

MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 16, 2014

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange was called to order at 6:20 pm on Thursday, January 16, 2014 at Walter G. Alexander, 105 Wilson Place Community Room, Orange, New Jersey. The Executive Director advised that all of the requirements of the Sunshine Law were met A roll call was taken as follows:

Present

Vice Chairman Ernest Williams
Commissioner Lillie Davis – Entered the Meeting at 6:32 p.m.
Commissioner Evelyn Hudson-Dorrah
Commissioner David Rossi
Commissioner Joseph Juliano
Commissioner Clifford Ross

Also Present

Walter D. McNeil, Jr., Executive Director
Ernest Booker Esq., Feinstein, Raiss, Kelin & Booker
Several Employees
Several Tenants

Absent

Chairman Coram Rimes

Vice Chairman Williams called for the adoption of the agenda. Commissioner Rossi moved to adopt. Commissioner Hudson- Dorrah.

Vice Chairman Williams called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All commissioners voted in favor

Vice Chairman Williams called for the adoption and/or correction of the Minutes from Regular Board meetings on September 19, 2013, October 17, 2013 and Special Meeting on November 26, 2013. Commissioner Ross moved to adopt. Commissioner Hudson-Dorrah seconded

Vice Chairman Williams called for discussion.
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners voted in favor

Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report

Executive Director' Report

Mr. McNeil said he is going to try to sum up what we did for the year. He said we got a lot accomplished, because of the efforts of this Board of Commissioners, the staff and this community working together. We featured the golf outing. We won the national award of merit and have applied for the award again. We are trying to preserve the 30 million dollar investment. . Our programs, scattered sites, Congregate Housing Programs we feed a number of people daily. The program has been going on for ten years. We are going to be top contenders for the National Award of Merit. We were awarded 1.3 million to do Oakwood Avenue through the Sandy monies. National night out. started North Parrow Street Project. Mr. McNeil said we have a new Chairman. We will be sending you a list of the items we will be working on in 2014. We are not slowing down one bit. Mr. McNeil said we received a letter from the New Jersey Redevelopment Authority and would like to share this comment with you. We applied for a \$500,000.00 loan/grant. She paid us the highest compliment. She said out of all of the applications they have received, your packet was the most complete. Not only was it the most complete, it was easy to follow and had the most background information. I asked her what are our chances. She said, I think your chances are pretty darn good to get the loan/grant. There a couple of things we have to follow up on. We have to get those properties conveyed to us from the City of Orange. Mr. McNeil said even though the City Council did the resolution to convey those properties to us, the Mayor and the Administration has not signed off on the deed so we can develop them. Mr. McNeil said what that does is put the onus on the city to clean those properties and keep them up and going. There are two properties that are on North Parrow Street that are contiguous with properties that we have already purchased. We have to get ownership to go before the planning Board in order to make everything right. We need to make a push to get those properties from the City of Orange. For 2014 you will see the demolition of the rest of the properties. We are going to knock down the bodega and the salon. The residents have moved. Shanda Hammond the Housing Manager helped to get those families relocated. We are ready to demo the property. We are going to complete the development. We are going to do 16 units off of Oakwood and Parrow and another 26 units where the old community center was. Mr. McNeil said a big feature is a 4500 big community space. People have been complaining about not having any place to go, this space is going to be awesome! However we are going to have to work with the city and other agencies to put together programs. Even though we built the space, we don't have money to operate a program. We will talk with the powers that be about that. Mr. McNeil said around Walter G Alexander we are continuing to do scattered sites. We just did an imminent domain on 159 Central Place. The church that has been closed for the last 8 or 9 years. It is deteriorating. We have put together a plan to demolish it. It is right in the middles of a residential area. We are the owners of the property. We are looking at 197 Central Place. Mr. McNeil said at Washington Manor we are doing the community room, \$150,000.00 in renovations. There will be a conference room space with a kitchenette. Will be able to use it for training. Brighter lighting. We will replace some stoves and refrigerators. Looking to expand the parking lot. We bought two other scattered sites 245 Washington Street and 241 Washington Street which has 7 garages attached to the back. We are looking to put families in our homeownership program in those units. May be used as a training center. Residential/commercial space so it will work well. Mr. McNeil said we are applying for a literacy grant. The Grant is for \$150,000.00.

Public Session

Councilman Hassan Abdul Rasheed, 259 Reynolds Terrace, said that the Orange Housing Authority is due in Court in Belleville regarding a dispute between the Orange Board of Education and the City of Orange about garbage on the property. Councilman Abdul Rasheed asked if anyone from the Housing Authority will be going to Court on the 29th.

Mr. McNeil said we cleaned up the property. We sent pictures to Marty Mayes and the Commissioners. The City questioned why we cleaned it up if it wasn't our property. Mr. McNeil said we took the higher road and cleaned it up, even though the survey shows it is not our property.

Councilman Abdul Rasheed said he didn't know that we cleaned it up. I wanted to commend you for that. Do you have a general time for demolition?

Mr. McNeil said there is no demolition for the properties he is talking about.

RESOLUTIONS

Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5272-14 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Approving Bills Resolution No. 1857 Commissioner Ross moved to adopt. Commissioner Hudson-Dorrah seconded.

Vice Chairman Williams called for discussion

No discussion

A roll call was taken

All Commissioners voted in favor

Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5273-14 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange certifying the Audit review for fiscal year ending March 31, 2013 Commissioner Ross moved to adopt. Commissioner Davis seconded.

Vice Chairman Williams called for discussion

No discussion

A roll call was taken

All Commissioners voted in favor

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5274-14 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of approving the annual Plan for fiscal year ending 2014. Commissioner Hudson Dorrah moved to adopt. Commissioner Ross seconded.

Vice Chairman Williams called for discussion

No discussion

A roll call was taken

All Commissioners voted in favor

Unfinished/New Business

Commissioner Juliano said he is doing a reading at the Orange Public Library for Martin Luther King Day.

Vice Chairman Williams said the Christmas toy drive was a success.

Vice Chairman Williams called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Hudson-Dorrah moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Davis seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter D. McNeil, Jr.
Secretary/Treasurer