

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF BERGEN COUNTY
One Bergen County Plaza, Fl 2
Hackensack, NJ 07601

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 27, 2017

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM BUT ARE INSTEAD A SYNOPSIS OF WHAT TRANSPIRED AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 27, 2017.

PRESENT: Chairman Daniel Ortega
 Commissioner Junior Hernandez
 Commissioner Steven Kopf
 Commissioner Danielle Peterson
 Commissioner Bob Taschler
 Commissioner Steven Weinstein
 Lynn Bartlett, Executive Director
 Kevin McCann, Director of Finance
 Julia Orlando, BCHHH Director
 Esther Gatria, Human Resources Manager
 Vincent Bufis, Field Operations Manager
 Jeffrey Slater, BCHHH Clinical Coordinator
 Terrence Corrison Esq., General Counsel

ABSENT: Commissioner Joanne English Rollieson
 John Biale, Director of Development

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ortega called the meeting to order at 5:51 pm and asked that the open public meetings statement be read. Executive Director Lynn Bartlett read the following:

Consistent with the Bryon M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act P.L.1975c231, all meetings of public bodies shall be open to the public at all times. Notice of the regular meeting was provided to The Record and the Jersey Journal on December 15, 2016, and was provided to the County Clerk for posting at the County Administration Building, at which time the date time and place were set forth. The minutes of this meeting will be available following the next regularly scheduled meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Ortega lead the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Ortega asked that roll be called. Commissioners, Kopf, Peterson, Hernandez, Taschler and Weinstein were present. Commissioner English-Rollieson was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Weinstein to approve the regular minutes of the meeting of September 28, 2017. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Peterson.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Chairman Ortega – AYE
Commissioner Hernandez – AYE
Commissioner Kopf - AYE
Commissioner Peterson – AYE
Commissioner Taschler – AYE
Commissioner Weinstein - AYE
ABSENT: Commissioner English-Rollieson (1)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

In a continued effort to lessen the burden of documents necessary for review before a board meeting and to increase engagement of Commissioners the update Executive Director report was provided to all Commissioners in their board packets. Director Bartlett then provided the following updates and changes to the Board Report that had been circulated:

FIELD OPERATIONS

Director Bartlett reported that the transformer project at Boiling Springs was completed in four (4) days. Four conduit lines were fully replaced along with the transformer. Ms. Bartlett praised HABC staff for their dedication, time and effort throughout the process. The Bergen County OEM generator worked exceptionally well insuring normal full building operations during the entire time with very limited noise. Normal senior center operations as well as unit lighting, heating, and cooking function never faltered.

ASSISTED HOUSING

Finance and Rental Assistance Department work with HUD's Office of Shortfall Prevention (SPT) have been tied out. All projections have been finalized.

DEVELOPMENT

Upper Saddle River – John Biale was before the USR Planning Board the same evening as the Board meeting.

BCHHH

Ms. Bartlett pointed out that the guest status report has been updated and the new numbers come directly from HMIS reporting input into the monthly Annual Performance and Report (APR) submitted to HUD. Ms. Bartlett clarified for all that “number leaving” includes those that were house, those that abandoned their bed and those discharged.

In addition to the routine maintenance provided at the BCHHH Ms. Bartlett reported the water main break that effected the shelter on Tuesday, October 24th. Water service to the shelter was shut down for approximately 4 hours.

Expenses for the shelter were under budget for the month with the expectation that expenses generally increase in the winter months with additional blankets for the cold weather months.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The MLK Senior Center Director was hired.

Pre-employment is underway for the full time maintenance assistant vacancies as well as identification of the top candidate for the tenant services coordinator.

Commissioner Kopf complimented HABC staff on the new tablet use.

Commissioner Taschler joined the meeting at 6:05pm.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Corrison did not have anything specific to report. He did inform all that HDC had acquired a condominium in Teaneck to continue on-going affordability, and will sell to another eligible buyer.

DISCUSSION

Chairman Ortega informed all that he attended the Emerson Veteran Housing ribbon cutting and let all know that the development was very well received and praised by both the local community but community service agencies too. The Chairman further shared his belief that HABC is the gold standard for housing authorities and that the Board of Commissioners should be proud to part of the leadership of the organization, he also commended staff on their work and commitment to the goals of the Authority.

Chairman Ortega then asked for clarification on the policy of the BCHHH regarding sheltering pregnant women. BCHHH Director Julia Orlando responded explaining that she is presently working on developing policy to both protect this population, ensure their safety and provide housing. Concern regarding the lack of nursing services complicates support and sheltering this population with appropriate consideration of their condition.

Ms. Orlando stated that oftentimes BCHHH makes referral to other providers who are better able to accommodate or cater to pregnant women. Policy consideration will be given to inclusion of the woman's healthcare or ob/gyn provider.

Ms. Bartlett that she and Ms. Orlando have been working on development of a policy that recognizes the limitation of the shelter in limiting exposure of guests to contagious illnesses and does not discriminate against familial status. The policy would apply to all stages of the pregnancy, not just advance trimesters. Terry Corriston encouraged that medical clearance or consultation on behalf of the client is highly recommended.

Ms. Orlando explained that each guest is addressed on a case by case basis. She further assured the Board that if there is a better option than sheltering at the BCHHH HABC BCHHH staff work toward that solution. Additionally, if there are no immediate more optimal sheltering solutions she explained that the BCHHH would most certainly shelter for the first 72 hours to work toward the best sheltering resolutions.

Chairman Ortega stated his concern going forward that we have help and support in place to address the needs of this population.

Commissioner Hernandez asked if both the HABC Director and BCHHH Director are accessible for this issue after hours. Ms. Bartlett and Ms. Orlando both confirmed that they not only are but were part of the discussion as any situation presents after hours.

Commissioner Peterson asked if there is a separate room or space that could be dedicated to this population. Ms. Bartlett explained that the "overflow" space is currently used to accommodate either additional female or male beds in response to the number of homeless guests being sheltered. Ms. Orlando also explained that shelter rooms upstairs, where overflow is located, is more isolated.

Ms. Bartlett explained that as policy develops final policy would come before the full Board for review.

Commissioner Weinstein asked if hotel stay were possible. Ms. Bartlett explained that there are other agencies that have hotel programs, the HABC does not have a hotel program nor do we have funding for this activity. Ms. Orlando explained that Bergen County United Way does have such resources through their compassion fund.

Commissioner Taschler asked if we could set aside vouchers to be available for just such emergencies. Ms. Bartlett explained that funding constraints don't make that possible.

PUBLIC MEETING

A motion was made to open the meeting to the public by Commissioner Weinstein and seconded by Commissioner Kopf.

The first member of the public to address the Board of Commissioners was Hamingia Rodas. She stated that the United Way assistance was limited to those who had income. She stated that should a pregnant woman seek assistance from the United Way she would only receive assistance proportionate to her income and need. Ms. Rodas said that 211 is a referral service that you need to leave a message on an answering machine and wait return call.

Commissioner Ortega explained that the scenario discussed would be an emergency and that the HABC would be able to contact BCUW to address the emergency immediately to facilitate immediate response. He explained that this is conversation that would continue internally and that working with BCUW would only be one option. He further explained that the Authority would be reaching out to other partners, not necessarily be limited to only one partner agency.

Ms. Rodas stated that calls to the Housing Authority seeking emergency assistance are directed to the Bergen County Board of Social Services, and that calls to the Board of Social Services for emergency assistance are directed to the Housing Authority. Ms. Bartlett clarified and explained the requirements of both agencies and their response to address emergency assistance.

There were no other members of the public that wished to address the Board of Commissioners.

A motion was made to close the public portion of the meeting by Commissioner Weinstein and seconded by Commissioner Kopf.

AMENDED CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Kopf to approve the consent agenda and seconded by Commissioner Weinstein.

A. Resolution 2017-71

Resolution approving the routine expenditures for the HABC for the period of 9/15/17 – 10/13/17

B. Resolution 2017-72

Resolution approving the routine expenditures for the HDC for the period of 9/15/17 – 10/13/17

C. Resolution 2017-73

Resolution authorizing change order #1 for the Dumont Building Envelope Rehabilitation

D. Resolution 2017-74

Resolution authorizing change order #1 for the Ramsey Roof Replacement

E. Resolution 2017-75

Resolution authorizing execution of a Shared Service Agreement with the County of Bergen for use of an emergency generator

The vote upon roll call was:

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Chairman Ortega – AYE

Commissioner Hernandez – AYE

Commissioner Kopf - AYE

Commissioner Peterson – AYE

Commissioner Taschler – AYE

Commissioner Weinstein - AYE

ABSENT: Commissioner English-Rollieson (1)

Chairman Ortega asked if there were any questions or additional comments. Seeing there was any new or additional business to discuss a motion was made by Commissioner Taschler to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Commissioner Kopf and it was unanimously approved at 6:32pm.

Prepared by: Lynn Bartlett
