

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

MINUTES OF MEETING OF APRIL 25, 2019

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM BUT ARE INSTEAD A SYNOPSIS OF WHAT TRANSPIRED AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 25, 2019 OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF BERGEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

PRESENT: Commissioner Peter Caminiti, Sr.
 Commissioner Joanne English Rollieson
 Commissioner Junior Hernandez
 Commissioner Daniel Ortega
 Commissioner Danielle Peterson
 Commissioner Steven Weinstein

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: Julia Orlando, BCHHH Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ortega called the meeting to order at 5:40pm 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

Chairman Ortega led all in the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

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

MINUTES

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of the March 2019 meeting of the HABC Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Ortega pointed out that circulated minutes reflected the incorrect year, though they were for the 2019 meeting. Motion was made by Commissioner Hernandez and seconded by Commissioner Caminiti. The motion carried upon roll call.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Commissioner Caminiti - YES
Commissioner English-Rollieson - YES
Commissioner Hernandez - YES
Commissioner Ortega – YES

Commissioner Peterson – YES
Commissioner Weinstein – YES

IN FAVOR: All Commissioners (6)
ABSENT: None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Director Bartlett informed all Board members that Commissioner Candela resigned his position as an HABC Commissioner. Mr. Candela was also appointed by the Department of Community Affairs to be the Governor's appointment to serve on the Cliffside Park Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, and will remain in that role rather than serve on both PHA Boards.

Ms. Bartlett reminded all to complete the submission of the 2019 Financial Disclosures.

She provided the following updates to the previously circulated Executive Director report:

NJHFMA was out to Fort Lee for a site visit to the proposed development site. The purpose of the site was to satisfy all components of the NJHFMA process and document submission necessary for Agency DOI which is expected to be on the Agency May meeting for financing commitment. Ms. Bartlett reported that Agency staff were impressed by the location of the site given its access to transportation, down town, shopping, food stores and area hospitals.

HCV program will be responding to a HUD NOFA, applying for Family Self Sufficiency Funds to begin a new program in collaboration with the Bergen County Board of Social Services and the Bergen County One Stop targeting families coming off welfare assistance.

HABC will also be responding to HUD notice expanding the Move To Work (MTW) demonstration program. The HABC will be responding to the interest in admission due in June. MTW allows PHAs to design and test innovative, locally designed housing and self-sufficiency strategies for participating families by permitting PHAs to use assistance received under HCV more flexibility by allowing certain exemptions from program rules, as approved by HUD. If selected HABC will be in the rent reform cohort.

Reduction in HCV program funding due to program difficulties leasing up the program. The combination of the end of the wait list as well as market conditions has slowed leasing efforts to an average of 90 days or 3 months to lease-up. As such HABC program funds have come from PHA and HUD held reserves, thus reducing HUD advance of program funds.

HDC Board of Trustees approved the purchase of another affordable condominium for re-sale to an eligible household. The unit is located in Ramapo Brae, Mahwah.

HABC applied for CDBG funds to replace all the boilers and hot water heaters in all RAD units in Mahwah and Ramsey. The project was fully funded through the CDBG award and was completed this month. Most immediately noticeable is complete reduction in emergency calls for no heat or hot water. The greatest benefit being staff time for other projects.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Corrison reported that there were some troublesome tenant issues in court this month. Many of them are tenants with a rich history of problem tenancies.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Members of the public express their inability to hear the discussion going on. Ms. Bartlett took time to explain for those present the procedures and process of the Board meeting. She then welcomed anyone who had comment and wished to address the Board.

Tazmisha Kopic, a resident of Wallington and a present wait applicant inquired regarding policies and procedures of the Authority managing wait lists. Specific to the HCV and Mahwah/Ramsey waiting lists, she stated that she provided regular updates regarding her status as well as regularly inquired regarding her placement on these wait lists. She explained that she is a 10-year resident of Bergen County and each time she inquired as to status she was assured that she is in proper place on Mahwah/Ramsey list but was removed from the HCV list. Ms. Kopic stated that she was taken off the Section 8 wait list because she was issued a voucher but it expired because she never got it. She went on to say that she was informed by HABC that it was her responsibility to prove that she never got it. She recently was informed by HABC staff that preference was not correctly applied to her application for the Mahwah/Ramsey wait list. Ms. Kopic inquired on what can be done for a person like her, and what are the policies as relate to her situation? She stated that she did what she was required in terms of her responsible due diligence and stated that the Authority did not do what it is required to do under its policies. She further stated that she does not know how she was removed from the HCV waiting list and had waited exceptionally long in the incorrect position on the waiting list for a RAD unit.

Ms. Bartlett explained that given that she was not immediately familiar with the details pertaining to the application that she would need to research the details regarding the specific situation to follow up and answer all her questions. Ms. Bartlett did explain in general terms the HABC policies regarding wait list administration and removal from list. Removal requires no response to two HABC mailings, proof of mailing is kept in each applicant file, no response to either outreach results in removal. Applicants that have been removed from a wait list can be restored to the wait list if they contact to the Authority in the next 12 months.

Commissioner Weinstein asked when the 12-month period begins, Ms. Bartlett stated 12 months from the date of removal. Ms. Bartlett explained to a question posed by Commissioner English-Rollieson that status updates can now be done on-line at any time of day and this procedure improvement has been in effect for little over last year. Ms. Bartlett also cautioned that if the application was actually 2002 there will be no documentation – electronically or otherwise - to provide as proof of application, wait list management or application removal since it exceeds the time frame for document retention. Additionally, Ms. Bartlett pointed out the HCV wait list opened an additional two times since Ms. Kopic's application to the program.

Chairman Ortega then stated that Ms. Bartlett would review and research the Authority's information regarding her situation and follow up directly with Ms. Kopic. Given some of the applicant's assertions, some of which do not presently make sense, require investigation to be able to be clarified and addressed.

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 Weinstein. This was unanimously approved.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner English-Rollieson and seconded by Commissioner Caminiti. Upon roll call the motion carried unanimously.

A. Resolution 2019-26

Resolution approving the routine expenditures for the HABC for the period of 03/15/19 – 04/12/19

B. Resolution 2019-27

Resolution approving the routine expenditures for the HDC for the period of 03/15/19 – 04/12/19

C. Resolution 2019-28

Resolution approving correction of towing contract for Bergenfield, Dumont and Northvale

D. Resolution 2019-29

Resolution authorizing 1-year contract extension for routine as needed HVAC services

ROLL CALL VOTE

Commissioner Caminiti - YES
Commissioner English-Rollieson - YES
Commissioner Hernandez - YES
Commissioner Ortega – YES
Commissioner Peterson – YES
Commissioner Weinstein – YES

IN FAVOR: All Commissioners (6)
ABSENT: None

Given there was no further business to consider, Commissioner Caminiti then moved to adjourn 6:07pm which was unanimously agreed upon.

Prepared by: Lynn Bartlett