

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH OF CLEMENTON  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2015**

Chairman Schmidt called the Housing Authority of the Borough of Clementon Board of Commissioners Meeting to order at 6:00PM and announced that the meeting has been properly advertised pursuant to N.J.S.A., 10:4-6, the Open Public Meetings Act. The meeting was held at the John Leshar Senior Center located at 49 Berlin Road, Clementon, New Jersey.

Salute to flag.

Upon roll call the following were present: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Casella, Commissioner Closs, Commissioner Nicholson, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Cater (arrived at 6:05PM), and Chairman Schmidt. Also present at this meeting were Anthony Ogozalek, Jr., Solicitor, William Harris, Executive Director, and Barbara Murray, Secretary.

**MINUTES**

Chairman Schmidt asked if there were any questions or comments on the minutes of the August 5<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting or the minutes of the August 5<sup>th</sup> Executive Session Meeting. There being no questions or comments, Chairman Schmidt asked for a motion to approve both sets of minutes in block.

Commissioner Casella, seconded by Commissioner Nicholson, made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 5<sup>th</sup> Board of Commissioners meeting and the minutes of the August 5<sup>th</sup> Executive Session in block. Roll call vote: Ayes: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Casella, Commissioner Closs, Commissioner Nicholson, and Chairman Schmidt. Abstain: Commissioner Watson. Vice-Chairperson Cater was not present at the time the vote was taken. The motion carried.

**BILLS**

Chairman Schmidt asked if there were any questions or comments on the bills to be approved for payment. Commissioner Closs questioned the gas bill. Mr. Harris explained that month's bill of \$8,984.96 was the final reading of three months' consumption due to, according to the gas company, a defective meter that they discovered sometime in late winter or early spring without notifying us. We received a bill for the months of January through March for approximately \$10,000.00 and one for the second quarter for \$8,984.96; Mr. Harris advised that we paid the first bill and held the second bill until we received an explanation for why we were not informed of the defective meter and also had them come out to verify that the consumption actually took place. The bill for this month (\$492.99) is an actual reading.

Chairman Schmidt said that as was previously discussed, we are going to be looking at some of our policies and possibly be making some changes such as an increase in the amount that is paid monthly by our tenants for the use of their air conditioners. Mr. Harris said that this is a topic

that the administration committee can meet and discuss and then present their thoughts to the Board.

Commissioner Closs asked about the cost that we are spending for maintenance supplies; Mr. Harris advised that it is within our budget and that we just turned over two units for occupancy in September.

Mr. Harris made a suggestion that if any Commissioners had any questions on any of the bills, he would be more than happy to discuss and answer any of their questions prior to the meeting, either in person or by telephone.

Chairman Schmidt asked for a motion to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$29,762.79. Commissioner Casella, seconded by Commissioner Watson, made a motion to approve the payment of bills with proper certification in the amount of \$29,762.79. Roll call vote: Ayes: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Casella, Commissioner Closs, Commissioner Nicholson, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Cater, and Chairman Schmidt. The motion carried.

Chairman Schmidt turned the meeting over to Mr. Harris.

## **MANAGEMENT REPORT**

### **Occupancy**

Mr. Harris reported that we are at 100% occupancy at Wooster Towers and that our Section 8 HCV program remains at 41 families receiving subsidy.

### **SEMAP**

Mr. Harris advised that we have submitted our by-annual SEMAP report to HUD and that we are hoping to receive a grade of high-performer.

### **Termination of Assistance – Section 8 Client**

Mr. Harris advised that a letter was sent to one of our Section 8 clients advising them that their subsidy will be terminated as of October 1<sup>st</sup> due to a lease violation. The letter also advises that they may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing within 10 days of the date of the letter.

### **Tenant Activities**

Mr. Harris advised that the Voorhees Care & Rehab came over and did a "Family Feud" game with our tenants, on September 8<sup>th</sup> Bob Tucker, a guitar player and storyteller, will be here, and on September 16<sup>th</sup> the Nostalgics, a group sponsored by the County Cultural Heritage Commission, will be here in the afternoon.

### **Financial Report**

Mr. Harris advised that the financial report that is included with the management report were prepared by our accountant, Joseph Kavanaugh, and it reflects a \$47,000.00 year-end deficit as of June 30, 2015. Mr. Harris contributes this deficit to three major factors:

- 1) Shortfall in HUD subsidy – HUD failed to meet their obligation by approximately \$31,000.00
- 2) Electric bills were higher than expected by approximately \$8,000.00
- 3) Extraordinary maintenance – hot water circulator pumps went bad, smoke screen doors went bad

Chairman Schmidt and Mr. Harris both agreed that a meeting should be scheduled with the finance committee to discuss these issues. A discussion followed. The committee agreed to meet on Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00PM in the Wooster Towers.

### **Elevator Bid Proposal – Shared Service**

Mr. Harris asked for the Board's approval to enter into a shared service with the Vineland Housing Authority to assist us with the technical specifications and put together a bid proposal for elevator maintenance service. Mr. Harris has asked Ron Miller, who is the qualified purchasing agent for the Vineland Housing Authority, to give us a price for this; the price is \$1,200.00. Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. Harris if he spoke to Jackie Jones, Executive Director of the Vineland Housing Authority; Mr. Harris said he did not but he did not think that Ron Miller would have sent the letter with the price if he did not discuss it with Ms. Jones first. Chairman Schmidt asked Mr. Harris to call Ms. Jones to see if they would lower their price; the rest of the Board did not think we should ask them to lower their price; Vice-Chairperson Cater said that Vineland has agreed to lower their price on other things when we have asked but there may come a time when they will say no. Chairman Schmidt said that he will agree to this shared service but he still wants Mr. Harris to call Ms. Jones regarding the pricing. A discussion followed.

### **Generator**

Mr. Harris advised that he asked PMH Associates to do an assessment of our generators to see if they could handle the additional loads or what alternatives we would have in the event of another emergency. The recommendation, based on our financial situation and the lack of capital funds to purchase a new generator, was to put together specs for an electrician to attach a device that would enable the electric power to be attached to a portable generator; we would have to contract with a supplier of portable generators to insure that in the event of an emergency a trailer would be brought here and connected to our electrical service. The specs have to be done by a licensed electrical engineer and the work has to be done with a permit that has been applied for by a licensed electrician.

Commissioner Nicholson asked if we received a response from the borough regarding our generator situation; Mr. Harris said we have not received a response, there have been some discussions but no willingness to commit to any application for monetary assistance.

Vice-Chairperson Cater asked about the possibility of using one of the generators that belongs to the borough; Commissioner Nicholson advised that they are all typically used in other areas of the borough and he is not sure if they have an extra one. Mr. Harris added that he attended a meeting required by FEMA with the police chief and other emergency management persons and that the police chief stated that they have portable generators that they move to different wells based on need. He also added that we would probably be a lower priority because they have an obligation to keep the wells pumping.

Chairman Schmidt asked if anyone had any questions on the management report. Commissioner Watson asked Mr. Harris to find out who would maintain the generator once it is installed, would the proposed contractor come out and take care of fueling it or would that become the responsibility of the Housing Authority.

Commissioner Nicholson asked about the fire screens that are for fire detection, smoke depression, etc. Mr. Harris said that he spoke to the maintenance supervisor at the Collingswood Housing Authority and asked if they had this experience; he said the state inspector came with the local fire marshal and was told that they had to put the fire doors on all hallways. The maintenance supervisor installed the doors on three floors. The same state inspector told Ms. Wooster that we had to install the doors; they were able to come to an agreement to install the fire screens. The problem with the screens is that they are not reliable; they are relatively new and they are past the one-year warranty for labor.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Cell Phone Policy – Resolution HA15-22**

Chairman Schmidt sent his draft of the cell phone policy to Commissioner Casella and Commissioner Closs; Commissioner Casella said that he did not receive it. Chairman Schmidt said that the next time he would call him on the phone. Chairman Schmidt and Commissioner Closs reviewed the draft and after some changes Chairman Schmidt sent the policy to Mr. Harris to see if he had any changes and also sent it to our Solicitor for his legal advice. Both Mr. Harris and Anthony Ogozalek, Jr. thought it is fine the way it is written.

Vice-Chairperson Cater said that she has two recommended changes:

- 1) Strike out the word temporary in the second paragraph
- 2) Change the wording in the last sentence in third paragraph from “may be” to “will be”

A discussion followed. The Board agreed to strike the word temporary in the second paragraph and to leave the wording the same in the third paragraph.

Commissioner Casella, seconded by Commissioner Closs, made a motion to approve Resolution HA15-22 to amend the Personnel Policy to include the cell phone policy. Roll call vote: Ayes: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Casella, Commissioner Closs, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Cater, and Chairman Schmidt. Nays: Commissioner Nicholson. The motion carried.

**Shared Service Agreement w/Vineland Housing Authority – Resolution HA15-21**

Chairman Schmidt asked for a motion to approve Resolution HA15-21 authorizing a shared service agreement with the Vineland Housing Authority to prepare an elevator maintenance service contract specifications. The Board did discuss and agree to not ask Vineland Housing Authority to lower their price. Commissioner Watson, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Cater, made a motion to approve Resolution HA15-21 authorizing a shared service agreement with the Vineland Housing Authority to prepare an elevator maintenance service contract specifications. Roll call vote: Ayes: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Casella, Commissioner Closs, Commissioner Nicholson, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Cater, and Chairman Schmidt. The motion carried.

**By-Laws Amendment – Resolution HA15-23**

Chairman Schmidt said that in reading over our By-Laws, as he does from time to time, he noticed that Section 8 mandates us on every vote that we take, even motion to adjourn, must be done by roll call. Chairman Schmidt said that he discussed with both Mr. Harris and Solicitor Ogozalek, Jr. amending the by-laws to state that as long as no commissioner has an objection to what is being voted on, we could have a motion and a second and then a voice vote. He also said that there are some things where we would still have to do a yea or nay vote. A discussion followed.

Commissioner Casella, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Cater made a motion to approve Resolution HA15-23 to amend Section 8 of the by-laws to say that votes may be conducted by voice vote at the discretion of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson and for matters that are required by law to be conducted by roll call vote the yeas and nays will be recorded in the minutes. Roll call vote: Yeas: Commissioner Armbruster, Commissioner Casella, Commissioner Closs, Commissioner Nicholson, Commissioner Watson, Vice-Chairperson Cater, and Chairman Schmidt. The motion carried.

**Agenda for October Meeting**

Chairman Schmidt advised the Board that he discussed with Mr. Harris and Solicitor Ogozalek, Jr. that he would like to add to the agenda for the October meeting that there is a court order that may be of interest to the Housing Authority.

**Comments from Commissioners**

Commissioner Nicholson said that he feels most of the business should be handled by the Executive Director and if he needs help with something, the Commissioners can assist him if he prefers. Commissioner Nicholson said that he was a little upset that Chairman Schmidt made a phone call to our auditor and that by the end of the phone call the auditor was sending an e-mail to Mr. Harris that he wanted to quit. Chairman Schmidt said that the conversation was fine until

the subject of the auditor's work papers came up and then everything went "south" and didn't end well. Commissioner Nicholson also said that he didn't understand why, when Chairman Schmidt asked if Wednesday was agreeable to everyone and everyone agreed that it was, at last month's meeting some of the meeting days were changed. He also added that even though there was a quorum, two Commissioners were not in attendance nor was the Executive Director.

Commissioner Watson said that he agrees with Commissioner Nicholson, that the telephone calls to the professionals should be handled by the Executive Director or the Solicitor.

Mr. Harris said that he did get involved regarding the phone call to the auditor and had a conversation with Mr. Giampaolo and told him that the way the RFP's have been written over the past several years it always included the statement that the Housing Authority has the right to review the auditor's work papers; he said it was in the same contract that he signed last year. Mr. Giampaolo said that he feels that Chairman Schmidt is going to try and use the work papers against in in some devious way. Mr. Harris told him that he thought he was over reacting. Commissioner Nicholson said he was concerned that this was an auditor that Chairman Schmidt did not like from the beginning and that he wanted to hire a more expensive auditor; Chairman Schmidt responded that it doesn't matter whether you like a person or not and that is who we hired and he will have to work with him. Mr. Harris added that things have calmed down and that Mr. Giampaolo will be doing our audit.

Commissioner Casella said that he has experience with accounting and that he thought it was a bit of an over-reaction also.

**PUBLIC**

Chairman Schmidt opened the meeting to the public; seeing no public, Chairman Schmidt closed the meeting to the public.

Vice-Chairperson Cater, seconded by Commissioner Casella, made a motion at 6:56PM to adjourn. Voice vote: All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William J. Harris". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

William J. Harris  
Secretary