

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
NOVEMBER 17, 2021

A regular Board meeting of the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford was held using a remote connection meeting platform Zoom and held in person at 22 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut on Wednesday, November 17, 2021.

Commissioner Rutz called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

A. Attendees

Present:	Susan Rutz	Absent:	Bianca Shinn-Desras
	Lester McKoy		Courtney Nelthropp
	Rich Ostuw		
	Sheila Williams-Brown		

Advisory Board Member: Ronice Latta

Present:

- Vin Tufo
- Natalie Coard
- Jon Gottlieb
- Sam Feda
- Jackie Figueroa
- Ken Montanez
- Darnel Paulemon
- Jamie Perna
- Jan Tantimonico
- Christine Young

B. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 27, 2021

➤ Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner Williams-Brown seconded

The minutes were approved.

Ayes:	Susan Rutz	Nays:	None
	Rich Ostuw		
	Lester McKoy		
	Sheila Williams-Brown		

C. Public Comment – Ms. Lane inquired about the Administrative Plan update for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program that Ms. Figueroa discussed in the Operations Committee meeting tonight. Ms. Figueroa stated that the public comment period for the Administrative Plan will be an informational session available to the public on a Zoom meeting 12/1/2021. Ms. Figueroa will provide the Zoom meeting details to Ms. Lane and the public prior to the meeting.

D. Board Committee Reports

Human Resources Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, McKoy, Shinn-Desras and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Coard, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna and Ms. Young attended the HR Committee meeting on 11/16/2021. Ms. Tantimonico provided an update on recruitment and reviewed the Employee Communication and Engagement Activities Plan for 2021/2022. Ms. Tantimonico reviewed the status of the employee personnel online storage project.

Finance Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, McKoy, Shinn-Desras and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Coard, Mr. Feda, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Mr. Paulemon, Ms. Luzietti, Mr. Arturo, Ms. Young, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Tarulli, Ms. Shutes and Mr. Warren attended the Finance Committee meeting on 11/16/2021. Mr. Montanez provided an extensive overview of COC’s cyber security infrastructure and the importance of cyber safety. Mr. Montanez reviewed the results of the cyber assessment conducted by Whittlesey

& Hadley. The assessment provided COC with a risk rating and suggestions on how to mitigate risk and vulnerabilities. The IT Department is working on a Cyber-Security Assessment (CSA) Mitigation plan.

Mr. Paulemon and Mr. Fedra provided a budget overview of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and Multi-Family properties for FYE 12/31/2022. Mr. Fedra discussed the impact of the 2022 HUD Section 8 Fair Market Rents (FMR) on the portfolio. The 2022 budgets have positive and stable results in comparison to 2021 budgets. The largest impact on the portfolio results from the FMR rent increases.

Operations Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, McKoy and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Stothart and Ms. Young attended the Operations Committee meeting on 11/17/2021. Ms. Figueroa and Ms. Perna presented highlights from the Quarterly Operations Report of 9/30/2021 that included the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Property Management dashboards as well as the Communication, Business Enterprise and Supportive Services sections. Mr. Stothart reviewed the Procurement and Capital Improvement sections. Ms. Perna presented an update on the UniteCT Rent Relief program noting that there are 143 residents in the combined COC/Stone Harbour portals, including approved and pending applications. Ms. Perna stated that COC has received approximately \$313,000 in UniteCT funding to date and that program activity had increased in the previous week. Ms. Perna discussed that residents who declined to participate in UniteCT would be referred for legal action and offered a repayment agreement. Ms. Perna reported that COC continues to work with Person to Person on rent relief with six residents having received rent relief in 11/2021 and with two applications pending. P2P will pay a maximum of \$1,000 per application.

Mr. Fedra reported on the 10/2021 accounts receivable (A/R) status for all properties noting an increase in total A/R over the previous month. Mr. Fedra discussed that pending UniteCT funds would eliminate current A/R balances at certain developments. Ms. Perna reported that COC has added a new learning module to the Charter Oak Learning Exchange (COLE) focusing on 2021 Fair Housing Training. Ms. Perna noted that COC participates in training through the Connecticut Fair Housing Center every two years. All client facing staff attended this training that included the following departments: Property Management, Maintenance, Housing Choice Voucher, Intake & Admissions and the Executive Office. Ms. Figueroa provided an overview of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Administrative Plan and discussed the updates that are being proposed in this edition. The updates were presented publicly 11/8/2021 and are available for comment through 12/7/2021. A public hearing has been scheduled for program participants and stakeholders via Zoom on 12/1/2021.

Mr. Stothart reported on upcoming Capital Projects, which include the Office Renovations at Clinton Manor and the Site Improvements at Lawn Avenue Townhouses. He provided updates on the two RFPs that are currently being prepared: Financial Services for Rippowam Corporation and the Electrician Services for COC. Mr. Stothart noted that the Air Conditioning Installation project at Wormser Congregate is being funded under the City of Stamford's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

- E. **Report from Executive Director** - Ms. Coard stated that the Clinton Manor office renovations of the first-floor reception area and office spaces will begin 12/6/2021 with an anticipated completion date of 1/25/2022. This will affect working areas, and the plan is to disburse the team to temporary office spaces to ensure the continuity of work. The second-floor completion is slated for 3/2022. Ms. Coard discussed the impact on reopening our offices to the public due to the construction.

Ms. Coard stated that Ms. Leslie Sexer, Family Centers Chief Program Officer, will oversee the Resident Service Coordinators (RSCs) team since the passing of Ms. Carole Elias. Ms. Coard stated that bi-weekly meetings are being held to acquaint Ms. Sexer with the RSCs responsibilities.

- F. **Strategic Overview from Chief Executive Officer** - Mr. Tufo noted that Mayor-Elect Caroline Simmons has begun to develop a transition team consisting of an advisory group and cabinet members. Ms. Bridget Fox, President, Stamford Cradle to Career, United Way of Western Connecticut, has been appointed the Executive Director of the transition team and, in 12/2021, will be appointed the Mayor's Chief of Staff. COC has a good working relationship with Mayor-Elect Simmons and Ms. Fox that we'll develop once the administration takes office. Mr. Tufo stated that the transition team consists of nine policy advisory committees with approximately 100 individuals that will advise the administration on prospective initiatives and goals, which include: economic development, citizen services, infrastructure and resiliency, public health, public safety, education, affordability and housing, equity and inclusion and veteran's affairs. Mr. Tufo has been appointed to the committee focused on affordability and the housing sector; Ms. Figueroa and Commissioner Shinn-

Desras are seated on the education committee. Mr. Tufo stated the affordability and housing sector consists of ten members: COC, Inspirica, Housing Development Fund, New Neighborhoods, SilverSource, three Stamford residents and representatives of Fairfield County's Community Foundation. The group will meet over the next few weeks to recommend policy proposals and comment on which goals are achievable within the first 100 days of the administration. Mr. Tufo discussed the Stamford Housing Affordability Study that is nearing completion, which will be a valuable resource to support the goals outlined of the administration.

G. Board Discussion – Political Yard Signs on COC Properties & Recycling Frequency

Commissioner Williams-Brown raised concerns about political yard signs on COC properties. Ms. Coard stated that COC does not host or discriminate against any political parties or activities. Currently, COC allows all signs on properties, and there is no COC signage policy. The Commissioners agreed that a policy needs to be drafted and implemented for public use.

Ms. Williams-Brown discussed concerns on the Fairgate recycling bins that fill up within two days and are only picked up once a week. Ms. Coard stated that garbage and recycling services are provided for residents weekly due to budget constraints. Management will consider additional recycling bins for properties in need.

H. Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

I. Adjournment

At 7:12 p.m., after a motion duly made by Commissioner Rutz and seconded by Commissioner Ostuw, the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director