

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF GREENWICH**  
**Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners**  
**March 27, 2013**  
*Minutes of the Meeting*

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Greenwich was held on Wednesday, March 27, 2013, in the Community Room at Armstrong Court. The Chairman, George Yankowich, called the meeting to order in public session at 5:40 p.m.

The Chairman declared that a quorum was present and directed the Assistant Secretary, Lisette Contreras, to act as secretary for the meeting.

Commissioners Present: George Yankowich, Abelardo Curdumi, James Boutelle, Agripina Lopez, Sam Romeo, Bernadette Settlemeyer and Robert Simms Jr

Staff Present: Anthony Johnson, Terry Mardula, Bruno T. Lacaria, Penny Lore, Lisette Contreras, John Yankowich, Sardis Solano and Winston Robinson

Legal: Lou Pittocco

Public: Joan Yankowski, Patty Sechi, Director of the Armstrong Court Community Garden and Cathy Landy

The Chairman welcomed the public and asked if there are any comments or concerns. Ms. Joan Yankowski states that she received complaints from Dan Fiore, a resident of Quarry Knoll. He pointed out that there was no hay placed around the sewers to prevent any soot from going into the drain. The Executive Director stated that he spoke with the contractor about it and the contractor addressed the issue. The Executive Director stated that there is no code regarding silt going into the storm sewers. The Chairman replied that there is something under the Clean Water Act that states the contractor has to check the storm sewers after a rain storm. The Chairman asked the Executive Director to remind the contractor of this. Ms. Yankowski stated that Mr. Fiore was also upset because the residents are still not recycling properly. The Deputy Director responded that he will send out letters to the residents stating that recycling is the law and it should be abided by. The Deputy Director added that HATG does not have the enforcement power for proper recycling. All he can do is provide the residents with more education on proper recycling. Commissioner Boutelle stated that if City Carting goes to the transfer station and they inspect, they will receive a fine. The Deputy Director replied that City Carting has their own transfer station. Commissioner Simms stated that the labels on the dumpsters are not very legible and he is concerned that it is only in English because some of the residents do not speak English. The Chairman suggested painting the recycling dumpster blue. Ms. Yankowski stated that Mr. Fiore also complained that the Housing Authority does not return phone calls. The Executive Director and Deputy Director informed Ms. Yankowski that Mr. Fiore has never called them or emailed them and he is welcome to do so. The Chairman indicated that if there is a complaint it is best to do it in writing because phone calls cannot be tracked. Commissioner Boutelle suggested contacting an advocacy group to train the resident councils on advocacy. The Executive Director responded that there are national advocacy groups for public housing authorities and we can contact them and we currently use CCI and Family Centers in this capacity.

Ms. Patty Sechi introduced herself as the Director of the Armstrong Court Community Garden. She informed the Board that they will celebrate their fifth year this year. The garden is open to all residents. Since the garden started the gardeners are saving money on food bills, they are getting healthier, they are happier because they are making connections with other people and they are spending more time with their family in the garden. Commissioner Boutelle asked if there is a date set for the anniversary event. Ms. Sechi replied that it is tentatively set for June 1<sup>st</sup>. Commissioner Boutelle asked if the soil was tested for arsenic. Ms. Sechi replied that it has been tested and the soil is okay. They also constructed raised beds and the soil that is used is certified organic material that comes from organic farms. With the garden there are more birds and butterflies. Commissioner Romeo added that the gardeners take pride in their gardens and that it looks great. Ms. Sechi commented that the butterfly garden was started for the kids and it will eventually be used for teaching purposes. Commissioner Settlemeyer asked if Ms. Sechi has any classes on composting. Ms. Sechi replied that there are classes on composting and she plans to continue them. Ms. Sechi stated that she has a steering committee that is made up of gardeners and herself, they help her manage the garden. The Deputy Director asked how the senior gardeners are doing. Ms. Sechi responded that they are doing great and sometimes she sends them volunteers to help them out. The Chairman thanked Ms. Sechi for attending the congregate housing meeting and for speaking highly of HATG.

The Chairman asked for approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on February 27, 2013. On a motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes, with revisions were approved.

Review of the Task List

1. PC Tax Credit– The Limited Partners signed the Agreement December 3rd. The payout amount will be approximately \$170,000, final amount to be determined after completion of the audit.
2. THAC–Waiting for HUD to approve assignment of the HAP.

**TASK LIST 3/27/2013**

<b>Date of Request</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Anticipated Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
6/24/09	PC Tax Credit	Tony Johnson, Bruno Lacaria	April 2013	Update Monthly
6/24/09	THAC	Bruno Lacaria	April 2013	Update Monthly

Finance Committee

Meeting was held on March 26, 2013. In attendance were Commissioners Curdumi and Settlemeyer, the Executive Director, Deputy Director and Finance Director. Commissioner Curdumi reported that Section 8 has started to operate at a deficit. The Finance Director stated that this is due to the Section 8 Family Self Sufficiency program not being funded by HUD this year. HATG has applied for a grant to continue the program. Commissioner Curdumi stated that if HATG does not receive the grant, the program might have to be discontinued. Commissioner Settlemeyer added that the other option is to fund it out of HATG reserves. Commissioner Curdumi reported that Parsonage Cottage’s operating revenues are less than last year due to not yet receiving one of the quarterly checks from the Fund Raising Board. Penny Lore stated that they will send double the amount for the next quarter. Commissioner Curdumi stated that the Greenwich Close estimated deficit has grown to \$520,000 to fund the non-critical work items.

Commissioner Curdumi informed the Board that the Management Fee Account may end the year positive. The Chairman stated that the Management Fee Account is an account of earned management fees.

The Chairman explained that HATG would like the CDBG loan made into a grant. The Director of Community Development, Princess Erfe, sent HATG a list of information needed. The Chairman requested that the Executive Director put together a dialogue explaining the reasoning of this request. The Executive Director stated that HATG is asking for the loan to be forgiven. The reason is financial. HATG has supplemented Parsonage Cottage including waiving the management fee, which is about \$110,000 annually. Commissioner Curdumi stated that HATG asked for it to be a loan, instead of a grant, originally because Parsonage Cottage had private investors. Now Parsonage Cottage does not have private investors therefore there is no reason to have it as a loan. The Chairman stated that the goal is for Parsonage Cottage to build up cash flow. The Chairman mentioned that HATG will offer to refinance the loan with the Town if the CDBG loan is forgiven. The Finance Director requested approval of the Board to have the 2012 management fee for Parsonage Cottage waived. Commissioner Settlemeyer suggested the Executive Director include in the dialogue the fact that HATG helped the Town by acquiring Parsonage Cottage from them. Commissioner Romeo mentioned that he was on the Board at the time and the Town had asked many organizations to take over the property and no one wanted to. Commissioner Boutelle asked if a loan can be forgiven because he had never heard of it being done. The Executive Director replied that it can be done. Commissioner Romeo suggested discussing the issue with Alma Rutgers. The Chairman responded that he already contacted her and she said HATG should first meet with the Community Development Director, Princess Erfe.

Commissioner Curdumi informed the Board that Section 8 payments will be reduced by 6%. The Deputy Director added that in the two months since the change on the FMR, the average tenant rent has increased by \$147 per month. The Deputy Director is concerned about tenants not being able to pay their portion of the rent. The Executive Director explained that HUD determines the FMR; HATG has no control over that.

Commissioner Romeo motioned to add the approval to waive the Parsonage Cottage management fee for the year 2012 on the agenda. Commissioner Boutelle seconded and all votes were in favor.

#### Development Committee

A meeting was held on March 22, 2013. In attendance were Commissioners Romeo and Yankowich, the Executive Director, Finance Director, Director of Planning and Development, Director of Maintenance and Maurice from Acticon. Commissioner Romeo reported that the improvements on the Strickland Road property are coming out nicely. The walls have been painted, the floor has been sanded, and the contractor is in the process of laying the lacquer on the floors. Commissioner Romeo informed the Board that the Town agreed to place a fence along the property line that abuts the parking lot and the Department of Public Works agreed to trim the overgrown trees. Commissioner Romeo stated that HATG received a lot of good press with this purchase and that Town Hall is very pleased.

The Executive Director, Finance Director and the Chairman met with Mike Santoro from DECD. The meeting was relating to a planning grant worth \$250,000. DECD only considered giving the grant to well run and effective housing authorities. HATG didn't apply for the funding. HATG will be receiving a letter from DECD. The Chairman added that DECD is looking for the funds to be spent on rehabilitation projects or creation of additional units at existing properties.

The Executive Director stated that the roof replacement work at Greenwich Close is going well. The contractor is working on building 10.

The Executive Director stated that approval of the contract for the Wilbur Peck Court window replacement is on the agenda, however he has to request that it go back to the development committee due to the fact that the bid is non-responsive. The Executive Director explained that when HATG requested a breakdown of the costs, most of the cost was on materials and the labor was less. HATG has the option of buying the windows and requesting just labor or rebidding the project. Commissioner Boutelle questioned rebidding the project instead of going with the next lowest bidder. The Executive Director replied that he believes HATG can get a lower price by rebidding it and possibly receive more bids.

#### Administrative Committee

A meeting was held on March 21, 2013. In attendance were Commissioners Settlemeyer, Boutelle and Curdumi and the Deputy Director. Commissioner Settlemeyer stated that the committee would like to be named Personnel Committee instead of Administrative Committee because there are so many personnel issues, it will take all year to complete the committees personnel tasks. The Chairman stated that he originally thought it would only take about three months to take on personnel issues and then the committee could move on to another task. Commissioner Boutelle commented that personnel issues are all the committee can take on this year. No vote was taken on renaming and refocusing the committee.

Commissioner Settlemeyer mentioned that there are two studies that the committee believes are worthwhile. First, she wanted to make sure that there is money in the budget for the studies. Commissioner Curdumi stated that the studies should wait until all the cuts have gone through. Commissioner Settlemeyer proceeded to discuss the personnel study which will help with establish salary ranges and appropriate job descriptions. NAHRO has a program called the Salary Comparability Study which costs about \$4,000. Commissioner Settlemeyer explained that for about \$6,000 HATG will be able to get a study that meets its needs. The Chairman stated that he does not think that program is what HATG needs because NAHRO requires a payment of \$2,000 to prepare the report and an extra \$2,000 for them to come to HATG and present their report. Commissioner Boutelle explained that the committee is looking for someone that will do the reviews onsite. Commissioner Romeo questioned if HATG is prepared to possibly finding out that personnel are underpaid and raise their salaries. Commissioner Boutelle answered that the two are not necessarily incumbent on each other. The Chairman stated that the committee needs to define the scope of what this study is trying to accomplish. Commissioner Boutelle stated that the committee wanted to first check with the finance committee to make sure that there are funds available for this type of study. The Executive Director asked what the committee is trying to accomplish with this study. Commissioner Boutelle replied that the committee feels that the job descriptions are poor and salary ranges need to be in place. The Chairman stated that there is not enough information to vote on it at the moment. He asked if NAHRO would be willing to perform the study the way the Board wants it. Commissioner Settlemeyer answered that they are willing to perform the study depending on HATG's needs; however, she would like to have three different proposals.

Commissioner Settlemeyer went on to discuss a program that NESC has which offers a Board performance checkup in order for the Board to become more effective. The cost of this is \$1200 and the committee would be able to invite NESC to HATG to give more information on this program. The Board sent the funding requests back to the committee for further review.

### Other Residences Committee

The meetings were held on March 21, 2013. In attendance at the Greenwich Close meeting were Commissioner Yankowich, the Executive Director, The Finance Director, the Director of Development and the Greenwich Close Asset Manager. The Chairman stated that Commissioner Curdumi already covered the issues with Greenwich Close and that the improvements have to speed up because the deadline is approaching. The Executive Director stated that he will request an extension on the deadline.

The Parsonage Cottage meeting was also held on March 21, 2013. In attendance were Commissioners Yankowich and Settlemeyer, the Executive Director, The Finance Director, the Director of Development, the Parsonage Cottage Administrator, Rich Depreta, Chairman of Parsonage Cottage's Fund Raising Board and Barry Nova, a commissioner of Parsonage Cottage's Fund Raising Board. The Chairman reported that in the meeting with Rich Depreta and Barry Nova they stated that reimbursements may be going down next year.

### Executive Director Report

Same as Development Committee.

### Staff Reports

The Deputy Director informed the Board that the area median income in Greenwich, Stamford and Norwalk for a family of four is \$110,000 and the moderate income limits for Greenwich is \$127,026. The Chairman stated that the Greenwich Time thought that a three bedroom apartment in the Cos Cob area for \$2700 is a great deal.

Ms. Penny Lore stated that there are six vacancies at Parsonage Cottage. The Deputy Director stated that there will be a senior from Armstrong Court moving in to Parsonage.

The Executive Director stated that there is one vacant unit at Greenwich Close. Recently three people were housed that used to live at Putnam Hill. Another tenant sold a big house and moved into Greenwich Close. Right now the contractor is trying to find out how much lead is around windows that needs to be remediated. The Executive Director is trying to work the elevator price down to something that is manageable. HUD thought that the elevators were going to be ADA accessible; however, we are not doing that. Commissioner Curdumi asked how long the elevators are not going to be functioning. The Executive Director responded that the elevators will not function for a month per building. Some elderly tenants might have to be relocated. An earlier recommendation by the previous Executive Director suggested mounting temporary elevators on the outside of the building.

Attorney Pittocco reported that the tax appeal is complete. He also stated that he has not had a chance to speak with the attorneys dealing with the West Putnam Avenue issue. HUD is looking into it and it will most likely go through.

### Other/New Business

Commissioner Boutelle motioned to vote on the approval of a total of \$15,000 for the 2013-2014 scholarship fund. Commissioner Romeo seconded and all votes were in favor.

Commissioner Curdumi motioned to vote on waiving the Parsonage Cottage management fee for the year 2012. Commissioner Settlemeyer seconded and all votes were in favor.

Ms. Cathy Landy apologized for coming late to the Board Meeting and missed the public comments section but would like to mention some things. Ms. Landy stated that she missed the meeting

regarding the renters insurance and wanted to know the insurance agency that she could contact. Commissioner Romeo replied that the agency he spoke to was State Farm in Old Greenwich. Ms. Landy stated she would pass the information to other tenants as well. Ms. Landy reported that the vents in the bathroom are working well however the ceilings have not been painted. She wondered if HATG will be painting the ceilings or if the tenants are responsible for doing that. The Executive Director responded that tenants that need their ceiling painted should place a work order and it will be done. Ms. Landy asked if the vents in the laundry room are getting serviced regularly. The Deputy Director answered that MacGray will be taking care of the vents. Ms. Landy stated that HATG had spoken about placing fences around the dumpsters because they don't look good. The Deputy Director responded that he will be looking into it; he does not have a definite answer at the moment. Ms. Landy asked why the stair towers are going to get repainted again; they have been painted about three times. The Chairman responded that the towers will keep getting repainted until the contractor does it right. Ms. Landy asked who she could talk to regarding how the other properties function, such as Greenwich Close. The Executive Director replied that she can make an appointment with the Deputy Director.

Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:29 p.m.

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:30 p.m.

The Board voted 6 in favor and 0 against a bonus program this year for senior management employees.

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lisette E. Contreras