

MINUTES
MADISON HOUSING AUTHORITY
September 20, 2022, REGULAR MEETING

Chairperson Lois Bhatt called the meeting to order at 4:31 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, Mark Chiarolanza and Jeffrey Smith

Also present were Tanya Van Order, Executive Director, Karen O’Keeffe, Deputy Director, Terrence Corriston, Attorney (speaker phone), John Hoover, Council Liaison and Lisa Jorgenson, Family Self Sufficiency Program Coordinator.

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 McBride moved and seconded approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 19, 2022. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Council Liaison Report

Madison Borough Council Liaison, John Hoover provided his report as follows:

Drew University filed litigation against the Borough seeking to vacate the prior affordable housing settlement agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center. On August 19, 2022, the judge dismissed the most serious count which would have voided the Borough’s affordable housing plan, immunity and Settlement Agreement with the Fair Share Housing Center. The Borough is awaiting the Judge’s written decision.

The Borough continues to work 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 and Community Place. The Civic Center has been vacated and preliminary site work has begun.

Several commercial office buildings at Giralda Farms are vacant and/or have very low occupancy. Giralda 3, the former Quest Diagnostics headquarters, is under contract with Avalon Bay. The Planning Board has started a process to expand the permitted zoning uses to plan for a future where employees telecommute and conduct business virtually rather than in person at office facilities.

Special Presentation for Family Self Sufficiency graduate

Ms. Bhatt welcomed Lisa Jorgenson the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Coordinator. Ms. Jorgenson presented Laura Uribe Restrepo upon her graduation from the FSS program. Ms. Uribe Restrepo joined the program in 2015 as a single mother with two children under five years of age. At that time she was working as a babysitter at the YMCA. During her time in FSS, Ms. Uribe Restrepo enrolled in classes

at County College of Morris and became a certified lash technician. She is currently working in the health profession. Her annual income has more than doubled since she started with FSS. She graduates with a check for \$12,000.

Ms. Uribe Restrepo expressed her appreciation for the guidance and support she received while in the program.

The Board expressed congratulations to Ms. Uribe Restrepo on her accomplishment. Both Ms. Jorgenson and Ms. Uribe Restrepo left the meeting after the presentation.

Report of Chairperson

Ms. Bhatt welcomed the Board back. She acknowledged that former Commissioner Melissa Elias has moved to Chicago. Ms. Bhatt and others were able to express their appreciation to Ms. Elias for her service to the Housing Authority before her move.

Ms. Bhatt explained that the Mayor and Borough Council decide who is appointed to the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. Ms. Bhatt has communicated to the Mayor the strengths of each current Commissioner and expressed that appointing a new commissioner with complimentary skills would be helpful.

Jeff Smith was recently re-appointed to a 5-year term on the Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Bhatt congratulated the staff on their ongoing trainings recent certifications.

Report of Executive Director

Ms. Van Order reported that Jessica Kirchenbauer assumed her new position as Rental Assistance Program Manager 9/1/2022 and is streamlining processes and improving the use of technology for both participants and landlords. In an unprecedented recent development, HUD awarded MHA four additional HCV vouchers with a one-time administrative fee bonus to offset costs of lease up. PHAs nationwide were awarded additional vouchers in HUD's effort to address the affordable housing crisis through expansion of the HCV program. With these four new vouchers, our HCV program moves from a maximum of 190 to 194.

Ms. Van Order stated that we received a score of 100 on our Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) score for FYE 3/31/22. We continue to work with our fee accountant to keep our lease up rates within our funding authority and we have been able to add additional units even prior to receiving the 4 new vouchers.

Ms. Van Order updated the Board on the status of the partial release of RAD Use Agreement and for Public Housing ACC closeout: 1/ The partial lease paperwork has not been completely filed with the county clerk and this should be completed very soon. 2/ The HUD Newark field office reports it submitted the closeout paperwork to HUD Headquarters in Washington in July and is awaiting approval from Headquarters to issue the closeout letter. We are also still working on recording the documents related to HUD's approval of our request for a partial release from four of our RAD Use Agreements. Both of the above matters need to be resolved in order for us to move forward with our plans to develop additional affordable housing on the excess parcels released from the RAD Use Agreements.

Ms. Van Order provided updates on ongoing capital projects. We have a date for milling and paving of five parking lots in early October. We will be line striping those parking lots as well as the other two lots that we did crack & seal repair on earlier in the summer. Our architect, Bill Charleroy, is completing the flood mitigation plan for the boiler room area behind the senior building and we hope to be ready to bid this portion of the project this fall. Mr. Charleroy is also working on a reconfiguration of the rear driveway at that location to improve the overall drainage from Belleau Avenue and encourage the flow of water on that roadway toward the Borough storm water drains and away from our boiler room. The rear driveway project will not be covered by the FEMA mitigation funding. We received a non-official confirmation from Morris County Community Development that MHA's 2022 CDBG grant request of \$95,000 was "conditionally approved". Once we receive a grant agreement from CD, we can go out to bid for the Loantaka Way HVAC improvements in early 2023.

Ms. Van Order reviewed the details of the resolution regarding RMP Development Group's request for an easement to allow them to loop the proposed water main from the Walnut Street site to the existing dead-end water main along Community Place. This connection through the rear of our property was recommended by the Borough Water and Fire departments and will not have any lasting impact on our property. RMP will restore any disturbances created during installation of the water main line.

Ms. Van Order commended Deputy Director Karen O'Keeffe for managing the onboarding of our newest staff member, Elaine Martino, and overseeing Jessica's transition to her new position.

Lastly, Ms. Van Order reported that she and Ms. O'Keeffe will be attending the Governor's Housing Conference at the end of September and the NAHRO conference in November.

Report of Deputy Director

Ms. O'Keeffe reported that as of September 1, 2022, 54 of our 56 family units and 78 of our 79 senior units are leased.

Recent staff transitions are going well. Elaine Martino is getting up to speed quickly as Office Administrator. She has been very well received by our residents. Jessica Kirchenbauer is also quickly getting a handle on her new position as Rental Assistance Program Manager. Ms. O'Keeffe also reported that residents often report very positive feedback about the excellent work done by our two-maintenance staff, Julio Duque and Wilson Castaneda

HUD recently released a PIH Notice requiring all HUD subsidized units be equipped with CO2 detectors. With Madison Fire Department Captain Ed Nunn's help, the Housing Authority was able to articulate to HUD that we have CO2 detectors in all locations in the building that have gas or combustible input. We were able to get specific feedback from HUD that they agreed with Fire Captain Nunn's assessment and that our building is in good standing as is with the PIH Notice. Ms. O'Keeffe expressed appreciation for the partnership with the Madison Fire Department.

Thirty-one residents at the Rexford Tucker Apartments (RTA) attended the new Resident Organization's first meeting on August 18, 2022. The Organization has elected its first Board of Officers. They will host their next meeting this Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

On October 4th Zufall will be hosting a Flu and Bivalent Covid-19 Booster shot clinic at RTA. There has been a big response from residents, and we expect a lot of residents to participate in this event. Zufall also had their dental van come to the senior building twice this summer.

October 5-7th we are expecting the milling and paving of both Park Avenue sites, Community Place, Loantaka Way and John Avenue. Belmont and RTA will have new lines painted. Ms. O’Keeffe stated that the Housing Authority will be working with the Borough to help our residents park offsite without being ticketed.

In coordination with the FSS Program Coordinator, back to school backpacks were distributed to many of our family households at our annual Back to School Bash on August 18th. The backpacks were stuffed with back-to-school supplies. This is a popular program and is very well received by our residents.

Committee Reports

None.

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Correspondence

SEMAP Final Score Notification Letter for Fiscal Year Ended 3/31/2022

Fair Share Voucher Allocation Notice

NAHRO Moratorium on New Regulations by HUD and “Resetting the Partnership” between HUD and Public Housing Agencies

Certificate of Completion for Tanya Van Order: Everything You Need to Know About Disparate Impact!

Certificate of Completion for Karen O’Keeffe: How to Manage Resident Who Don’t Play by the Rules

NAHRO Certification for Karen O’Keeffe: Certified Specialist of Occupancy-HCV

NAHRO Certification for Karen O’Keeffe: Certified Specialist of Eligibility and Calculation-HCV

NAHRO Certificate for Jessica Kirchenbauer: HCV Portability

Certificate of Training for Elaine Martino: Cyber Security

Certificate of Training for Elaine Martino: Protecting Children from Abuse

Resolutions

22-20-9-1 Resolution Approving Payment of Invoices

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

22-20-9-2 Resolution to Renew Membership in the New Jersey Public Housing Joint Insurance Fund

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

22-20-9-3 Resolution Approving a Deed of Easement with Walnut Street, L.P. for a Water Main Extension at Community Place (Lot 23, Block 1601)

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

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Bhatt moved for adjournment at 5:30 P.M.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 8, 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,

Karen O’Keeffe
Deputy Director