

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF GREENWICH
Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
April 27, 2016
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, April 27, 2016 at the Wilbur Peck Court Community Room. The Chairman, Sam Romeo, called the meeting to order in public session at 5:35 p.m.

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

Commissioners Present: Sam Romeo, Abelardo Curdumi, James Boutelle and Robert Simms Jr

Commissioners Absent: Cathy Landy, Angelo Pucci and George Yankowich

Staff Present: Anthony Johnson, Terry Mardula, Derrick Bryant, Penny Lore, Lisette Contreras, Teryl Elliott, Ruth Young, Laura Murphy, Sardis Solano, Jamie Longo, Meaghan Maloney and Winston Robinson

Legal: Lou Pittocco

Public: Joan Yankowski, Stephen Ramkisson, Elda Schupp, Maria Cristina Henao, Maria Jaramillo, Santiago Henriquez, Eliana Ceron, Berta Builes and Chris von Keyserling

The Chairman welcomed the public and asked for any comments from residents. He reminded the public that this is a public meeting not a public hearing and that he will invite any non-residents to speak.

The Chairman stated that during the inspections of Wilbur Peck Court, staff found really nice and well-kept apartments. HATG wanted to recognize those residents by awarding them a plaque and a \$50 gift card. Commissioner Curdumi announced the five recipients, Maria Jaramillo, Maria Henao, Santiago Henriquez, Eliana Ceron and Berta Builes. Commissioner Curdumi announced that there were two residents that were runner up for the grand prize and they will be awarded a \$25 gift card. The Chairman thanked the residents for keeping their units clean.

Mr. Stephen Ramkisson stated that the windows at McKinney Terrace II are too heavy for the residents to open/close. The Executive Director responded that HATG realizes that the windows are very heavy and has tried to alleviate the situation, however, there is no way that they can be adjusted any further. If we try to loosen the windows up any further, it cause damage to the window and it could be dangerous for the resident as well. The maintenance personnel makes himself available to open/close windows for residents. Mr. Ramkisson inquired about spraying for bugs outside the buildings. The Executive Director replied that HATG doesn't spray for bugs, however a request can be put into the Town for bug spraying. Commissioner Boutelle mentioned that there might be an issue with the playing field being so close to the property. Mr. Ramkisson asked if the Town or HATG is responsible for repaving the parking lot and repainting the lines. The Executive Director replied that HATG repaved the parking lot and repainted the lines last year, but due to the

winter weather the lot might need to be repaved. He added that HATG might have to reach out to the Town for help to get it repaved; they paved Quarry Knoll two years ago. The problem is that the property does not have sufficient reserves. The Executive Director suggested adding the item to the CDBG application. Commissioner Boutelle explained that the funds for this application would not be available until next year. Mr. Ramkisson inquired about when the elevator will be available for use. The Executive Director responded that there are a few last security items that need to be cleared up with the State and then it will be available for use.

Ms. Maria Henao stated that the main laundry room at Wilbur Peck Court is deteriorating and should be redone. She complained that the machines are often out of order. The Deputy Director replied that there is a phone number to call the company for any problems with the machines because they are leased. The Senior Asset manager stated that there is very poor communication with the laundry machine company. The Executive Director added that it has been a few years that the room has been painted and it probably needs to be painted again. He asked who cleans the laundry rooms. The Senior Asset Manager replied that tenant Luz Gomez is in charge of the cleaning and maintenance personnel say she does a good job.

Ms. Elda Schupp inquired about the cleaning of the outdoor windows at McKinney Terrace II. The Executive Director replied that it will be done soon. Ms. Schupp requested a notice be posted whenever there is a party in the community room. She complained that there was a party over the weekend with very loud music and the children were running in the hallways. The Executive Director replied that it should be posted. The Asset Manager responded that she was not aware of a party over the weekend but she will look into it.

The Chairman asked for approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on March 23, 2015. On a motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes, with revisions were approved (Commissioner Curdumi and Commissioner Boutelle abstained due to absence).

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met on April 27, 2016. In attendance were Commissioner Boutelle, Commissioner Simms, the Finance Director and Deputy Director.

Commissioner Boutelle mentioned that HATG Has starts to accrue the management fee from Town Hall Annex and Parsonage Cottage.

The Finance Director attended a HUD finance training session in Hartford.

Commissioner Boutelle informed the Board that the audited numbers were submitted on April 15th.

Commissioner Boutelle stated that the Finance Director and the Planning and Development Manager are in the process of refining the five year capital plan because it is easier to get access to reserve funds when the projects are already on the plan.

The Executive Director added that he requested the Finance Director to provide the managing cash flow in the finances.

Commissioner Boutelle stated that Attorney Pittocco will be bringing documents pertaining to Parsonage Cottage to the meeting that he would like to discuss in Executive Session.

Development Committee

The Development Committee met on April 22, 2016. In attendance were the Chairman, Commissioner Yankowich, Executive Director, Maintenance Director and the Planning and Development Manager.

The Chairman informed the Board that the application for the Armstrong Court phase II project was submitted today to CHFA. The Executive Director added that HATG Received the first round of funding for Phase I so he is hopeful that HATG will receive this round as well. The Executive Director explained that tenants that currently live in one bedroom units are mostly seniors and they will be relocated into senior housing. Qualifying tenants will be chosen from throughout the complex to be relocated into the 18 new townhouses. The cost for Phase II is about \$20 million and the cost for Phase I is about \$6.6 million.

The Chairman stated that the Planning and Development Manager met with Marchetti regarding the Armstrong Court boilers. The Executive Director added that they will be re-working two connections.

The Chairman reported that the groundbreaking ceremony for Adams Garden II was held on April 16th. It was a nice event and in attendance were the First Selectman, State Representatives Bocchino and Camillo, representatives from the banks and the contractor.

The Chairman stated that the playground project at Adams Garden should be completed by next week.

The Chairman informed the Board that work on the outside of the Strickland Cottage has commenced and work on the inside will start next week.

The Chairman stated that soon there will be bids out for work at Town Hall Annex such as, the new heating system, new front door, roof and new kitchens.

The Chairman reported that five companies submitted a bid for the bathroom renovations at Wilbur Peck Court. Two of the company's proposals were close.

The Chairman mentioned that the pull boxes at Wilbur Peck Court were installed. The Executive Director added that HATG is waiting to get clearance from the Town.

The Executive Director stated that the health clinic at Wilbur Peck Court is complete. First Family Centers will have a soft opening and later on they will hold a grand opening.

The Chairman informed the Board that Greenwich Close had received proposals for camera installation. The Greenwich Close Asset Manager added that the proposals that were received are very expensive and that some cameras might have to be removed from the design in order to bring cost down. The Greenwich Close Asset Manager stated that there will be one vacancy that is already rented for June 1st. He invited everyone to the tulip party that will be held on Thursday at the Greenwich Close pocket park. He has met with contractors regarding building a community room in building 20. Commissioner Curdumi added that if the community room will be rented out to make sure that it reflected in the insurance policy. The Greenwich Close Asset Manager reported that he has a small waiting list for the 1-2 bedroom units.

The Executive Director reported that the Quarry Knoll II community room will be rehabbed. Right now Town approvals are needed as well as CHFA and HUD. Ms. Joan Yankowski asked how long

will the room be closed. The Executive Director replied that he didn't know yet as there is no construction schedule in place at the moment.

Administrative Committee

The Administrative Committee did not meet this month.

Other Residences Committee

The Other Residences Committee did not meet this month.

The Parsonage Cottage Administrator stated that she has difficulties occupying the semi-private rooms. She will place a request with the State to convert them into private rooms.

Executive Director Report

The Executive Director stated that he is looking into energy conservancy solutions, especially for Agnes Morley Heights. Last year the utility bills were over \$400,000 and HATG pays all the utilities at this building. He has a meeting set up to look at energy incentives. Commissioner Curdumi asked if he is looking into solar. The Executive Director responded that he is looking into solar for other buildings. Commissioner Boutelle asked if solar would be possible for Adams Garden. The Executive Director replied that Adams Garden is not a good contender for solar since there are a lot of trees on the property and not much roofing.

The Executive Director mentioned the Fire Marshall notification to add pull boxes at Armstrong Court. He stated that the Board has to decide whether they want to spend that amount of money on a system that might be ripped out later on. The Chairman added that the Fire Marshall has turned the matter over to the State's Attorney. He added that the residents are not at any risk of a fire due to the make of the building. The Executive Director stated that it doesn't make sense to add pull boxes in stairwells that are open and have windows since there is enough egress in that area. He added that carbon monoxide detectors were recently installed in all units. Commissioner Simms inquired if labor costs are what is most costly. The Executive Director replied that it is labor and the materials as well. HATG will have to hire unionized electricians and pay them based on Davis Bacon wages.

The Executive Director stated that he is working on closing the tax credit deal for phase I of the Armstrong Court project. He is looking at bank proposals as well. Commissioner Curdumi asked who uses the credits. The Executive Director replied that corporations use them to get their operating losses.

Commissioner Simms mentioned that HATG has to publicize all the good things that are done. The Chairman informed him that the Executive Director met with the Greenwich Time Editor and he publicized a positive article on the groundbreaking of Adams Garden II. The Executive Director mentioned that Family Centers employs a full time public relations employee. He suggested forming a committee. The Chairman appointed Commissioner Simms chairman of the Public Relations Committee. Commissioner Boutelle reminded the Board that, according to the bylaws, only the Chairman and the Executive Director are allowed to talk on behalf of the authority. The Chairman asked Commissioner Simms to consult with either him or the Executive Director before publicizing anything.

Staff Reports

The Deputy Director informed the Board that there are only about 10 vacancies per year at Armstrong Court. He added that when a three bedroom unit becomes available, it is used for in-

house transfers. He added that HATG will be raising the base rents only for new tenants in order to fill vacancies with families with higher incomes. The Executive Director clarified that CHFA has always suggested HATG raise the base rents and it has not been done. With the tax credit deal, the building will not be owned by HATG, it will be owned by the LLC. He explained that existing tenants will be protected through the RAP program. The more RAP is needed, the less attractive the deal is.

Commissioner Curdumi inquired about the section 8 opening. The Deputy Director explained that people that submitted their application on April 14th and 15th do not have to reapply. The drawing will be a combination of those dates and the May 2nd and 3rd opening. He stated that from the first opening HATG received about 1,000 applications and he anticipates receiving another 1,000. From those, only 75 will be drawn and only those people will be notified. From the 75 applications drawn, only 12 vouchers will be distributed and the local preference policy will be in place. Commissioner Boutelle asked if only a few have the local preference, will more application be drawn. The Deputy Director answered that another 75 might be drawn if that is the case. The In-Take Specialist stated that in the 2014 opening, 150 applications were drawn and about 50% had local preference. She added that she is now down to the last 3 applicants. By choosing less application, the list can be opened more often. The In-Take Specialist explained that while an applicant that did not meet the local preference requirement is on the waiting list, their status might change. The Executive Director stated that there is a growing need for housing and HUD is eliminating high density, low income housing its. The only thing left for people to turn to is the Section 8 program.

The Deputy Director informed the Board that Fair Housing came to HATG to look at the files of the last 30 voucher holders.

Other/New Business

Motion to go into Executive Session at 6:50 p.m.

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:25 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lisette E. Contreras