

Regular Meeting Minutes
Board of Commissioners Meeting
April 10, 2017

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Bridgeport met in a Regular Meeting at 150 Highland Avenue, Bridgeport, CT, on the 10th day of April, the place, date and hour duly established for the holding of such meetings Chairperson Andrews called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

The Recording Secretary stated that this meeting is being conducted in conformity with the Open Public Meeting Act.

Present:

Chairperson Cowlis Andrews
Vice Chairperson Hadassah Nightingale
Commissioner Richard Garcia, Treasurer (late arrival)
Commissioner Stephen Nelson

Also, Present:

Sean Bagot, Senior Legal and Compliance Analyst
Caroline Sanchez, Contract Specialist
Alan Cashmore, Chief Financial Officer
Deborah Woodson, Executive Operations Administrator/Meeting Recorder/Transcriber

Asset Management Staff:

Tiffany Maldonado, Director of Asset Management
Monica Ratley, Manager, Harborview Terrace
Lorretta Fuller, Manager, PT Barnum
Diedre Perry, Resident Selection
Mayra Ramirez, Manager, Trumbull Gardens

Absent:

James A. Slaughter, Interim Executive Director

Motion was made by: Commissioner Nightingale
Seconded: Commissioner Nelson

The Meeting of the Bridgeport Housing Authority also known as Park City Communities will come to order. Ready for the Roll Call

[Alan Cashmore] Roll Call:

Commissioner Nightingale	Present
Commissioner Garcia	Absent
Commissioner Andrews	Present

Commissioner Nelson Present

[Alan Cashmore] Chairperson we have a Quorum.

Public Comment #1 Macy Harper (Presidential Village) 533 Hallent Avenue

We have a lot of problems that we are dealing with at scattered sites. My house is on a lake every time it rains. You need rain boots to go out the front and rain boots to go out the back. My bathroom was raining on Monday. I called in a work order, they came out but they didn't come to my apartment. So, it rained in my bathroom Monday, Thursday and Friday. Now the mold is back on my ceiling. That's the first thing. She has pictures on her phone.

When inspection time came. Maintenance just patched things up and left. I don't have lease. Housing sent me a summons and my daughter. I have a lot of children. There's a lot of mold in that building that needs to be addressed.

Someone fell in that driveway and I received a summons and complaint because of that fall since a neighbor fell. The units involved are (531, 533 and 535) That's a lot of stress on me.

[Bettie Cook] This have been going on forever. They come to monthly meetings, the complaints have been addressed but nothing is being done. She has a special needs child.

These are the picture after the snow, No one came out to shovel. I actually emailed the pictures to Mr. Slaughter showing the water. I am trying to figure out how to read these housing statements. The payments are being broken up.

Because the neighbors are suing housing, housing has send me and my daughter a summons and complaint.

[Commissioner Andrews] Let me see.

[Elizabeth Perez] Some of the scattered sites units have one address. I can help her read the statement. It depends on where you live. I can sit with her and explain it.

[Commissioner Andrews] We are going to have Sharon and her assistant manager do a walk through. Today is Monday so by Wednesday we should have a walk through.

Commissioner Nightingale] Can I go?? I want to verify the report that they are going to send you and the Board.

[Commissioner Andrews] By Wednesday we need to have a walk through and we should have a report by the afternoon. They need to take care of both units. The report should be provided to the Board.

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[Commissioner Andrews] I don't think so. Here's what I want. I want the manager and the assistant manager to do the walk through. I want them to do the walkthrough and provide a report. I want them to provide a report to the board, not only as to what is happening but to provide a plan. Sharon and the Assistant Manager need to contact Ms. Nightingale so that she can inspect the unit and report back to the board.

[Commissioner Andrews] They need to work something out

[Macy Harper] Here are pictures of the water. The drains in the front and back are clogged. It's a simple fix but they don't want to do it. I am actually trying to get a handicap sticker. Because it's hard for me to bring my daughter through the rain and the snow.

[Macy Harper] Who do I call about getting a bigger unit. I have nine in my unit.

[Commissioner Andrews] I don't want to get into specifics, please contact Resident Selection. We need to understand the problems with the lease and some of the technical issues. Not having a lease and being under housed.

[Macy Harper] My stove is not working properly since December.

[Commissioner Andrews] When they come to your house remember to tell them about your stove

[Macy Harper] Thank you

[Commissioner Andrews] You're quite welcome.

[Commissioner Andrews] Are there any other Public Comments?

Public Comment #2 [Bettie Cook, President RAB/Scattered Sites]

I would like to address the Commissioners about the maintenance help at all the sites. Scattered Sites only have 8 maintenance men and two temps they just hired for six weeks. When the guys work weekends, they have to take two days off and that is defeating the purpose of trying to catch up. Because the two days that they are taking off, they are still falling behind. Why not pay them for the overtime and let them work. You know what I am saying?

[Commissioner Andrews] Ms. Cook I really do understand that. But the fact of the matter is that we have been losing five million dollars for the last four to five years. And the money is just now there. So, we are trying to figure out.

But Commissioner Andrews you are hiring all these big time people up over the maintenance guys and yet and still you want these guys to manage 400 to 500 properties with 8 people. What if someone calls out sick??

[Commissioner Andrews] I fully understand what you are saying and what you are getting at. I appreciate that. The flip side of the issue is this housing authority reports to HUD because we use a lot of Federal money and the people that we are hiring at the hire levels are there and we have probable 50% of the staff that we used to have at this authority in terms of employees at the administrative/management level. One of the reasons why I am here to be frank with you is because we are reporting to HUD. We have to do our reports, get our vacancy rates down so that we can get higher subsidy. So, we are working on those issues. We are cognizant of that, I understand and appreciate your frustration. I really do.

It's not fair to us as tenants, when you need something done. The elevator in my building had been down for two months. You get stuck in the elevator, people are calling every fifteen minutes and people come knocking on my door.

[Commissioner Andrews] What building do you live in?

Scattered Sites, Stratford Avenue

[Commissioner Andrews] Is the elevator still out??

Yes, they came out to repair the elevator and they said that they have to order a part. One lady almost passed out. It's a good thing that I was downstairs, because the Fire Department doesn't come anymore. The Housing Authority hasn't paid them? People used to get stuck in the elevator, they would push the emergency button and the fire department used to come. But they don't come any more.

[Commissioner Andrews] To all the RAB board members and tenants, if you see something going on, make an anonymous call to the office and report what's happening.

It's been reported.

[Commissioner Andrews] I grew up with someone who died because people were playing with the elevators and when she had an asthma attack the paramedics went up and had to come back down and get everything that they had to get. She lived on the 5th floor and she died. By the same token, when something happens people have to tell who's doing it and leave a name. But we have to protect ourselves too. It's not just us turning these things around fixing an elevator, they are charging \$1500 a pop.

Five reports have been called in for the last two months. By people who have been stuck in the elevator from their cell phone.

[Commissioner Nightingale] A lot of the problems with the elevators are people pressing the up and down button. I will admit that it may be someone doing something, but in most cases it's the age of the elevator. The elevators need to be inspected and we cannot overlook this. Some buildings are high risers, some are not. My building has 13 floors. If someone gets stuck in that elevator, what are you going to say, we didn't have the money. These elevators need to be

inspected and analyzed. One week its fixed and next week the elevators are out again. If you don't have the money you have to find it.

[Commissioner Andrews] I understand that, but by the same token we have some financial realities.

[Dave Ghio] We have a service contract which has been in effect for five years and the inspect the elevators quarterly, so we save a few dollars. All the elevators in this agency are inspected every year.

Then we aren't the certificates of inspection put in the elevators. I saw a certificate that had expired over five years ago.

[Dave Ghio] I cannot vouch for the certificate not being in the elevator but they are inspected.

[Commissioner Nightingale] The residents should know when each elevator was inspected last. It should not be a guessing game. The elevator in my building is making a grinding noise. Let's make the residents feel a little more comfortable. It's because of the residents that you people have jobs here. If it wasn't for the residents, there would be no need for BHA or PCC. Now some of us may not be paying their rent on time and but there are a lot of reasons why we don't have any money. But this is a necessity, you have seniors and children in these buildings. I am sure you would not want your mother riding up and down in an elevator that is not working properly. And none of them are really working properly.

[Commissioner Andrews] I agree with you 100%. My answer is it's all of the above. We have service contracts and we have to do the proper maintenance. Residents must also take care of where they live and so it's all of the above. It's not this or that, it's all of the above,

[Commissioner Nightingale] While you are at it, tell your Directors to attend the resident meetings. All of you should make arrangements to be at some of these meetings (Resident Council and RAB), so the residents can hear what's going on from your mouth. Yawl are the one's making decisions and you should be the one's telling them what's going on.

[Commissioner Andrews] It's not Yawl, it's us! We are all in this together. I am willing to take some time off, to attend these meetings.

[Commissioner Andrews] Is there another speaker?

Public Comment #3 [Karen Bracey, Trumbull Gardens]

Good Evening. Have we found out any information about the US, the clothes drive. We would like to know where the money went?

[Alan Cashmore] The last money that we received was in November. We received it quarterly, I have not seen any money recently. I have not been able to find a contract to find out why we have not received any money since November of last year.

I need to know how much money came to Trumbull Gardens. How did it get spent? Did some of the residents get it? That's what I want to know.

Second thing what's going on with the Wi-Fi? We have no Wi-Fi at the Community Center. We have an after-school program and the children get on the computers, but they can't get on the computers because we have no Wi-Fi.

[Alan Cashmore] I will try and get out there as soon as I can. After I spoke to you about the problem last week, I just have not had the time to go to Trumbull. Right now, I am doing Finance and IT, I will try and get there tomorrow. Our IT person left and we are in the process of hiring someone.

He was no good anyway. So, it's no loss to the housing authority. Yes, I said it.

Third question, while we are on the subject of the elevators. when the center opened, I specifically told my site manager and foreman about the elevator at the center. It has not been inspected since 2012. So, don't tell me that they come out monthly or quarterly because if they did this elevator would have been taken care of by now. So, I am just saying, get down there and get the elevator people out there and get the Certificate right. All we need is for someone to come down there and get hurt in the elevator or the elevator bounces.

I am telling you, I fall very easily! I am just saying.

My last comment is the gentlemen that was assaulted last month, they need to move. They need to get on this quickly. I was told that the list was given to the scattered sites people as to what apartments were available for the family. But nothing has been done. I don't know who we have to speak with Manager or whomever, but we need to get the family out of the building. They are terrified, they need a four bedroom and I know that they are available. We need get this moving. I have already spoken to Resident Selection and my site manager. We are waiting on scattered sites. I don't know what the holdup is.

[Commissioner Andrews] What is the hold up?

[Tiffany Maldonado] The scope of work has to be done. It's a five bedroom

[Commissioner Andrews] So the work has not been done.

[Tiffany Maldonado] No

[Commissioner Andrews] Can you please follow up and get back to me tomorrow afternoon?

[Tiffany Maldonado] Yes.

[Karen Bracey] Thank you.

Are there any other comments?

Public Comment # 4 Bernadette Brooks

My problem is I was approved for another unit and I am still waiting. But in the meantime, it was my understanding that I was going to be placed in a Hotel. The conditions of my apartment are getting worse instead of getting better. A certain person at the table told the foremen there was nothing wrong with the floors in my unit. The only thing they fixed was the mold everything else is getting worse. There is water leaking from the light. I was approved for another unit in February and here it is April and I am still in the same unit. I have two children with disabilities. I called management I get voicemail. I don't understand what's going on.

[Commissioner Andrews] We will get a plan and get back to you by the end of next week.

Thank you.

[Commissioner Andrews] Are there any more comments?

Is there any old business?

Can I get a Motion for the Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes from March 22, 2017

Motion was made by: Commissioner Nelson
Seconded: Commissioner Nightingale

Any there any questions?

Roll Call:

Commissioner Nightingale Aye
Commissioner Andrews Aye
Commissioner Nelson Aye

Motion Carried: 4 – 0

[Commissioner Andrews] Are there any Committee Reports??

There were no reports from the Sub Committees.

Finance and IT

[Alan Cashmore] This month's report is similar to last month; we have the same issues. Our retirements benefits are still over budgeted. We are trying to go out and get a new health insurance company.

[Commissioner Andrews] Do you have everything that you need to get a new policy??

[Alan Cashmore] We are getting there. It's a long process, because of all of the retirees and active employees. We are working on the census. We should have it by the end of the week. We have been talking to Anthem which is our current company, it will be difficult to change it before October 1st because that's when we have Opening Enrollment is.

[Commissioner Andrews] So we are essentially we have to eat this?

It appears without changing a lot of the benefits we really won't be saving a lot of money. A self-insured policy should be cheaper, there's still a lot of questions to be answered.

[Commissioner Andrews] That's not encouraging!

[Alan Cashmore] I know. Having said that COS is showing the same loss it suffered last month, which is the attorney fees that have not been paid because we do not have the money. We are showing a \$400,000 loss at the end of February.

Public Housing currently has an operating surplus of \$828,521 compared to a projected deficit of \$(25,480). This is largely due to the use of capital funds.

Section 8 showing a loss of \$10,000, we haven't received all of our subsidy. Hopefully, that will be straightened out by our next meeting. Overall PH appears to be doing well but it is actually very tight. And the Section 8 Department and COCS need some help. So, we have to watch our expenses.

[Commissioner Andrews] We have to watch our expenses and management it. We have to provide services but also we have to prioritize. James is not here; Senior Management has to come up with a plan and present to the Board how we are going to manage this stuff. From a cash management system, it's tough and staff don't realize how crucial our finances are right now.

[Alan Cashmore] COCC had \$8,000 to pay bills at the end of March.

[Commissioner Andrews] What are we doing with the cameras at Marina? Can they be used at another property?

[Alan Cashmore] Yes, they can be repurposed.

PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNIZATION:

[Dave Ghio] Bids are in for the Roof Repairs for Trumbull Gardens. Our recommendation will be presented to you tonight The Resolution was awarded to the lowest bidder who happens to be a local Section 3 Contractor. There were seven bidders. The lowest bid was extremely low and was thrown out not without discussion to the bidder. The bidder under estimated the bid and was not interested in the project.

We will start working on the 17 vacant units at Trumbull Gardens in buildings 10 and 11.

Immediately after that we will start working on the 11 vacant units at C.F. Greene Homes. We have four at P.T. Barnum and 3 at Boston Commons (Scattered Sites) are on the way. We advertised for the architects back in January and February we awarded and assigned the work to the architect as well as opening up the bids in March. In April we expect to award contracts for the Level 3 work to be done. Some may stretch out to June.

Will the units be turned over as they complete them?

Our goal is to hire more contractors and limit the overall duration. They will be coming on individually. The bid specs asks for prices individually, so that they can be handpicked and awarded a contract.

Boston Commons is wrapping up. The Contractor is planning a re grand opening.

How many units?? Three Units.

(For the record Commissioner Garcia is present)

[Commissioner Andrews] So they will be turned over as they become available.

Yes. They will be done individually and not as a group.

[Commissioner Andrews] Good Work guys, let's get the work done so that we can get people housed.

Procurement:

[Caroline Sanchez] There is an upcoming solicitation for elevator maintenance and repairs that I am trying to release this coming Monday, April 17, 2017.

As Dave mentioned, we have Trumbull Garden, P.T. Barnum and C.F. Greene Vacancy Unit Turnovers scheduled for April 24, 2017 and General Legal Services.

[Commissioner Andrews] I have been referring contractors over to P & D that are looking for work. I say talk to them because I don't know.

[Dave Ghio] No problem, we welcome that! As you know we are always looking for good contractors.

Property/ Asset Management

[Tiffany Maldonado] There is a slight increase in the number of vacant units overall. Development wide we are trying to get to 94%. As you know our problem sites are Green

Homes, Trumbull Gardens and Scattered Sites. Until I meet with Finance, HR and the Executive Director to determine vacant maintenance positions that we have to fill. In the meantime, we have hired temporary maintenance staff from Engage Staffing to support the vacant units.

[Commissioner Andrews] When I first came on this board I heard we had hired temps that were here working far too long.

[Tiffany Maldonado] This is only for the next six weeks. I do want to say that my staff should be recognized for their hard work they completed 34 move ins during the month of March in comparison to seven during the month of February. So, they are working towards getting the numbers in the right direction. Our TARS are down from 30% in February to 23% in March, with the help of Legal. We are still trending at 98.02% for re-exams and we are trending upwards in terms of rent collection for the month of March.

Resident Selection;

[Diedre Perry] We are shaking and moving over there. People could not move in without us assigning people to those units. We have people that are ready to be housed in every bedroom category as you can see on my report. So, we are just waiting for some units to be ready. We have people scheduled to move in between now and the next board meeting.

We do need to open up our waiting list as I said for the last couple of months and not for every bedroom size but for 3, 4, 5 and elderly and possibly disabled. It depends how fast we go through the ones that we have right now. I would like to mention that Resident Selection is still short staffed.

[Commissioner Andrews] Can we open the waiting list one at a time?

We could do that but it's easier if it's done all at one time because we have to advertise in the newspaper and its costly.

[Caroline Sanchez] It costs \$800 to advertise each in the classified and minority newspapers.

[Commissioner Andrews] So, we are talking \$2400

[Diedre Perry] I can't stress anymore how important it is that we hire additional staff.

[Commissioner Andrews] Thank you for your hard work.

Housing Choice Voucher:

Commissioner Andrews] Who is here for HCV? Nobody? Someone better be here for the next meeting. We are losing money and things aren't getting done. Someone had better be at the next meeting.

Security

[Ralph Villages] Good Evening, you have my monthly report. I have been working with Captain Garcia to work on stepping up their patrol at Green and Trumbull Gardens. We had a couple of walk throughs and a couple of meetings. We have met with the managers of both sites. We believe the other sites are setting up meetings as well. They are stepping up their efforts to make some arrests. We still don't have the MOU. They will be using a Post at C.F. Greene and one at Trumbull. We have some issues with OSHA violations in there. We are working to correct those issues. We are having a lot of trouble in buildings 10 and 11. We still have some issues with the doors and locks at Trumbull.

That's about it for my report. Do any Commissioners have any questions?

[Commissioner Garcia] Did Ms. Dickey's problem get straightened out??

[Ralph Villages] I was not at the last board meeting? So, no one followed up with you.

[Commissioner Andrews] That person has been served for eviction as far as I know. We need to make sure that our folks are protected.

[Ralph Villages] She has stepped up those efforts up there, Commissioner Nelson is aware how things are set up. I am trying to make sure we have better communication between the police and site managers.

[Commissioner Andrews] So we will be in touch and discuss this further after the board meeting.

[Commissioner Garcia] What's happening with Marina Village as far as making it more secure?

[Dave Ghio] We have received authorization to install an eight-foot fence. The fence will be installed for the safety of the remaining families residing at Marina We have accepted proposals for boarding up the units. I don't know the status of the completed work. But I will find out tomorrow.

[Commissioner Andrews] I road by there yesterday. We need to take some of the staff from Marina to help out at other AMPS. Either we have to find some new people, or put them somewhere where they will be more effective. Other places are suffering because of work orders and other things. We are dealing with a lot of vandalism. Who is buying the copper from the vandals.

Legal:

[Seon Bagot] So we have 87 families in Court right now. That amounts to 130,000 that the Court has ordered them to repay the housing authority in the next two years. We are pursuing another 183 cases of non-payment and 116 cases in terms of lease violations. The good things is that TAR's are going down, more people are paying their rent. The system that we have in place

is helping us move the needle. The only piece to the puzzle that could really help us is to get another Marshall. I only have one Marshall who is severely over worked.

[Commissioner Andrews] Can you use a local Sheriff??

Yes, if they come and apply. Having another Marshall/or Sheriff would help.

[Commissioner Andrews] Commissioner Nelson maybe you know a Sheriff that you can contact.

Action Items:

1. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A CONTRACT IN THE NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$475,000.00 FOR A PERIOD OF THREE MONTHS, WITH A-PREFERRED ROOFING & CONTRACTING FOR TRUMBULL GARDENS BUILDING 10 & 11 ROOF REPLACEMENT

Motion Submitted: Garcia
Seconded: Nelson

Roll Call:

Commissioner Andrews	Aye
Commissioner Nightingale	Aye
Commissioner Garcia	Aye
Commissioner Nelson	Aye

Resolution passed 4 - 0

2. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SECOND-YEAR OPTION IN THE CURRENT CONTRACT WITH RODRIGUEZ ASSOCIATES, ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS, LLC FOR 504/ADA CONSULTANT SERVICES IN THE NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$100,000.00

Motion Submitted: Garcia
Seconded by: Nightingale

Roll Call:

Commissioner Andrews	Aye
Commissioner Nightingale	Aye
Commissioner Garcia	Aye
Commissioner Nelson	Aye

Resolution passed 4-0

3. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN EXTENSION IN THE CURRENT CONTRACT WITH ARON SECURITY FOR SECURITY GUARD SERVICES FOR AN ADDITIONAL TEN WEEKS AT NO ADDITIONAL COST.

Motion Submitted: Garcia
Seconded by: Nightingale

Roll Call:

Commissioner Andrews	Aye
Commissioner Nightingale	Aye
Commissioner Garcia	Aye
Commissioner Nelson	Aye

Resolution passed 4 - 0

4. RESOLUTION AWARDING A CONTRACT TO SIEMENS INDUSTRY, INC., FOR FULL SERVICE FIRE ALARM, SPRINKLER AND FIRE PUMP REPAIR SERVICES AGENCY-WIDE IN THE NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$102,460.00.

Motion Submitted by: Garcia
Seconded by: Nightingale

Roll Call:

Commissioner Andrews	Aye
Commissioner Nightingale	Aye
Commissioner Garcia	Aye
Commissioner Nelson	Aye

Resolution passed 4 - 0

5. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE OPENING OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR THE REVISED ADMISSIONS & CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY

Motion Submitted by: Garcia
Seconded by: Nightingale

Roll Call:

Commissioner Andrews	Aye
Commissioner Nightingale	Aye
Commissioner Garcia	Aye
Commissioner Nelson	Aye

Resolution passed 4 - 0

[Commissioner Andrews] There is nothing for Executive Session.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:50 p.m.

/dwoodson