

COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING, AUGUST 18, 2021

The Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority held its regular meeting on Wednesday, August 18, 2021 by a Zoom Meeting pursuant to Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7B. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Prescille Yamamoto at 1:38 p.m.

- 1. **ROLL CALL:** Commissioner Hazelann Cook
 Commissioner Kathleen Stephens
 Vice Chairman Prescille Yamamoto
 Commissioner John Carella

Chairman James Kate was absent from the meeting.

Also present were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director; Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director; Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR Director; Ralph Alexander, Legal Counsel and Esther Clarke & Connor Martin, Town Council Liaisons.

- 2. **Approval of Regular Board Meeting Minutes, June 16, 2021**

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 16, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

Approval of Special Board Meeting Minutes, July 9, 2021

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to approve the minutes of the special meeting of July 9, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto stated she had one correction to the minutes which was to note Commissioner Carella was absent.

The motion previously made and seconded was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

- 3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one from the public present to address the Board.

- 4. **Request for Additional Agenda Items**

There were no additional agenda items.

- 5. **FINANCE REPORTS**

a. **Payment Vouchers, June & July, 2021**

Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if there were any questions on the June & July, 2021 payment vouchers. In regards to the payment voucher for June & July, 2021: #678 Veterans Terrace Communities LLC – Ms. Bouchard stated that this money is what the East Hartford Housing Authority put towards the development project. As part of the SDA, the Housing Authority agreed to put up some funds to help the project along because the Department of Housing encouraged us to contribute funds so we used our reserves. Commissioner Carella asked about the amount of reserves the Housing Authority has for that

project. Ms. Bouchard said currently the Housing Authority has a little over \$2.1 million and gave them \$583,885 for the Phase 1 and will give them close to that amount or little more for Phase 2.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept the Payment Vouchers, June & July, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

b. Aged Receivables, June & July, 2021

Mr. Pliszka stated that they are high and some of that will come down with money that the Housing Authority will receive from Unite CT and there are a number of tenants that have been approved and we filled out our part and now we are waiting for the money to come through.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept the Aged Receivables for June & July, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

c. Aged Payables, July, 2021

The motion was made by Commission Cook to accept the Aged Payable – July, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

d. Rent Collection Reports – June & July, 2021

There was a brief discussion in regards to rent collection.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept the Rent Collection Report – June & July, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

e. Quarterly Notice to Quit Count – April - June, 2021

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept the Quarterly Notice to Quit Count – April - June, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

f. Quarterly Withdrawals Direct Deposits – April – June, 2021

Commissioner Carella asked what is Deferred Comp? Ms. Bouchard said it is similar to a 401K employees put money into it and it is withdrawn from employee's payroll and the Housing Authority pays it. Commissioner Carella said it is a reoccurring expense. Ms. Bouchard said that it is taken out weekly. There was further discussion regarding the deferred comp plan.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept the Quarterly Withdrawals Direct Deposits – April - June, 2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

g. Monthly Actuals for Period Ending – June & July, 2021

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept the Monthly Actuals for Period Ending – June & July, 2021. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Yamamoto to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Reports (June & July, 2021); b. Occupancy Reports (June & July, 2021); c. Section 8 Voucher Reports (June & July, 2021); d. Scattered Sites Properties Reports (June & July, 2021); e. Attorney's Report (August, 2021); f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT (June & July, 2021). Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if there were any questions on the following:

- a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Reports – June & July, 2021 – Ms. Bouchard said that HUD has given us an extension to expend and obligate those funds due to COVID. There was a discussion regarding the projects and the costs. Vice Chairman Yamamoto said that 83-85 Connecticut Boulevard looks good with the work that was done there.
- b. Occupancy Reports – Vice Chairman Yamamoto said she had a question regarding Miller Gardens and why there were five units offline. Mr. Pliszka explained to her that it was due to the fire. Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if we had any idea when they would be back on line. Mr. Pliszka said we are hoping by the end of September or middle of October the latest. Mr. Pliszka said some of it was due to supplies but there was also a lot of discussions between the contractor and the insurance company.
- c. Section 8 Housing Voucher – There were no questions on this report.
- d. Scattered Sites Properties Report – There were no questions on this report.
- e. Attorney's Report – There were no questions on this report.
- f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT – Ms. Bouchard explained why this report is a good tool for her to use internally. Commissioner Cook posed the question if this is a report that the Board needs to receive. Commissioner Stephens stated she wants to continue to receive this report because she can better tell what is happening by reviewing this report.
- g. Quarterly Resident Services Coordinator Report – June, 2021 – There were no questions on this report.

The motion previously made and seconded was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Summerfield Townhouse Project – Ms. Bouchard said she contacted Attorney Phelan to find out where Vitus and Belveron are with the Summerfield Townhouse Project. It appears they just purchased the property and they don't expect to close until the first quarter of next year. It was explained to the Board what has been done so far. Housing Related Hazards Grant – Ms. Bouchard said we have not heard from HUD yet if we were awarded that grant. She said that she is hearing that it will be probably October of this year when they notify people. If we do receive this grant, it will go towards upgrading the Meadow Hill and Highlands fire alarm systems. Open Positions – We just filled the Site Assistant position with Jazzmin Sheff. Ms. Bouchard said she is from Manchester and has had previous multi-family housing experience, Section 8 experience and tax credits. Annual Plan Submission – Ms.

Bouchard said the annual plan was submitted without the significant amendment which she explained this further to the Board. Ms. Bouchard said that HUD has 90 days to review it so we should hear something by the fall if it was approved or not. Union Negotiations - As discussed at the last meeting, the managers and clerical collective bargaining agreements are up and they are being reviewed and have spoken to our attorney and will be meeting with the unions to start negotiating. Veterans Terrace Redevelopment Project – Phase 1 – Ms. Bouchard said that some of the buildings are being erected and things are looking good so far. She did state that Senator Blumenthal wanted to hold a press conference at the site on Friday and due to our lead person for the developer being on vacation we are requesting that they hold it on a different date. There was further discussion of the reason they wanted to hold this press conference. Ms. Bouchard said that the developer is out there doing initial assessments for tax credits to make sure the residents qualify to go back to those units and make sure they are in good standing with the Housing Authority. Commissioner Cook asked what happens if they are not in good standing and Ms. Bouchard explained what the process is. Glendower, the relocation company, is out there trying to relocate people back to the first phase if possible and they need to start relocating people in phase 2. Phase 2 – Ms. Bouchard said there is really not much going on in Phase 2 except for relocation planning and trying to close on funding in the fall. Ms. Bouchard informed the Board that Helen Munez called her yesterday to let her know she was leaving Carabetta and her last day is on September 11 and Eric Polinsky is returning and will be the project manager. Since he was involved in the project before, she is hopeful it will be a smooth transition. Phase 3 – Ms. Bouchard said we will not be applying until January, 2022 for Phase 3. Vice Chairman Yamamoto said when they are relocating these families off the property are they staying in East Hartford. Ms. Bouchard said yes but cannot make them do so.

8. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review and Approval of Resolution CT013-193-08-2021 the Vacated Tenant Accounts Receivable Write-offs for the Federal Development

Mr. Pliszka explained these are write-offs for our federal development. None of these are people that we are currently collecting money on. Most of the people that are being written off have already been reported to collections so there is a possibility that we may get some money back if they try to rent again.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept Resolution CT013-193-08-2021 for the Vacated Tenant Accounts Receivable Write-offs for Federal Developments. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

b. Review and Approval of Resolution CT013-194-08-2021 the Vacated Tenant Accounts Receivable Write-offs for Veterans Terrace

Mr. Pliszka said these are the write-offs for Veterans Terrace. Commissioner Stephens asked how does someone get up to \$7,000. Mr. Pliszka said they may not have been paying their rent while they were going through the eviction process and sometimes it could take almost a year to get people out through the court system and it could add up quickly. Ms. Bouchard said another possibility is that they were at flat rent due to their income or failing to recertify which they end up at flat rent.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept Resolution CT013-194-08-2021 for the Vacated Tenant Accounts Receivable Write-offs for Veterans Terrace. Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

9. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Ratification and Approval of Resolution CT013-191-08-2021 Submittal of the East Hartford Housing Authority PHA Plan for Fiscal Year beginning 10/2021

Ms. Pliszka stated that at the Special Meeting there should have been resolutions for the following items under Old Business, therefore, we need to ratify what was approved at that meeting in the form of resolutions.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept Resolution CT013-191-08-2021 for the Submittal of the East Hartford Housing Authority PHA Plan for Fiscal Year beginning 10/2021. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

- b. Ratification and Approval of Resolution CT013-192-08-2021 Change in the Section 8 Payment Standards

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to accept Resolution CT013-192-08-2021 for the Change in the Section 8 Payment Standards. Commissioner Carella seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

Commissioner Stephens stated she would like to put an item on the agenda under Executive Session. There was a discussion that it was not already on the agenda. Attorney Alexander stated with the majority vote an item can be added to the Agenda since this is a regular meeting.

The motion was made by Commissioner Stephens to request to go into Executive Session for the purpose of Old Business. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

Ms. Clarke asked what is going to be discussed in Executive Session? Commissioner Stephens said pending claims relating to personnel matters.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Pending Claims Relating to Personnel Matters

The motion was made by Commissioner Stephens to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of pending claims relating to personnel matters. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present to go into Executive Session at 2:20 p.m. Also in attendance was Attorney Ralph Alexander, Legal Counsel.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to come out of Executive Session and Commissioner Stephens seconded the motion; it was carried by the unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present to come out of Executive Session at 3:02 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Commissioners, Vice Chairman Yamamoto entertained a motion to adjourn which was made by Commissioner Cook and seconded by Commissioner Stephens said motion being carried by the unanimous vote of the commissioners' present and the meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Prescille Yamamoto
Vice Chairman of the Board

ATTESTED BY:

Debra Bouchard
Executive Director