

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

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2014

(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.)

**SWEARING IN CEREMONY**

(At this point in the proceeding, Mr. Asadurian sworn in AnnMarie Saccaro (reappointment as a Commissioner) and Blanche Stuart as a new Commissioner.)

Acting Chairman AnnMarie Saccaro called the meeting to order.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Acting Chairman AnnMarie Saccaro\*  
Commissioner May D'Arminio  
Commissioner Al Casamenti  
Commissioner Blanche Stuart\*

Absent: Chairman Anthony Stassi  
Commissioner Ralph Rivera  
Commissioner Gino Tessaro

Also Present:  
Acting Executive Director John Bellocchio  
William F. Snyder, Consultant to the Authority  
Anthony Feorenzo, Operations Manager  
Gregory Asadurian, Esq., Counsel to the Authority

**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 Center, and delivery of same to the Bergen Record & Star Ledger on December 10, 2013. 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**

All those present stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence in support of all those who serve our Country.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 12, 2013**

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (3)  
Absent: Rivera/Stassi/Tessaro

Abstain: Stuart

## **RESOLUTIONS #2014-1 THROUGH #2014-4**

### **1. #2014-1- AUTHORIZATION TO ATTEND ANNUAL CONFERENCES**

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

Mr. Snyder explained in January a list of all the upcoming in-state and national conferences is prepared. In 2013, there was very little travel. This gives authorization to Staff and Commissioners to travel to these conferences. If interested, please let the office know in advance so Registration can be provided and arrangements made.

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

### **2. #2014-2 – INDEMNIFICATION RESOLUTION – CRIMINAL**

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

Mr. Snyder explained this is the annual Indemnification Resolution for everyone in case there is any type of a criminal issue and a Commissioner got dragged into it, they would have a right to Counsel. The Housing Authority would cover the cost up to a reasonable rate.

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

### **3. #2014-3 – INDEMNIFICATION RESOLUTION – CIVIL**

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

Mr. Snyder explained this is in regards to a civil action: slip and fall, for example, a Commissioner could be sued, under the tort claim act; they have a certain number of days to file. In a case Mr. Snyder is aware of, the person sued the Director and Commissioners individually.

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

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

#### 4. #2014-4 – CASH MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

Mr. Snyder explained the State of New Jersey requires that you adopt a Cash Management Plan once a year. It lists signatories for checks, banking institutions and insures deposits are protected under the Governmental Unit Deposit Protection Act (GUDPA). When the Auditor he checks that the money is being invested in secure instruments and is protected in the event of a bank failure, and that the proper number of signatures are on a check, which are the three signatures. Payroll has two signatures on a check, a requirement of the State.

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

#### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

There were no questions or comments regarding correspondence.

#### **PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – JANUARY 2014**

Motion to approve payment of claims made by Commissioner D'Arminio; seconded by Commissioner Casamenti.

Commissioner Stuart asked, if she were to abstain from voting, because she does not know all the vendors, would that stop the payments from being made. Mr. Snyder said yes, it would, as four votes are needed. Mr. Snyder said they would give Commissioner Stuart a computerized printout of the vendors. Mr. Bellocchio said if Commissioner Stuart came into the office, he'd go over the list with her. Commissioner Stuart said that would be good.

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

## **MANAGEMENT REPORT & UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Mr. Snyder reported that the elevators were out to bid, which occurs every two years to maintain the elevators. There have been some problems in the past, hopefully, the lowest responsible bidder is going to do the right thing. Bids will be awarded probably next month. The RAD application was submitted under HUD's demonstration program, the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program, on October 21<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Snyder made a presentation during the month of November and December. There were 60,000 units nationally that HUD has set aside for this new program. As of December 23<sup>rd</sup>, just above 60,000 units had been applied for. Hackensack got their application in by the 21<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Snyder is feeling pretty good that Hackensack has an opportunity to get funded. There are now over 108,000 units that have been applied for. In the current HUD appropriation bill, there are not any more units that have been added. However, Mr. Snyder's been told that HUD is going to ask for another 60,000 to help fund everyone else. That program would result in a funding increase to Hackensack of about 13 percent, which is a significant amount of money. As Mr. Snyder mentioned during his presentations, that is approximately 15-\$16 million that HHA is able to raise to make repairs to our buildings, which will again do the second phase of HHA rehabilitation work, which will make HHA housing some of the best in the City, if it is all approved.

Mr. Snyder is following this very closely, and speaking with the people who are handling those applications in the upcoming months, to proceed as HHA needs to submit other documents.

The engineer hired to do the bidding documents for the generator here at 65 First Street, which is quite old, and needs to be replaced. The engineer will finish with his documents shortly and bids will be received on 2/26/14. That contract should be awarded by March and shortly thereafter, the generator will be replaced.

Mr. Bellocchio had nothing to add at this point.

Mr. Snyder updated the Commissioners on the search for a new Executive Director. The statute has specific requirements on what you have to do and what the qualifications are for that position. This process has been ongoing for six months with the advertisements in the professional trade journals. Mr. Snyder is working on the resumes he's received and the Personnel Committee will get a memo, with resumes attached and interviews will be set up. Many people from out-of-state apply, but don't meet the New Jersey State Statute requirements, where you have to have a 4-year college degree and a minimum of five years experience to assume the position.

Commissioner Stuart asked who is on the Personnel Committee. Mr. Snyder said it's the Chairperson, Commissioner D'Arminio and Commissioner Casamenti. Only three are required, because if there are four commissioners, it constitutes a public meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS** – no one from the Police Department present.

Chairman Saccaro spoke regarding the Hackensack/Lodi Boys & Girls Club. Tuesday night last she went to a meeting where she was one of seven judges for members of the Boys & Girls Club, who are applying ultimately for a national honor. She said it was a very gut-wrenching experience. Many of the juniors and seniors in high school have come from difficult backgrounds and are very grateful to the Boys & Girls Club for having given them so many opportunities. That was the first round of judging.

Two more rounds will happen, then go to State and ultimately to Finals, which will be in June. Chairman Saccaro spoke with the young man in charge of the Scholarship and Awards Program. Chairman Saccaro hopes that the nominee to go to the State would come before the Commissioners and give a presentation. She feels it would be an opportunity for her to practice, ask questions, and help her gain support. If there are no objections, it will probably be in March.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Saccaro welcomed Commissioner Blanche Stuart, congratulating her on her appointment. Chairman Saccaro added that it is quite noticeable that two people are not on the dais: Dr. Pargellan McCall and Commissioner Tony Stassi. The Commissioners would be remiss were they not to thank Dr. McCall for the time and effort she put into the last 12 years serving on this Board. With her dedication, keen intelligence Commissioner McCall personified the word "Commissioner" and she is wished good health and happiness.

Chairman Saccaro also informed those present that Commissioner Stassi suffered a stroke and is currently in rehab at Kessler Institute in Saddle Brook. She is happy to inform everyone that he's coming along nicely and is eager to resume his position as Commissioner. He told Messrs. Bellocchio and Snyder that he happens to be back by the next Board meeting. Everyone wishes him a speedy recovery and look forward to having him back.

### **REMARKS OF CITIZENS**

MAYOLA, 7B, 65 First, asked if anything will be done about the vents in the kitchen to prevent odors from coming in or to take out the odors in your own kitchen when cooking. Mr. Bellocchio said it was unusual that she was getting an odor back in because there's a fan on the ceiling pulling up. He will check it tomorrow. The fan

on the stove has a charcoal filter, takes in the smell and blows out over your head. Everyone said there is a vent, but it doesn't work. Mr. Bellocchio said there is a fan up on the roof that pulls everything up from the vent. Mr. Snyder added that the money that will be spent, an architect and an engineer will give specific assessments that HUD requires in their format. When these men do that, they'll tell HHA all the work that needs to be done throughout all the buildings. It will be prioritized as to what we can afford and what we need to do, and HHA will have the tenants' input.

Once that's done, there will be another meeting with all of the residents, getting your comments and at that point you will tell management what you think needs to be done.

DON CARTER, 9E, 65 First, said he still smells smoke on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. Mr. Bellocchio answered management is trying. Don said he thinks it is not the resident, but his company, especially with the \$250 fine. Mr. Bellocchio said you are libel if your guest is smoking. It's between A and C on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. Mr. Bellocchio will check it out tomorrow.

SALLY JOHNSON, 230 Central, 5D, wants to know what the procedure is for African-Americans getting into the housing program. She said there are a lot of Hispanics now. Mr. Snyder explained the Housing Authority has a waiting list. The demographics of the United States are changing. The Hispanic population is exploding. The waiting list is composed of when people apply. How the list works is based on date when you submit your application and then based upon preferences based on local resident gets one point; veteran gets another point. For example, if you applied and you lived in Bloomfield and applied 30 years ago and Mr. Snyder applied today and he lives in Hackensack, he goes above the person who applied 30 years ago, because he's a resident. Likewise, if he's a local resident and a veteran, he gets two points and goes above anyone with one point. Technically, you could be on the list and living here for 10 years, but Mr. Snyder comes in today, is a veteran and goes on the list, he is ahead of you. Sally said she knew someone who is a veteran, but is kept out because of his income. Mr. Snyder stated there are more Hispanics applying for housing everywhere. When your name comes up based on the bedroom category, there is a list for 1, 2 and 3-bedrooms. If one person comes in, they are not allowed a two-bedroom. The list is submitted to HUD electronically, and if someone said in Hackensack someone jumped the list, that would be illegal. Years ago, it may have happened but not now with the advent of computers. Mr. Snyder suggested that if someone has an issue regarding the list, contact the office and they will tell you exactly where the person was, when they applied and how they got where they did.

Years ago, the Board decided veterans should get a little better benefit than someone who is a non-veteran. The Board feels that local residents should benefit over a non-resident. It is audited by HUD and the Fair Housing people. Penalties

are severe and you would lose your job. Commissioner Casamenti asked if that was just locally. Mr. Snyder said it is every housing authority in the country. Commissioner Stuart asked if the office goes through the list and purges. Mr. Snyder didn't know when the last time was, but most places do purge over time because people move and are no longer around. Mr. Bellocchio asked if she meant senior or family housing. The family list has been closed for about five years. The senior list is always open because it's a very active list. Mr. Bellocchio said he has enough people for the family list to go seven or eight years. It doesn't change. Mr. Snyder said it could change because someone might be a non-resident and then becomes a resident, then their status changes.

ESTER MC MILLAN, 230 Central, 2H, commented she is a long-time resident and notices people who never lived in Hackensack are moving in. They have family moving in from New York. She said some people come and are turned down. Mr. Bellocchio said that's right, the family list is closed. She noted there are more Hispanics than blacks and they're taking over. Commissioner Stuart asked how often do they purge the list. People might move out of town and decided not to be on the list, perhaps it should be purged every two years. Commissioner Stuart said when she was growing up in the Authority Housing at 230 Central; there were 50 African-American families, now there are seven. Commissioner Stuart said people are telling her that Hispanics are saying they came to this country 2-3 years ago. Her concern is that they are jumping the list. Mr. Bellocchio asked Commissioner Stuart to plan to spend a lot of time when she comes in to check over the vendor list and he will explain the lists to her with them in front of her. Mr. Bellocchio explained they go down the list until someone meets the criteria and wants the apartment.

Mr. Snyder stated that Hackensack Housing wants to have the credibility, so that the public understands. Years ago, the African-American population was the majority at 230 Central and probably a large population in the school system. If you went to the school now, the Hispanic population is much larger than it was back then. The city is changing. Commissioner Stuart said the BOE says it's about 50 percent. Seven years ago when Mr. Bellocchio was on the BOE, it was 30 percent. The staff here knows they have to follow the guidelines or they'll lose their jobs. The Authority has no stake in who moves into the building, it's just according to the list. If someone has a complaint, they can contact you (Commissioner Stuart) and you can contact us and the office should be able to answer your question.

Commissioner Casamenti asked: #1- veteran; #2 – resident; #3 – 62 or older, disabled on Social Security Disability or handicapped. These are the elderly designations. The two family sites are families – single or family.

Commissioner Stuart asked this about the family units: as children grow up and move out, how do you transition that parent into a smaller unit. Mr. Snyder said

that is a problem. Many years ago when Mr. Snyder first came here that is one of the things he stopped: giving apartments to children of children. They thought it was an incentive to have children. If a family gets larger, and you must come in once a year to get recertified of your income, you're supposed to be put into the size unit that fits your family. As your family shrinks, you're supposed to move into a smaller unit, but that doesn't often happen because people outright refuse to move. A court action would have to be taken. Hackensack Authority wants to get people into the right size unit. Mr. Bellocchio will take Commissioner Stuart around to meet some of the people that have moved and they are happy. There are more services for the seniors. Mr. Bellocchio said the Spanish population has accused him of favoring African-Americans.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez, Transcriber