

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 a regular meeting via a GoToMeeting at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/900873205> at 7:00 PM on September 3, 2020, the hour and date duly established for the holding of such meeting.

Chairman Ficarra called the meeting to order, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Executive Director Brightman 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 August 31, 2020, 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 800B 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

ABSENT

Commissioners:

Commissioners:

Jack Kenny, Vice Chair
Ryan Michelson, Commissioner
Jenny Perez-Rosado, Commissioner
Paul Pires, Commissioner
Gregg Ficarra, Chairman

Sharad Agarwal, Commissioner
Shontay Walker, Commissioner

Council Liaison:
Lizbeth DeJesus, Councilwoman

Authority General Counsel:
Terrence Corriston, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

Administration:
Donna Brightman, Executive Director

A motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on May 4, 2020 was made by Commissioner Pires and seconded by Commissioner Rosado and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

A motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on June 22, 2020 was made by Commissioner Kenny and seconded by Commissioner Michelson and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

A motion to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on July 24, 2020 was made by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Pires and upon roll call the vote was as follows:

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Charity Daramola stated that she resides in Sewaren and has an interest in housing and how it affects Woodbridge as she has seen a backlash from residents in regards to affordable housing (Green Street). Some comments on facebook were about apartments housing transient people/homeless and causing a downward spiral within the town, they won't pay their fair share in rent, and they will overcrowd schools. She stated that she has experienced racism in Sewaren and that the Club of Colonia has documented racism in the Colonia section of town.

Chairman Ficarra mentioned that the new Green Street apartments do not belong to the Woodbridge Housing Authority.

Executive Director Brightman stated that there are two big differences in how the WHA leases to tenants as opposed to the private market. We do not do credit checks and most management companies do use them and then deny potential renters if their credit score is low. We also analyze criminal background checks to see if efforts were made to rehabilitate. Again management companies just deny entry and that is why Senator Corey Booker is trying to pass legislation that prohibits management companies from these outright denials of tenancy.

Executive Director Brightman went on to say that Ms. Daramola might want to read the Color of Law by Richard Rothstein as he documents how government segregated America via the housing industry.

Chairman Ficarra thanked Ms. Daramola for taking an interest and calling into the meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS - none

REPORTS

Chairman Ficarra commented on Ms. Giles' report and how the residents needed reassurance because of COVID and asked that Executive Director Brightman please extend our thanks to her.

Executive Director Brightman's report:

Chairman Ficarra noted that the Teamster's agreement is not settled, the additional CARES allocation and the hiring of special council to pursue the Olsen rebuild. He also noted that the WHA will open the waiting list for Bunns Lane on 9/11/20.

Chairman Ficarra noted Maintenance Director Stecker's report and mentioned that there are additional boiler repairs needed at Olsen.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Reso #3069 – NJ PHA JIF Renewal

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #3069.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #3070 – Designate Official Newspapers, FYE 9/30/21

Motion moved by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Pires to adopt Resolution #3070.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

c) Reso #3071 – Annual Update of HCV Utility Allowance

Motion moved by Commissioner Kenny and seconded by Commissioner Michelson to adopt Resolution #3071.

Discussion

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is required annually. It is a requirement for the PHA to review utility costs for the Section 8 program.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

d) Reso #3072 –2020 Adopted Budget Reso

Motion moved by Commissioner Pires and seconded by Commissioner Rosado to adopt Resolution #3072.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that the budget was introduced in June, and sent to the state to review, and accepted, which now requires the BOC to adopt the budget.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

e) Reso #3073 – Write-off Uncollectable Rent Balances for Red Oak – FYE 9/30/20

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #3073.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

f) Reso #3074 – Write-off Uncollectable Rent Balances FYE 9/30/20 - Olsen

Motion moved by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Pires to adopt Resolution #3074.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that all evictions are sent to the collection agency.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

g) Reso #3075 – Reso Authorizing COVID-19 Stipend

Motion moved by Commissioner Kenny and seconded by Commissioner Michelson to adopt Resolution #3075.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that this stipend is being awarded to the staff for hours worked above and beyond regular hours in order to provide services to the tenants.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

h) Reso #3076 – Designate Specialized Legal Counsel

Motion moved by Commissioner Pires and seconded by Commissioner Rosado to adopt Resolution #3076.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that it is necessary to hire special counsel to pursue the purchase of a new site for Olsen Towers.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

i) Reso #3077 – Adopting Monthly Bill List for August 2020

Motion moved by Commissioner Pires and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #3077.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

j) Reso #3078 – Adopting Monthly Bill List for August 2020 (Red Oak)

Motion moved by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Pires to adopt Resolution #3078.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

k) Reso #3079 – Ratify the Award of the Change Order for the boiler Repair Work at Olsen Towers for \$8,350

Motion moved by Commissioner Michelson and seconded by Commissioner Kenny to adopt Resolution #3079.

Discussion

Chairman Ficarra stated that additional sections of the boiler needed to be replaced.

ROLL CALL: Agarwal Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Walker Ficarra
AYES: Kenny Michelson Perez-Rosado Pires Ficarra
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Agarwal Walker

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Rosado stated that it was a great summer and she sponsored several successful events.

Commissioner Pires enjoyed the summer and is looking forward to returning to normal.

Commissioner Kenny stated that all is good and to be safe.

Commissioner Michelson thanked Executive Director Brightman and the staff and Ms. Dacamola for joining us tonight.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Executive Director Brightman stated that the reorganization is in October and we need to think about meeting in-person or continue on-line.

ATTORNEY COMMENTS

Counsel Corrison stated that there are currently no evictions as tenants are paying their rent. He stated that he is working with the Executive Director on the CARES Act and eligible expenditures.

COMMENTS

Chairman Ficarra thanked Ms. Daramola for joining the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Pires and seconded by Commissioner Michelson to adjourn at 7:49 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Donna Brightman
Executive Director/Secretary