

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

THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2015

(This is a condensed version of the taped minutes of the Regularly Scheduled Monthly Meeting of the Hackensack Housing Authority commencing at 6:00 P.M.)

Chairman Anthony Stassi called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Anthony Stassi
Commissioner May D'Arminio
Commissioner Marie Dukes
Commissioner Tasha McMillan-Russell
Commissioner Ralph Rivera
Commissioner Blanche Stuart

Also Present:

Anthony Feorenzo, Executive Director
William F. Snyder, Consultant to the Board
Gregory Asadurian, Esq., Counsel to the Authority
Officer Vinnie, Hackensack Police Department

Absent:

Commissioner Gino Tessaro

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 & Star Ledger on 12/1/14. 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, FOLLOWED BY MOMENT OF SILENCE IN SUPPORT OF FIREMEN, POLICE AND UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – March 12, 2015

Motion to amend minutes of March 12, 2015 regarding flag salute made by Commissioner Stuart; seconded by Commissioner McMillan-Russell.

Motion to accept minutes as amended made by Commissioner Stuart; seconded by Commissioner McMillan-Russell.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Tessaro

RESOLUTIONS #2015-9

1. RESOLUTION #2015-9 – APPROVAL OF 2015 CAPITAL FUND ANNUAL & 5-YEAR PLAN

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

Mr. Snyder explained HHA is not required to do an annual plan, but it's been five years, so now it's a 5-year plan. As part of upcoming RAD plan, you must give an update and state you are considering participating in the RAD program. Main part is budget numbers. First part is annual statement; then is 5-year plan stating how you're spending the money that HUD is giving you, which can be changed every year. Mr. Snyder gave an extensive explanation regarding this. (Each Commissioner had a packet containing this information.)

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Tessaro

2. RESOLUTION #2015-10 – APPROVAL OF ROOFING BID

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

ED Feorenzo spoke about four roofs done last year at Newman/Railroad, which came in on budget approximately \$30,000 less than this new bid. \$404,000 was budgeted. Low bidder came in at \$375,000. Mr. Feorenzo said it's in the best interest of the Housing Authority to do all four roofs, which will last another 25 years. There are leaks in some of the third floor apartments in buildings not done, therefore, he is requesting the next four be replaced. Mr. Snyder further explained it is a good time to get started on this before prices rise and the summer gets here. Commissioners this evening will approve the base bids plus the alternates. Arco withdrew their bid. The next bidder is the one that did the other four roofs.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Tessaro

CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioner Rivera asked if there were complaints about smoking or just cigarette butts in the halls. ED Feorenzo sent another letter out about smoking. ED Feorenzo said one person is being looked at that continues to smoke, and another person was removed from the Housing Authority. Commissioner McMillan-Russell asked what building. Mr. Feorenzo said just at the Seniors Building. There is no non-smoking policy in the family buildings. Mr. Snyder said it wasn't done because the senior building was hi-rise. It is at the Board's pleasure whether a building is non-smoking, and HUD notes family hi-rise buildings have children, where second-hand smoke does occur through ventilation systems. Commissioner McMillan-Russell said she gets smoke in her apartment from neighbors through vents. Mr. Snyder said a survey was taken of the tenants at 65 First and then smoking eliminated in the building. A survey could be taken at 230 Central, if requested, by the Commissioners. ED Feorenzo said he would send out a survey to the tenants at 230 Central regarding smoking/non-smoking.

7.3 - FP A/E SERVICES FOR THE PHYSICAL CONDITION ASSESSMENT

Mr. Feorenzo said this is needed if HHA is continuing with the RAD Program. Four bids came in today, but information is not available at this time.

7.4 - RAD FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Mr. Snyder gave an extensive report on the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program and provided a detailed report in writing to the Commissioners. He also speaks at numerous conferences regarding RAD and many other subjects. Commissioner McMillan-Russell asked several questions regarding rents, which Mr. Snyder answered in detail. Next month a Physical Condition Assessment will be prepared on an Excel Spreadsheet that HUD requires to participate in this program, which will indicate all repairs needed in all of the buildings – currently and over the next 24 years. There will be X amount of dollars financed through tax credits and mortgage, which will be used to make initial repairs. Then HHA is required to make an initial contribution to Reserve for Replacements and every single year money will be put away that is going to address all of them items on that Physical Assessment for the next 20 years.

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

Motion to approve payment of claims made by Commissioner Dukes; seconded by Commissioner D'Arminio. Commissioner McMillan-Russell asked for clarification about a heading on the Payment of Claims. It was the same last month. Mr. Feorenzo said it should indicate 30 days, there was a mistake.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Tessaro.

MANAGEMENT REPORT & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Feorenzo introduced the Staff from the Boys & Girls Club. Cori Santana, Director; Danielle Santana and Richard Clyburn are assistants.

Cori introduced Danielle and Richard, who are working on special programs at this time. There are 74 youth in total/54 from housing. The time is 3-7 PM and numbers are rising with warmer weather, seeing between 60-65 children a day. An additional staff member has been hired – approximately 15 children per room in four rooms.

The afterschool specialized weekly programs are: SMART GIRLS; PASSPORT TO MANHOOD and S.T.E.M. The first two programs aid in bringing children into adulthood because of social media and all the technologies available to them. Danielle and Richard try to help them understand the process. S.T.E.M. is science, technology, engineering and math – which are only in the beginning stages. Bergen County Links has been visiting Boys/Girls Club for over three years doing different projects. Right now is aquafonics and kids are learning how fish waste can grow plants. Some local high school students that are part of a Science Club do projects with the children. There is a Kids Café where hot food is served, working with the Community Food Bank. Barbara Savage, who previously worked there, is back in the kitchen. There are nutrition lessons with the food bank on a monthly basis, learning healthy habits.

Fairleigh Dickenson University has a partnership with the Club, including the men's basketball club, working both at Lodi and Hackensack. On MLK Day, over 50 children traveled to Lodi to watch the Girls' Team – hosted by the Men's Team. Microsoft is doing an outreach with the Club, and did a Community Service Day helping to organize everything at the Club, painting murals and basically, being a much-needed helping hand. KPMG came to the Club for Women's History Month, Family for Literacy, Network of Women's Division. They brought books for all the children, which were based on historical women. The children were very interested and participated in the reading. There is a monthly Member of the Month for a child that does exceptional things, getting a certificate, and Barbara makes a birthday cake each month to celebrate kids born in that particular month.

Commissioner McMillan-Russell asked Cori what are the qualifications of the person teaching SMART GIRLS. Cori answered they go through a training; to be a staff member at the Club you have to go through at least 8-hours of individual training for child care, and also an additional 4-hours of Boys & Girls Club training, which in this case is done by the Director of Operations, and also bgca.net in which they learn how to teach it. They must read the manual, but attend the training. Permission slips must be obtained from parents as some of the subject matter is delicate: puberty, personal hygiene, etc. If the instructor feels uncomfortable or

feels the child is uncomfortable, Cori is contacted immediately. There was a case in point where DYFUS was contacted, just to be on the safe side. Commissioner McMillan-Russell was concerned that with 12 hours of training that qualifies a person to call in DYFUS on a situation. Cori explained she is qualified because she's been there over four years, Director over two years, but usually a problem would go right to her Supervisor, then the person who brought it to their attention has to be there when the Supervisor makes the phone call. Cori explained two hours of extra training is needed in each area: safety and procedures; first aid and CPR, for example. Everything is documented for them to obtain their Child Care License. The children get an hour in a classroom setting – Passport to Manhood – icebreaker for 15 minutes, introduction to the day's subject, activity and worksheets, journals – how they felt about the situation, closing statement where there is recaps and a question box if they are uncomfortable discussing something out loud.

Richard introduced himself. He's been at the Club for 3 years; this is his first year teaching Passport to Manhood. There are 14 individual lessons or activities. Boys are 8-13. Richard explains the journey from boyhood into manhood as well as changes and what will occur – making right decisions, personal hygiene, thought of having a family and his biggest issue – going on to college. Richard explained growing up he had two older siblings, but there was a huge age gap. His dad wasn't a focal point in his life and he wants to be their older brother/father figure and that they can depend on him and rely on him during the entire process.

Danielle explained she's been a Counselor for a year, growing up a Club kid and being in it for over 10 years. The most important thing for her in regards to Smart Girl is girls are afraid to ask their mom or older sister things. She tries to make everything as comfortable as possible and being there for them.

Mr. Snyder asked if one of the Board members wanted to stop in and see one of the sessions, would that be possible. Cori said please feel free to drop in at any time. Smart Girls is Thursday, and Manhood is Mondays – 4:30 P.M. when the programs are started. Mr. Snyder informed Cori there is a scholarship through the trade association for one child living in public housing – high school senior or someone already in college – Hackensack children would get a preference over Lodi - \$2,000/year to be used for books or anything they need totaling \$8,000. When Mr. Snyder presented it to a student several years ago, it was the biggest scholarship a student had gotten. If the Commissioners know of anyone, please bring their name to Mr. Feorenzo's attention.

Mr. Feorenzo gave an update on Verizon Wireless. They went before the Board of Adjustment last month. Board of Adjustment kicked it out, wanting more revised drawings; more screening around the antennas; conduits to be on interior of building, not exterior. By the next meeting, it is expected the Zoning Board will have given their approvals so construction can begin.

Next, Mr. Feorenzo discussed the parking survey. 144 surveys were sent out and 17 were returned. Out of the 17, everyone would like assigned parking. There are 121 spaces of which two are handicapped, which cannot be designated to someone. Nine spaces are for the Boys/Girls Club – leaving six additional spaces if the 110 are given out for registered cars. Some tenants have been there for a long time. The Board will have to give him some direction in regards to a lottery or drawing and how they want it to be done.

Mr. Snyder said ED Feorenzo has a pretty good set up – either front or back of building, so everyone would be close to their building. Mr. Feorenzo said he separated it into two sections – four units and four units. Commissioner Stuart asked about the discussion of adding spots. Mr. Feorenzo said it would cost \$20,000 to do the work.

Motion to give assigned parking spots to 17 individuals who returned their survey made by Commissioner McMillan-Russell; seconded by Commissioner Stuart. 17 that answered should get spot of their choice; other spots will be assigned, because they did not submit survey.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Tessaro

HACKENSACK POLICE DEPARTMENT – Officer Vinnie

Officer Vinnie reported everything has been pretty quiet. He would like to get more feedback, but the tenants don't say much. He walks the stairwells and buildings from 6:00 P.M. to 2:00 A.M. There are some individuals who hang out in certain buildings and don't live there, he has spoken with them. There has been no property damage or criminal mischief.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS – completed in Management Report

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Stuart asked about the Committees of the Housing Authority. Chairman Stassi answered: Personnel, Finance and Building & Grounds. Mr. Snyder said he didn't know if anyone has been assigned to them. Commissioner Stuart would like to be on the Personnel Committee. Mr. Feorenzo said committees are typically appointed by the Chair, but a person could just ask. He said just call him and a meeting will be set up. Commissioner McMillan-Russell asked if the committees were listed in the By-Laws.

Commissioner Stuart asked Mr. Snyder about the RAD Program and \$1,700/month for rental property. She's always had a problem with credit checks, because people don't fight to get into public housing; they cannot afford to pay rents outside. They may have credit issues; is any consideration done for that? Mr.

Snyder answered if people have really bad credit, they are given the report and perhaps it isn't their fault – medical bills and things beyond their control. If someone cannot pay rent because you don't have the income, that's one thing, but if it's VISA or Master Card – people just not paying their bills, the concern is that even if their rent is low, they won't pay. A company does it, not having a credit card is weighed into the score. Mr. Feorenzo said it's probably factored in on how they pay their bills - landlord/tenant issues, etc. Mr. Snyder said if it's really bad credit, they have a co-signer.

Commissioner Stuart has spoken with senior citizens living here. In the past, there were programs for seniors in this complex, but no longer have them. Can someone put a program together again? Ruth Kennedy said when Marcella Davis were here, there were trips, but Marcella retired and now no one does it. Commissioner Stuart mentioned aerobics, as an example. Mr. Feorenzo said almost \$25,000 is spent to keep the buses going for the seniors. Spending that money takes away from other programs. He said flyers were sent out about the Recreation Center at St. Anthony's Church on Tuesday/Wednesday – free lessons – and no one responded. Commissioner Stuart mentioned the MLK Center on First Street. If things were here, more people might attend. Mr. Snyder said it sounds good and seniors will come to anything as long as there's coffee and cake. Commissioner Stuart said perhaps a movie night. Ruth Kennedy added people do not have a way to get to the MLK Center unless they walk – no transportation. Every Thursday they show a movie. Mr. Snyder said they can meet with the residents and perhaps reroute the bus. Ruth said they do exercise, play cards, Bible study and the movie. She will get the information for Mr. Feorenzo. Mr. Snyder said movie would be easy and make some popcorn too. They'll look for volunteers.

REMARKS OF CITIZENS

One gentleman asked if Hackensack Housing Authority was public or private, and about their operating budget and about the investors. He was told it is public housing and how it will be handled under the RAD Program.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Stuart; seconded by Commissioner McMillan-Russell.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Tessaro

Respectfully submitted,
Deborah L. Alvarez, Transcriber

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:25 P.M.