

MINUTES
MADISON HOUSING AUTHORITY
July 19, 2022, REGULAR MEETING

Chairperson Lois Bhatt called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM in the 2nd floor Conference Room at the Hartley Dodge Memorial Building. The following Commissioners answered as present:

Lois Bhatt, Diane Driscoll, Mark McBride, Caridad Reyes (speaker phone), Melissa Elias (speaker phone) and Jeffrey Smith

Commissioner Chiarolanza was absent.

Also present were Tanya Van Order, Executive Director, Karen O’Keeffe, Deputy Director, Terrence Corrison, Attorney (speaker phone), 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 18, 2022, 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.

Approval of the Minutes

Commissioners Driscoll and Smith moved and seconded approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 21, 2022. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Council Liaison Report

Mr. Hoover reported that Drew University filed litigation against the Borough seeking to vacate the prior affordable housing settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center. The goal is to force the Borough to rezone the Drew Forest and other portions of the Drew Campus to allow market rate multi-family housing development.

The Borough has been working with Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill’s Office on a \$2 million special appropriation grant for the Borough-sponsored 44-unit affordable housing development on Walnut Street (30 units) and Community Place (14 units). The funding was approved by the House Appropriations Committee and is now pending concurrence by the Senate. The Walnut Street Civic Center will be vacated shortly, and the new construction is anticipated to begin in October.

Lastly, Mr. Hoover reported that the Borough was happy to support MHA’s MTW Demonstration Program application with a letter of support from Mayor Conley.

Mr. Hoover reported that the Borough will be compiling and submitted the annual affordable housing report due August 20, 2022, as required by the Settlement Agreement with Fair Share Housing. Lastly, Mr. Hoover noted that supply chain issues in infrastructure equipment are causing many delays in commercial and residential projects in the Borough.

Report of Chairperson

Ms. Bhatt thanked Mr. Hoover for the Borough’s support of our MTW Demonstration program application.

Report of Executive Director

Ms. Van Order reported that the Amended & Restated Use Agreements and the Post Conversion Restrictive Covenants have been fully executed. Our attorney in this matter will record the documents and address all other HUD requirements. We are still waiting for HUD to complete their review of the close out of our public housing program. The Newark Field Office has completed their review and it is now with Headquarters in Washington for a final review and approval.

As reported last month, we received \$72,450 from FEMA, and it was confirmed that this includes mitigation funding as we requested. We have engaged an engineer to develop a plan to use the sewer ejector station as an emergency backup sump pump. Our architect has reviewed our options for wet proofing the boiler room and has recommended increasing the height of the back door to the boiler room as an alternate to installing a new flood resistant door for that area, which experienced significant damage and loss in the September 2021 flood event.

In other capital projects, work on the Belmont Avenue deck is complete. We are working with Captain Joe Longo to include the senior building in the Borough's plans to install a unified video security system across all Borough properties at an estimated cost of \$12,300. We have requested more specifics about the annual fees and maintenance costs for the system. Last week Karen met with Tilcon to visit the five parking lots that need milling & paving, and we hope that project will be completed in the next weeks. Lastly, we requested and received an extension through 11/1/2023 on our 2020 CDBG grant of \$100,000 for our proposed HVAC project at Loantaka Way. We are still awaiting formal notification of the 2022 CDBG grant award of \$95,000, which will add to the 2020 grant of \$100,000 to fund the project.

Ms. Van Order reported that we have hired a new Office Administrator. Elaine Martino will start next week and comes with a wealth of administrative experience and a strong affinity to our mission. As reported last month, Connie Brill will be retiring effective 9/1/2022 and Jessica Kirchenbauer will be promoted to Rental Assistance Housing Manager.

We will be submitting our Moving to Work (MTW) Demonstration Program Asset Building Cohort application next week. We held a resident meeting last month and a public hearing earlier this month. As part of the package, we requested and received five letters of support from key partners, including Lakeland Bank, NORWESCAP, Morris County Continuum of Care, Morris County Housing Authority and the Borough of Madison.

Lastly, Ms. Van Order noted that NAHRO is once again holding their annual conference in person in San Diego from 9/22 through 9/24/2022. Additionally, PHADA is holding a Legislative Forum from 9/11 through 9/13/2022 in Washington, DC. She asked that commissioners interested in attending a conference reach out to the office for registration details. Ms. Van Order noted that she currently serves on two national NAHRO committees, the Small Agency Advisory Committee and the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee. She also holds an Executive Board position with the regional MARC-NAHRO, serving as Treasurer.

Report of Deputy Director

Ms. O'Keeffe reported that as of July 1, 2022, 54 of our 56 family units and 78 of our 79 senior units are leased. One new senior resident is scheduled to lease up by August 1st. We expect another senior unit to be turned over beginning in August. The two vacant family units should be ready by September

1st. One of those units will be occupied by a current family who will transfer units to accommodate a disability.

Elaine Martino has accepted the position of Office Administrator. She will start on July 25th. Jessica Kirchenbauer will be promoted to Rental Assistance Program Manager. Jessica will have the opportunity to train with Connie Brill before Connie retires August 31st.

Ms. O’Keeffe reported that MHA continues to look for efficiencies in the use of the PHA-Webb platform. Soon MHA will be able to access criminal and credit checks for prospective tenants through the on-line portal. The staff will be trained on this new service in August.

The annual HQS Housing Quality Standard inspections of MHA owned units is complete. Follow up work orders are being processed by the maintenance staff. Ms. O’Keeffe is following up with tenants in cases where re-inspections are warranted.

The new Resident Council at Rexford Tucker plans to have its first meeting on August 18th where the concept of the new council will be introduced to all residents. Elections are planned for September 5th and the first board meeting on September 15th. Some activity ideas the Resident Council would like to implement include:

1. Establishing a Buddy System where residents can check-in on one another.
2. Planning a Welcoming/Get Together for new residents every quarter.
3. Potluck dinner where residents can bring ethnic dishes to share different cultural backgrounds.
4. Game nights/ additional movie nights/holiday theme get-togethers
5. Speakers’ series

On June 29th the Madison Fire Department hosted a BBQ at the senior building. A write-up about the event filled the back page of the Madison Eagle last week. On June 30th the Zufall Dental Van visited RTA. All appointments were quickly booked up. Due the demand the van will be coming back on August 30th. Norwescap will be doing an NJ SAVE Presentation in July to inform residents how to lower their Medicare costs. The regular programming continues with exercise classes, Trivia, Scrabble, Bingo, and Movies nights. Meal delivery and congregate dining.

Committee Reports

None.

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Correspondence

- The State of the Nation's Housing 2022
- Madison Eagle News Article "Madison firefighters and Elks Lodge serve up treat for seniors"
- NAHRO FSS Final Rule Training Certificate for Jessica Kirchenbauer
- NJAA Fair Housing and Beyond with NJ LAD Certificate for Jessica Kirchenbauer

Resolutions

22-19-7-1 Resolution Approving Payment of Invoices

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

CONSENT AGENDA Resolutions 22-19-7-2 through 22-19-7-8:

- 22-19-7-2 Resolution Authorizing Membership in the Union County Cooperative Pricing System (Succp)
- 22-19-7-3 Resolution Authorizing Awarding Contract to Tilcon New York, Inc. For Paving Improvements Under Morris County Cooperative Bid in an Amount Not to Exceed \$90,000
- 22-19-7-4 Resolution Authorizing Awarding Contract to Denville Line Painting Under Morris County Cooperative Bid in an Amount not to Exceed \$30,000
- 22-19-7-5 Resolution Approving Submission of an Application for HUD Moving to Work Demonstration Program: Asset Building Cohort
- 22-19-7-6 Resolution Approving a Salary Increase for Jessica Kirchenbauer
- 22-19-7-7 Resolution Approving A \$13,227.48 Change Order with Straight Edge Construction, LLC, to Make Emergency Structural Repairs at 24 Belmont Avenue
- 22-19-7-8 Resolution Approving an Amended Deed Restrictions for 15 Chateau Thierry Avenue (Rexford S. Tucker Senior Apartments) Affordable Housing Development

Commissioners Driscoll and Chiarolanza 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 5:30 P.M.

Next meeting: September 20, 2022, at 4:30 PM in the 2nd Floor Committee Room of the Hartley Dodge Memorial Building at 50 Kings Road, Madison, NJ.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanya Van Order
Executive Director