

MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING ON OCTOBER 17, 2013

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange was called to order at 6:08pm on October 17, 2013 in the Community Room at Washington Manor, 340 Thomas Boulevard, Orange, NJ. The Executive Director advised that all requirements of the Sunshine Law were met. A roll call was taken as follows:

Present

Chairman Coram Rimes
Commissioner Joseph Juliano
Commissioner Ernest Williams
Commissioner Evelyn Hudson-Dorrah
Commissioner Clifford Ross
Commissioner Lillie Davis
Commissioner David Rossi – Entered meeting at 6:15

Also Present

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

Pledge of Allegiance was said

Chairman Rimes called for the adoption of the agenda. Commissioner Davis moved to adopt. Commissioner Juliano seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners voted in favor

Adoption and/or correction of minutes from a Regular Meeting on June 20, 2013, Emergency Meeting on July 11, 2013 and a Special Meeting on August 21, 2013. Commissioner Hudson-Dorrah moved to adopt. Commissioner Ross seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners voted in favor except for Commissioner Ross who abstained.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. McNeil said that the September report things have not changed much same situation. We are utilizing the net restricted assets of Section 8 Reserves with HUD. You will see the reserves

spending down. HUD is paying us less money so that we will spend down the reserves. All other programs except Section 8 are at level of functioning at a positive manner. Outline information each month. Expenses have gone up consistently.

Public Session

Linda Jones Bell stated that something is going to have to change; the RAB has not been used for its purpose. She said she just found out that the community room would be closed for elections. She said she talked to Shanda Hammond the Housing Manager and Ms. Hammond informed her that this issue was cleared up and the location of voting would not change.

Walter McNeil said we are not changing the location of voting the community will be allowed to vote in this building. I have concerns regarding voting. I spoke with folks from the election board. Spoke with them about the use of the room. Mr. McNeil realized how important is for folks to have access to voting. Foyer would be okay to use. It would inhibit our folk's ability to vote. Mr. McNeil also said that we do planning with RAB every year. The RAB meets four times a year about planning. Mr. McNeil said he is allowed to select people to work with, not the Residents Association. Every 4 years we try to give others opportunity chance to be on board. We now have cameras on elevators, community rooms and kitchens. Most kitchens and bathrooms are done. We have been advised about refrigerators and stoves. I have been here longer than 5 years. I don't won't anyone to undermine what the staff and RAB has done. We are trying to get to every apartment. Energy efficient toilets, new closet doors. The RAB talked about bed bugs we spent \$30,000.00 on extermination. We do utilize RAB. It is a 5 year process and we invest time and effort to do these things. The community room looks institutional so we need a change here. Mr. McNeil said he spoke with RAB and residents. The residents picked out how the room will look. Mr. McNeil said many of the residents were in these meetings to come up with the plan for the community room. We expanded our reach as developers in the community.

Commissioner Ross said that he wanted Mr. McNeil to clarify for the Board and tenants to let us know when construction will begin.

Mr. McNeil said he cannot give the exact date he said he would like for them to work on the ac in the room. Mr. McNeil said to give him a few weeks to get a date it will happen after November 5, 2013. I will sit down with the residents to let them know what is going to happen.

Commissioner Ross asked if the next election will be in the community room.

Mr. McNeil said it all depends on what we can get from the engineers. He said not to be upset if it's in foyer.

Ms. Barbara Price said that the staff needs training on how to communicate with us. A letter was sent to the residents from Cristina Mateo which wasn't very nice.

Mr. McNeil said we had a personal conversation about this. This matter was remedied.

Mr. Rufus Hardy spoke to Ms. Davis and told him the community room will be closed for two months. Can't they do one half of the room at a time?

Commissioner Ross said that would be a problem with insurance. It would be unsafe for people to be in the room.

Mr. McNeil said I am hoping it won't take two months. The ceiling and floor tiles will be taken out and electrical and ac vents that need to be changed. Demolition will be done and demo of the store for wheelchair access.

Mrs. Marianna DeVincentis, Director of Section 8 said in reference to the bed bug situation each unit has been inspected. Mr. McNeil hired additional staff, maintenance to washed clothes moved furniture. Mrs. DeVincentis said that we are down to five units. Any issues you have let us know right away. We spent a lot of money to remedy this.

Shanda Hammond, Housing Manager said we don't just tell people to throw out furniture. We work with the exterminator to remedy before telling them to get rid of furniture.

Ms. DeVincentis said we attacked it head on with the furniture, clothes, bought laundry detergent and we will follow up in 6 months.

Commissioner Ross said we've pretty much tackled problem with bedbugs. It is a cooperative effort.

Shanda Hammond said if you know someone who has bedbugs don't visit in their unit. You will bring the issue to your unit.

Betty McCloud said people come in this room and bring the issue with them. Can you allow them not to come down here?

Mr. McNeil said if you know of someone who has bedbugs come to the manager and let her know. The manager can give the resident a notice. We will address it.

Linda Jones Bell wanted to know about the Thanksgiving dinner and Christmas dinner.

Mr. McNeil has to have a discussion on how these situations will be handled.

Mr. Rufus Hardy was wondering in light of holidays could construction be moved after the first of the year.

Mr. McNeil said he will get back to everyone after his meeting with the contractor.

Resolutions

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5256-13 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Approving Bills Resolution No. 1854. Commissioner Ross moved to adopt. 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 to adopt Resolution No. 5257-13 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Honoring Ms. Ruby Forney for achieving the age of 102 Years. Commissioner Williams 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. 5258-13 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Approving the Authority's participation in the recently announced City of Orange Tax Lien Sale. Commissioner Williams moved to adopt. Commissioner Juliano seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners were in favor

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5259-13 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Authorizing the Executive Director to provide Holiday Bonus to Employees. Commissioner Ross moved to adopt. Commissioner Davis seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion

Chairman Rimes said the staff has worked hard. Commissioner Ross and Commissioner Davis agreed with Commissioner Rimes.

Chairman Rimes called for any more discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners were in favor

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5260-13 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange Certifying Compliance with the appointment regulation for each of the Orange Housing Authority Commissioners and the Executive Director. Commissioner Hudson-Dorrah moved to adopt. Commissioner Williams seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners were in favor

Unfinished/New Business

Mr. McNeil said that the golf outing was a success and the golf committee did a great job. We have money to carry us over into the next event. Commissioner Rimes did a great job fundraising over \$10,000.00. Mr. McNeil would like to thank the committee that reviewed the applications for the scholarships. Mr. McNeil also said that we were told we had one of the best golf outings.

Mr. McNeil said the website is updated. We have a date for new golf outing which is September 15, 2014. Green Brook made some recommendations on how to save money. We are working on 75th anniversary. We are thinking about having it sometime in January or February. Hopefully in our new community room.

Mr. McNeil said that he emailed a list of all of the properties we have acquired. To date we have 41 properties. He said our scattered sites bring in rental revenue. Mr. McNeil said he would like for the Commissioners to tour to see the properties. He also said that the City of Orange has vacant and abandoned properties which they are conveying 6 properties to us.

Chairman Rimes called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Ross moved to adjourn. Commissioner Rossi seconded.

Chairman Rimes called for discussion
No discussion
A roll call was taken
All Commissioners voted in favor
Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Walter D. McNeil, Jr.
Secretary/Treasurer

