

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
APRIL 22, 2020

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 22, 2020.

Commissioner Ostuw called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

A. Attendees

Present:

Courtney Nelthropp
Rich Ostuw
Susan Rutz
Sheila Williams-Brown
Lester McCoy

Absent:

Advisory Board Member: Adriana Ospina

Staff Members Present:

Vin Tufo
Natalie Coard
Jacqueline Figueroa
Jamie Perna
Peter Stothart
Lisa Reynolds
Sam Feda
Darnel Paulemon
Alexis Luzietti
Janice Tantimonico
Dorothea Dorante
Jon Gottlieb
Chris Warren
Christine Young
Marcia Bennett

B. Approval of Minutes - Approval of minutes of the Agency Plan Meeting of April 13, 2020

➤ Commissioner Nelthropp moved, Commissioner Rutz seconded

The minutes were approved.

Ayes: Courtney Nelthropp
Rich Ostuw
Susan Rutz
Sheila Williams-Brown
Lester McCoy

Nays: None

C. Public Comment - No public comments.

Board Committee Reports

1. **Human Resources Committee** –Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, Williams-Brown, McCoy, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Dorante, Ms. Coard, Mr. Tufo and Ms. Reynolds were in attendance at the HR Committee meeting on 4/21/2020. Ms. Tantimonico reported on the changes of business practices to mitigate risk and maintain operation during the pandemic. The Committee discussed other options of employee engagement while working remotely.

2. **Operations Committee** – Commissioners Rutz, Ostuw, McCoy and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board Member Ms. Ospina, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Coard, Ms. Perna, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Tufo, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Feda, Ms. Luzietti, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Dorante and Ms. Bennett were in attendance at the Operations Committee meeting on 4/22/2020. Ms. Perna discussed the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) approved rent increase for Lawnhill Terrace, Oak Park and Wormser Congregate. Ms. Perna provided an update on the newly established rent forbearance program. Ms. Figueroa discussed the regulatory waivers issued by HUD which will provide administrative relief to staff; she identified 34 waivers that will be utilized during this time. Ms. Figueroa noted that some waivers have conditions; a list will be generated to keep track of waivers and their end date. Ms. Coard provided an update on Scofield Manor Business Continuity Plan; COVID-19 testing will be provided to residents at Scofield Manor and staff on 4/24/2020; housekeeping and the janitorial staff increased the cleaning at the facility during the week and twice on weekends. All residents and staff are mandated to wear masks; they are currently working with a staffing agency that will help to provide additional coverage. Ms. Coard noted that 8 residents and 2

staff members have tested positive, 6 residents remain in quarantine at the facility and 2 are currently hospitalized. Ms. Figueroa noted that all cost associated with COVID-19 are being tracked.

3. **Finance Committee** – Commissioners Ostuw, Nelthropp, Rutz, Ostuw, Williams-Brown and McCoy, Mr. Tufo, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Coard, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Mr. Paulemon, Ms. Luziatti, Mr. Arturo, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Ball, Ms. Silverio, Ms. Alexander and Mr. Persaud were in attendance at the Finance Committee meeting on April 21, 2020. Ms. Luziatti and Ms. Alexander discussed the Wormser Congregate budget for Fiscal Year Ending (FYE) 6/ 30/21. Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Arturo and Mr. Persaud discussed the State Moderate Rent properties Oak Park and Lawnhill Terrace budget for FYE 6/30/2021. The financial impact of COVID-19 was discussed as part of the budget presentation on the three property budgets. Additionally, key financial ratio indicators were presented as part of the budget to illustrate financial sustainability, flexibility and strength. Mr. Fedra presented the economic impact of COVID-19 on COC residents through rent collections in April. The collection percentages were presented to the Commissioners and the future month(s) outlook was briefly described. The financial reporting for COC has been postponed to May or June to provide the Commissioners with an accurate financial projection, incorporating the impacts of COVID-19.

D. **Report from Executive Director** – Ms. Coard reported that the NAACP contributed fourteen thousand masks to the Stamford Community. The first round of distribution went to Stamford Manor, Post House, Clinton Manor and Quintard Manor; the residents received ten masks with informational material. The NAACP is working on additional funding to provide masks to other properties. Ms. Coard noted that the Stamford Police Department also provided masks to elderly properties; Glenbrook Manor, Summer Place and Rippowam Manor residents. Ms. Coard reported that Resident Service Coordinators (RSC) reached out to over 800 residents to provide assistance related to the CARES Act and completing any applications to assist with obtaining financial resources. RSC’s are also working on offering phone group and zoom activities to residents to keep them engaged.

E. **Strategic Overview from Chief Executive Officer** – Mr. Tufo discussed two areas of response by the organization during this crisis, one internally and another externally. He recognized the work being done by senior management and directors; the group developed an emergency response team that has been meeting weekly to review different policies and regulation to enable the organization to be proactive and to respond to the conditions that we are currently undergoing. Mr. Tufo discussed the external role through the Vita Partnership; that includes 25 community service organizations that usually meet on a monthly basis now meets weekly virtually as a part of a community table to discuss common challenges. Vita Collaborative has responded to the broader community by purchasing over 20,000 surgical masks on behalf of all the service partners. Over 12,000 masks were provided to about 20 organizations for the frontline workers, volunteers and those that are most vulnerable within our community.

F. **Resolution**

20-16: Approve 2020 Rent Increase for Oak Park and Lawnhill Terrace

➤ Commissioner Nelthropp moved, Commissioner Rutz seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Base Rent increase for the State Moderate Rent Program, which includes Lawnhill Terrace and Oak Park, is adopted effective May 1, 2020 and continuing thereafter, subject to final approval by the State or CHFA as applicable

The resolution was passed.

Ayes:	Courtney Nelthropp	Nays:	None
	Rich Ostuw		
	Susan Rutz		
	Sheila Williams-Brown		
	Lester McCoy		

20-17: Approve 2020 Congregate Fee and Rent Increases for Wormser

➤ Commissioner Rutz moved, Commissioner Williams-Brown seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the monthly service increase of \$60 for Wormser Congregate is adopted effective July 1, 2020 and continuing thereafter, subject to final approval by the Connecticut Department of Housing.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes:	Courtney Nelthropp	Nays:	None
	Rich Ostuw		
	Susan Rutz		

20-18: Approve FYE June 30, 2021 Budgets for State Moderate Rent – Lawnhill Terrace, Oak Park and Wormser Congregate Program

➤ Commissioner Nelthropp moved, Commissioner Rutz 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 – Lawnhill Terrace, Oak Park and Wormser Congregate facility are adopted for the Fiscal Year starting July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 subject to final approval by the DOH and CHFA as applicable..

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Courtney Nelthropp
Rich Ostuw
Susan Rutz
Sheila Williams-Brown
Lester McCoy

Nays: None

20-19: Authorize Change Order No. 3 to Contract w/ Celery Design Collaborative for Added Funding and Term Extension for Strategic Branding, Marketing and Communications Consulting

➤ Commissioner Nelthropp moved, Commissioner Rutz seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the CEO is authorized to approve Change Order No. 3 to the contract with Celery Design Collaborative for the amount of \$60,000.00 bringing the total not to exceed contract amount to \$298,700.00; and that additional funding shall not be exceeded without further Board authorization.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Courtney Nelthropp
Rich Ostuw
Susan Rutz
Sheila Williams-Brown
Lester McCoy

Nays: None

20-20: Accept the City of Stamford Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for Roof, Soffit & Gutter Replacement at Scofield Manor

➤ Commissioner Rutz moved, Commissioner Nelthropp seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Executive Director is authorized to accept the \$152,084.00 CDBG Grant from the City of Stamford for the Roof, Soffit and Gutter Replacement at Scofield Manor. She is authorized to execute a contract and related documents, including requests for payment from this grant.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Courtney Nelthropp
Rich Ostuw
Susan Rutz
Sheila Williams-Brown
Lester McCoy

Nays: None

G. Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

H. Adjournment

At 6:33 p.m., after a motion duly made by Commissioner Nelthropp and seconded by Commissioner Rutz, the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director