

CORPORATE MINUTES - BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF MANCHESTER

2020

April 15, 2020

Mayfair Gardens Community Room

Attending: Chairman Josh Howroyd
Paul Rubin – Vice Chairman
Timothy Becker
Lisa O'Neill
Joseph D'Ascoli, Executive Director
Judith Taylor – Tenant Commissioner

- I. Meeting Called to Order
Chairman Howroyd called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm via video conference.
- II. Adoption of Minutes – Meeting of March 18, 2020
Chairman Howroyd called for a motion to approve the minutes of March 18, 2020. Mr. Becker so moved; Mr. Rubin seconded. Motion passed 4- 0- with one abstention.
- III. Correspondence – Letter from HUD Regional Administrator for New England to Mayor Moran
Joseph D'Ascoli shared with the Board a letter sent to the Manchester Mayor Jay Moran. The letter outlined the precautions and directives being taken with regard to COVID-19 by the housing Authorities.
- IV. Accounts Payable – March 2020 Payment Summary & Detail Report
Mr. D'Ascoli reported business as usual. After careful review by Mr. Counihan and our AP Clerk Cheryl Stout the checks are printed. Next, checks have two signatures, one of our Board members and Joseph D'Ascoli and mailed out. Judy Taylor asked if the tenants are paying their rent on time. Mr. D'Ascoli shared he will discuss later in the agenda. Tim Becker asked what the UI Data Access is. Joseph D'Ascoli explained we use this criminal background check system when we have new participants to the Section 8 program.
- V. Executive Director's Report
 - A. Financial Statements – March 2020.
Joseph D'Ascoli shared we are in good shape. In AMPI, we have gained \$135k, AMP II is up \$76k. The State elderly shows a slight loss due to some added expenses. Tim Becker asked about the utilization. Joseph D'Ascoli shared we received different amounts from HUD based on a snapshot of expenses from October, November and December and the average of these months. With the COVID-19, we show an increase in the rental amounts due to change in participant's income. We have 504 HCV vouchers and with the Spencer Village project, we will require 25 of those vouchers to become Project Based Vouchers there. Tim Becker commented the report indicates expenditures are 102% and how long with MHA be able to sustain that. Joseph D'Ascoli noted at times HUD gives us extra money and he is comfortable with the reserve we have at this time. Chairman Howroyd added HUD wants the vouchers to be fully utilized by housing authorities, not held.
 - B. Vacancy Report – March 2020
Joseph D'Ascoli reported we have a short list this month. We are dealing with problems leasing up vacant units due to the COVID-19 and people not wanting to come out and look at units. We have posed this to HUD and are waiting to see if they will waive the penalty, we encounter for units not leased up within a certain time frame. Tim Becker volunteered to take photographs or videos of vacant units so people could do a virtual walk through on the available units to possibly aid in the leasing up of vacant units. Joseph D'Ascoli shared he

had several phone conversations with HUD field office and other ED's on this issue. Chairman Howroyd shared this is uncharted territory for all of us. Judy Taylor asked about rental payments by participants during this time. Mr. D'Ascoli had indicated that the Governor had issued his Executive Order No 7X which gives tenants protection during the COVID-19 Pandemic. During this time, Housing Authorities are not issuing notices to quit and are waiving late fees charges. Tenants will still be responsible for their rent and once they have received unemployment an interim rent change will be conducted, and the tenants will be responsible to pay the landlord any back rent. This directive from the Governor may be more towards the private market landlord who individuals may not have a subsidy. The caveat for the residents with the Manchester Housing Authority is that most tenants are elderly or disabled and they receive Social Security in which the interim changes may be with our scattered site families whom may be working if they were laid-off or furloughed. In the State of Connecticut, the Housing Court is closed during this time and evictions will be held sometime in June. Our property managers Martha Bertrand and Stephen Itsou will follow up with tenants facing these issues then.

C. General Information

1. Modernization Report

MHA has halted projects due to vendors they have stopped production at this time. Joseph D'Ascoli shared he has hired a part time Modernization Coordinator, Corey Hartline which will help with coordinating projects for MHA. We are looking at some of the exterior work such as Mayfair Gardens upgrading utilities, scattered sites needing roof repairs or replacement and repair or replacement of driveways.

2. CDBG 2020-2021 CDBG Annual Funds Request

Joseph D'Ascoli explained he has submitted the Annual Request to the Town for CDBG funds. Tim Becker asked for specifics of this. Mr. D'Ascoli stated the upgrades were to provide through new storm doors on the front and rear of the units to reduce heating and cooling costs. Water conservation measures of new toilets, showerheads, and aerators to promote conservation and reduce the amount of electricity or natural gas expended to heat the water. Mr. D'Ascoli will keep the Board apprised of the outcome.

3. Memo – Update to RAD

Joseph D'Ascoli reported he has had several discussions with HUD about 2 outstanding issues that need to be taken off the books before we can move forward with RAD conversion. The items are payoff of the solar field and Retirement fund short fall. Chairman Howroyd share the Board will receive documentation on MERS from Attorney Wrona and we will discuss at the next Board meeting.

4. Memo – Update to Revitalization of Congregate

Joseph D'Ascoli shared he has been talking with Tom Arcari, the Architect on the Congregate revitalization about this project. We have been trying to reach the contractor regarding completion of the exterior projects had were put on hold due to winter. Neither of us has been able to reach them. We have also had some issues with the new showers in the bathrooms from Bath Fitters regarding proper draining of water. If we are unable to reach them, we will contact CHFA to see what we should do.

5. Memo – Update to Revitalization of Spencer Village

Joseph D’Ascoli reported good news that the Bond Commission met on March 26 and we have been awarded the funds for this project. There is a conference call tomorrow with CHFA to discuss next steps. It is possible to have some of the outside work started in late June or early July. He will keep the Board informed of the status of this project. He also shared that he has not spoken with the tenants and he will send a notice to the tenants sharing the good news.

6. Memo – Regarding Office Procedure and Remote Operations during COVID-19

Joseph D’Ascoli explained to the Board the he is following the protocol set by the Governor. Setting up employees to work from home and limiting time in the office. We have an office calendar so employees can schedule time in the office as necessary to make copies, mail out paperwork and check postal mail. The maintenance staff has been working sanitizing common areas, units that have two levels the hallways including doorknobs and hand railings.

The congregate is on shut down to outsiders. Food delivered to residents put in the lobby and residents come down to retrieve their deliveries. Chairman Howroyd shared he has limited his exposure to the office by coming in the side door; checks are left in the conference room he signed them and leaves with minimum interaction with staff. We are all doing our best to keep safe distances with each other. Tim Becker asked how is handling those residents that have tested positive to COVID-19. Joseph D’Ascoli reported that our Resident Service Coordinator Mary Ann Murray is keeping his apprised of any resident that has tested positive and see they are quarantined for 14 days once they have returned home. We have been in contact with the local Health Department they are putting the onus back on us. Joseph D’Ascoli stated if there are any residents that have tested positive, he will be notifying maintenance, first responders including EMT’s Fire and Police departments. This may be in violation of HIPPA laws, but his first concern is the health and safety of individuals coming in contact with the COVID-19 virus. If he is violation of HIPPA, he will face the consequences at that time. Chairman Howroyd share we do not know the consequences of this virus as it affects everybody differently. The Board relies on the Executive Director to do what is best in this case.

VI. Chairman’s Report - None

VII. Old Business – None

VIII. New Business

1. Resolution 2020–2 Transfer of Funds UNA to RNA

Joseph D’Ascoli explained that back in 2017, he came before the Board asking to transfer funds from the UNA to RNA, but the transfer was not done. With the Spencer Village project MHA is looking at having 25 Project Based Vouchers set aside. He is looking to transfer \$250,000.00 from UNA to RNA for this purpose. Currently we have \$700k in reserve and he does not want HUD to take back these funds as they have done in the past. Tim Becker asked how MHA arrived at this reserve. Joseph D’Ascoli explained over several years Section 8 uses Rent Reasonableness to control the rental amounts to

landlords. Chairman Howroyd called for a motion to approve Resolution 2020-2 Transfer of Funds UNA to RNA. Lisa O'Neill so moved; Paul Rubin seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

2. Resolution 2020-3 FY 2020 Income Limits

Joseph D'Ascoli shared that on March 31, 2020 HUD published the new fiscal year income limits for Hartford County. The amount has a slight increase for family of four it is \$30,800. HUD mandates this for public Housing and Section 8. Tim Becker noted the date on this is 2019 and should be 2020. Joseph D'Ascoli noted and stated he would make the change. Chairman Howroyd called for a motion to approve Resolution 2020-3 FY 2020 Income Limits. Lisa O'Neill so moved; Judy Taylor seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

3. Resolution 2020-4 Award of PBV

Joseph D'Ascoli was requesting that the MHA to provide 25 PBV to the Spencer Village Revitalization Project. Mr. D'Ascoli provided that the Manchester Housing Authority was the only proposal that was received and should be awarded. Chairman Howroyd called for a motion to approve Resolution 2020-4 Award of PBV. Tim Becker so moved; Paul Rubin seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

4. Resolution 2020-5 implement COVID-19 Statutory and Regulatory Waivers for the Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher

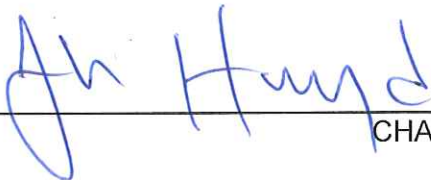
Joseph D'Ascoli reported that last Friday HUD issued a 62-page waiver to change the way HA's handling rent changes, inspections and tenant loss of income. If a tenant is unable to get a letter from his employer, they can sign a self-declaration stating they are not currently working. EIV reports will be waived for the time being. Staff will have to go back to EIV for the tenant to have to enter into a repayment agreement with MHA for unreported income. If a unit failed, the inspection the landlord and the items that failed are not life threatening the landlord can verify that the repairs were completed. Tim Becker requested that the date of 2019 be corrected to 2020. Chairman Howroyd called for a motion to approve Resolution 2020-5 implement COVID-19 Statutory and Regulatory Waivers for the Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher. Lisa O'Neill so moved; Judy Taylor seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

IX. Items for Future Agenda – Please send items to either Chairman Howroyd to Mr. D'Ascoli. Tim Becker requested that Attorney Wrona and Jason Beale attendance the next meeting. He also requested the management letter be included in the packet sent out to the Board members prior to the meeting.

X. Executive Session – None

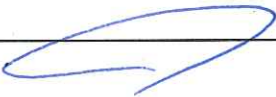
XI. Adjournment

Chairman Howroyd called for a motion to adjourn. Tim Becker so moved; Lisa O'Neill seconded. Motion passed 5-0 to adjourn at 7:56 pm.



5/21/2020

CHAIRMAN:



ATTEST:

5/21/20

