

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
APRIL 28, 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 on Wednesday, April 28, 2021.

Commissioner Rutz called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

A. Attendees

Board Members:

Susan Rutz
Rich Ostuw
Adriana Ospina

Absent:

Courtney Nelthropp
Sheila Williams-Brown
Lester McKoy

Advisory Board Members: Ronice Latta
Bianca Shinn-Desras

Angie Murphy

Present:

Vin Tufo
Natalie Coard
Jon Gottlieb
Jackie Figueroa
Jamie Perna
Lisa Reynolds
Sam Fedá
Janice Tantimonico
Dorothea Dorante

B. Approval of Minutes – Approval of minutes of the Special Board Meeting of April 13, 2021

➤ Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner Ospina seconded

The minutes were approved.

Ayes: Susan Rutz
Rich Ostuw
Adriana Ospina

Nays: None

C. Public Comment – No public comments.

D. Board Committee Reports

Human Resources Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, McKoy and Ospina, Advisory Board members Latta and Shinn-Desras, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Coard, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Dorante, Ms. Perna, Mr. Tufo and Ms. Young attended the HR Committee meeting on 04/27/2021. Ms. Tantimonico and Ms. Dorante provided an update on current open positions and employee engagement activities, including communications and events. Ms. Tantimonico and Ms. Dorante provided an overview of preliminary hybrid work policy considerations. Ms. Tantimonico reviewed the new health insurance premiums for the CT State Partnership Plan, effective July 1, 2021. Ms. Reynolds provided an update on the Charter Oak Learning Exchange (COLE).

Operations Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, and Ospina, Advisory Board members Latta and Shinn-Desras, Ms. Coard, Ms. Perna, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Fedá, Ms. Figueroa and Ms. Tantimonico attended the Operations Committee meeting on 04/28/2021. Ms. Perna presented an update on the Charter Oak Communities-Family Centers Rent Relief Program (RRP). The total number of participants in the program is 31 with approximately \$145,000.00 program funds dispersed. Ms. Perna provided an update on UniteCT, the state's new rent relief program, noting that 22 households have applied with an additional 16 applications being submitted with the assistance of staff. Ms. Perna noted that the COC Rent Relief Program "2.0", providing a streamlined, limited subsidy, has 26 households enrolled. Mr. Fedá presented the accounts receivable dashboard, updated through April, noting the decline in Accounts Receivable.

Ms. Perna reported that COC continues to host COVID-19 testing events monthly at all senior developments. Ms. Perna noted that 288 residents have been vaccinated with Stamford Health through their “No Barriers” program. Ms. Perna reported that three households enrolled in COC Childcare Stipend Program with approximately \$5,800 program funds dispersed.

Ms. Figueroa provided an update on the implementation of FileVision, an electronic central repository for documents and data, that will be used for all housing programs at COC. FileVision will be the first step in supporting COC’s paperless resident file initiative. The Operations Team underwent a weeklong training session and have gone live with utilizing the system.

Ms. Perna reported that COC established a new Flat Rent Schedule. The flat rents are calculated at 80% of the Fair Market Rents (FMR) minus any utility allowance. All the residents that reside in federal developments have the option to use flat rents.

Finance Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, Ospina, McKoy, Advisory Board members Latta and Shinn-Desras, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Coard, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Dorante, Mr. Persaud, Ms. Perna, Mr. Fedra, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Arturo, Ms. Luzietti, and Mr. Tufo attended the Finance Committee meeting on 04/27/2021. Ms. Luzietti presented the Wormser Congregate FY 6/30/22 budget and the 2021 projected results. She stated the program has positive ratios and financial results. Mr. Arturo presented the Oak Park budget for FY 6/30/22. He discussed the out-year projections for Oak Park and the estimated impact of increased vacancies as we move into the pre-development and redevelopment phases at the property. Mr. Paulemon reviewed the Board’s Fiduciary Checklist, highlighting the current quarter and upcoming quarter activities.

E. Report from Executive Director –Ms. Coard provided an update on the two recent deaths at Stamford Manor and ongoing coordination with the Stamford Police Department. Ms. Coard stated that a meeting was scheduled with the police to discuss concerns for the safety of Stamford Manor residents. An update will be provided at the next Board meeting. Ms. Coard also provided historical background regarding prior issues at Stamford Manor as well as the improvements throughout the years. Ms. Coard noted that Stamford Manor has 24/7 security coverage to safeguard the residents.

F. Strategic Overview from Chief Executive Officer - Mr. Tufo described the newly instituted process of federal earmarks. Mr. Tufo noted that the LawnHill Terrace Phase 4 development budget was showing a \$450,000 shortfall after all other capital financing was confirmed. Mr. Tufo stated that COC, in coordination with the City, applied to Congressman Himes for a federal earmark to close this gap and was selected as one of his 10 District choices. The request must now progress through the congressional appropriations process. Mr. Tufo described a new initiative through the VITA Program called *Equitable Economic Recovery*. The goal of this initiative is to assist residents in achieving re-employment and to improve their economic status, standard of living and quality of life.

G. Board Discussion – Ms. Shin-Desras led the discussion with the board members on the following items: what specific topics should we identify to bring awareness among our elected officials; how do we engage our elected officials from Stamford around our legislative priorities; thoughts about drafting legislative priorities and hosting annual events to our policy makers; how are policies and legislative bills followed by the agency; is there staff member that tracks certain housing bills and brief the executive team? The members discussed provided comment and feedback to the items.

H. Resolution

21-11 Approve FYE June 30, 2022 Budgets for the State Moderate Rent- Oak Park and Wormser Congregate Program

➤ Commissioner Ospina moved, Commissioner Ostuw seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Budgets for the State Moderate Rent Program (Oak Park) and Wormser Congregate facility are adopted for the Fiscal Year starting July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 subject to final approval by the DOH and CHFA as applicable.

This Resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw
Susan Rutz
Adriana Ospina

Nays: None

21-12 Adopt Updated Flat Rent Schedule for all Federal Low Ren Public Housing Properties

- Commissioner Ospina moved, Commissioner Ostuw seconded.

Be it resolved that the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the updated flat rent schedule is hereby adopted and effective May 1, 2021.

This Resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw
Susan Rutz
Adriana Ospina

Nays: None

I. Executive Session

Executive Session was held to discuss Scofield Manor.

J. Adjournment

At 7:25 p.m., the meeting was adjourned after a motion duly made by Commissioner Ospina and seconded by Commissioner Ostuw.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director