

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
MARCH 24, 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, March 24, 2021.

Commissioner Rutz called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.

A. Attendees

Present: Susan Rutz
Rich Ostuw
Lester McKoy
Sheila Williams-Brown
Adriana Ospina

Advisory Board Members: Ronice Latta
Bianca Shinn-Desras
Angie Murphy

Present: Vin Tufo
Natalie Coard
Dorothea Dorante
Sam Feda
Jackie Figueroa
Jonathan Gottlieb
Jamie Perna
Suela Pergjoni
Lisa Reynolds
Peter Stothart
Janice Tantimonico
Christine Young

Resident Present: Frances Lane

B. Approval of Minutes - Approval of minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 24, 2021

➤ Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner McKoy seconded

The minutes were approved.

Ayes:	Susan Rutz	Nays:	None
	Rich Ostuw		
	Lester McKoy		
	Sheila Williams-Brown		

C. Public Comment – Ms. Lane commented that the recertification process this year was handled pleasantly, and she appreciated the streamlined process with a reduction in the paperwork.

D. Board Committee Reports

Human Resources Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, Ospina, McKoy and Williams-Brown, 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 03/23/2021. Ms. Tantimonico and Ms. Dorante provided an update on employee engagement communications and events. Ms. Reynolds reviewed a presentation on the Charter Oak Learning Exchange (COLE) that outlined the goals, objectives and measurements for the trainings that will be accessible in the system to the staff.

Operations Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, McKoy, Ospina, and Ms. Williams-Brown, Advisory Board members Latta, Shinn-Desras and Murphy, Ms. Coard, Ms. Perna, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Feda, Ms. Pergjoni, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Dorante and Ms. Young attended the Operations Committee meeting on 03/24/2021. 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 30 with approximately \$137,000.00 program funds dispersed. Ms. Perna reported that UniteCT, the state's new rent relief program, is now available for

applications, and property managers and resident service coordinators are working with the eligible residents to enroll. Ms. Perna noted that the COC Rent Relief Program “2.0” has 25 households enrolled. Mr. Feda presented the accounts receivable dashboard, updated through March, and noted an increase of \$109,000 of arrears in addition to a significant arrears paid over the previous two weeks. Ms. Perna reported that COC will not implement the yearly rent increase for the State and Tax Credit properties due to the ongoing pandemic and because many residents continue to experience economic hardship.

Ms. Perna reported that COC continues to host COVID-19 testing events monthly at all senior developments. Ms. Perna noted that 49 residents have been vaccinated with Stamford Health through their “No Barriers” program. Ms. Perna reported that COC recently applied for a grant with Fairfield County Community Foundation and was awarded \$15,000.00. The grant provides direct childcare stipends to eligible East Side residents who have had increased expenses due to school closures and lack of childcare.

Ms. Figueroa provided the board with an overview of the HUD FY2021 FMRs and reported on the outcome of COCs rent survey appeal. Ms. Figueroa discussed the proposed resolution of the new Payment Standard schedule effective April 1st. Ms. Coard provided an update on the upcoming Resident Services, Family Self-Sufficiency & Relocation Request for Proposal (RFP) that will be out for bid in April.

Finance Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, Ospina, McKoy and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board members Latta and Shinn-Desras, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Coard, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Dorante, Ms. Perna, Ms. Ball, Mr. Feda, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Arturo, Ms. Silverio, Ms. Luzietti, Mr. Tufo, and Ms. Young attended the Finance Committee meeting on 03/24/2021. Representatives from Whittlesey presented an overview on the Stamford Elderly Housing d/b/a Scofield Manor (Y/E 9/30/2020) and the Tax Credit properties (Y/E 12/31/20) Audited Financials. The auditors noted no findings or management comments and issued a clean, *unmodified* opinion.

- E. **Report from Executive Director** –Ms. Coard provided an overview on the areas of the Reopening Plan that will be updated before the office transitions to Phase 2. The areas discussed were Hazard Pay, Reasonable Accommodation, Travel and Office Schedule. Ms. Coard discussed the website source, [*COVID Act Now*](#), that is used to obtain the metrics concerning the potential for coronavirus community spread that will trigger the conversion to Phase 2. Ms. Coard noted that employee COVID testing will continue on a bi-weekly basis for the foreseeable future to ensure the safety for all when working in the office. Ms. Coard stated that the office will remain closed to the public in Phase 2; however clients are able to make an appointment if necessary.
- F. **Strategic Overview from Chief Executive Officer** - Mr. Tufo solicited feedback from the board members on the first strategic session held on 3/10/2021. Mr. Tufo stated, to better allow discussion and questions, a third session will be added on 5/6/2021. The session on 4/13/2021 will focus on Operations, which include Property Management, Resident Services, Maintenance, Procurement and HCV. The session on 5/6/2021 will focus on Board Engagement and Community Initiatives and any other content not addressed at the 4/13/2021 session.
- G. **Board Discussion** – Ms. Rutz discussed the new board agenda item that will allow the board to discuss items of interest that may not be covered by the staff on the normal agenda. The discussion focused on a map of Stamford that marked the locations of all COC owned and managed properties, which included the properties managed by Stone Harbour. The members discussed the locations, proximity to public transportation and possible development in other areas of Stamford. Mr. Ostuw, Mr. McKoy, Ms. Williams-Brown, Ms. Lata, Ms. Shinn-Desras, Mr. Gottlieb and Ms. Coard provided comment and feedback on the map.
- H. **Resolutions** –
- 21-08: **Adopt Payment Standards for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) to comply with HUD FY2021 Fair Market Rent Calculations.**

- 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 Housing Choice Voucher Program Payment Standards for new and current participants are hereby adopted effective April 1, 2021.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Susan Rutz
Rich Ostuw
Adriana Opsina
Lester McKoy
Sheila Williams-Brown
Nays: None

I. Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

J. Adjournment

At 7:05 p.m., after a motion duly made by Commissioner Ostuw and seconded by Commissioner McKoy, the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director