

MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING MARCH 20, 2014

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

Present

Chairman Coram Rimes
Vice Chairman Ernest Williams
Commissioner Joseph Juliano
Commissioner David Rossi
Commissioner Evelyn Hudson Dorrah
Commissioner Clifford Ross
Commissioner Lillie Davis

Also Present

Walter D. McNeil, Jr.
Ernest Booker, Feinstein, Raiss, Kelin and Booker
Several Tenants
Several Employees

Pledge of Allegiance was said

Chairman Rimes called for the adoption of agenda
Commissioner Ross moved to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Williams seconded.
Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners voted in favor

Chairman Rimes called for a motion for the Adoption and/or correction of the Minutes from Regular Board meetings on December 19, 2013, January 16, 2014 and February 20, 2014.
Commissioner Ross moved to adopt December 19, 2013 minutes. Commissioner Davis seconded.
Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners voted in favor

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adopt the Minutes from a Regular Board meeting on January 16, 2014. Commissioner Williams moved to adopt January 16, 2014 minutes. Commissioner Hudson Dorrah seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners voted in favor with the exception of Chairman Rimes who abstained

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adopt the Minutes from a Regular Board meeting on February 20, 2014. Commissioner Ross moved to adopt February 20, 2014 minutes. Commissioner Williams.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion

No discussion

A roll call was taken

All Commissioners voted in favor with the exception of Commissioner Davis who abstained.

Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report

Executive Director's Report

Mr. McNeil said that we have a new press packet that outlines some of the activities we have done. We received some press regarding the FSS program and Black History Program. He said at the Black History Program that was held here, we distributed checks to the FSS graduates. Commissioner Williams spoke about Ernie Thompson. Mr. McNeil said next year we should be back in our community room and we will work to have an even better program.

Mr. McNeil said the trip to Washington DC was successful. We spoke about the increased regulations HUD has put on us and the decrease in funding. He talked to them about the Drug Elimination Program and bringing it back and Community Development Block money to help our youth in the community. Mr. McNeil said with more Congressional visits we should get more visibility.

Mr. McNeil said the Mayor finally signed the deeds that go with the North Parrow Street Developments. We are moving forward. We can now go to the Planning Board.

Mr. McNeil said that we got an email from the DCA (Department of Community Affairs) saying they approved our environmental review for both of the Oakwood Avenue Projects. They did the Neighborhood Enhancement Program Grant we are using to complete the project on Oakwood. They are waiting for HUD to approve the environmental review then they will release the money. We are close to selecting the contractor. This will be done through the Orange Housing Development Corporation. It will take about nine months to complete. We should be hearing something soon about the tax credits. Mr. McNeil said we will continue to acquire properties and develop them.

Mr. McNeil said that our Section 8 report we have a goal to decrease our outgoing portables and we are trying to minimize the outgoing portable fees.

He said that the Public Housing report 249 out of 251 units occupied. Most of the scattered sites are leased up. Two properties on Washington Street are being worked on.

Mr. McNeil said that he is happy about the direction the agency is going in.

Commissioner Ross asked about the Treasurer's report. Mr. McNeil explained about the new regulations added by HUD and the additional workload on the staff. There will be a treasurer's report next month.

PUBLIC SESSION

Councilman Hassan Abdul Rasheed, 259 Reynolds Terrace, Orange New Jersey inquired about the litigation with the Orange Board of Education regarding the property cleaning dispute.

Mr. McNeil explained the outcome in court. An agreement was made to take turns with cleaning the site.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 5277-14 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Approving Bills Resolution No. 1859.
Commissioner Ross moved to adopt. Commissioner Hudson Dorrah seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion

Commissioner Rossi asked about the camera installation. Mr. McNeil explained there were different purchase orders for the cameras in the community room. Lance Hammond further explained that some of the money came for Capitol Fund and some came from the regular budget.

Commissioner Ross asked about the new water bill for 131 Central Place. Mr. Hammond explained the process.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion

No discussion

A roll call was taken

All Commissioners voted in favor

Chairman Rimes called a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5278-14 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Authorizing the Reduction of Administrative Fee Payments to Receiving Housing Authorities. Commissioner Ross moved to adopt. Commissioner Hudson Dorrah seconded

Chairman Rimes 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. 5279-14 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Approving the Annual Budget for Fiscal Year Ending 2015. Commissioner Williams moved to adopt. Commissioner Davis seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion

Commissioner Rimes stated he wanted to urge everyone to vote “no” without seeing the budget. Commissioner Hudson Dorrah agreed. Mr. McNeil further explained HUD had to give us the numbers. It is the same budget – it’s been reduced to 80% for Public Housing subsidy and 85% for Section 8 HAP payment – 75% for section 8 administrative fee funding. We met with the auditor who gives you the report at the end of the year. He tells us where we are at the end of the year. There are penalties for not submitting your budget as of April 1st. Not much has changed. Chairman Rimes requested to meet with the fee accountant before voting on this. We need to correct it. Mr. McNeil said the accountant will have the report by Friday. Commissioner Williams stated we should vote on it today and deal with the accountant after the report. Commissioner Hudson Dorrah wanted to know how the analysis was done to come up with the figures. Mr. McNeil explained how the figures were derived. We did the research to put together the budget. It is based on what cost we will encounter. Commissioner Rimes said the budget is based on historical data and historical data is what is used to project the future.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion

No discussion

A roll call was taken

Commissioner Hudson Dorrah, Commissioner Ross and Chairman Rimes did not vote in favor to adopt the resolution. All other Commissioners voted in favor – motion passed.

Unfinished/New Business

Commissioner Juliano wanted to know if anything was done for Women’s History month. Mr. McNeil informed the agency did not as of yet.

Commissioner Williams spoke about a show that was held at Walter G. Alexander last week. Old school R&B concert.

Mr. McNeil received an email from the Mayor's office about us participating in community clean-up day. Mr. McNeil said he sent all the Commissioners the information about the Obama Healthcare. The sign up last night for the Obama Healthcare went well last night. Many people attended and signed up. Commissioner Davis said there was a lot of information about the program and people to help you sign up.

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Davis moved to adjourn. Commissioner Juliano seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion

No discussion

A roll call was taken

All Commissioners voted in favor

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter D. McNeil, Jr.
Secretary/Treasurer