wanted the Board to be aware of what is going on at that site. She stated no one from the Larson Center (YMCA) contacted her regarding any improvements but believes they received over \$1 million in bond money. Mr. Holmes from Capital Studio Architects contacted her to have the application for Planning & Zoning authorized and signed by property owner and that is how she was made aware of the renovations and explained she has never seen a plan and needs to know if they will be encroaching over the lease line. Mr. Holmes said what is being done is new roof, windows, siding and interior painting and they will be putting an elevator structure on the building and explained where they were going to install the elevator. She explained the only time it may involve the Housing Authority adjacent property is when they begin the construction they may need to walk across our lawn. Mr. Holmes informed her that he would keep her apprised as to what is going on and meet beforehand to talk about how they are going to proceed and notify us.

Chairman Kate said he went to a conference in New Hampshire and brought some handouts that were distributed to the Commissioners. He stated it was a very good conference.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review and Approval of the PHA Board Resolution for the Operating Budget for FY 2020

Mr. Pliszka explained that with Veterans Terrace you need to operate on no gain or loss so we put a lot more in repairs because the expenses were reduced. The dwelling vacancy is much higher than they allow but will try to explain it and allow the Housing Authority to have that high of dwelling vacancy. Normally, they only allow you to have 1 to 5% and now we have about 10% since we have those units vacant for relocation during construction and are not going to lease those units. Commissioner Cook said there will probably more as the year goes on. Mr. Pliszka said there will be and he knows they will probably not let it go higher than 10 to 11%. Mr. Pliszka said last year he put together the year to year comparisons and also included that in the Board package.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept Resolution #CT013-168-06-2019 approving the PHA Operating Budget. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

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

Mr. Pliszka stated this goes off the same budget but we need a different resolution for Veterans Terrace.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept Resolution #CT013-169-06-2019 approving the Management Plan for the State Housing Development – Veterans Terrace & Extension. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

c. Review and Approval of Changes to the Admission and Continued Occupancy Plan

Ms. Bouchard said after review of our Five-Year Plan there were items that needed to be updated and that is what this is reflecting. Ms. Bouchard explained that one of the items she wanted removed from our current waitlist is the VAWA preference. There was a preference on the waitlist for domestic situations which applicants could claim VAWA status and then they would rise to the top of the list. She stated it becomes a problem since we cannot verify if someone is really a domestic abused person. Ms. Bouchard explained this further to the Board. Ms. Bouchard stated that this is not a requirement of HUD. Over the last couple of years this has become difficult because we are not qualified to make the decision if it is a domestic abuse situation. The Housing Authority will still transfer someone who is currently housed with us under our emergency transfer plan that is a VAWA victim but not going to do it as an application preference. She stated that needs to be updated in certain areas of the housing policies. Ms. Bouchard said that we needed to make several changes in our policies to include the no smoking policy that was adopted back in July, 2018. Ms. Bouchard said the last item is the flat rent schedule. She explained that every year we need to update our flat rate schedule and post it and explained what flat rent was to the Board.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept Resolution #CT013-170-06-2019 approving the changes to Section IV. – Tenant Selection Plan, Section IX – Denial of Admission Policy, Section XVI – The Flat Rent and Section XXIX – Smoke Free Housing Policy within the Admissions and

Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP). Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

d. Review and Approval of Changes to the Section 8 Administrative Plan

Ms. Bouchard said that the Housing Authority used to have a Hold Harmless clause. She said that HUD started mandating that we use Small Area Fair Market Rents and depending on the zip code in East Hartford we have different payment standards for rent. She explained this is to deconcentrate areas of poverty and move people into better areas. Ms. Bouchard said that there are two zip code areas and their payment standard is lower in 06108 than 06118. Due to the Hold Harmless clause, the Housing Authority has to pay some of the cost for people to live in 06108. She said that we felt that we need to take that Hold Harmless clause out to reduce the financial impact to the Housing Authority. She said that we can only make that change at their second annual and we are looking for approval on that. Commissioner Cook said you have to force them to move. Ms. Bouchard said otherwise they have to pay the difference in payment standard and the contract rent. There was a lengthy discussion regarding Small Area Fair Market Rents and the impact on Section 8 financials.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to table Resolution #CT013-171-06-2019 regarding changes to the Section 8 Administration Plan until further information is provided. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

e. Review and Approval of Five Year Annual Plan and Capital Fund Plan

Ms. Bouchard reviewed the plan briefly with the Commissioners. She explained that the first section is the Goals and Objectives for the next five years. Ms. Bouchard stated that we reviewed the Consolidated Plan to make sure that we are in alignment with what they are doing in the Town. The plan details our goals for the next five years and all the items that we have accomplished from the previous five year plan.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept Resolution #CT013-172-06-2019 approving the Five Year Annual Plan and Capital Fund Plan. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. Ratification of On-Call Carpentry Services

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the recommendation of AWL Painting, LLC as primary and to Hartford Painting Company as the secondary on-call carpentry service both at the rate of \$42 per hour. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

b. Ratification of Vacant Unit Painting Services

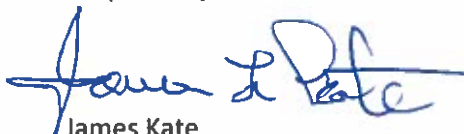
The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the recommendation of Hartford Painting Company for vacant unit painting services at the amounts quoted in their bid document. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners.

c. Ratification of On-Call Plumbing Services

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to accept the recommendation of Building Environmental Systems (BES) in the amount of \$79.50 an hour and \$119.25 is the after hours' rate. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by 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 Cook said motion being carried by the unanimous vote of the commissioners present, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



James Kate
Chairman of the Board

ATTESTED BY:



Debra Bouchard
Executive Director

