

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
 THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
 HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
 JUNE 28, 2023

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, June 28, 2023.

Commissioner Ostuw called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

A. Attendees

Board Members:	Rich Ostuw John Coff Divya Malhotra Lester McKoy Sheila Williams-Brown	Absent: Jaelyn Williams
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Advisory Board:	Ari Goldstein Ronice Latta
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Present:	Mayor Caroline Simmons Vin Tufo Natalie Coard Bridget Fox Jon Gottlieb Lisa Reynolds Jackie Figueroa Sam Feda Raul Gomez Ken Montanez Darnel Paulemon Megan Shutes Peter Stothart Jan Tantimonico Michele Tarulli Chris Warren Rob Velez Christine Young
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B. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of minutes of the COC Board Meeting of May 24, 2022

➤ Commissioner Ostuw moved; Commissioner Williams-Brown seconded.

The minutes were approved.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw Lester McKoy John Coff Divya Malhotra Sheila Williams-Brown	Nays: None
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C. Public Comments – There was no public comment.

D. Board Committee Reports

Human Resources Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Malhotra, McKoy and Williams-Brown and Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Velez, Mr. Warren, Mr. Paulemon, Ms. Young and Mr. Gomez attended the Human Resources Committee meeting on 6/27/2023. Mr. Gomez discussed the 13 new hires and resignations since 1/2023; Mr. Gomez provided a general recruitment overview on the open positions and promotion for 06/2023. Ms. Tantimonico and Mr. Gomez discussed the 6-month calendar on recruitment initiatives, new hires, retention, employee engagement events and lessons learned.

Operations Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Malhotra, McKoy and Williams-Brown and Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Velez, Mr. Warren, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Soares, Ms. Ball, Ms. Luzietti, Ms. Silverio, Ms. Young and Mr. Gomez attended the Operations Committee meeting on 6/27/2023. Mr. Fedra provided an overview of the 05/2023 Accounts Receivable (A/R) results and discussed the \$48k increase across all properties. The increase is in line with our tracking benchmarks as we assess A/R monthly, quarterly, and annually. Ms. Coard provided a leasing update at Lawnhill Terrace 4, which is the 34-unit final phase of the comprehensive renovations at Lawnhill Terrace. To date, there are 15 units leased. Six units are unavailable due to the water damage sustained from the sewer back up that took place 05/2023.

Ms. Figueroa presented HUD's new inspection protocol known as the National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE). NSPIRE is an overhaul to HUD's 20-year-old REAC inspection process. Ms. Figueroa highlighted the main concerns with the REAC inspections that lacked consistency and did not provide the most accurate view of the property. The new model is designed to provide results that more accurately identify deficiencies, it promotes preventative maintenance and better living accommodations with a strong emphasis on health and safety. NSPIRE introduces a single inspection model that will be used in all HUD properties, including multifamily and the housing choice voucher program. Implementation of this new protocol will require staff training and updates to our internal policies that are expected to be presented to the Board for approval 09/2023.

Mr. Stothart presented an update of capital projects and procurement: 1) the Lawn Avenue Fire Restoration for a unit with a resolution for a contract with Titan Enterprises; 2) the replacement of the Wormser Congregate Dining Room and common area Air Conditioning unit project with a resolution to accept funding from the City of Stamford's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for \$47,600; and 3) the small Scofield Manor roof replacement, which is currently in the design phase as we work with the City of Stamford's engineering department. Mr. Stothart informed the Board of a new contract award to TPC for fire inspections, and the janitorial RFP that is currently out to bid.

Finance Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Malhotra, McKoy and Williams-Brown and Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Montanez, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Velez, Mr. Warren, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Soares, Ms. Ball, Ms. Luzietti, Ms. Silverio, Ms. Young and Mr. Gomez attended the Finance Committee meeting on 6/27/2023. Mr. Paulemon provided an overview of the FY 2024 budget for Management, Administration and Enterprise (MAE) comprised of the revenues and expenses for the COC portfolio, including management services, executive and strategic leadership, Finance, HR and Technology departments. Also, the MAE budget includes our social service programs including Dovetail: SIP, Inc., Fairgate Farm and our BMR Services program. Mr. Paulemon presented the projected results for the current year budget (FY 2023) and the proposed budget for FY 2024 highlighting any significant variances. Variances for the program relate to several new positions supporting our growth and business needs and spending related to planned technology infrastructure replacements. Mr. Paulemon further described the projected cash flow for the program and provided three years of out-year projections.

Mr. Paulemon provided an overview of the FY 2024 Rippowam Corporation budget, which is the development and asset management function of the organization. Mr. Paulemon described the expected results for FY 2023 and presented the proposed budget for FY 2024, describing significant variances. The largest variance to the budget relates to investments in affordable housing and the addition of a Vice President to Rippowam Corporation including costs for salary, benefits, recruiting fees and possible relocation costs. This is needed to facilitate the

department's initial staff succession plan. Mr. Paulemon further described the projected cash flow for the associated budget and provided three years of out-year projections.

Mr. Paulemon provided an overview of the FY 2024 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program budget, which is the largest single program administered by COC. The \$30M budget supports more than 2,000 vouchers that house nearly 5,000 people in our community. Mr. Paulemon described the expected results for FY 2023 and presented the proposed budget for FY 2024, describing significant variances. The variances are related to staffing needed to support the expected current and out-year expected program growth. The program is expected to continue to grow supporting our planned conversions from units in the Public Housing Portfolio. However, final HUD federal budget appropriations will govern our level and pace of growth. Mr. Paulemon further described the projected reserve levels provided for five years of out-year projections based on our current assumptions.

Ms. Silverio described four tenant A/R write-offs that exceeded the \$5,000 threshold for Board approval. The four A/R balances total \$47,359 for Oak Park, Lawnhill Terrace Phase 2 and Stamford Manor Addition. Ms. Silverio provided the history for each write-off highlighting assistance received, court actions and other pertinent information. The resolution will be submitted to the Board 6/28/2023 for approval.

Ms. Reynolds discussed the concept of utilizing Board liaison roles for the Finance and Technology departments. The function of the role would be a conduit between the Board of Commissioners, board committee and the operating departments. Enhancing lines of communication between the Board and staff will help us to improve the level and type of information shared with the Board and should provide a new level of collaboration and Board engagement. Commissioners Coff and Malhotra have agreed to pilot the concept with us, and we appreciate their commitment and support. The quarterly Cyber Security Sub-Committee meeting was held 6/26/2023. Topics discussed included the current status of the findings from our last Cyber Security Assessment (CSA), along with current and emerging concerns about cyber security and prevention measures.

E. Mayor's Statement / Open Discussion – Mayor Caroline Simmons stated that COC's partnership with the City and its essential role are important and appreciated for the health and wellness in our community. Mayor Simmons provided updates with respect to the City's housing policy and the vision and goals to build a more inclusive, equitable and vibrant city that is affordable for all. Mayor Simmons reported that the city completed an affordable housing plan and is working to implement a number of components of the plan. An executive order will be signed shortly including a number of provisions: 1) to support the equivalent of 1,000 new or substantially renovated affordable units by 2025 in partnership with COC and others in the city; 2) policy updates to make it easier to develop and upgrade our affordable housing supply to include rezoned parcels around the Stamford train station for higher density; 3) the city is considering increasing the threshold for the below market rate (BMR) program and the requirements for new developments to support or include affordable components; and 4) the city will direct more budget resources towards affordable housing, as it has in the 2024 capital budget. Mayor Simmons discussed partnering with COC and other providers on increasing the housing development fund and expanding homeownership opportunities.

Mr. Tufo stated that many people want to come and live in Stamford because they believe in the opportunities that Mayor Simmons is proposing. More importantly, the public and private sectors should work together, and not just in one area but all areas coming together. Mr. Tufo described how COC is different than other housing authorities in the way in which COC engages with the private sector to include tax credits that become affordable housing dollars along with other institutions that work to bring private dollars to the work we do. Additionally, COC works with many institutions to make affordable housing work better and more efficient with a range of solutions being proactive such as COC's division that partners with BMR owners and provides leasing, and recertification services.

F. Resolutions –
23-16: Acceptance of Charter Oak Communities Write-Off of Tenant Accounts Receivable Balances Over \$5,000

- Commissioner Williams-Brown moved; Commissioner Malhotra seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford that the uncollectable funds of \$47,358.90 be written off to reduce current A/R balances.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
Lester McKoy
John Coff
Divya Malhotra
Sheila Williams-Brown

23-17: Approve the Management, Administrations & Enterprise (MAE) operating budget for the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2024

➤ Commissioner McKoy moved; Commissioner Coff seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Budget for the Management, Administrations & Enterprise are adopted for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
Lester McKoy
John Coff
Divya Malhotra
Sheila Williams-Brown

23-18: Approve the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) operating budget for the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2024.

➤ Commissioner McKoy moved; Commissioner Coff seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the operating budget for the Housing Choice Voucher Program are adopted for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
John Coff
Lester McKoy
Sheila Williams-Brown
Divya Malhotra

23-19: Award Contract for Fire Restoration work at 197 Custer Street to Titan Enterprises, Inc.

➤ Commissioner McKoy moved; Commissioner Coff seconded.

Be it resolved by the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Executive Director is authorized to enter into a contract with Titan Enterprises, Inc, for Fire Restoration at 197 Custer Street. The cost of this procurement amount is not to exceed \$278,000.00. Further Board approval will be required if the contract amount exceeds 110% of the authorized amount.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None

John Coff
Lester McKoy
Sheila Williams-Brown
Divya Malhotra

23-20: Accept City of Stamford Year 49 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for Replacement of the Dining Room Air Conditioning units at Wormser Congregate

➤ Commissioner McKoy moved; Commissioner Coff seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford that the Executive Director is authorized to accept \$47,600.00 YR 49 CDBG Grant from the City of Stamford for the Replacement of the Dining Room Air Conditioning Units at Wormser Congregate. The Executive Director is authorized to execute a contract and related documents, including requests for payment from this grant.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw
John Coff
Lester McKoy
Sheila Williams-Brown
Divya Malhotra

Nays: None

G. Executive Session - No Executive Session was held.

H. Adjournment - At 7:07 p.m., after a motion duly made by Commissioner Malhotra and seconded by Commissioner Williams-Brown the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director