

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF GREENWICH
Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
July 22, 2015
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, July 22, 2015 at the Agnes Morley Heights 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, Cathy Landy, Angelo Pucci, Robert Simms Jr and George Yankowich

Commissioners Absent: James Boutelle

Staff Present: Anthony Johnson, Terry Mardula, Derrick Bryant, Penny Lore, Lisette Contreras, Ruth Young, Sardis Solano, George Schiavello, Laura Murphy and Winston Robinson

Legal: Lou Pittocco

Public: Joan Yankowski, Lynn Latiak, Margaret Clarke, Antonia Christiano, Barbara Rogers, Carol Nuro, Marcelle Sands, Cristina Pica and Deidra Rose

The Chairman welcomed the public and asked for any comments from residents. Ms. Carol Nuro stated that there is a parking problem at Agnes Morley to the point that tenants are afraid to leave because there is no parking when they return. Ms. Barbara Rogers claimed that she gave her car to her son because she never finds parking at Agnes Morley. Ms. Marcelle Sands stated that she is very happy to live at Agnes Morley and it's a very wonderful place, however, she doesn't feel free because of the parking issue. She mentioned that when she moved in there were parking stickers issued, now that there are no parking stickers, she has no idea which cars belong to residents. The Chairman replied that the Executive Director and the Deputy Director are working on developing a parking plan. The Deputy Director added that the plan will require employees as well as aides to park elsewhere. Ms. Rogers stated that the aides will not work here if they are not allowed to park. The Executive Director responded that he has to address the parking issue and the aides employers will have to address that with them. He added that the cameras will help identify cars that should not be parked. Ms. Nuro commented that the cameras are not great; they do not capture all parking areas. The Executive Director replied that the cameras are meant to protect residents from other people, not to capture the cars. The Parsonage Cottage Administrator asked if there is no more land where parking can be built. The Executive Director responded that there is no land available. Ms. Cristina Pica suggested using Call-A-Ride or a taxi. The Deputy Director assured the residents that the parking policy will be in effect soon, once the employee parking is sorted out.

Ms. Joan Yankowski stated that she is concerned for the safety of the residents. Mr. Victor Romero's dog is always running around without a leash. She is concerned that the elder residents might trip over the dog. Ms. Yankowski also mentioned that there is a non-resident that is threatening the residents of Quarry Knoll. The Chairman stated that the police need to be called when something like that happens. Ms. Yankowski stated that he is a visitor of a resident but he takes a lot of liberties. The Executive Director replied that if HATG can be informed of who this individual is visiting, the resident can be addressed about their visitor's behavior, because residents are responsible for their visitors. The Deputy Director stated that he has contacted Mr. Romero's social worker to intervene with the situation with the dog. The Deputy Director informed the residents that work to repair the lock to the community room doors at Quarry Knoll I will begin on Monday.

Ms. Nuro mentioned that the residents that congregate on the third floor are not hurting anyone. She thinks it's wonderful that they can do that and have a good time hanging out. Ms. Sands added that she is very grateful to have that group of people to socialize with because it's therapeutic.

Ms. Pica thanked HATG for having the apartments painted. She mentioned that the exterior of the building windows have not been washed in a long time. The Executive Director replied that the windows will be taken care of.

Ms. Sands thanked the Board for providing a hospitable place to live. The Chairman stated that the Housing Manager does a great job with keeping the building in good shape.

The Chairman asked for approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on June 24, 2015. On a motion duly made and seconded, the Minutes, with revisions, were approved (Commissioner Curdumi abstained due to absence).

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met Wednesday, July 22, 2015. In attendance were Commissioner Curdumi, the Executive Director, Deputy Director and Finance Director.

Commissioner Curdumi reported that Agnes Morley continues to reduce the deficit that was caused by expensive utility bills at the beginning of the year.

Commissioner Curdumi informed the Board that the auditors are conducting the 2014 audit and it should be completed by mid-August.

Commissioner Yankowich asked how reserves are treated. The Finance Director replied that the State holds reserves. Commissioner Yankowich inquired about the depreciation amount shown on the financial statements. The Executive Director responded that when reserves are taken out, they are capitalized as an asset and then they are depreciated.

Commissioner Yankowich referred to the PILOT question he asked previously. The Finance Director stated that at the end of the audit, the auditors will accrue the PILOT. Quarry Knoll is the only program that has been accrued.

Development Committee

The Development Committee met on Friday July 17, 2015. In attendance were Commissioner Romeo, Commissioner Yankowich, the Executive Director, the Planning and Development Manager and the Greenwich Close Asset Manager.

The Executive Director informed the Board that the kitchen project at Adams Garden has stopped until the end of August. The contractor has caught up creating the temporary kitchens and half of the cabinets have been delivered. The Executive Director explained the issue with the cabinets to Commissioner Landy, who inquired. Commissioner Pucci asked how many apartments were disrupted. The Executive Director replied that ten apartments had to have temporary kitchens built. The Deputy Director stated that no one is complaining and the residents have been very patient. Commissioner Romeo mentioned that many residents were very happy with their kitchens and wanted to show them off during the block party. The Executive Director stated that professional pictures were taken and will be added to the website.

The Executive Director mentioned that he is working on the bid for the Adams Garden expansion. The bank is working on final approvals and he expects them soon.

The Executive Director stated that he received quotes for the bathrooms at Wilbur Peck, the fire alarm system at Wilbur Peck and for the security cameras at Town Hall Annex. The Executive Director added that he has some questions on the fire alarm system quote.

The Executive Director informed the Board that HATG received a \$300,000 loan offer from the State for the development of Armstrong Court. However, HATG has not received the paperwork or the funds. He hopes that it's a good indication that the State is leaning towards offering HATG the grant that was applied for.

The Chairman commended the Maintenance Director for the good job done on cutting back the bushes on Booth Court side of Armstrong Court. The street looks much wider.

Administrative Committee

The Administrative Committee met on Friday, July 17, 2015. In attendance were Commissioner Pucci, Commissioner Simms, the Executive Director and the Deputy Director.

Commissioner Pucci stated that the Higbie case was discussed and would like to discuss it during executive session.

The Executive Director informed the Board that the Town Clerk will hold the election for Resident Commissioner. The Chairman added that there will be three voting polls; at Adams Garden, Armstrong Court and McKinney Terrace. He stated that this will be handled like a municipal election and will be a model on how to handle resident commissioner elections. Commissioner Curdumi asked how many candidates there are at the moment. The Executive Director answered that there are currently two candidates.

Other Residences Committee

The Other Residences Committee did not meet this month.

The Parsonage Cottage Administrator stated that the emergency call bell system will be completed the first week in August.

The Parsonage Cottage Administrator is concerned about the ramp relocation project because she doesn't know how to handle all the requirements. Commissioner Yankowich is concerned about the funding. The Chairman informed them that he asked the First Selectman to intervene on the fees and inspections stating that there should be some concessions due to Parsonage Cottage being a Town building. The Executive Director stated that an MI is not needed but a full application still needs to be submitted. The Parsonage Cottage Administrator stated that she has \$30,000 for this project.

The Executive Director reported that final work is being performed at Greenwich Close with the laundry rooms and the corridors. The exterior lighting of the pocket park has been completed.

Commissioner Yankowich mentioned that he has heard many compliments on the garden at Town Hall Annex.

Executive Director Report

The Executive Director informed the Board that HATG is working on installing pull boxes at Wilbur Peck Court so that the violation can be removed. Once that happens, HATG can work on installing insulation. Commissioner Yankowich asked if Wilbur Peck will be subject the Town's alarm ordinance and pay for each pull box. The Chairman responded that it will be registered as a whole.

The Executive Director stated that he would like to get the Strickland Cottage renovation started but he has not heard back from Tony D'Andrea.

Commissioner Yankowich inquired about the new management structure for Town Hall Annex. The Executive Director explained that HATG is opting out of the current contract with HUD. HUD will give the current tenants Section 8 vouchers which will be administered by John D'Amelia. HATG will not be doing certifications; only managing the property. The Deputy Director added that one reason for this change is that HUD will not approve a higher contract rent despite the fact that a rent reasonableness study was done showing that the current rents are below market. With higher contract rents and opting out of the current contract, the building will increase revenue. Tenants can either leave Town Hall Annex or move somewhere else with their voucher. The Chairman stated that the tenants believe that the State will manage the building and evict everyone. The Deputy Director responded that a meeting was held for residents by John D'Amelia & Associates to explain the change for the residents. The Deputy Director attended the meeting and answered questions about the management of Town Hall Annex. Commissioner Landy asked who tenants can contact if they have more questions. The Deputy Director replied that if the questions relate to a tenants recertification or income, they should contact D'Amelia, other questions should be addressed to the main office.

Commissioner Yankowich inquired about the Public Health Code policy. The Executive Director clarified that the policy is according to State regulations and is being revised. Parsonage Cottage is asking for a budget increase for the lawyer in this case.

The Executive Director showed the Board the Award for Excellence that was issued to HATG for the Alterations and Improvements at Quarry Knoll II from the NAHRO New England Regional Council. He stated that the National Award will be issued at the NAHRO conference that will take place next week.

Staff Reports

Commissioner Yankowich mentioned a unit at McKinney Terrace I where he noticed that there was a structural issue and asked why it didn't come up during the annual inspections. The Executive Director stated that the inspectors do not look for structural issues; they would have to be trained to recognize them as well as maintenance personnel. The Chairman stated that the freezing of drains at McKinney Terrace I would have to be looked at. The Executive Director informed the Board that McKinney Terrace I and II are next on the State's lists of properties that need renovation.

Commissioner Yankowich inquired about the scholarships. The Deputy Director replied that the scholarship committee has not met yet to review the essays. The Executive Director stated that they will meet early next week.

Commissioner Simms asked about the internet access that President Obama is asking housing authorities to provide for their residents. The Executive Director responded that he does not know how that will be funded.

Commissioner Landy questioned the maintenance charges on the Asset Manager's report for Armstrong Court. The Executive Director replied that HATG charges for repairs due to tenant neglect, however, it's not a monthly charge. Commissioner Landy inquired about the tree that was removed at Armstrong Court. The Executive Director stated that after a dead tree (that looked healthy on the outside) fell on the property, a tree expert assessed all the trees and determined which trees needed to be removed.

Commissioner Landy asked of the \$80 charge for air conditioners for the residents at Agnes Morley is a monthly charge. The Deputy Director replied that it is for the whole season.

Other/New Business

The Chairman stated that the personnel matter on the agenda under executive session needs to be removed because there is no matter to be discussed.

Motion to go into Executive Session at 6:59 p.m.

Motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:40 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Lisette E. Contreras