

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF BERGEN COUNTY
One Bergen County Plaza – 2nd Floor, Hackensack

MINUTES OF MEETING OF MARCH 28, 2019

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM BUT ARE INSTEAD A SYNOPSIS OF WHAT TRANSPIRED AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF MARCH 28, 2019 OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF BERGEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

PRESENT: Commissioner Peter Caminiti, Sr.
 Commissioner Vito Candela
 Commissioner Junior Hernandez
 Commissioner Daniel Ortega

 Lynn Bartlett, Executive Director
 Terrence Corrison Esq., General Counsel
 Kevin McCann, Director of Finance
 Esther Gatria, Human Resources Manager
 Vincent Bufis, Field Operations Manager

ABSENT: Commissioner Joanne English Rollieson
 Commissioner Danielle Peterson
 Commissioner Steven Weinstein

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ortega called the meeting to order at 5:41pm and Executive Director, Lynn Bartlett, read the following statement:

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 Bergen Record and posted on the Authority website on December 31, 2018 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 the regular meeting will be available following the next regularly scheduled meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SWEARING IN

HABC General Counsel lead the swearing in of newly appointed Commissioner Vito Candela.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call Commissioners Caminiti, Candela, Hernandez and Ortega were present; Commissioners English-Rollieson, Peterson and Weinstein were absent.

Chairman Ortega welcomed Commissioner Candela to the Board and encouraged him to reach out to Executive Director Bartlett with any questions he has and to become more familiar with the operations of the Authority.

MINUTES

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of the February 2019 Meeting of the HABC Board of Commissioners. Motion was made by Commissioner Hernandez and seconded by Commissioner Caminiti. The motion carried upon roll call.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Commissioner Caminiti - YES
Commissioner Candela - ABSTAIN
Commissioner Hernandez - YES
Commissioner Ortega - YES

IN FAVOR: Commissioners Caminiti, Hernandez, Ortega (3)
ABSTAIN: Commissioner Candela (1)
ABSENT: Commissioners English-Rollieson, Peterson, Weinstein (3)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Director Bartlett provided the following updates to the previously circulated Executive Director report.

She pointed out that the HDC Emerson Veterans project was showcased in the NJHMFA Annual Report and circulated a copy during the meeting for all the present Commissioners to view. She also pointed out that there is a late addition of a resolution to the agenda for the evening. The purpose of the resolution is to accept an additional allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds toward the Mahwah/Ramsey Boiler and Hot Water Heater Replacement project. The additional funds now cover all project costs. The requirements of the "Quick Start" grant was that the project must be fully completed, and all funds drawn by April 15th.

Ms. Bartlett pointed out that the E.D. report was circulated late with the purpose of providing progress photographs of the capital improvements project currently being undertaken by the Authority in several of the buildings.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Included in the report are before and after, or progress photos of Brookside Gardens/Bergenfield renovations, Carucci Apartments/ Lyndhurst kitchen renovation project and Boiling Springs/East Rutherford TV room upgrades

OPERATIONS

Ramapo Brae Townhomes/Mahwah – Ms. Bartlett informed all that the tenant disputes that had been reported last month have been resolved, both tenants have accepted the offer of mobility and are moving. One tenant relocation is effective April 1 and the other June 1.

DISCUSSION:

Commissioner Hernandez complimented Ms. Bartlett on the comprehensiveness and visual nature of the Executive Director report, pointing out that it is a welcome and great improvement. Ms. Bartlett thanked him.

Commissioner Ortega questioned Resolution 2019-24 proposing authorizing changes to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan. Ms. Bartlett explained that the changes were provided in the Board packet and explained that the changes are limited to expansion of the program's

occupancy standards. She additionally explained that the proposed changes are to increase program expenditures in response to the 2017 shortfall responses and the net zero effect that Small Area Fair Market Rents have had on the program.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Corrison reported that there was much of the same to report with many of the same people, but nothing significant.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Motion was offered by Commissioner Caminiti and seconded by Commissioner Candela to open the meeting to the public, all present Commissioners were in favor.

Ms. Ruth Craig addressed the Board inquiring programs and assistance available for her brother that has untreated mental health issues and was recently evicted after having lived much of his adult life with a parent that is recently deceased. She explained that he has sought assistance from the Bergen County Board of Social Services and was approved for General Assistance in the amount of \$700/mo. Ms. Craig explained that her brother was homeless and did reside at the Bergen County Housing Health and Human Services Center, due to his untreated MH issues he left the shelter and for these same reasons he cannot reside in her home.

Ms. Craig's main question was the justification of \$700 GA award, seeing logically that it is insufficient to afford any kind of housing at that level.

Ms. Bartlett explained that the Bergen County Board of Social Services programs and assistance are determined by their program guidelines. She acknowledged the housing affordability issues related to welfare awards. Ms. Bartlett explained basics on BCBSS process, Section 8 rental assistance, Section 8 wait list processes and BCHHH appeal processes. She offered to speak post meeting with Ms. Craig regarding the situation and the upcoming appeal for shelter at the BCHHH. This was acceptable to Ms. Craig.

Mr. Corrison further offered that Maureen McCormick of the County of Bergen, is presently working on data and information gathering for the County to provide housing referrals throughout Bergen County. Ms. Bartlett additionally offered the New Jersey Housing Resource Center for affordable housing search information.

Ms. Theresa Riccardo then addressed the Board sharing her shocking housing search experience attempting to assist Ms. Craig's brother viewing rooming houses as possible housing options, explaining that she has no idea how some of these units have a certificate of occupancy. She stated her complete incredulity that these units are in Bergen County. Ms. Bartlett acknowledged that these units do exist but also shared honestly her deep happiness that none of these units are owned by the Authority.

Seeing there was no one additional from the public who wished to address the Commissioners. Commissioner Caminiti made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting which was seconded by Commissioner Hernandez. This was unanimously approved.