MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
APRIL 25, 2018

A regular Board meeting of the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford was held at 40 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut on Wednesday, April 25, 2018.

Commissioner Ostuw called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

A. Attendees

Present: Richard Ostuw
Bill McCullough
Sheila Williams-Brown
Susan Rutz
Lester McCoy
Kristella Garcia

Absent: Courtney Nelthropp

Also Present: Vin Tufo
Natalie Coard
Lisa Reynolds
Janice Tantimonico
Jackie Figueroa
Eric Allen
Christine Young
Marcia Bennett

B. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 28, 2018

Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner Williams-Brown seconded

The minutes were approved.

Ayes: Bill McCullough
Richard Ostuw
Sheila Williams-Brown

Nays: None

C. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

D. Board Committee Reports

1. Human Resources Committee

Commissioners Ostuw, Advisory Board members Rutz and McCoy, Ms. Tantimonico (phone) and Ms. Galletti were in attendance at the HR Committee meeting on 03/27/18. Ms. Galletti gave a recruitment update that included the promotion of Ms. Augustin from an Admissions/Receptionist to an Intake Specialist and the hiring of a part-time Certified Nurse’s Aide (CNA) at Scofield Manor. Ms. Tantimonico reported on open positions: Eligibility Specialist, Receptionist, Housing Inspector and part-time Attendant at Scofield Manor. Ms. Tantimonico noted the final edits were made to the Employee Survey, and it has been submitted for approvals. Ms. Tantimonico reported that open enrollment for employee medical, dependent care, flexible spending and transit benefits will begin in June 2018.

Commissioners Ostuw and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board members Rutz and McCoy and Ms. Tantimonico (via phone) were in attendance at the HR Committee meeting on 04/24/18. Ms. Tantimonico gave a recruitment update noting that the following positions had recently been filled: the main office Receptionist and a part-time Attendant at Scofield Manor. Ms. Tantimonico reported on the status of open positions: Eligibility Specialist, pending final decision from management; Housing Inspector, position is being reviewed; and the five Fairgate Farmers Market Trainees. Ms. Tantimonico noted that the RFP for the Labor and Employment Law Attorney has been completed. Two law firms were interviewed: Shipman & Goodwin and Kainen, Escalera & McHale. Ms. Tantimonico reported on the upcoming Employee Benefits Fair on 6/13/18 and 6/14/18. Ms. Tantimonico noted that open enrollment for employee medical, dependent care, flexible spending and transit benefits will begin in June 2018. Ms. Tantimonico noted that the Mayor’s Youth Summer Program (students working at COC) will run 7/9/18 through 8/9/18. Ms. Tantimonico provided feedback on wellness activities noting that approximately 25 employees attended the cooking class at the Sign of the Whale restaurant. Ms. Tantimonico noted that the COC employee summer picnic will be held at Dolce Norwalk on 8/17/18.

2. Operations Committee

Commissioner McCullough, Advisory Board member Rutz, Ms. Figueroa and Mr. Allen were in attendance at the Operations Committee meeting on 3/27/2018. Ms. Figueroa discussed the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program utilization, and the plan to issue vouchers from the waiting list and absorb port-in households. Ms. Figueroa provided an overview of the HCV program Administrative Plan and detailed the upcoming
changes. Ms. Figueroa reported that PayLease, the new COC online rental portal, is fully functional, and residents have begun to submit online rental payments. Mr. Allen provided an energy efficiency update and reported that the work on the following properties has been completed for Glenbrook Manor, Oak Park, Ursula Park Townhouses and Wormser Congregate. Energy efficiency updates are pending for Quintard Manor, Rippowam Manor and Stamford Manor. Mr. Allen provided an update on current procurement activity.

Commissioner McCullough, Advisory Board members McCoy and Rutz (via telephone), Ms. Figueroa and Mr. Allen were in attendance at the Operations Committee meeting on 04/24/18. Ms. Figueroa provided an update on the upcoming waiting list openings - for several properties; State and Federal Public Housing will include Oak Park and Lawn Hill Terrace; Low Income Tax Credit properties will include Park 215, Greenfield, Westwood, Palmer Square and Lawn Hill LP. Ms. Figueroa stated that the waiting list for Stamford Manor and Post House are now closed. Ms. Figueroa reported that waiting list announcements were posted via the Advocate, COC Website, 211 United Way and service partners. Mr. Allen reported on upcoming Procurement activities noting that the RFP for Janitorial Services is now out for bid. Ms. Figueroa discussed tonight’s resolution: Approve the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Administrative Plan.

3. **Finance Committee** – Commissioners Nethropp and Ostuw, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Coard, Advisory Board members Rutz and McCoy, Mr. Feda, Mr. Paulemon, Ms. Villegas, Ms. Young, Ms. Luzietti, Mr. Engberg and Mr. Yanouzas (Whittlesey & Hadley, P.C.) and Ms. Hall (Webster Bank via phone) were in attendance at the Finance Committee meeting on 03/27/18. Ms. Hall discussed the status of COCs’ current investments and the expected interest rate for the coming year. Mr. Yanouzas and Mr. Engberg presented a summary of the Tax Credit Audits and advised the Board on important financial matters. The auditors issued no findings or management comments and issued an unmodified opinion on all properties. Ms. Luzietti presented and reviewed the Investment Policy Objectives and projected investment earnings in 2017 and 2018.

Commissioners Ostuw, McCullough and Williams-Brown, Advisory Board members McCoy and Rutz, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Feda, Ms. Coard, Ms. Villegas, Ms. Figueroa, Mr. Paulemon, Ms. Peagler and Ms. Perna were in attendance at the Finance Committee Meeting on 04/24/18. Mr. Paulemon and Ms. Perna presented the proposed 2019 budget for Lawn Hill Terrace and Oak Park. Mr. Paulemon highlighted significant variances in revenues and expenses. Ms. Perna noted that Lawn Hill Terrace will support the relocation needs for Lawn Hill Terrace Phases 3 and 4. Ms. Villegas and Ms. Peagler presented the Wormser Congregate 2019 budget; Ms. Villegas stated that Wormser’s net asset has moved from a negative into a positive status. Mr. Feda presented and reviewed the 3/31/18 Quarterly Financial Report. Ms. Feda reported several changes to the financial report highlighting the additional ratio analysis and cash flow statements. Mr. Feda noted that the changes will provide COC Board and executives with a better analysis to aid in understanding the decision making process. Mr. Feda noted that there were no significant variances to the projected results provided last quarter.

F. **Report from the Executive Director** – Ms. Coard stated that, due to a recent survey conducted at Wormser Congregate to better identify the needs of the residents, it was decided to bring on a part-time Resident Services Coordinator. This will allow us to implement a program similar to Scofield Manor, which has made significant improvements in the lives of residents. Ms. Coard discussed adding a Maintenance Mechanic at the East Side properties. This need was determined following an analysis of the maintenance requirements of the East Side properties after the addition of Lawn Hill Terrace Phase 2 and the near completion of Phase 3. Ms. Coard noted that the added expense to the budget is a shared cost across all the East Side Properties

G. **Strategic Overview from the Chief Executive Officer** –
Mr. Tufo reported that Fairgate Farm had recently received two grants. The Recycle CT Foundation grant for $10,000, which is to support research and educational programs aimed at increasing the rate of recycling and food waste reuse in Connecticut. Another recent grant, the Mayor’s Neighborhood Grant for $4,000, will support the construction of the farmers market stand to support the USDA Farmer’s Market Promotion program.

Mr. Tufo highlighted several upcoming events. The kick-off to the Fairgate Farm Farmers Market and annual Strawberry Festival will be held 6/2/18. A make-up session on the COC Strategic Planning Corporate Services Group (CSG) will be held 4/30/18, and the next phase of the COC Strategic Planning Management and Operations team will make a presentation 5/15/18 with Ms. Coard and her team.

Mr. Tufo discussed two conferences that he participated in Washington, D.C. in 4/2018. The National NAHRO Legislative Conference, which includes housing authorities, executive directors and commissioners, to focus on Ben Carson’s briefing as well as two other briefings from senior HUD officials on the Moving to Work and Rental Assistance Demonstration Programs (see below).

Mr. Tufo stated he attended the national alliance conference of Smart Growth America entitled First and Main, which is a national coalition of state and local organizations working for smart growth across the country. Mr. Tufo noted the coalition includes mayors of mid-size cities focusing on core initiatives on the environment, transportation, infrastructure, housing and community development. Mr. Tufo discussed that the coalition will subdivide into planks of common interests, and COCs’ interest will be focused on community revitalization and cross-sector development.
Mr. Tufo reported on a series of meetings on Capitol Hill that he was fortunate to be in attendance with Senator Murphy’s staff. Mr. Tufo noted that it was an opportunity to host the meetings with other mayors to build upon relationships. Mr. Tufo reported on his meeting at the White House with the Director of Internal Governmental Affairs for domestic programs. Mr. Tufo discussed a new program, the Opportunities Zone Initiative, which has been added to the tax reform bill. Mr. Tufo stated that COC submitted proposals to the opportunity zones that are of low-income sensitive tracks where COC has already been approved for the use of market-tax credits. COC proposed five sensitive tracks, and all five opportunity zones have been recommended for approval by the Governor.

Mr. Tufo discussed and highlighted the areas he believes HUD will be focused on under this administration:
- The deregulation of affordable housing and shifting the housing responsibility to the local level, which would reduce the federal government’s involvement. Mr. Tufo noted that funding at this time is speculative.
- The Moving to Work (MTW) program will open opportunities to more housing authorities to develop locally based practices and policies that offer more flexibility and fungibility. This will assist organizations, similar to ours, to progress as an entrepreneurial or quasi-governmental agency. Details for MTW status will be determined later this summer.
- The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program enables housing authorities to pull one or more buildings out of the public housing program and reposition them as project based rental assistance buildings (PBRAB). The RAD program fixes the amount of assistance that you get out of a per unit basis at the same level of a public housing building, but provides the opportunity to get tax credits and reposition the building as a limited partnership and level subsidy for other subsidy. Mr. Tufo stated that COC is strategically evaluating if Stamford Manor would be a candidate for the RAD program. Mr. Tufo noted that Stamford Manor is in need of many capital improvements that under the traditional program we have been unable to accomplish, which includes energy efficiency, security and other amenities. Mr. Tufo discussed that COC is willing to take advantage of regulatory options, state or federal programs, but not compromise the physical housing stock or responsibilities to our residents.

H. Resolutions

18-11: Approve the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Administrative Plan

➢ Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner Williams-Brown seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the updated Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan is hereby adopted effective May 1, 2018.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Richard Ostuw
Nays: None
Bill McCullough
Sheila Williams-Brown

18-12: Approve FYE June 30, 2019 Budgets for State Moderate Rent – Lawn Hill Terrace and Oak Park - and the Wormser Congregate Program

➢ Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner Williams-Brown seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Budgets for the State Moderate Rent Program – Lawn Hill Terrace and Oak Park - and Wormser Congregate facility are adopted for the Fiscal Year starting July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 subject to final approval by the DOH and CHFA as applicable.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Richard Ostuw
Nays: None
Bill McCullough
Sheila Williams-Brown

18-13: Approve Contract Change Order No. 4 with Family Centers, Inc. for a Senior-Level Professional as Director of Programs for the Vita Initiative

➢ Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner McCullough seconded.
Be it resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Chief Executive Officer is authorized to approve Change Order No. 4 to the contract with Family Centers, Inc. for the amount of $70,350.00 for the first year of this renewed agreement (April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019) and an increase of three percent to $72,460.00 for the second year of this agreement (April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020) bringing the total not to exceed contract Change Order amount to $4,086,010.00; and that further additional funding shall not be exceeded without further Board authorization.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Richard Ostuw          Nays: None
       Bill McCullough
       Sheila Williams-Brown

18-14:  Approve Resolution for the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford regarding Lawn Hill Terrace 2 CL&P d/b/a Eversource Energy Utility Easement

Commissioner Ostuw moved, Commissioner McCullough seconded.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

1. The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities (HACS) approves the granting of a utility maintenance easement to Connecticut Light & Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy. The easement agreement is attached to this resolution and is incorporated by reference.

2. Vincent J. Tufo, the CEO of COC be authorized to execute and deliver in the name of COC the easement as presented to this meeting and to do any and all other acts necessary to effectuate the foregoing.

3. This resolution shall be effective immediately.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Richard Ostuw          Nays: None
       Bill McCullough
       Sheila Williams-Brown

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 McCullough, the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director