

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF  
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE  
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD  
OCTOBER 26, 2022

A regular Board meeting of the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford was held at 40 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut and on the Zoom remote connection meeting platform on Wednesday, October 26, 2022.

Commissioner Rutz called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**A. Attendees**

Present:	Susan Rutz	Absent:
	Rich Ostuw	
	Lester McKoy	
	Bianca Shinn-Desras	
	Sheila Williams-Brown	

Advisory Board Members: John Coff  
Shari Johnson  
Ronice Latta  
Divya Malhotra

Present:	Vin Tufo
	Natalie Coard
	Jon Gottlieb
	Lisa Reynolds
	Sam Feda
	Jackie Figueroa
	Brethela Love-Ortiz
	Ken Montanez
	Jamie Perna
	Megan Shutes
	Peter Stothart
	Chris Warren
	Christine Young

Public:	Ms. Frances Lane
	Ms. Cynthia Bowser

**B. Approval of Minutes**

- Approval of minutes of the COC Board Meeting of September 28, 2022

➤ Commissioner Ostuw moved; Commissioner McKoy seconded

The minutes were approved.

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

**Public Comments** – Ms. Lane requested an update on negotiations between the City of Stamford and Center Management for the sale of Scofield Manor. Mr. Tufo explained that the city needs to have discussions with the Board of Representatives to approve the transfer. COC has made it clear that it's in the program's best interest long-term for

the transfer to be completed. COC continues to manage the building, but the costs continue to rise on an annual basis; COC will continue to request subsidy from the city to operate the building.

### C. Board Committee Reports

**Human Resources Committee** – Commissioners Ostuw, McKoy, Shinn-Desras and Williams-Brown and Advisory Board members Coff, Latta and Malhotra, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Gomez, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Ms. Love-Ortiz and Ms. Young attended the HR Committee meeting on 10/25/2022. Ms. Tantimonico provided an overview of open positions, new hires and promotions. Ms. Tantimonico provided an update on the new annual performance reviews. Ms. Tantimonico provided employee feedback on the recent Town Hall Meeting and announcement of COC obtaining the Hearst Connecticut Media Group 2022 Top Workplace award. Upcoming employee engagement events were discussed.

**Finance Committee** – Commissioners Ostuw, McKoy, Shinn-Desras and Williams-Brown and Advisory Board members Coff, Latta and Malhotra, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Gomez, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Ms. Love-Ortiz, Mr. Paulemon, Ms. Silverio, Ms. Luzietti, Mr. Galasso, Ms. Correa, Ms. Young and Mr. Warren attended the Finance Committee meeting on 10/25/2022. Ms. Silverio discussed the Comprehensive A/R Write-Off report as required by the Adopted Write-Off policy in accordance with the Board’s Fiduciary checklist. The comprehensive report highlighted the last two years of write-offs, identified those approved by the executive director (less than \$5K per tenant) and those approved by the Board of Commissioners by a resolution (over \$5K per tenant). Ms. Correa outlined the employee engagement activities for National Cyber Security in 10/2022. Activities have included weekly education topics, challenge questions to earn points and a ‘Lunch & Learn’ banquet with a Cyber Security expert guest speaker.

Ms. Luzietti provided an update on the current audit activity including the housing authority and Scofield Manor audits. They are proceeding within the prescribed timeframes, and no adverse issues have been raised by the auditors to date. The audits will be presented in final form and approved by the Board with a resolution.

**Operations Committee** – Commissioners Ostuw, McKoy, Shinn-Desras and Williams-Brown and Advisory Board members Coff, Latta and Malhotra, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Gomez, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Perna, Ms. Love-Ortiz, Mr. Paulemon, Ms. Silverio, Ms. Luzietti, Mr. Galasso, Ms. Correa, Ms. Young and Mr. Warren attended the Operations Committee meeting on 10/25/2022. Mr. Fedra provided an A/R update for 09/2022 noting that some residents have made large payments and entered into repayment agreements. Ms. Perna discussed several upcoming court appearances where COC anticipates entering into additional repayment agreements. COC recently received payment on three applications to UniteCT totaling approximately \$23k, with 16 remaining applications pending.

Ms. Perna announced that Connecticut’s UniteCT program received an additional \$11m in funding from the federal government. These funds were redistributed from states that were slow to spend their allocations from the American Rescue Plan Act. The funds are going to be supplemented with an additional \$1.5m from the state. Ms. Perna noted that, when the program closed to new applications in 02/2022, there were 20,000 incomplete applications awaiting consideration. At this point it is unclear whether those applications will be revisited with the new allocation of funds. COC has contacted UniteCT and is awaiting further guidance. COC did have several applications that were still incomplete when the program closed to new applications.

Ms. Figueroa provided an overview of the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program highlighting key changes to the Action Plan that were recently approved by HUD; she shared current program activity regarding enrollment and escrow balances. Mr. Stothart provided an update on the Lawn Avenue Townhouses Site Renovations capital project. Mr. Stothart stated that the Award for on-call General Contractor Services including Carpentry and General Labor Services will be presented at the 11/2022 Board meeting. Mr. Stothart discussed improvements to the air-conditioning system at Wormser Congregate, which is currently out to bid, and the \$60k request submitted to the City of Stamford’s Planning Board to replace the roofs at Scofield Manor.

**D. Report from Executive Director** - Ms. Coard acknowledged and congratulated the maintenance team for their hard work in preparation for the REAC inspections that took place between 03/2022 and 08/2022 at eight COC properties. Ms. Coard provided information on the REAC inspection process, which included apartments, common areas, exteriors and systems. The eight properties scored: Taylor Street 93%, Post House 99%, Rippowam Manor 78%, Stamford Manor 86% and Scattered Family Properties (4) 86%.

**Strategic Overview from Chief Executive Officer** – Mr. Tufo welcomed the new Advisory Board members Coff, Malhotra and Johnson. Mr. Tufo discussed the onboarding process to be a meaningful experience to include learning about members’ interests and how to support them. Mr. Tufo noted that COC would like to collaborate on a mentor plan to pair a senior staff member with an Advisory Board member to learn about the organization and be fully connected. Mr. Tufo discussed the Charter Oak Learning Exchange (COLE), providing training modules to complete at their own pace. Mr. Tufo mentioned the 9/2022 strategic plan update which begins with COC’s core objectives and goals for each operating divisions to gain an insight into the next years planning process to build and preserve our existing portfolio. The concept is to help the Advisory Board members not be overwhelmed but become integrated with COC at their own pace with the right information based on their needs and interest.

Mr. Tufo stated that the Vita Health and Wellness Partnership has created a working group focused on housing affordability in the context of economic stability and food insecurity. Mr. Tufo noted that the Stamford Health Department and Stamford Hospital are beginning to focus on housing as a health-related issue in the latest Community Health Needs Assessment. Mr. Tufo stated that the process would include a review of the city resources available, how to advocate for more resources, and then set targets and goals. COC is in a good position to help guide this process as we have solid experience in collaborations.

**E. Executive Session**

No Executive Session was held.

**F. Adjournment**

At 6:32 p.m., after a motion duly made by Commissioner Ostuw and seconded by Commissioner Shinn-Desras the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard  
Executive Director