

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
SEPTEMBER 22, 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, September 22, 2021.

Commissioner Rutz called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

A. Attendees

Present: Susan Rutz
Rich Ostuw
Bianca Shinn-Desras
Sheila Williams-Brown
(left 6:30 p.m.)

Absent: Courtney Nelthropp
Lester McKoy

Advisory Board Member: Ronice Latta

Present: Vin Tufo
Natalie Coard
Sam Feda
Jackie Figueroa
Jonathan Gottlieb
Ken Montanez
Jamie Perna
Peter Stothart
Lisa Reynolds
Jan Tantimonico
Christine Young

B. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of August 25, 2021

➤ Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner Shinn-Desras seconded

The minutes were approved.

Ayes: Susan Rutz
Rich Ostuw
Bianca Shinn-Desras
Sheila William-Brown

Nays: None

C. Public Comment – No public comments.

D. Board Committee Reports

Human Resources Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, Mr. McKoy, Shinn-Desras and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Tantimonico, Ms. Coard, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Perna, Ms. Figueroa, Mr. Montanez and Ms. Young attended the HR Committee meeting on 9/21/2021. Ms. Tantimonico provided an update on recruitment and COC’s employee recognition and engagement activities. Ms. Tantimonico informed the Committee that Scofield Manor is in compliance with the vaccine mandates in Governor Lamont’s Executive Order 13B. The COC Vaccination Policy summary was reviewed with the HR Committee. During the Board of Commissioners meeting on 9/22/2021, Ms. Tantimonico reviewed one update to the summary, which included additional restrictions on attending meetings and events.

Finance Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, Williams-Brown and McKoy, Advisory Board member Latta, Ms. Coard, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Feda, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Arturo, Ms. Silverio and Ms. Luzietti attended the Finance Committee meeting on 09/22/2021. Mr. Paulemon presented the Scofield Manor Operating Budget for FY 2022. The FY 2022 Operating Budget is projected

at (\$87K) due to Scofield's high vacancy rate and recent expense increases especially in food costs. The Committee noted that this budgeted operating deficit does not account for COC's unreimbursed indirect costs that exceed the earned management fee at the facility (for FY 2022, the indirect cost net loss is \$212K).

Ms. Reynolds and Ms. Silverio presented the annual Tenant Accounts Receivable Write-off Report per the Fiduciary Checklist for FY 2021. A high-level policy review and a dashboard with three years of data were presented and discussed. The data included the number and value of write-offs approved by the Executive Director for more than \$5K and the Board for more than \$5K, write-offs by property type and general reasons for the write-offs.

Ms. Reynolds provided an Investment Policy Review Update. The Committee had its first meeting this month, completed the review of the Internal Control Section of the Policy, and will issue an RFP for Investment Advisory Services shortly. Mr. Paulemon provided an update of the current external audit activity. The unaudited REAC submission to HUD was completed 9/15/2021 and preliminary external audit work is underway with expected completion by end of calendar year 2021. Audit planning for Scofield Manor is underway with completion expected by 1/31/2022.

Operations Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Rutz, Shinn-Desras and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Stothart and Ms. Young attended the Operations Committee meeting on 09/22/2021. Ms. Perna provided an update on the UniteCT Rent Relief Program activity noting that COC currently has 61 applicants waiting in the portal with \$134,500 having been paid to date. Stone Harbour has 19 applicants in the portal with \$70,500 paid to date. Ms. Perna noted that the current total AR balance for outstanding applications across all properties totals approximately \$207,000. Ms. Perna reported that the UniteCT mobile bus would be stationed at Oak Park on 10/4/2021 to assist residents to apply for the program. UniteCT also provides utility expense assistance that may be helpful to residents.. Ms. Perna presented the 08/2021 accounts receivable dashboard for all properties noting that there was a significant reduction in total arrearages owed due to payments received from UniteCT.

Ms. Figueroa reported on the recently released FY2022 Fair Market Rents (FMRs) published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The new FMRs, which are a significant increase from FY2021, are effective 10/1/2021 for the Stamford-Norwalk Metropolitan area. The FMRs are used to adopt payment standards for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Given the high rental market in Stamford, payment standards are set at 110% of FMRs. The FY2022 FMR's will increase resident options and benefit rental calculations for Project Based HCVs.

Ms. Perna reported that COC will soon be opening the waitlists for Clinton Manor and Quintard Manor. Ms. Figueroa reported that the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Program lists will be opening for the following three properties: Metcalf House, Woodland Avenue and Stone Street. Ms. Figueroa provided an update on COC's partnership with Stamford Housing First Collaborative and the referral process via the Coordinated Access Networks (CAN).

Mr. Stothart reviewed the capital improvement activities to include site improvements and erosion control at Lawn Avenue Townhouses; Clinton Manor office renovations; and the RFP for Landlord/Tenant Legal Services. Procurement activity updates include the contract having been executed with Reno and Cavanaugh for Specialized Legal Services; a change order signed with Creative Culinary for food services at Scofield Manor; and an RFP for electrical services that will be put out to bid.

- E. **Report from Executive Director** - Ms. Coard discussed the prospective Moving to Work (MTW) application to HUD, which is due 10/15/2021. Ms. Coard reported that participation in the program would provide COC with additional *fungibility* (i.e. flexibility) in the use of HUD public housing and HCV program funds; however planned reductions in the public housing inventory would likely limit their future availability. Ms. Coard discussed some details of the program affecting landlords and anticipated challenges including the absence of new HUD funding to support the mandated MTW activities; the program could reduce the number of available HCV vouchers. Ms. Coard noted a public session was held with residents to present the MTW program. If COC should go forward with the application process, the board would need to approve the application at a Special Board meeting, tentatively on 10/13/2021; COC would receive a response from HUD by early 2022. The board will be advised of further developments including staff's recommendation of whether or not to submit the MTW application.

