

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

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2014

(This is a condensed version of the taped minutes of the postponed meeting due to bad weather, the Regularly Scheduled Monthly Meeting of the Hackensack Housing Authority commencing at 6:00 P.M.)

Chairman Stassi called the meeting to order via telephone.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairman Anthony Stassi  
Commissioner Gino Tessaro  
Commissioner Marie Dukes\*  
Commissioner May D'Arminio  
Commissioner Blanche Stuart  
Commissioner Ralph Rivera  
Commissioner Al Casamenti

Also Present:  
William F. Snyder, Consultant to the Authority  
Anthony Feorenzo, Operations Manager  
Sonia Verdade, Boys & Girls Club of Hackensack/Lodi

Absent: Acting Executive Director John Bellocchio

**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 and posting of said notice on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Justice Center and delivery of same to the Bergen Record and Star Ledger on December 10, 2013. This body wishes to advise you in accordance with N.J.S.A. 26:3d smoking is prohibited while this body is in open or closed session.

**FLAG SALUTE**

All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was held in support of our police and firemen.

## **SWEARING IN OF NEW COMMISSIONER MARIE DUKES**

In the absence of Mr. Asadurian, Esq., Mr. Snyder swore in Marie Dukes as a new Commissioner of the Hackensack Housing Authority. If considered necessary, Mr. Asadurian will swear Commissioner Dukes in again next month.

Mr. Snyder introduced the two new Commissioners to Chairman Stassi: Blanche Stuart and Marie Dukes.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 16, 2014**

Motion to accept minutes of January 16, 2014 made by Commissioner Casamenti; seconded by Commissioner Tessaro. There were no questions or comments.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

## **RESOLUTIONS #2014-5 AND #2014-5 – (see attachments)**

### **1. #2014-5 – APPROVAL OF A/E CONTRACT AMENDMENT**

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

Mr. Snyder explained this is a contract/proposal solicitation for A/E firms to do roofing work. Most of the roofs have been replaced, but work must be done at 65 First, which wasn't in the scope of the contract. It is being added to the existing contract to replace many roofs. Mr. Feorenzo will do a walk-through at the various sites with the appropriate persons.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

### **2. #2014-6 – APPOINTMENT OF PERMANENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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

Mr. Snyder said this is a big move the Authority is making. Over one year the process began for a new Executive Director. The Personnel Committee met several times and it was determined at those meetings, that the work that Mr. Snyder put in place when he first became Director, continue in the same manner and progress, in making improvements to the buildings and holding firm in not losing any action for all of the gains made and everything that's been done.

Mr. Snyder's experience has been in doing these searches, that perhaps somebody would come forward that would be absolutely outstanding, but having

done two or three searches for various housing authorities over the past year, it's the same resumes showing up. Some people were not receptive to the plans and future of the Authority. One of the questions Mr. Snyder asked was: "What would you do if somebody didn't pay their rent? What would you do if somebody was selling drugs on the corner?" The Personnel Committee wanted to know if they were going to be sympathetic to the majority of people living here, the quality of life issues or are you going to worry about the person's rights who are engaged in bad activity in front of the building. The long and short of that was that during the process, an Operations Manager was hired, who was moved up to the Assistant Executive Director – Anthony Feorenzo. Under Mr. Snyder's guidance and the Personnel Committee's okay, Mr. Snyder was asked to rate Mr. Feorenzo to see if he was a person who would carry forth what has been put in place, what the Authority's mission is and the things that they've been trying to do.

The State of New Jersey requires that for the position of Executive Director, you have specific credentials: a college degree with five years experience; they also require that you do a professional search, which the Authority did. The position was advertised in the national publication from the National Association for Housing and Redevelopment Officials and the Public Housing Authority Directors Association. A search must be nationwide, which the Authority also did. Numerous resumes were received, but not as many as Mr. Snyder anticipated, because of salary levels. Mr. Snyder narrowed it down to four people, but only two were interviewed, because some issues came up with the other two. The interviews were concluded and as a result the Personnel Committee (Commissioner Casamenti, Commissioner D'Arminio, Commissioner Stassi – but Mr. Stassi was not able to make the personal interviews because of illness). The Committee came up with a recommendation and that is that **Mr. Anthony Feorenzo** be appointed to that position, on a probationary period, which is subject to review and approval of his credentials by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. They have to approve him in terms of his educational credentials and experience that they go into.

Mr. Snyder further explained to the new Commissioners, he did a written evaluation of Mr. Feorenzo, and feels that he is equipped and taking control in a lot of areas. Mr. Bellocchio will be leaving March 31<sup>st</sup>. He was the go-to daily guy. No plans are made to replace Mr. Feorenzo as it was the idea that he was going to be moving up eventually. It is the Personnel Committee's recommendation that Mr. Feorenzo be offered the position of Executive Director.

Commissioner Rivera asked how long it will take the vetting process take. Mr. Snyder said it varies because there is a New Jersey State Police background check. It usually takes a few months, but hopefully within 60 days. Mr. Snyder will send his credentials down in writing, make a phone call to Matthew Rudd to see if the process can be expedited. Commissioner Stuart asked who the search firm was. Mr. Snyder responded it was his company, Executech, which does searches

for Executive Directors in New Jersey. Mr. Snyder explained to the new Commissioners that this process began last year when Mr. Bellocchio said he was leaving March 31, 2014. Mr. Snyder said Mr. Feorenzo was hired with the possibility of being elevated into the position.

**ROLL CALL ON #2014-6 – APPOINTMENT OF ANTHONY FEORENZO AS EXEC. DIRECTOR**

Commissioner Tessaro	Yes
Commissioner Dukes	Abstain
Commissioner Stassi	Yes
Commissioner D'Arminio	Yes
Commissioner Stuart	Abstain
Commissioner Rivera	Yes
Commissioner Casamenti	Yes

Mr. Snyder offered congratulations to Mr. Feorenzo. (Applause.) Mr. Snyder added he will be reviewing Mr. Feorenzo, and providing a report within the six month period his observations and opinions as to what he's doing. Commissioner Dukes asked about the probationary period. Mr. Snyder said that term is used instead of using Interim or Acting Director.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Snyder asked if there were any questions or comments regarding Correspondence. Nothing at this time.

**PAYMENT OF CLAIMS FOR FEBRUARY 2014**

Motion to approve the bill list made by Commissioner Casamenti; seconded by Commissioner Tessaro.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

Commissioner Dukes asked if she could call the office regarding vendors. Mr. Snyder said please ask for Mr. Feorenzo and he would help her with any questions she may have. Commissioner Stuart asked if it was the same list as last month. Commissioner Rivera shared his list with Commissioner Stuart. Commissioner Stuart asked about MBT Contracting. Mr. Snyder said it is the HVAC plumbers. Mr. Snyder added this month there were a lot of RFPs, which are done every two years, for most of the services: plumbing, HVAC, electrical, etc. Probably next month there will be a list of vendors and a resolution approving them, with tabulation on who submitted bids, what the prices were. Mr. Snyder said they try and get local vendors to give them as much business as possible.

## **BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF LODI/HACKENSACK – see attachment**

Sonia Verdade, Project Director, was introduced to the new Commissioners and explained she's been here since it was opened in Hackensack in 2010, but has been doing programs since 2008. Sonia explained that in the report is a summary of each program. If anyone has questions, please call her. There are 129 youth at the present time; 45 of them come from HHA. There is an ethnicity report: 49 are African-American; 77 are Hispanic; Other are 2; White 1. On the back of the report are things that the children wanted to do for the Commissioners: why they like the Boys & Girls Club; thanking the Housing Authority for being where they are, etc.

For Christmas each child was able to get two gifts. Unilever and Toys 4 Tots in Closter were sponsors. Two people are here with Sonia: Gideon, a young fellow who spoke to the Commissioners. Gideon told the Commissioners about his life before he came to the Boys & Girls Club. Before joining, he would just go home from school, do his homework and then be bored for the rest of the day. One summer afternoon he was with friends and Sonia came out and asked Gideon if he wanted to join the Boys & Girls Club, explaining what they do and working with councilors. He brought home the form to his parents, they signed the papers and he was a member. Everything Sonia said came true – after his homework was done he had extra friends and gets to do a lot of things. After a few months, he found out about the Keystone Club, and they help people. Gideon likes to help people so he became a member of the Keystone Club, doing community service. Last fall they gave turkey baskets to people who needed them. Sonia said prior to Gideon being recruited to the program, the Club had a grant (inaudible) and Gideon was recruited into that program. Gideon would look into the windows to see what was going on prior to his joining. Since joining, a file was kept from day one to now on Gideon, and she is so proud of his community outreach as well as mentoring younger children. Sonia feels it has a big impact on their lives, and amazing to see and feel the difference they make at the facility. Sonia also introduced Board Member Mike Williams, 1<sup>st</sup> V.P. of the Board of Lodi/Hackensack.

(Applause and thanks followed Sonia and Gideon's talk.)

**HACKENSACK POLICE DEPARTMENT – they were not notified of rescheduled meeting. No one in attendance.**

## **MANAGEMENT REPORT & UNFINISHED BUSINESS – see attachment**

Mr. Snyder said the question of the waiting list came up last month and over the years there have been rumors/accusations but no complaints really in regards to the waiting list.

For all housing authorities across the country, this is a common item that comes up. There is a large volume of people that need public housing, and a long list of

people waiting to move up. There are more people on the list than there are available apartments. Hackensack's list is closed for family units. Mr. Snyder said since it came up last month, that he should go over the list and see statistically where Hackensack is at. Some issues have arisen and there is a variance in certain areas. Mr. Snyder feels the waiting list should reflect somehow the composition of the community demographics. All public housing authorities are required to have a waiting list, and that list is developed and administered according to the Continued Occupancy Policy.

(At this point in the meeting, Mr. Snyder gave a Power Point presentation regarding **Waiting List Statistical Information.**)

Commissioner Casamenti said the presentation was very good. Commissioner Rivera asked about people maintaining their position on the list even if they've been there 5-10 years. Mr. Snyder said new people coming in go to the bottom of the list. Veterans and local residents go to the top of the list because they would have the two points. The theory being HHA wanted to help veterans, particularly now, Vietnam Veterans who are aging now and need this housing. Mr. Snyder asked Chairman Stassi (still via telephone) if he agreed with the veteran status, as Chairman Stassi is himself a veteran, and the answer was yes.

**OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS/OTHER BUSINESS – nothing at this time**

**REMARKS OF CITIZENS – nothing at this time**

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Casamenti; seconded by Commissioner Rivera.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

Commissioner D'Arminio added how great it was to hear Chairman Stassi's voice.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez, Transcriber