

MINUTES
MADISON HOUSING AUTHORITY
January 18, 2022, REGULAR MEETING

Chairperson Lois Bhatt called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM via Zoom video meeting. The following Commissioners answered as present:

Lois Bhatt, Diane Driscoll, Mark McBride, Caridad Reyes and Jeffrey Smith

Commissioners Elias and Chiarolanza were absent.

Also present were Tanya Van Order, Executive Director, Karen O’Keeffe, Deputy Director, and John Hoover, Council Liaison.

Ms. Van Order read the NJ Open Public Meetings Act Notice: Both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting has been provided by the Secretary of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Madison by preparing an Annual Notice dated January 12, 2021, setting forth the date, time and place of this meeting. Said notice was filed with the Clerk of the Borough of Madison, forwarded to newspapers of local circulation and to the persons requesting it and posted to the Madison Housing Authority website. This meeting is being conducted remotely in accordance with the Authority’s Emergency Remote Meeting Procedures and N.J.A.C. 5:39-1(h).

At this point in the meeting Ms. Bhatt relinquished the Chair to Ms. Van Order who asked for nominations for Chairperson of the housing authority for calendar year 2022. Ms. Van Order reported that Commissioner Bhatt self-nominated via email for Chairperson There were no other email nominations. Ms. Van Order asked if there were any further nominations from the Board for Chairperson. There were no further nominations.

22-18-1-1 Resolution Approving the Election of Lois Bhatt as Chairperson of the Housing Authority.

Commissioners Driscoll and Reyes moved and seconded the resolution. The roll call was unanimous, and the Resolution was approved.

Ms. Bhatt asked Ms. Van Order if there were any self-nominations for Vice-Chairperson of the housing authority for calendar year 2022. Ms. Van Order reported that Mr. Smith self-nominated via email for Vice-Chairperson. There were no other email nominations. Ms. Bhatt asked if there were any further nominations from the Board for Vice-Chairperson. There were no further nominations.

22-18-1-2 Resolution Approving the Election of Jeffrey Smith as Vice-Chairperson of the Housing Authority.

Commissioners Bhatt and McBride moved and seconded the resolution. The roll call was unanimous, and the Resolution was approved.

Approval of the Minutes

Commissioners Smith and Driscoll moved and seconded approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 21, 2021. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Council Liaison Report

Mr. Hoover reported that the site plan for the Borough-sponsored 44 units of affordable rental housing is scheduled to be heard by the Planning Board on February 1st. Mr. Hoover expressed thanks to the

MHA for allocating eight (8) Project-Based Vouchers to the project, which will provide 30 units of housing on Walnut Street (Civic Center to be demolished) and 14 units on Community Place. RPM Development Group submitted a \$425,000.00 HOME grant and will apply for 4% Low Income Housing Tax Credits from the New Jersey Housing & Mortgage Finance Agency once the site plan is approved. Construction is anticipated to start in August 2022.

A Conditional Judgement of Repose from Superior Court Judge Michael Gaus has been secured and Borough planners are working with the MHA and HQM to address one open issue (bedroom and unit mix) which, when resolved, will allow the Court to issue a Final Judgement of Repose providing the Borough immunity from Builder Remedy litigation through July 2025. The lead attorney for the Fair Share Housing Center, Mr. Bassam Gergi, resigned recently and the Borough has requested an introductory meeting with his replacement.

Lastly, Mr. Hoover reported that the Borough is working cooperatively with the leadership of Drew University to monetize non-academic property resources to financially stabilize the university. To that end the Borough rezoned the Copper Beech Condominium Development allowing Drew to sell 28 vacant condominium units for \$9,000,000.00. Borough planners are working with Drew's planners on rezoning of portions of the Drew campus perimeter.

Report of Chairperson

Ms. Bhatt welcomed our new Council Liaison Mr. Hoover and expressed our commitment to working with the Borough to increase the supply of affordable homes within the requirements of the Borough's Mt. Laurel Housing settlement with Fair Share Housing.

Ms. Bhatt also reminded the Board that communication with the Borough Council regarding Authority related matters should be handled through the MHA Chairperson and the Council Liaison

Report of Executive Director

Ms. Van Order noted that the Board package includes the formal introduction of the 2022 operating budget. Once introduced by resolution, the budget will be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for review. After addressing any corrections, they require, the Board will formally adopt the budget.

Ms. Van Order reported that HUD renewed our Family Self-Sufficiency grant for 2022 with an increase from \$72,000 to \$79,200. This is a grant that we have in partnership with the Morristown Housing Authority.

Regarding the residual flooding from Hurricane Ida, Ms. Van Order noted that she continues to work with FEMA to recover our \$5000 insurance deductible. Initially we had hoped to apply for remediation funding, but our circumstances do not qualify because we have fully repaired the boiler plant. We will continue to seek funding to identify and address the conditions that contributed to the losses in the senior building boiler plant.

Ms. Van Order noted that she will be conducting a file review at the Summit Housing Authority in MHA's capacity as their RAD PBV contract administrator and reminded the Board that last year we increased our share of Summit's administrative fee to 50% to reflect the substantial time required to support their staff, track HAP payments, manage all HUD reporting, coordinate inspections, obtain rent reasonableness studies and review the annual OCAP adjustment.

Lastly, Ms. Van Order reported that she continues to reach out to HUD Washington's Office of Recapitalization regarding our request for a partial release from the RAD Use Agreement that would

allow us to subdivide the property and build additional affordable homes. In a recent email Cheryl Fox expressed enthusiasm for our incentive and planned projects while at the same time referencing additional documents needed to complete their review and anticipated approval of our request.

Report of Deputy Director

Ms. O’Keeffe reported that with two lease ups this month at the senior building we are currently fully leased. There is one scheduled lease up at the scatter site and two additional units are in turnover.

Ms. O’Keeffe stated that on 1/19/2022 she and Julio Duque, MHA Maintenance Supervisor will accompany Madison Fire Captain, Ed Nunn, as he conducts a fire safety inspection at the senior building. Captain Nunn will also do a fire safety presentation at the senior building in the afternoon.

Ms. O’Keeffe reported that the United Way will be providing free income tax preparation support to our families and seniors beginning 2/1/2022. The United Way has trained IRS-certified tax preparers who will review all documents and communicate through video chat or by phone.

Zufall Health Center continues to provide weekly health programming on Tuesdays at the senior building. Interfaith Food Pantry continues to supply supplemental food bags to seniors at Chateau Thierry who sign up for their services. Both of these programs are very popular with our senior residents.

Ms. O’Keeffe additionally reported that the Thursday Morning Club from the Madison Community House donated knitted winter gear to residents at the senior building.

Committee Reports

Personnel: Ms. Bhatt reported that the Personnel Committee met to conduct the annual review of the Executive Director, Ms. Van Order, noting that the committee was pleased with her accomplishments and growth in her first year.

Strategic Planning: Ms. Bhatt reported that the Strategic Planning Committee will provide an updated report at the next Board meeting taking into consideration the prior Board discussion.

Finance: Mr. McBride reported that the Finance Committee met with the Authority’s fee accountant, Bill Katchen, to review the proposed 2022 budget. Mr. McBride noted that it is a conservative, near break-even budget reflecting a roll forward of the priorities of the prior budget. These priorities include the increase to the Reserve & Replacement account, capital improvements corresponding with the RAD Physical Needs Assessment study and upgrades to units at turnover.

While the FYE 3/31/21 audit is not finalized due to delays in New Jersey OPEB financial reporting, the draft audit indicates that we will realize a surplus. The 2022 budget projects a smaller surplus due to capital improvements and the increase to the R&R account.

Lastly, Mr. McBride noted that there are some HUD constraints on our current operating reserves, which will be resolved with the final closeout of the Authority’s former public housing program. Mr. McBride noted that, while it will be beneficial to the Authority to have access to these reserves for creating new housing opportunities, there are other viable sources of revenue for development, including HOME funds, Borough Affordable Housing Trust funds and national housing trust funds targeted specifically to small scale developments.

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Correspondence

Madison Eagle News Article “Madison senior apartment residents enjoy ornament-painting workshop”

Resolutions

22-18-1-3 Resolution Approving Payment of Invoices

Commissioners Bhatt and Driscoll moved and seconded approval of the resolution; The roll call was unanimous, and the Resolution was approved.

CONSENT AGENDA – Resolutions 22-18-1-4 through 22-18-1-11:

22-18-1-4 Resolution Introducing the Operating Budget for FYE 3-31-2023

22-18-1-5 Resolution Appointing a Qualified Purchasing Agent

22-18-1-6 Resolution Approving the Cash Management Plan

22-18-1-7 Resolution Authorizing a Policy Respecting Reimbursement of Authority Commissioner/Employees for Costs of Defending Against Civil Claims and Criminal Charges

22-18-1-8 Resolution Designating Official Newspaper of the Housing Authority for Publication of Legal Notices

22-18-1-9 Resolution Approving Monthly Meeting Dates for 2022

22-18-1-10 Resolution Designating Karen O’Keeffe as the Madison Housing Authority Public Agency Compliance Officer

22-18-1-11 Resolution Appointing Tanya Van Order as Fund Commissioner to the New Jersey Public Housing Authority Joint Insurance Fund Year 2022

Commissioners Driscoll and Reyes moved and seconded the Consent Agenda; The roll call was unanimous, and the Consent Agenda was approved.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Bhatt moved for adjournment at 5:40 P.M.

Next meeting: February 15, 2022, at 4:30 PM via Zoom meeting video conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanya Van Order
Executive Director