

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

THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2016

(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 Russell
Commissioner Blanche Stuart

Also Present:
Anthony Feorenzo, Executive Director
Jamie Sandor, Occupancy Specialist
Gregory Asadurian, Esq., Counsel to the Authority

Absent: Commissioner Michael Allegretta
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 12/4/2015. 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

Pledge of Allegiance recited. A moment of silence was held in respect and remembrance for police, firemen and Armed Forces.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 14, 2016

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Allegretta/Tessaro

RESOLUTION #2016-12 – APPROVAL OF RAD FINANCING APPLICATION TO LFB

Motion to approve Resolution #2016-12 made by Commissioner Stuart; seconded by Commissioner Russell.

AYES:

- Commissioner Russell
- Chairman Stassi
- Commissioner D'Arminio
- Commissioner Dukes
- Commissioner Stuart

ABSENT: Commissioner M. Allegretta
Commissioner G. Tessaro

RESOLUTION #2016-13 – APPROVAL OF TENANT SELECTION PLAN & RELATED DOCUMENTS FOR HUD SUBMISSION

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

ED Feorenzo stated HHA is submitting this to HUD for their approval. Because HHA is going to multi-family now, a Tenant Selection Plan must be created. Most of the regulations from HUD are going into this as part of their plan. HHA put their documents from ECOP in there. This evening approval is needed and after the approval, Staff will still sit with the Occupancy Committee, and changes can be made as things move along, even after financing is completed. This is just the template with HUD to get approval because they will make corrections and Staff will again sit down with Occupancy Committee. There will be changes and they can be made to this policy – Tenant Selection Plan.

Commissioner Russell said she had not read it all and was not comfortable approving something that has not been finalized. She said some of the Commissioners had requested packets be received before the week-end. ED Feorenzo said waiting another month would not affect HHA and before June's meeting, the Occupancy Committee will meet. ED Feorenzo requested of the Commissioners that if anyone has concerns or questions to please call him prior to that meeting. **Resolution 2016-13 tabled to June's meeting.**

Commissioner Dukes said the Occupancy Committee had reviewed up to Page 22. The approval they had is not final and binding and changes can be made at any time. ED Feorenzo agreed with Commissioner Dukes. He said if it was approved this evening, next month they could make more changes or even next year make changes. Commissioner Dukes asked if everything discussed was in there. ED Feorenzo agreed with that also.

CORRESPONDENCE – will be contained in Management Report

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

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

Commissioner Russell asked about Unicorn. ED Feorenzo said that is the cleaning service that does work at Newman and Railroad waxing the floors.

AYES: All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Allegretta/Tessaro

MANAGEMENT REPORT & UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ED Feorenzo had a preconstruction meeting with the architects and engineer regarding two generators on the roof. They wanted to bid everything at once and Mr. Feorenzo said no; a generator first and secondly, dates when roofs will be done. If roofs bid in July-August and start in September, HHA will get a better price because most roofers doing public work for Boards of Education are busy in the summer; when schools reopen, roofers slow down. Bid documents will be on June 16th for two generators, anticipating the award at July 14th meeting, if drawings are done in time. Regarding roof at 230 Central Avenue, bid documents will be completed and anticipated on July 18th; review it; anticipation of the award would be at September meeting and start roofs then.

Summer help began and Rico and Myles came back. They both graduate high school this year and wanted to work at HHA once again. Another Hackensack gentleman (Elijah) was hired, who will be going to college near Springfield, MA. Elijah started yesterday and ED Feorenzo probably will hire one more.

HACKENSACK POLICE REPORT

Mr. Feorenzo stated all has been quiet except for one incident at Newman & Railroad. Litigation is pending. One tenant assaulted another one. Police were involved and an arrest happened. He has the Police report. The mother of the adult who hit the other tenant is removing her daughter from the lease, as Mom doesn't want any problems. This she did on her own, but the timeline is not known. The mother had called Jamie Sandor to remove her prior to HHA knowing about

the incident or police report. ED Feorenzo will give a further update once the daughter has moved. Commissioner Russell asked about the hours that police are working at HHA. ED Feorenzo said there is coverage from 10 AM to 6 PM and 6 PM to 2 AM. There is one permanent Type 2 that's full-time and HQ can put him/her anywhere. If that officer is busy, then HQ gives HHA another Type 2. Commissioner Russell questioned how the officer is supposed to get to know the people and community from 10-6. ED Feorenzo said the officer walks all the buildings and meets a lot of seniors; rotated between 3-4 people. ED Feorenzo said again that the police car HHA owns is not in great shape and when it is no longer able to function, it will not be replaced and City of Hackensack will be responsible to provide transportation for the Type 2s.

RAD REPORT & UPDATE

ED Feorenzo reiterated the Tenant Selection Plan is being tabled until next meeting. If any Commissioners have any questions, please let him know. He had a conference call meeting with HUD today. HHA finance package has been approved by HUD and HUD now doing a Part 50 (having to do with HHA environmental). They are three-quarters done with it, but there was an issue in three buildings when Phase I was done. Kansas Street, 230 Central and 164 Beech came back in the Phase I plan that they had oil tanks some time ago. There is no record of oil tanks being removed and disposed of properly with the DEP Agency. They are looking into it. ED Feorenzo ordered a Phase II, which is what the environmental company is suggesting HHA do. They will come and do an ultrasound and check the area where the tanks were, and check the soil. Hopefully, that will be completed in three weeks, which would go to HUD and HUD will complete the Part 50. In the meantime, HHA's financing application is being submitted to the underwriters for HUD, which should be done second week of June. After that HHA will be assigned an attorney, who will handle the documents for the closing for HUD. Commissioner Russell asked where they are checking for the tanks. ED Feorenzo told her there are pipes in the ground at 230 Central, 164 Beech and Kansas Street. They might not be there, but they saw evidence of the oil pipe in the ground. ED Feorenzo was not here and has no knowledge of what they did way back when. It must be closed out with DEP. The biggest item left is the Tenant Selection Plan, which will be looked at again, and get it over to HUD for their approval.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Stuart said a while ago she spoke about recreation for seniors. The nurse did come in. Seniors indicated they don't want people into their business, because it wasn't an issue about health, but about recreation. She wants to revisit that because Commissioner Stuart visited someone in the senior building at 164, and asked what happened to the flat screen TV there. ED Feorenzo said it broke. Commissioner Stuart asked if it could be replaced. Mr. Feorenzo indicated he

would look into that option. Commissioner Stuart also stated the MLK Center might close, as there have been some issues there that they're attempting to work out. Many of the seniors from here go there. If it does close, she'd like there to be some form of recreation here. Could Marcella plan trips? ED Feorenzo said Marcella is up here now at the front window, not at the Boys & Girls Club. ED Feorenzo requested the Commissioners email him any ideas they might have for recreation activities. They will be discussed with the nurse and see what can be done.

Commissioner Russell asked about the tenants with unreported income. The Office is giving them a two-year payment plan. How did it come to a consensus of a two-year payment plan? ED Feorenzo said it was his consensus, because they owe HHA the money. Commissioner Russell asked where the two years came from? ED Feorenzo said it was a long enough time to pay it back. He spoke with HUD about it. HUD told him it was stretching it, but it's up to the Authority.

Commissioner Russell said "it" states that if the Office feels it is in excess, what are the guidelines saying tenants weren't declaring all their income; what determines "excess". ED Feorenzo said it is the excess of their rent. If someone had unreported income of \$5,000 divided into 24, that's on top of their rent. It's 30% of the unreported income. It's not all of it.

NEW BUSINESS & OTHER BUSINESS – nothing at this time

REMARKS OF CITIZENS

PEGGY HARRISON said she went to the Office to do her leasing and gave the girl everything, but the girl needed to know about Peggy's insurance, and asked if it was cash payout. Peggy said no, for burial. The girl needed it, but Peggy wanted to know why. Peggy talked to HUD and the person said that's what the State wants because it's an asset. Peggy didn't believe her and went to see Senator Loretta Weinberg to ask her what it was all about. Peggy had HHA laws with her from when she signed her lease. Sen. Weinberg told her to hand it in, and Peggy then agreed. Commissioner Russell answered the reason is-- you must hold a whole life policy, but the whole life policy is declared as income. HUD declares that an asset. ED Feorenzo said it is needed so as to determine whether it's whole life or term policy. If term policy, it's null and void and means nothing to HHA. If whole life, she pays every month and it can be turned in for cash money. Commissioner Russell said it's always been HUD policy, but not asked for before. ED Feorenzo said it has been there, but no one asked for it before. There is a new person, Jamie Sandor, in the department and has instructions from ED Feorenzo to follow HHA guidelines to the "T" for everyone. Discussion back and forth amongst the parties. Peggy was told if she didn't turn the policy in, she could be removed from HHA. ED Feorenzo invited Peggy to visit the Office again and they would explain it again. ED Feorenzo calmly stated if Peggy didn't supply the document, it would be turned over to the Authority Attorney and go before the Judge.

RENEE COLEY speaking on behalf of her mother, EDWINA LYNCH, is upset how the seniors are treated. As Commissioner Stuart said seniors need to be educated regarding learning policies; people should come in and talk to the seniors helping to understand what is going on regarding their rent. Telling them they might go to a Judge is unfair. Her Mother is downsizing, as Renee has learned and come to terms, through rules and regulations, that her apartment is too large for her. Renee is asking for compassion for all seniors; perhaps a person doesn't understand HHA/HUD policies; policies do change over time and you must work with it. Renee said seniors need to get out and do activities and agencies should come in and do activities free. Renee would like to see arts and crafts, policies explained one on one; that HHA is not trying to take anything, and HHA is just following rules that have changed. Please be patient with HHA seniors; they do not want to push against new policies and new employees and have patience. Renee suggested the Office contact seniors to see what they want; some have no visitors and no where to go. Commissioner Russell apologized for the way Renee feels, because she and other Commissioners have compassion for those who stand before them. She also apologized for ED Feorenzo, who became a bit aggravated. Commissioner Russell stated she too is a tenant and the policy for life insurance has always been in place, just never enforced. Since Jamie came to HHA, the policy has been enforced. Commissioner Russell didn't want to give her taxes, as she feels it's none of HUD's business, but it's Federal and State laws. The time should be taken as to explanation when the tenant signs their lease. If you have questions, ask or make an appointment to speak to someone in Occupancy Department.

PEGGY HARRISTON added that Sen. Weinberg told her to give the information to the Office. Commissioner Russell explained "we" are living in housing and any assets, anything of cash value, has to be declared. HUD has to know what it is that the tenant has: vehicle, whole life, bank accounts, W2, W4 – all are required because it's an asset. Discussion back and forth on the same subject.

WANDA PERSON, 230 Central, asked about the life policies. She works and pays her rent. If you pay your 30% rent, why do you have to pay another 1% on your bank account to Housing. Wanda was told you can't have a bank account over \$5,000 because if you do, Housing is entitled to 1% of that. She doesn't understand. Jamie answered: in regard to assets in general, all assets need to be reported; Ms. Person is correct. If the total cash value of all of your assets exceeds \$5,000, .06% of that (the passbook rate, which is mandated by HUD and reviewed every year), .06% of any assets above \$5,000, counts as assets income. The amount is minimal and it does not impact rent, although it may be a dollar or two, but not hundreds of dollars, or tens. Jamie has seen it impact on seniors who have large investments over the course of a very long time – 30-\$40,000 where the .06% might actually have an impact. Commissioner Russell asked if it was a Federal or State law. Jamie answered it's HUD regulated – Federal. ED Feorenzo added HUD comes up with the interest rate. Jamie stated HHA has the right to set the passbook rate within the Federal Register. Commissioner Russell thinks they might

have to address that, because if the income was already declared then she believes it's double-taxation. If she made 50,000; saved \$5,000, then why is she being charged an additional. Intense discussion followed and Commissioner Russell will look into it. Commissioner Dukes said the argument would be at the Federal level vs. HHA. Commissioner Russell asked if HHA has the discretion to do so or not. Jamie answered no. Jamie said the Housing Authority has the discretion to set the rate – the .06% can fluctuate.

Wanda's second question was about reported income, and HHA setting the two-year payment. Is HHA taking into consideration the person willing to pay back the money has to pay rent and has other expenses also. If the person owed \$30,000 and paying base rent plus the two-year payment, and they're trying, is HHA willing to work with that tenant? Attorney Asadurian brought up the fact that there is a pending issue with Ms. Person with respect to what she just spoke about, and Ms. Person is looking for a legal opinion from the Board with respect to the pending issue. A notice has been served regarding unreported income. Commissioner Russell objected to Mr. Asadurian informing the Board of this. Mr. Asadurian answered that the Board should be aware of it. Wanda responded it was a hypothetical question. Discussion back and forth regarding the statements. ED Feorenzo interrupted and said Mr. Asadurian is here to protect the Board. There could possibly be some litigation and he's only informing the Board, and that is his job, that's why HHA pays him. ED Feorenzo agreed with what Mr. Asadurian said. If the person wants to come to Mr. Feorenzo's office, have another closed-door meeting and talk about it, that's possible, but there might be litigation and it should not be aired in public. Commissioner Russell added she was going to have ED Feorenzo address it. ED Feorenzo and Mr. Asadurian agreed that it cannot be addressed here. More discussion followed and Chairman Stassi ended this discussion.

ISABELLA TILLERY, 8B, asked if you don't get an increase in your Social Security check, how is that the rent can go up? You don't have any assets and brought all the needed information to the Office, how can your rent go up? Commissioner Russell said her rent up by \$600 through the HUD regulations. She suggested to the tenants that when notices are sent out and they have two weeks to respond, they should address their concerns.

MISCELLANEOUS

ED Feorenzo stated when the Occupancy Department does their rent certifications, they sit with the individual, and they explain to the tenant what they need and why they need it. The people are not in the dark, they are informed. Every individual has an opportunity to come in, present their documents, sign their new lease and it is explained why all this is necessary. Jamie said 230 Central is done as of May 1st. Kansas Street was finished December 2015. Newman and Railroad is beginning right now, effective for July. ED Feorenzo said there are

scheduled appointments and they see anyone in the Occupancy Department. Jamie stated Central Avenue was the first building where appointments were made, and found it worked very well. Sometimes other items are brought which entails more checking. Commissioner Stuart asked regarding life insurance and paying a premium, is that used against the rent. ED Feorenzo said only medical expenses. Jamie added if you're 62 or disabled then you can deduct allowable medical expenses, similar to an IRA deductions. ED Feorenzo said if it's a regular policy with no cash value, it's nothing, just listed in the file, not an asset.

WANDA PERSON asked why the bank statement has to be submitted. Jamie said that's also an asset. Wanda asked to see what's in the account or to see what's been going on in the account, which one is it? Jamie answered both: the ending balance is the value of the asset and through transactions if the Office sees an insurance premium which indicates – (inaudible) and if there are other accounts.

RENEE COLEY asked about the environmental oil tanks. Could it be explained again as she's concerned about her mother moving into another building where there are some issues. ED Feorenzo answered when the Phase I, there were tanks taken out at Kansas Street, 230 Central and 164 Beech. DEP has no record of the file being closed out. Once you take the tanks out and dispose of them properly, you have to go to DEP and get a NO FURTHER ACTION LETTER, which did not happen here, however long ago they were taken out and disposed of. The soil will be tested in the area and an ultrasound will be done to make sure the tanks are gone. She asked if there was any danger. Mr. Feorenzo said no and there are no records.

PEGGY HARRISTON wants the water tested. Commissioner Stuart commented about lead in water.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Russell; seconded by Commissioner D'Arminio.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Allegretta/Tessaro

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber

MEETING ADJOURNED: 6:55 P.M.