

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
FEBRUARY 28, 2024

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, February 28, 2024.

Commissioner Ostuw called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

A. Attendees

Present: Rich Ostuw Absent: Alexandro Morris
Lester McKoy
Divya Malhotra
John Coff

Advisory Board: Ronice Latta Absent: Jaclyn Williams
Ari Goldstein

Present: Vin Tufo
Natalie Coard
Jon Gottlieb
Lisa Reynolds
Sam Feda
Jackie Figueroa
Beth Janney
Ken Montanez
Jan Tantimonico
Chris Warren
Luisa Correa
Megan Shutes
Michelle Tarulli
Christine Young
Sheila Williams-Brown

B. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of minutes of the COC Board Meeting of January 24, 2023

➤ Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner McKoy seconded.

The minutes were approved.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
Lester McKoy
Divya Malhotra
John Coff

C. Public Comments – There was no public comment.

D. Board Committee Reports

Human Resources Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Coff, McKoy and Malhotra and Advisory Board members Latta and Williams, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Janney, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Feda, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Gomez, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Warren, and Ms. Young attended the Human Resources Committee meeting on 2/27/2024. Ms. Tantimonico provided a recruitment update. Mr. Gomez provided an update on the Employee Safety Committee’s initiatives and employee engagement activities. The activities included a Town

Hall meeting, Employee Appreciation Day, and focus groups that are planned as it relates to the employee survey results. Ms. Reynolds provided an update on the Yardi employee engagement project.

Operations Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Coff, McKoy and Malhotra and Advisory Board members Latta and Williams, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Janney, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Gomez, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Warren, Mr. Galasso and Ms. Young attended the Operations Committee meeting on 2/27/2024. Mr. Fedra provided a 01/2024 accounts receivable (A/R) update noting delinquent accounts. Mr. Fedra noted the A/R increase in 01/2024 over 12/2023, but a decrease at year end. COC has been receiving rent relief funds on behalf of tenants, which are helping to reduce the overall A/R balance. Mr. Fedra stated that the accounts that remain uncollected will be presented at the 03/2024 Board meeting for write-off approval.

Ms. Figueroa provided a summary of the 2024 utility allowance schedules for the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Ms. Figueroa noted that the schedules include updates to the structure types – Single Family, High-Rise and Low-Rise - and reflect rate updates for each utility source. Mr. Stothart provided an update on the Scofield Manor Flat Roof Replacement that will commence when the weather permits; the new Refuse Collection Services contract with Finocchio Brothers, Inc. will commence 03/2024; and the Litter Patrol and Landscaping RFP is currently out to bid and due 3/12/2024.

Finance Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Coff, McKoy and Malhotra and Advisory Board members Latta and Williams, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Janney, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Fedra, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Gomez, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Warren, Mr. Andrew Remus and Mr. Michael Guyder (Marcum LLP), Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Galasso, Ms. Luzietti, Mr. Soares, and Ms. Young attended the Finance Committee meeting on 2/27/2024.

Marcum LLP, an independent auditing firm, represented by partner Mr. Guyder and Audit Manager Mr. Remus, presented an overview of the COC Y/E 6/30/2023 audit. Mr. Remus noted that the audit resulted in an “unmodified” or “clean” opinion with no findings or regulatory irregularities. Ms. Luzietti and Mr. Soares presented the audit updates for Scofield Manor, which is complete, and the tax credit developments that are in various stages of completion. Auditors, Whittlesey & Hadley, P.C., will be presenting these audits at the 03/2024 Finance Committee meeting.

Mr. Fedra provided a Yardi update on project engagement activities and plans on the implementation status. Ms. Reynolds reviewed the Q1 2024 Fiduciary Checklist, noting plans for some procedural and scheduling adjustments.

E. Report from the Executive Director – Ms. Coard discussed the Family Centers Work Life Solutions training, which was developed for the Section 8 and Property Management staff with the assistance of Ms. Figueroa and Ms. Tantimonico. The training was geared toward promoting a productive work environment and included significant employee engagement. Family Centers suggested areas of improvement for COC and offered that COC should provide workshops on emotional intelligence.

F. Strategic Overview from Chief Executive Officer - Mr. Tufo discussed the federal government’s effort to avert a shutdown and maintain current funding levels by issuing another Continuing Resolution (CR). Mr. Tufo noted that reliance on CR’s and the likelihood of government shutdowns cause uncertainty in funding that challenge COC’s implementation of HUD programs. Although there has been some movement to avoid the imminent shutdown, we currently anticipate another short-term extension.

Mr. Tufo discussed the Strategic Planning (SP24) retreat being planned for 4/6/2024 that will be led by Board members and senior staff. Mr. Tufo stated that the intent of the retreat is to ensure that COC is properly aligned with its mission and objectives and that COC is communicating internally as well as externally. Each task group has studied their respective area to develop content, examine how things are working and make recommendations for improvement.

G. 2023 Year End Progress Report – The senior staff presented their 2023 Year-End Progress Reports.

H. Resolutions –

24-05: Accept the Year-End June 30, 2023, Audited Financial Statements for the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford

- Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner Malhotra seconded.

Be it resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford that the year ending June 30, 2023, Financial Statements are accepted.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw	Nays:	None
	John Coff		
	Divya Malhotra		
	Lester McKoy		

24-06: Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) Proposed Schedule for Allowances for Tenant Furnished Utilities and Other Services

- Commissioner McKoy 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 proposed allowances for tenant furnished utilities and other services is hereby adopted, effective March 1, 2024.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw	Nays:	None
	John Coff		
	Divya Malhotra		
	Lester McKoy		

24-07: Approve 2023 Discretionary 401(a) Plan Contribution

- Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner McKoy seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Employer’s Discretionary Contribution for calendar 2023 to the 401(a) plan shall be authorized at 6% for the period of 1/1/23 – 12/31/23. The Chief Executive Officer is authorized to execute such documents as necessary to implement the approved contributions to the 401(a) plan.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw	Nays:	None
	John Coff		
	Divya Malhotra		
	Lester McKoy		

I. Executive Session – No Executive Session was held.

J. Adjournment - At 7:03 p.m., after a motion duly made by Commissioner Coff and seconded by Commissioner McKoy the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director