

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE



The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Township of Woodbridge held its regular meeting in the community room of Greiner Towers, 460 Inman Ave., Colonia, NJ, in the Township of Woodbridge, New Jersey at 7:00 PM on May 1, 2017, the hour and date duly established for the holding of such meeting.

The Chair called the meeting to order, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and held a moment of silence.

Maureen Guiney read the Notice of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act P.L. 1975, C.231 which provided that notice of this meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Township of Woodbridge was provided in the following manner:

On October 4, 2016, a copy of the notice of this meeting setting forth the date, time and location of this regular meeting was posted on the Housing Authority's official designated bulletin board located at 20 Bunns Lane, Woodbridge, NJ, sent to Town Hall for posting and was faxed to the Home News Tribune and Star Ledger.

Upon roll call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT

Commissioners:

John Kenny, Commissioner
Ryan Michelson, Commissioner
Rukmal Rupasinghe, Commissioner
Ketan Shah, Commissioner
Shontay Walker, Commissioner
Gregg Ficarra, Chairman

Council Liaison:

Lizbeth DeJesus, Councilwoman

Authority General Counsel:

Terrence Corriston, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

Administration:

Donna Brightman, Executive Director
Maureen Guiney, Executive Asst.
Larry Stecker, Maintenance Director
Mike Yannuzzi, Maintenance Manager

A motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 3, 2017 was made by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Walker and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Madhu Butala, apt. 302, stated that he did not receive a notification for the resident council ceremony and that residents should know when there are installations.

Mr. Butala also stated that he wanted to be provided with committee meetings.

Chairman Ficarra stated that Evergreen is a designated senior area with events.

Councilwoman DeJesus stated that there is also Sycamore.

Chairman Ficarra stated that activities for the building are conducted through the resident council.

Mr. Butala stated that this is only during office hours. He stated that he wanted executive committee meetings for about 25 people from anywhere.

Councilwoman DeJesus asked what senior group would be having these meetings.

Mr. Butala responded that they would be for the Hindu/Americans as there are 700 members.

Executive Director Brightman responded that we have functions for only residents of the building as insurance certificates are required for non-residents.

Steven Novasedlik, apt. 204, president of the resident council had many concerns as follows:

- A couple of residents asked him to have the ceiling fans painted in front of the elevator
- He questioned the fire alarms at the building and wanted to know if the procedure was to not use the elevators. He stated that he is concerned about residents with limited mobility. He asked how the Fire Dept. knows where they are and asked for clarification on this matter.
- He mentioned that residents would like a canopy put in front of the building to the parking lot for bad weather.

Chairman Ficarra asked if that would be from the front entrance to the walkway.

Mr. Novasedlik stated that this encompasses several feet along the walkway and we may need engineers to deal with this matter, if possible.

- He questioned the signs saying that residents are not allowed to sit in the lobby area and talk and stated that this rubs him the wrong way. He wants the residents to gather in the foyer instead of the community room.
- He stated that he is concerned about the wonderful seniors that are not bi-lingual and are Indian or Hispanic and that they need an interpreter as they are being short changed. He stated that the Indians ask questions and don't understand. He mentioned that there is a husband/wife that need repairs and have no way of resolving the issue; therefore, we need fluent Indian and Spanish speakers on staff.

Chairman Ficarra stated that the association represents the building and perhaps he can reach out to the residents for help with this matter as the Housing Authority providing interpreters is not practical. He stated that perhaps Mr. Butala can help.

Mr. Novasedlik stated that he has lived in the building for three years and has not noticed anyone helping with this matter and to please let him know by the next meeting.

Chairman Ficarra stated that he doesn't have to wait until the next meeting as we go to different buildings throughout the year and we will try to assist in any way possible.

- Mr. Novasedlik asked what WHA and RAD mean

Chairman Ficarra stated that RAD stands for Rental Assistance Demonstration.

Mr. Novasedlik asked what the relationship is.

Chairman Ficarra responded that it is a program that we applied to with the federal government. He mentioned that the rules were changed and there were cuts in funding and this is an alternate way to generate funds as we hope to improve but it is not replacing the Woodbridge Housing Authority.

Counsel Corrison stated that it is just a different funding source.

Mr. Novasedlik asked if the type of resident will change.

Executive Director Brightman responded, no.

Mr. Novasedlik stated that he remembers this building being only for seniors and not for people under 62.

Chairman Ficarra stated with the ADA Act the young people are living with the seniors and we realize that this is a challenge with co-existence.

- Mr. Novasedlik mentioned the car accident with the snow plow hitting a car in the parking lot but the matter was resolved favorably for the tenant.
- Mr. Novasedlik stated that 3 months ago a tenant had bricks thrown through their windshield, but the tenant no longer lives in the building.
- Mr. Novasedlik stated that there was a misunderstanding between a resident and visitor and that the visitor pushed the resident.

Mr. Novasedlik stated that due to the above more security cameras are needed and that the building needs an updated security system so that we can go back one week and look at the tapes if there is a problem.

Chairman Ficarra stated that no one can argue with having more security but cameras are extremely expensive. He stated that we are trying to do the basics with RAD and improve things and from time-to-time he has seen grants being given out for extras.

Mr. Novasedlik then responded that it will then be going on the back-burner.

Chairman Ficarra stated that we will do our best and look for funding. He said the most important things for our senior buildings are safety, working elevators and heat. He mentioned that there are a total of 6 buildings and the apartments on Bunns Lane.

- Mr. Novasedlik then spoke of the washers and dryers and that when a technician comes to instruct residents how to use them some people cannot speak English and are at a disadvantage. He mentioned that the second floor machine broke down and that

residents have to go to different floors to do their wash. He stated that the residents were not part of the input with housing in deciding about washers/dryers. He stated that residents are upset with the contractor and the lack of service as they are not being serviced in a timely manner.

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is a public bid and no one gets input.

Chairman Ficarra stated that this can be mentioned when the next contract comes up if there is a repeated problem.

Mr. Novasedlik stated that this is the problem – housing doesn't know that there is an issue.

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is the key – housing needs to know that there is a problem. She stated that there is a manager in the building and also maintenance personnel.

Chairman Ficarra asked Mr. Novasedlik not to wait if there is a problem as we have employees in the building.

Commissioner Kenny asked if Housing wants the tenants to notify the vendors.

Executive Director Brightman stated that if residents have a continuous problem with the machines that Christina Smolder can deal with the vendor.

Mr. Novasedlik stated that some issues are at night.

Commissioner Kenny stated that we need a system that can be tracked.

Chairman Ficarra asked Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi to put a system in place with Diane Boyle.

Mr. Novasedlik stated that he needs Housing to make the calls and appreciates their help.

Margaret Struben, apt. 111, mentioned that sitting in the hallway was stopped 3 years ago due to people bothering others.

Counsel Corrison stated that this was a deliberate action.

Executive Director Brightman stated that there is no congregating in any lobby in any building.

Mary Robson, apt. 222, waived her necklace around (some sort of alarm) and wanted to know if a person is not near the string (alarm) how does emergency service get into the building.

Executive Director Brightman stated that there is a master key in the lock box for First Responders.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that EMS is changing out the lock box.

Ms. Robson stated that this has been for over a year.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that they are working on it presently.

Dave Ricart, apt. #102, Treasurer, stated that his card doesn't work in the washing machine and finds it aggravating.

Chairman Ficarra stated that he needs to communicate this to Diane Boyle, the manager of the building.

COMMUNICATIONS

Judy Higgins, apt. #314, stated that Greiner Towers has a certified butterfly garden and that last year 9 different species of butterflies came to the garden. She stated that the garden seems to attract black swallow tails.

Chairman Ficarra stated that Commissioner Rosario resigned and sends his best regards. He stated that Mr. Rosario is very involved in the football Saints organization.

REPORTS

Maintenance Report:

Maintenance Director Stecker stated that we have completed the Olsen elevator upgrades and are closing out the 2013 year of funding.

Master Monthly Reports:

Chairman Ficarra stated that this is a new format regarding these reports. He mentioned that Kathy Blaha officially retired and will be missed as she was a very good employee and dedicated to the residents.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Reso #2849 – Authorizing the Submission of the WHA Streamlined Annual PHA Plan 2017

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Walker to adopt Resolution #2849.

ROLL CALL:	Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES:	Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2850 – Adopting Monthly Bill List for April 2017

Motion moved by Commissioner Shah and seconded by Commissioner Rupasinghe to adopt Resolution #2850.

ROLL CALL:	Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES:	Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

c) Reso #2851 – Award Contract for HQS Inspection Services to Home Stat Inspections, Inc. for a Two Year Period – 5/1/17 – 4/30/19

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Walker to adopt Resolution #2851.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra asked if there was a history with this company.

Executive Director Brightman responded yes, this is a good firm.

Motion moved by Commissioner Shah and seconded by Commissioner Rupasinghe to adopt Resolution #2850.

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

d) Reso #2852 – Renew the Contract for Fire Alarm Monitoring, Inspection & Preventative Maintenance Services with Certified Protection through 6/14/19

Motion moved by Commissioner Walker and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #2852.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra asked if there was a history with this company.

Executive Director Brightman responded yes, a good history.

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

e) Reso #2853 – Designate General Counsel from 6/1/17 to 5/31/18 to Breslin & Breslin

Motion moved by Commissioner Kenny and seconded by Commissioner Rupasinghe to adopt Resolution #2853.

Discussion

Counsel Corriston thanked the Board.

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

f) Reso #2854 – Designate Fee Accountant from 6/1/17 to 5/31/18 to William Katchen

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #2854.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that Mr. Katchen does a nice job and also teaches courses in finance.

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

g) Reso #2855 – Award Labor Counsel Contract to Florio, Perrucci, Steinhardt & Fader from 5/1/17 to 4/30/19

Motion moved by Commissioner Walker and seconded by Commissioner Michelson to adopt Resolution #2855.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that this firm received the highest rating.

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

h) Reso #2856 – Award Banking Services to Valley National Bank 2017-2021

Motion moved by Commissioner Shah and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #2856.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra asked if there is a history with Valley National Bank.

Executive Director Brightman stated that there is and since we do not have big balances, Valley National offers the best rates.

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

- i) Reso #2857 – Approval to Execute Master Development Agreement & Short Term License for Demolition – Jacobs Landing

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Shah to adopt Resolution #2857.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that the process has begun.

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is a more formal resolution for demolition.

ROLL CALL: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

- j) Reso #2858 – Approval to Execute Master Development Agreement – Jacobs Landing

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Rupasinghe to adopt Resolution #2858.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that Executive Director Brightman and her team worked very hard with the Jacobs Landing team. He stated that we just received the final document today and that he would like to see it approved after Ms. Brightman goes over it with a fine tooth comb.

Counsel Corrison stated that it is alright.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the members of the Housing Authority and Development group do not need to abstain on this resolution.

Counsel Corrison stated that it is fine for them to vote on the resolution but, of course, they can use their own judgement.

Commissioner Shah asked if we don't already have an agreement.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we never executed the master agreement.

Chairman Ficarra wanted to make sure that the agreement was satisfactory to Executive Director Brightman.

Commissioner Kenny stated that he is voting yes as long as the final approval is given by the Executive Director and Counsel.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the housing authority got the best shake possible and that we received a 30% management fee and some money for the sale/lease. She stated that we are going to lease six employees to Ingerman and that Ingerman will have to follow our Personnel Policy and Union Contract. She stated that she is fine with the document.

ROLL CALL:	Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
AYES:	Kenny Michelson Rupasinghe Shah Walker Ficarra
NAYS:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

Comments

Chairman Ficarra then mentioned Constellation and the wind devices.

Commissioner Kenny stated that we need a representative from Constellation to attend the next BOC meeting and answer the Board's questions. The other commissioners agreed with this.

Chairman Ficarra stated that we should not release payment.

Counsel Corrison stated that we need to send a letter to Constellation from the Board stating that we do not agree with the charges. He mentioned that he will send the letter.

The commissioners and liaison wished all the moms a Happy Mother's Day.

Chairman Ficarra stated that he now has a veterinary doctor in his family as his daughter will graduate from school next week.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Kenny and seconded by Commissioner Michelson to adjourn at 8:19 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Donna Brightman
Executive Director/Secretary