

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
HACKENSACK HOUSING AUTHORITY
65 FIRST STREET
HACKENSACK, NEW JERSEY 07601

THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2011

This is a condensed version of the taped minutes of the Hackensack Housing Authority meeting taken on Thursday, May 12, 2011 commencing at 6:00 P.M.

Chairman Pargellan McCall called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Commissioner AnnMarie Saccaro
Chairman Pargellan McCall
Commissioner Michael D'Arminio
Commissioner Ralph Rivera

Absent:

Commissioner Casamenti
Commissioner Stassi

Also Present:

Executive Director William F. Snyder
Deputy Director John Bellocchio
Gregory Asadurian, Esq., Counsel to the Authority
Sgt. Sroka, Hackensack Police Department
Ptl. Corcoran, Hackensack Police Department

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT

“Adequate notice of this meeting, as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, has been provided by the filing of an Annual Meeting Notice with the Municipal Clerk, the posting of said notice on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Government Building, and delivery of same to the Bergen Record and Star Ledger on 12/15/10. This body wishes to advise you that, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 26:3d(1), et seq. (Smoking in Public Buildings), smoking is prohibited while this body is in open or closed session.”

FLAG SALUTE

At this point in the meeting, all those present rose, recited the Pledge of Allegiance and remained standing for a moment of silence in support of our world.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – April 19, 2011

Motion to approve minutes made by Commissioner Saccaro; seconded by Commissioner Rivera.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)
Absent: Casamenti/Stassi

RESOLUTIONS #2011-15 & 2011-16 (See attachment)

1. #2011-15 – HIRING OF CASHIER – MISCHA SPRAY

Motion to approve made by Commissioner D'Arminio; seconded by Commissioner Saccaro.

Mr. Snyder explained Adelaide had retired. Approximately 150 resumes were received for the position. He narrowed down the numbers, interviewed several people and Mischa Spray was selected. Mischa is a very qualified young woman and has already started collecting rents and is doing a very nice job.

VOTE: AYES: All Present Commissioners (4)
Absent: Casamenti/Stassi

2. #2011-16 – HIRING OF BOOKKEEPER – SUSAN PORCO

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Rivera; seconded by Commissioner Saccaro.

Mr. Snyder explained the bookkeeper had retired a while ago. Dale handled Accounts Receivable/Accounts Payable. An interlocal agreement was entered into last year with Passaic Housing Authority and allows their staff to handle the bookkeeping, but it did not work out. Much input is required, i.e., payroll and they were not always here. It was decided to hire a full-time bookkeeper. A few months ago Mr. Snyder noticed that the bank statements had not been reconciled, which was not to his liking.

Many people sent in resumes and many qualified people were interviewed that had accounting and bookkeeping backgrounds. The finalists were called back in and given a test – a simple bank reconciliation. The three finalists were very qualified. Susan Porco was the most qualified and had done work previously with ADP, the payroll service for HHA. She also is proficient in Peach Tree Accounting, HHA's software accounting program. Her pay is less than what Passaic was receiving.

Dale still handles some work part-time, because she is retired and can only make so much money working on an hourly pay.

Chairman McCall asked if there was an occasion when the Commissioners might meet with the new employees. Mr. Snyder suggested the Commissioners stop in and say hello.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)
Absent: Casamenti/Stassi

CORRESPONDENCE

There were no questions or comments regarding correspondence.

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

Motion to make payment of claims made by Commissioner D'Arminio; seconded by Commissioner Saccaro.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)
Absent: Casamenti/Stassi

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Director Snyder said that today he'd met with the contractors for the sewer line replacement at Beech Street. The work will start very soon. The parameters were outlined for the contractor: digging the holes during the day, putting protection over the holes, come back at night and fill the bladder in, send a machine through it to bore out the laterals, which is all done in a short period of time – one to two hours to harden.

Tenants will be notified so they'll be inconvenienced to a minimum – turning off the water. Project Manager Dave Vanteen will try to keep dust and dirt to a minimum. The entire job will probably only take 2-3 days at most.

Parking lot improvements at Keeling-Manning – Boys & Girls Club – additional parking spaces are being added there, which means more spots for tenants at night. A light pole will be moved by PSE&G as soon as they pay attention to the request, and permits from the City are received.

A maintenance position has been advertised. Mr. Snyder interviewed about 8 people – some good candidates, but no one really stood out. A person with a black seal license is mandatory. Four more candidates will be interviewed by next meeting. Mr. Snyder hopes to have a recommendation at the next meeting.

Kitchens at Beech Street completed and there are 30" openings for the stoves, previously it was 20" stoves, hopefully self-cleaning, electric ranges.

Smoking policy is now in effect. All NEW tenants who move into the buildings will no longer be able to smoke, not even in their apartments. This is a result of all the meetings and complaints regarding second-hand smoke coming through vents.

Concrete at Oratam Court is spalling at the top. Mr. Snyder and Mr. Bellocchio believe that when the concrete was poured, they had a problem with it and it does not have the proper strength. Layers at the top were spalling. Cores were done and a compression test will be done telling what the strength of the concrete is. If it comes up below what was specified, there is a problem. The company is saying it is chemicals – too much salt, but HHA does not use salt. It will be replaced one way or the other as it is somewhat of an eyesore.

At the suggestion of Kathy Nielsen, Occupancy Person, the minimum rent is being raised from \$25 to \$50, which most housing authorities have already done. This only affects a handful of our residents. Minimum rents are for people with minimum income. Most tenants pay a formula based rent, 30 percent of their annual income. If it's above the minimum, you pay the higher amount. If it's below the minimum, you still pay the minimum - \$50.

The Other Post-Employment Benefit Study – HUD is threatening to recapture money from all housing authorities across the country. The study places on our books a liability for all current and future retirees to tie up our reserve and it doesn't allow HUD to take it back. The study will be placed on our books as a liability and go against our reserve, so HUD would not be able to take it back. The accountant is reviewing it now, then to the auditor. He'll adjust the audit and that will affect HHA's reserve.

There is a personnel issue that Mr. Snyder needs to talk to the Board about. After remarks of citizens, there will be a closed session.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner D'Arminio congratulated Chairman McCall on becoming a member of the Board of Trustees of the Boys & Girls Club. Chairman McCall did attend the opening of the Counseling Teen Center. It has been decided that two other Commissioners will be appointed to an advisory position.

NEW BUSINESS

Sonia Verdade reported there are 157 active members. 70 are African-American; 80 are Hispanic; 3 are other; 4 are white. Her report was broken down by age, gender, grade, etc. There is a page with average daily attendance. After March, attendance went down a little bit – the weather is now nice, people are outside doing other things.

On another page there was attendance: November – 65; December – 87; January – 100; February – 118; March – 124; April – 131; May – 117. The report also

contained a very nice letter from a parent regarding the positive effect from the Boys & Girls Club.

A volunteer service of Bergen County contacted the Boys & Girls Club about three towns being offered a service of planting a garden: Englewood, Garfield and Hackensack. Sonia applied for and got the grant. The people are coming May 23rd to start planting the garden on-site of the Club. Hopefully, with the children helping in the garden, they'll take pride in their work and no damage will incur. Mr. Snyder asked if media would be there. Sonia said she had called "The County Seat".

Summer camp starts July 5th to August 26th – 9 AM to 3 PM. Chairman McCall asked about outsiders. Sonia said the capacity is 125, the at-risk grant is 50 children. She cannot go above her capacity or there will be a fine. Chairman McCall had been asked: 1 - If she's going to run a camp; 2 – is it accessible to non-housing children. Sonia said if there is someone she wants to offer for the VPI grant, Sonia will send the information and applications to Mrs. McCall: low-income, single parent, etc.

Sonia asked for, received and signed for a permit for Carver Park on First Street. She'll be able to use 9-3 during the summer, and also part of their lunch program as well.

For the planned trips, it is an out-of-pocket expense. Buses and gas costs are very high right now.

There was a grand opening on Anderson on May 5th – counseling and teen center.

Commissioner D'Arminio said it was a very impressive report. Chairman McCall sent Sonia information about a performance at Leonia High School that HELP has attended for many years. Sonia thanked her and plans are already made for a bus load of children to attend the performance.

Sonia has made arrangements for volunteer tennis coaches from Maywood to come and work with the children during the summer program two days a week. The campers will be brought to the Lodi Olympic sized pool for swimming.

Director Snyder asked Sonia to let the Commissioners know if there are children who cannot afford the trips, perhaps to do some fundraising to help, children worthy of going, but the money is just not available in their family.

REMARKS OF CITIZENS

SHERIDAN MC GEE, 46 Newman Street, loud music, night and all week-end. Mr. Snyder needs report from police officers to have it officially documented. Mr. Asadurian will send out a notice of cease doing this. If they don't, they'll get evicted.

LINDA RITTER, Apartment 1K, she had water damage on Saturday, April 16th after the very heavy rain. Rain comes in underneath the molding. Linda did call the office that evening, but no one contacted her. Mr. Snyder said they'd have to wait until the next heavy rain, so they can see where the water is coming in. Mr. Snyder will check it out now, but need to see it when it rains. Commissioner Rivera asked if she had any property damage. Ms. Ritter said no, but she worked very hard and used a lot of towels to sop up the water. Commissioner Rivera asked who the tenants contact when there is an emergency like this after hours.

WILLIE ESPY, Apartment 8G, Problem 1 – after repairs to bathrooms, the new bathroom is not insulated and he can hear his next-door neighbors if they're using the bathroom, and smells do come into the bathroom, possibly through the vents. It is embarrassing on his part and on their part. Problem 2 – there is a child that spends a great deal of time on the 8th floor with a grandparent. Willie believes the child is autistic, crying 30 minutes at a time.

RUTH KENNEDY, spoke about the same child running back and forth across the floor and making a lot of noise. She's not sure if the child lives her continually, but it seems that way. Mr. Asadurian said call the police, the police can knock on the door and see who is living in that residence.

Commissioner Rivera asked if the Office can knock on the door and see who is living there. Mr. Snyder said yes, you would see if there is children's clothing about. If they're making noise, that has to be documented, notice to cease or you'll be evicted or put in carpeting to buffer the noise, but you can't be police on children visiting their grandparents. It is a tough economic situation and grandparents do baby sit. If Mr. Snyder gets a report from the police documenting the noise, the tenant will get a letter.

LARRY, this party in 7H has been here since last summer, the child stays day and night, the mother comes and goes.

HACKENSACK POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sgt. Corcoran said there was one incident on the play ground, which will be addressed, and he has already spoken to John about it. Sgt. Corcoran does work four days on and then someone else works here.

Mr. Snyder asked if someone called Headquarters, who would answer the call here? Sgt. Corcoran said they are usually called as the primary. Mr. Snyder asked if he'd receive a report. Sgt. Corcoran said no, but the call is logged. If it was a call several times that day for the same infraction, then a summons might be issued, otherwise it's a verbal warning.

Mr. Snyder said HHA cannot take a side, but he does check out the complaints personally during the day. Commissioner Rivera said even if they don't write a report, the call is logged and that could be documentation.

Mr. Asadurian said if HHA went to Court, the Judge would ask when it first occurred. If you can't say when the incident occurred, then it gets dismissed. Sgt. Corcoran said they go to the problem first, then visit the person who called about the problem.

Mr. Asadurian said the Court has to be shown what occurred on what date, at approximately what time – loud noise of a person screaming or crying on this date at this time or there was loud music being played at this date at this time.

Chairman McCall summarized for the tenants: document by calling the police, next day you will call the office, so that the office will have a record and the police will have a record of it.

ADJOURNMENT TO CLOSED SESSION

Motion to close public session and move into closed Executive session made by Commissioner Saccaro; seconded by Commissioner Rivera.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Absent: Casamenti/Stassi

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez, Transcriber