

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY
700 COUNTY ROAD
SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY

This is a condensed version of Regular Meeting **VIA ZOOM** minutes taken on Thursday, March 25, 2021 – commencing at 7:00 P.M. Secaucus, New Jersey.

Chairman Michael Harper welcomed everyone

Executive Director Christopher Marra called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Chairman Michael Harper
Commissioner Rajkumar Pardasani
Commissioner Richard Fairman
Commissioner Patricia Mondadori
Commissioner Carmen Rivera
Commissioner Michael Schlemm*

Also Present:

Executive Director Christopher Mara
Deputy Executive Director Jake Naszimento
Charles D'Amico, Esq., Counsel to the Authority
Deborah L. Alvarez, Secretary/Transcriber*

Absent: Commissioner Antonio Suarez

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS STATEMENT

"Adequate notice of this meeting, as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, has been provided by the filing of an Annual Meeting Notice with the Municipal Clerk, the posting of said notice on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Government Center, and delivery of same to the Jersey Journal on December 17, 2020. This body wishes to advise you that, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 28:3D(1) et seq. (Smoking in Public Buildings), smoking is prohibited while this body is in open or closed session."

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Minutes of February 25, 2021 not available at this time

FLAG SALUTE – Waived at this meeting

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – MARCH 2021

Motion to approve bill list made by Commissioner Mondadori; 2nd by Chairman Harper.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Suarez/Schlemm*

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

ED Marra was not able to put monthly account balances together, but has Adoption Resolution to Adopt Budget beginning 4/1/2021. SHA received email back in 3rd week of February from State saying SHA can adopt budget. Tonight is formal resolution to adopt budget from 4/1/2021 to 3/31/2022.

1. RESOLUTION #2021-13 – 2021 ADOPTED BUDGET RESOLUTION

(Commissioner Schlemm joined Zoom meeting at this point.)

RESOLUTION 2021-13 2021 ADOPTED BUDGET RESOLUTION

SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY

FISCAL YEAR: FROM: 4/1/2021 TO: 3/31/2022

WHEREAS, the Annual Budget and Capital Budget/Program for the Secaucus Housing Authority for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2021 and ending, March 31, 2022 has been presented for adoption before the governing body of the Secaucus Housing Authority at its open public meeting of January 28, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Annual Budget and Capital Budget as presented for adoption reflects each item of revenue and appropriation in the same amount and title as set forth in the introduced and approved budget, including all amendments thereto, if any, which have been approved by the Director of the Division of Local Government Services; and

WHEREAS, the Annual Budget as presented for adoption reflects Total Revenues of \$6,448,800 Total Appropriations, including any Accumulated Deficit, if any, of \$6,224,504 and Total Unrestricted Net Position utilized of \$0.00; and

WHEREAS, the Capital Budget as presented for adoption reflects Total Capital Appropriations of \$290,000 and Total Unrestricted Net Position planned to be utilized of \$0.00; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the governing body of Secaucus Housing Authority, at an open public meeting held on March 25, 2021 that the Annual Budget and Capital Budget/Program of the Secaucus Housing Authority for the fiscal year beginning, 4/1/2021 and, ending, 3/31/2022 is hereby adopted and shall constitute appropriations for the purposes stated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Annual Budget and Capital Budget/Program as presented for adoption reflects each item of revenue and appropriation in the same amount and title as set forth in the introduced and approved budget, including all amendments thereto, if any, which have been approved by the Director of the Division of Local Government Services.

(Secretary's Signature)

(Date)

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Commissioners	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Chairman Harper	X			
Vice Chairman Schlemm	X			
Commissioner Suarez				X
Commissioner Fairman	X			
Commissioner Pardasani	X			
Commissioner Rivera	X			
Commissioner Mondadori	X			

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Rivera; 2nd by Commissioner Mondadori.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6) Absent: Suarez

POLICY COMMITTEE

ED Marra: Approving of Lease Changes for RAD PBV Tenants – This resolution initially was adopted for introduction in January 2021. After January meeting, notices were sent to all tenants, posted on SHA web site and hard copy also located in Community Room of three buildings. SHA received a few inquiries about it, mostly having to do with pet issues. No other written comments or questions about lease. ED Marra answered questions to satisfaction of residents.

Commissioner Fairman asked if lease has to be approved by HUD. ED Marra answered SHA will send copy of lease to Mr. Marra's contact at HUD; going to implement lease and if HUD calls back and says changes have to be made, SHA will do that. If SHA waits for them to approve lease changes, it could be 18-24 months before SHA hears anything.

2. RESOLUTION #2021-14 – APPROVING LEASE CHANGES FOR RAD PBV TENANTS

RESOLUTION 2021-14

(Approving Lease Changes for RAD PBV Tenants)

WHEREAS, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides that Authorities must provide each resident with a lease; and

WHEREAS the Secaucus Housing Authority had not updated its lease since September of 1999; and

WHEREAS, the RAD-PBV lease needed to be updated to delete sections from the lease that are obsolete and to include HUD regulations necessary for tenants; and

WHEREAS, the proposed changes were submitted in accordance with federal regulations to the RAD-PBV residents for comments. No comments were received.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Secaucus Housing Authority does hereby approve the changes made to the residential lease for RAD-PBV tenants at its three properties.

Commissioners	Ayes	Nays	Absent
Chairman Harper			
Vice Chairman Schlemm			
Commissioner Suarez			
Commissioner Fairman			
Commissioner Mondadori			
Commissioner Pardasani			
Commissioner Rivera			

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Rivera; 2nd by Chairman Harper.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Suarez

People, who effectively come in April or May 1st, will be doing it and all who live in Kroll Heights will be signing new lease when they recertify for June 1st.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

3. RESOLUTION #2021-15

Last resolution is 2021-15: Award of Contract for the Renovation of 75 Bathrooms at Kroll Heights. Letter from Lee Mestres and also 5 bids received. Lowest bid was by LaRocca for \$381,500. Next highest bid was \$544,000. At conclusion of meeting Lee met with contractor who he's worked with in past. Contractor went back, checked his numbers, called Lee 2 days later and said my numbers are good, \$381,500 bid is good; company we are going with. Renovation includes removal of toilet, vanity, sink, medicine chest and light fixtures. It includes glazing each bathtub in all 75 units, and changing some of the plumbing involved in shower; finally, of course, painting bathroom before they leave. No estimated date of when project will start. Best guess is sometime in mid-late June. Obviously, tenants will be given lots of notice about it, schedule when contractors will be in their unit.

Commissioner Fairman asked if contractor will be bonded. ED Marra said yes and all proper paperwork was submitted. Chairman Fairman wondered if Building & Grounds Committee approved. ED Marra said there was B&G meeting on day bids were submitted, March 16th. Focus of meeting was not about these bids. Focus was about The Elms; they were informed about bids, but ED Marra didn't have Lee's final recommendation. You received that information tonight as packet was sent last Saturday via email. If you're asking did B&G go over this part – no, they went over

beginning part with Lee when discussing renovations of bathrooms at Kroll Heights and outlining what project would entail.

Commissioner Fairman also asked if this improvement was included in original RAD budget. ED Marra said it wasn't included in original RAD budget, no. Original RAD budget has a very limited – and he will have at April's meeting the twice year report about what SHA has spent and what SHA budgeted in original RAD budget, so all can see prospectively spend like with this project, as it's awarded, so Board can see that.

RESOLUTION 2021-15
(RESOLUTION AWARDING THE CONTRACT FOR
RENOVATIN & UPRADE TO BATHROOMS AT KROLL HEIGHTS)

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus (hereinafter referred to as SHA) has determined that it needs to procure services for to renovate and upgrade at Kroll Heights; and

WHEREAS, SHA has published in the newspaper an invitation to bid; and

WHEREAS, the SHA received bids from five (5) bidders on March 16, 2021; and

WHEREAS, on the public opening of the bids La Rocca, Inc. with a bid of \$381,500 was found to be the lowest responsible bidder pursuant to both N.J.S.A. 40A:11-2 and N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4; and

WHEREAS, the bid submitted by La Rocca, Inc. has been reviewed by the Habitech Architecture who recommended the contract be awarded to La Rocca, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, the bid submitted by La Rocca, Inc. has been reviewed and deemed by the SHA to be both responsive and conforming with all requirements set forth by the New Jersey Public Contracts Law, the bid specifications and the invitation to bid,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the SHA hereby finds that the contract for the above captioned work items as described in the bid specifications and drawings, be awarded to La Rocca, Inc. in the amount of \$381,500; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners hereby authorize and Direct the Executive Director of the SHA to execute said contract and take any and all necessary administrative actions to implement this Resolution.

Commissioners	Ayes	Nays	Absent
Chairman Harper			
Vice Chairman Schlemm			
Commissioner Suarez			
Commissioner Fairman			
Commissioner Mondadori			
Commissioner Pardasani			
Commissioner Rivera			

Motion to approve made by Chairman Harper; 2nd by Commissioner Schlemm.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Suarez

UPDATE ON 3 PROJECTS

Fire pump project is probably completed now at The Elms. Just waiting for Town to come and issue Final Permit that's complete. Did award contract for flooring of ground floor at 600 County Avenue to replace rug. Project probably won't start until after Easter. Next Tuesday, contractor is coming for walk-through of 3 buildings for installation of new security cameras.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM – DED JAKE NASZIMENTO

ED Marra will provide more information next month about HCV Program, how much money SHA has spent; spending each month.

DED Naszimento stated SHA had 214 regular transactions this month; spent about \$206,561; had some port-in families – 7 families that have ported (moved) into Secaucus; spent \$11,028 on those families as well. SHA will get that money back from original housing authorities. Port-outs – SHA had 4 families that are port out and spent \$5,641 for them.

NEW BUSINESS/OLD BUSINESS – nothing at this time

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Every employee including ED Marra and DED Naszimento have gotten at least one COVID shot.

Last summer, a young woman, Emily Padamino (ph) came in and worked from end of May until 2nd week of August. Some of that was covered by subsidy from New Jersey NAHRO. In January, like during winter break, same intern – if they're good – will be called back to help SHA during winter break. March 8th everybody is back in office; no rotation of employees; no rotation of anything, everybody comes to work everyday. Emily worked at SHA January-February and beginning of March we talked, come to some agreement that she would leave on March 26th. Subsequently, since ED Marra's been in for past 2 days, office staff has spoken with ED Marra about keeping Emily here; almost like having her our summer intern again. ED Marra spoke with her a few minutes today; obviously, she's very good and although not a permanent job, we want to try to keep Emily here through second week of August. Emily goes to Felician College, still enrolled there, wants to become a nurse, and a 2nd year-college student doesn't have it easy finding a job at this point. We are going to keep her a bit longer. If there is an issue with that, Board members can speak with ED Marra. Emily lives in Patriot Commons and does a good job.

Commissioner Schlemm asked if SHA will be getting NAHRO money again for Emily. ED Marra said NAHRO doesn't really allow you to go back with same person a second time. He cannot submit her back again for a scholarship. ED Marra will discuss it later as to why they wouldn't do it a second time.

REMARKS OF CITIZENS

SUE GASSER, Kroll Heights, asked about renovations in bathrooms; how will that affect living conditions. ED Marra said this is easier job than done at The Elms. Workers will have everything out of bathroom on 1st day; when they leave they must return new toilet bowl there for your use. Day 2 you will have sink, vanity and probably 3 days total in your apartment through completion. RE: water condition Monday-Tuesday-Wednesday – no hot water. ED Marra said Ronnie was here, issue resolved. Sue took her shower later in the day; spoke with Ronnie next day; Ronnie said he's ordering part, hopes it comes in next day. It was there on 3rd day, but tenants not told anything as he said office would receive too many calls. There were about 5-10 tenants that called to speak about hot water. It is a small building and word gets around; not everyone took a shower that day, but okay for whatever else they were doing. There was some hot water, but it wasn't hot enough. Ended up it was something needed to be fixed in boiler room. Sue also informed Mr. Marra general voicemail at office, no one knows pin to it so someone in office said they'll just have IT get rid of it. Tenants do not know which person to call. ED Marra said leave them for him as he sees them all at end of day.

DANIELLE FRY, Kroll Heights, asked if Mr. Marra was going over lease changes at this meeting. ED Marra didn't go over changes, but notice was given out and on web site. Short answer about lease changes: #1- Lease hasn't been updated in 20 years. New HUD regulations that should be in that lease; #2 – Main lease changes really had to do with issues having to do with tenants, if they were not exactly behaving or breaking the law, how we might more easily be able to take to Court to evict them. It was sent out day after January meeting, made sure everyone could see it online if they wanted to, had it in Community Room and said tenants should email ED Marra if they had questions. Reality is it's a lot of the same, not trying to create a list to catch people. Really to create an updated lease that is more in compliance with some HUD regulations and also tighten up some disciplinary items that deal with residents when either they or guests are not behaving in best manner or in everyone's interest in the building.

SUE GASSER has items highlighted and will speak with Mr. Marra another time.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2nd by Commissioner Rivera.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6) Absent: Suarez