

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH OF CLEMENTON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MONTHLY MEETING
AUGUST 11, 2021**

Chairman Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:05PM and stated that the meeting was being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, also known as the Sunshine Law, NJSA 10:4-6. Notice of the meeting was sent to the Courier Post and South Jersey Times on 8/5/2021 and published in the Post and the Times on 8/9/2021. Notice was also transmitted to the Borough Clerk on 8/5/2021, posted on the bulletin board in Wooster Towers and posted on the Authority's website www.clementonhousingauthority.com. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and following CDC and New Jersey State guidelines, the meeting was held virtually and both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting has been provided, specifying the time, place and way such notice was provided.

Salute to flag.

Upon roll call the following were present: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Konrad, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Closs and Chairman Schmidt. Also present at this meeting were Vernon Lawrence, Executive Director, Barbara Murray, Secretary and Anthony Ogozalek, Solicitor. Excused: Commissioner Cater.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Schmidt advised that under Resolution 2021-018 Awarding Contracts for Architect & Engineering Services that the wording be revised for LAN Associates to say architectural only.

Chairman Schmidt asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2021, with the revision. Commissioner Watson, seconded by Commissioner Konrad made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2021, with the revision. Voice vote: All ayes (Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Konrad, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Closs and Chairman Schmidt) The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

Chairman Schmidt asked for a motion to approve the payment of bills for July 2021 in the amount of \$41,820.59 with proper certification. Commissioner Konrad, seconded by Commissioner Armbruster made a motion to approve the payment of bills for July 2021 in the amount of \$41,820.59 with proper certification. Roll call vote: Ayes: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Konrad, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Closs and Chairman Schmidt. The motion carried.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Vacant units

Mr. Lawrence reported that there are no vacant units at this time.

Lease Violations

We have been receiving complaints about residents smoking in their apartment or not being 25' from building when they go outside to smoke; these complaints are addressed as we receive them.

We have one resident who is in the hospital and is not current with their rent; the family has been uncooperative, so our next step is to send an eviction notice.

Administration

Chairman Schmidt asked that the Board be notified when the part-time position is narrowed down to the final 2 or 3 candidates so that the administration and finance committee could be included in the selection.

Meeting Location

Due to the Delta variant the Board has agreed to continue with virtual meetings until the end of the year.

NEW BUSINESS

Audit Proposals

Chairman Schmidt advised that we received 2 proposals for auditing services, one from Bowman & Company and the other from Novogradac & Company. Chairman Schmidt said that both firms are very competent, but Novogradac & Company has more Housing Authority experience, while Bowman & Company's office location is closer. Chairman Schmidt advised that Novogradac is the auditor for the Pleasantville Housing Authority, and we are in a shared service agreement for them for Executive Management and we also use the same accounting services, his opinion is he would like to have some separation and certainly if Novogradac was not the auditor for the Pleasantville Housing Authority he would not have a problem. Chairman Schmidt noted that even though Bowman is \$4,000 more, he did have a limit of not going above \$18,000 for auditing services.

Commissioner Armbruster said that although he understands Chairman Schmidt's concerns it wasn't that long ago that we had financial issues with the Authority and bringing Mr. Lawrence in has helped us immensely with that. He said that Bowman is a good firm, and it would not be a bad choice; however, his concern is that when we were having financial issues, we were cutting benefits and salary from the employees, and he does not think that was fair to some of our employees. He went on to say that for the Authority to consider paying \$4,000 extra for a firm that we don't know would do anything different would be a considerable waste of money and in his opinion a slap in the face to those employees we took things from.

Commissioner Konrad asked how we would maintain transparency if we used the same auditor; Commissioner Armbruster explained that the auditors are independent auditors, they share a contract and they audit both authorities, but they are not part of the Pleasantville Housing Authority they are independent. He also said that he is concerned with the extra dollars and the signal it sends.

Commissioner Watson questioned whether this would be a conflict of interest; Solicitor Ogozalek advised that there is no conflict of interest. A discussion followed.

Chairman Schmidt asked if someone wanted to make a motion or if everyone wanted to state who they prefer and make a motion from that. Commissioner Armbruster, seconded by Commissioner Konrad made a motion to accept the proposal from Novogradac for auditing services for FYE 06/30/2021.

Chairman Schmidt made a motion to accept the proposal from Bowman & Company for auditing services for FYE 06/30/2021. There being no second, Chairman Schmidt asked for a roll call vote on the motion made by Commissioner Armbruster, seconded by Commissioner Konrad to accept the proposal from Novogradac for auditing services for FYE 06/30/2021. Roll call vote: Ayes: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Konrad, and Commissioner Watson. Nays: Vice-Chairman Closs and Chairman Schmidt. The motion did not carry.

Vice-Chairman Closs advised the Board that she did not have a chance to review the proposals and did not feel comfortable voting one way or the other without first reviewing the proposals.

Chairman Schmidt advised that the proposals are good for 60 days and that the matter will be addressed and voted on at the next meeting (September 8, 2021).

OLD BUSINESS

Bar-B-Que for Residents

Chairman Schmidt asked if anyone was going to do a bar-b-que for the residents; Barb Murray advised that Dave Cornwell, from Friends of Clementon Food Bank, contacted her and would like to host a bar-b-que for the residents but she has not heard back from him yet. A discussion followed.

COVID Vaccination Policy for Employees

Chairman Schmidt asked if all our employees were vaccinated and if they were not there a policy in place for this. Mr. Lawrence advised that at this time there is not a policy in place but that one could be implemented. A discussion followed.


PUBLIC

Chairman Schmidt advised that any members of the public wishing to address the governing body of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Clementon may do so after being recognized by the Chair. Public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes per person. Anyone wishing to address the governing body again may do so for an additional three (3) and final minutes. Chairman Schmidt asked if anyone wanted to address the governing body.

There being no public, the public portion of the meeting was closed.

Chairman Schmidt asked for a motion to adjourn at 6:48PM. Commissioner Watson, seconded by Commissioner Armbruster made a motion to adjourn. Voice vote: All ayes. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,


Vernon Lawrence
Secretary