

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

March 4, 2022

This is a condensed transcription of the taped minutes as taken on Thursday,  
March 4, 2022, THE ELMS, 777 Fifth Street, Secaucus, New Jersey.

Chairman Michael Harper called the meeting to order.

**ROLL CALL**

Present:

Chairman Michael Harper  
Vice-Chairman Michael Schlemm  
Commissioner Raj Pardasani  
Commissioner Richard Fairman – via Zoom  
Commissioner Patricia Mondadori  
Commissioner Carmen Rivera  
Commissioner Antonio Suarez\*

Also Present: Executive Director Christopher Marra  
Deputy Executive Director Jake Naszimento  
Charles D'Amico, Esq., Counsel to the Authority

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

"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 12, 2021.

**FLAG SALUTE – led by Angie Oliveros**

ED Marra introduced Angie Oliveros, an Intern with SHA for past 8 weeks. Starting Monday, Angie will be a full-time employee, sitting in front of office; title is Housing Choice Voucher Specialist, working most of the time with Linda Fanning on HCVP and doing other administrative functions of SHA office.

Angie spoke to audience giving some of her background – pursuing her Bachelor Degree in Social Work. This opportunity will help her apply all her skills.

Chairman Harper welcomed Angie and thanked her for becoming an integral part of the system so rapidly.

## **REMARKS OF CITIZENS**

ED MARRA: Commissioner Pardasani met with a residents a few Sundays ago; sent ED Marra an email with 6 items: parking lot – not being lit enough; back door entrance also not lit well enough; elevators; 6<sup>th</sup> floor carpet; smoking and main sliding entrance door.

COMMISSIONER PARDISANI: Met Margaret and Vincent (505) and another person. Each agreed on the issues – door risky when someone coming in, it doesn't close fast enough as anyone could come in. Light at back entry: there is a light, but not bright enough. Parking lot lighting: everyone said not enough light, not safe. Margaret takes her phone in elevator, because people got stuck even though they were repaired; something needs to be done further.

PATRICIA JOYCE - #206 – Event happened to Margaret right after her, Patricia said man was outside that wanted to enter building, claimed he wanted to see his grandmother, but did not push button to speak with grandma. Man cursed Patricia because she did not let him enter building. Patricia stayed there a few minutes; he did not leave, but she went out back entrance, hurrying to her car. Patricia found out 2 days later Margaret had same problem with same man. Someone let man in; he told Margaret he was going to 6<sup>th</sup> floor to see grandma. Patricia and Margaret saw him again as they were coming to this meeting.

ED MARRA: If someone in parking lot loitering, call police and say people are loitering in parking lot – ED Marra went to parking lot, 1 light out; all those lights changed last year for brightness, but certain shields installed so as not to bother residents behind fence. Yellow light will be changed out also.

JOE - #514 – Asked about security in building. ED Marra: Security not budgeted to put in building and what would a guard do? JOE: Patrol floors. ED Marra confirmed that a Catalytic converters stolen this week off a truck in parking lot.

PATRICIA: Building has people in/out all day; you can't control who comes in behind you.

MARGARET – Got stuck in elevator. ED MARRA: Every time elevator is serviced, email is sent from Thyssen/Krupp. Not many service calls in last 3-4 months – are elevators weekly/2x a month/3x a month – are people getting stuck on elevator? Many answered doors take a long time to let you out, connection is missed. ED MARRA: Report not received yet, but State just here within past 10 days to inspect elevators; he'll call Thyssen-Krupp back and have them check elevators; see if they have recent report about that; see what they can do.

Elevator is less than 3 years old. It's not happening weekly about getting stuck in elevator? People answered no.

ED MARRA: re: 6<sup>th</sup> floor and carpeting. In middle only, not down hallways, middle part of 6<sup>th</sup> floor apartments being ripped up. Carpet man and I looking for carpeting to match hallway carpets – found a piece about January 10<sup>th</sup>. Order put in. Man called ED Marra stating carpet won't be ready until March, did ED Marra want something else; spoke to him yesterday and somewhere in last 2 weeks of March, job on 6<sup>th</sup> floor will be done.

(7:10 PM - At this point in the meeting, Commissioner Suarez arrived.)

ED MARRA: They will take up middle part only; all the way to 619, 618, 617 – down hallways, not changing all rugs now for a specific reason. SLIDING DOOR – Door Jockey (they fix sliding doors/door on side of building not closing & catching – making adjustments). They were in Kroll Heights other day as doors in breezeway were not working; have to be repaired. Man came to The Elms after we discussed sliding door here: door slides back, staying 2 seconds because **it is required to for handicap reasons – walker or wheelchair, you need extra time** to get through door. They were to check door, make sure working properly, but not close faster. As long as door is closing, that's how it will work.

VINCENT - #505 – Doors will start to close, come within an inch of fully closed; if you walk in, it's going to open right up. If someone coming behind you, who should not be here.

PAT: The police that walk around here, what do they do? ED Marra: That started at end of summertime; Housing Authority never notified about that, which is in all 3 buildings. Random show-up, cop walks through. First time ED Marra saw him, asked if there was a problem. Policeman said no, we've just been assigned on random days/random times to come into buildings, walk the floors; going on since July/August – not recently.

WOMAN: Re: exterminator – wondered if same company. Opens door/any problems? She says no, and walks right out. Other men came, sprayed. These men do nothing. Bad job. Not even pink slip on door. ED Marra: Different man. Is this one from February? Yes, he should put pink slip on door.

WOMAN: Not usually home, but this time she was. He walked in the door, went to kitchen and right out again. ED Marra: What they have done is go into apartment, put something on hinges of door or something sticky in bottom of cabinet or above. It is same company we've had for 6 years; what it is about is the technicians that come here; not always same men every other month. I will talk to the company before they come next month – April.

FRANCES - #506 – Is there any other way to pay the washing machine instead of using quarters; bank doesn't give out quarters and sometimes machine is empty. ED Marra asked if tenants want to use a card. COMMISSIONER SUAREZ: There is an app you can put on your phone; install fobs into washers/dryers. You charge the account; then machine starts up. It is a good alternative when you don't want to use "the card". ED Marra will investigate it; no quick answer; 35-50 percent of building would be able to do this – then take into consideration that a percentage of building, individual doesn't come down to do laundry, their home health aide does it. I understand on Saturday/Sunday/Monday quarter machine doesn't have any more quarters left. Perhaps get a bigger machine or see how often it's refilled.

KATHY - #417 – What is happening with cameras? Every time something happens here and after hours, cameras are not working ED Marra: Since cameras were installed in August/September, they weren't fully working, but since then cameras work, save information for 30 days; then deleted. I do not go back 6 months, but I have it – working since October to now. Cameras cover front door, front entrance, side entrance, elevators, lobby, they work. KATHY: A guy got hit outside here, someone backed out, hit car and "they said" nothing on cameras. ED Marra: Maybe camera didn't cover that specific area he was in. When was it and whose car got hit? Kathy: Alan and it was about a week ago. ED Marra: It is on my desk; cameras work 100%, better than others. I'll call Alan; cameras operate 24/7. It is not CSI and nighttime is dark, but I can check it.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 27, 2022**

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Mondadori.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

## **PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – FEBRUARY 2022**

Motion to approve payment of claims made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Pardasani.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. RESOLUTION #2022-8 – ADOPTION OF FY20 ANNUAL AUDIT 3.31.21 & AUDIT REVIEW CERTIFICATION

The Audit Review Certification requires Commissioners to look at last page of audit, where auditor would disclose whether there were any findings or concerns for period ending 3/31/21, taking this long because of wait for OPEB Report or GASBY report to be released by State of NJ, only release a week ago; normally procedure done in October. Finance Committee met with Auditor at conclusion. One, not cited recommendation, was that SHA would issue financial statements on a quarterly basis, which we've been doing, including tonight. Motion needed and second for this Resolution #2022-8.

Motion to approve Resolution 2022-8 made by Chairman Harper; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Schlemm.

### **RESOLUTION #2022--8**

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:5A-15 requires the governing body of each local authority to cause an annual audit of its accounts to be made; and

WHEREAS, the annual audit report for the fiscal year ended 3/31/2021 has been completed and filed pursuant to NJSA 40A:5A-15; and

WHEREAS, NJSA 40A:5A-17 requires the governing body of each authority to, within 45 days of receipt of the annual audit, certify by resolution to the Local Finance Board that each member thereof has personally reviewed the annual audit report, and specifically the sections of the audit report entitled "General Comments" and "Recommendations" and has evidenced same by group affidavit in the form prescribed by the Local Finance Board; and

WHEREAS, the members of the governing body have received the annual audit and have personally reviewed the annual audit and have specifically reviewed the sections of the annual audit report entitled "General Comments" and "Recommendations" in accordance with NJSA 40A:5A-11; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED that the governing body of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus hereby certifies to the Local Finance Board of the State of New Jersey that each governing body member has personally reviewed the annual audit report for the fiscal year ended 3/31/21 and specifically has reviewed the sections of the audit entitled "General Comments" and "Recommendations" and has evidenced same by group affidavit in the form prescribed by the Local Finance Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of the authority is hereby directed to promptly submit to the Local Finance Board the aforesaid group affidavit, accompanied by a certified copy of the resolution.

I, Christopher W. Marra, duly appointed  
Executive Director of the Housing  
Authority of the Town of Secaucus  
Do hereby certify that the foregoing  
Resolution is a true and correct copy  
Of a resolution adopted a regular meeting  
Of the Board of Commissioners held on

March 3, 2022

CHRISTOPHER W. MARRA

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

2. RESOLUTION #2022-9 – AMENDMENT TO 4.1.22 BUDGET INCREASING THE AMOUNT OF THE ANNUAL DEPOSIT FOR REPLACEMENT RESERVES

ED Marra gave Commissioners comments from State of NJ re: budget for year beginning 4.1.2022; sent to SHA on February 15; William Katchen had responded to questions they asked; by February 28<sup>th</sup> they responded back that they received them. At SHA next meeting March 24<sup>th</sup>, Commissioners will adopt budget for April 1, 2022.

**RESOLUTION 2022-9**

**RESOLUTION BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY AMENDING AN APPROVED BUDGET**

Whereas, the Board of the Secaucus Housing Authority has previously approved a 2022 Budget for submission to the State of New Jersey, and;

Whereas, the State has reviewed and approved the 2022 budget, and;

Whereas, the Authority is desirous of amending the approved Budget to increase the contribution to the renewal and Replacement Reserve, and;

Whereas, the following line items of the budget is amended:

	<b>Original</b>	<b>Amended</b>
Expenditures:		
Nonoperating Appropriations-		
Renewal and Replacement Reserve	69,500	90,000

Now Therefore Be It Resolved by the Commissioners of the Secaucus Housing Authority approving the amendment to the 2022 approved Budget and authorizing the Executive Director to send to the State of New Jersey this Resolution and amended Budget pages for their review and approval.

ED MARRA: Resolution #2022-9 – being passed tonight, but used after we pass the budget at end of March; confirmed this is okay with Mr. Katchen. We are increasing contribution to Annual Renewal & Replacement of Reserves. Over past few years we've added to that at 2 or 2-1/2% each year, but this year SHA us upping fee from \$69,500 to \$90,000; money that gets put into fund to fund all

capital improvements going forward. Instead of increasing it just a few percentage points each year, SHA increased it by \$20,000.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Suarez.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

Commissioners received copy of memo sent to Fran Pine with instructions beginning in April to put money in reserve.

Monthly account balances through January 31, 2022 included and financial statements which were sent out earlier. There was a question about utility costs, which were below what SHA had budgeted, was there a good explanation as to why that occurred. ED Marra doesn't have an explanation; SHA not currently involved in savings program, but SHA is going to re-enter NJSEM in June. Commissioner Pardasani asked about Account #3 – account used to pay payroll, insurance and pension costs and other costs. Looking at Account #2 on 12/31 it had over \$1 million, but at 1/31/22 there was about \$60,000 less. Money from #2 got moved into #3, as we knew there is pension payment coming up on 4/1/22 – for hospitalization, etc. No items in Professional Services tonight.

Commissioner Fairman: On Page 1 of Financial Statement – Non-Routine Expenditures – at bottom of 1<sup>st</sup> page, far right “variance favorable or unfavorable” there's a \$523,000 unfavorable that's referred to as “replacement of non-expenditure equipment”. What is that? ED Marra: Bathrooms and other capital projects that we funded in – I'm sure that's what number is, because it's a big number. Line above it, for whatever reason, there was \$100,000 budgeted in that one; whether we didn't have enough money, but I'll reconfirm it tomorrow, I believe that is amount of money we spent on bathrooms in 2021. Commissioner Fairman: If you analyze the number into a lesser degree on the generalities, we're showing a year-to-date 9 months, Excess of Revenue over Expenditures of \$143,000 – does the \$523,000, will that be capitalized or back into these numbers – is running rate SHA is operating on – is it a good number or (inaudible). It's influenced one way as to how that 523,000 is ultimately going to be treated. ED Marra: I'll talk to Mr. Katchen tomorrow and get that answer.

#### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

SHA is publishing for new Maintenance Technician's position. We interviewed a few last night for that position.

Housing Choice Voucher Specialist (HCVP) job descriptions were included in Commissioners' packets – position Angie Oliveros will assume next Monday.

Collective Bargaining Agreement – SHA still not negotiating with anyone right now; contract expired about 12 months ago. Still waiting for Town of Secaucus to conclude their negotiations with white collar/maintenance and buildings & grounds staff – not completed yet.

## POLICY COMMITTEE

Everyone received in a separate envelope, a new Section 8 Administrative Plan – voting and adopting it in the April 2022 meeting. In March I will send memo to Commissioners about the Plan; plan that SHA has to follow in both managing Project Based Voucher Program and Housing Choice Voucher Program. NELROD, which wrote plan 2-3 years ago, update it for SHA; we'll talk more at March meeting.

ED Marra: Resolutions #2022-10 and #2022-11 – agreements with Cliffside Park and Weehawken Housing Authority to act as their independent entity; very similar things which we did with Cliffside Park. They were our independent entity having somebody outside your Authority to do 2 things: review your OCAP numbers and approve them and also run a Rent Reasonable Test, which is what we're doing for both of them.

3. RESOLUTION #2022-10 – ENTER AGREEMENT WITH CLIFFSIDE PARK HOUSING AUTHORITY
4. RESOLUTION #2022-11 – ENTER AGREEMENT WITH WEEHAWKEN HOUSING AUTHORITY

### **RESOLUTION 2022-10**

#### ***RESOLUTOIN AUTHORIZING AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY (SHA) AND THE CLIFFSIDE PARK HOUSING AUTHORITY (CPHA) FOR INDEPENDENT ENTITY SERVICES***

**WHEREAS**, SHA and CPHA, as part of their affordable housing strategies, converted their public housing units to Section 8 Project Based Voucher (PBV) units through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program

**WHEREAS**, CFR 24 part 953 establishes regulatory requirements in the administration of the PBV program; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 983.59 precludes Public Housing Authorities from performing certain Program Services in connection with the selection of PHA owned units, including the a) Conducting an Annual Rent Reasonableness Study, and b) Reviewing and approving the annual Operating Cost Adjustment Factor (OCAF); and

**WHEREAS**, Section 983.59(c) provides for an independent entity to perform these Program Services; such entity may be the unit of general local government for the PHA jurisdiction or any other HUD-approved public or private independent entity; and

**WHEREAS**, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development acknowledges and supports the execution of an Interlocal Agreement between SHA and CPHA

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The Board of Commissioners of Secaucus Housing Authority hereby authorizes the SHA Executive Director to negotiate and execute and Interlocal Agreement that allows the SHA to provide Independent Entity services outlined above to the CPHA.

**RESOLUTION 2022-11**

*RESOLUTOIN AUTHORIZING AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY (SHA) AND THE WEEHAWKEN HOUSING AUTHORITY (WHA) FOR INDEPENDENT ENTITY SERVICES*

**WHEREAS**, SHA and CPHA, as part of their affordable housing strategies, converted their public housing units to Section 8 Project Based Voucher (PBV) units through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program

**WHEREAS**, CFR 24 part 953 establishes regulatory requirements in the administration of the PBV program; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 983.59 precludes Public Housing Authorities from performing certain Program Services in connection with the selection of PHA owned units, including the a) Conducting an Annual Rent Reasonableness Study, and b) Reviewing and approving the annual Operating Cost Adjustment Factor (OCAF); and

**WHEREAS**, Section 983.59(c) provides for an independent entity to perform these Program Services; such entity may be the unit of general local government for the PHA jurisdiction or any other HUD-approved public or private independent entity; and

**WHEREAS**, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development acknowledges and supports the execution of an Interlocal Agreement between SHA and CPHA

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

The Board of Commissioners of Secaucus Housing Authority hereby authorizes the SHA Executive Director to negotiate and execute and Interlocal Agreement that allows the SHA to provide Independent Entity services outlined above to the WHA.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

In #2022-10, Cliffside Park spoke of paying SHA \$500, but ED Marra called and said no payment necessary, as amount of work is mostly done by Mr. Katchen in preparing the OCAP numbers. In terms of running this Rent Reasonable Report, it might take 15 minutes of SHA time. We paid them to do SHA inspections, but is man hours that they had to do.

## **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS**

### 5. RESOLUTION #2022-12 – AWARD CONTRACT TO MAIN ACCESS SYSTEMS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW CONTROL ACCESS SYSTEM

SHA is upgrading swipe card or your fob for all the doors. Company that had previous contract and software that runs fobs is outdated now; needed to be updated, otherwise if it breaks, we cannot fix it. We put it out for bid; Main Access Systems was one of 5 companies that submitted bids; Lee Mestres was architect; he submitted Commissioners a letter about his recommendation; that is what #2022-12 is.

### ***RESOLUTION 2022-12 (RESOLUTION AWARDING THE CONTRACT FOR UPRADE TO ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM AT KROLL HEIGHTS, IMPREVEDUTO TOWERS, AND THE ELMS)***

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus (hereinafter referred to as SHA) has determined that it needs to procure services for to upgrade the access control system for its three properties located at 600 County Avenue, 700 County Avenue, and 777 Fifth Street; and

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

WHEREAS, the SHA received bids from five (5) bidders on February 8, 2022; and

WHEREAS, on the public opening of the bids Main Access Systems, Inc. of Lawrenceville, NJ with a bid of \$29,999 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 Main Access Systems, Inc. has been reviewed by the Habitech Architecture who recommended the contract be awarded to Main Access Systems; and

WHEREAS, the bid submitted by Main Access Systems, 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 Main Access Systems Inc. in the amount of \$29,999; 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.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

ED Marra said everyone will have a replacement card.

Letter from Copa Montalbano re: bids went out 2 times for elevator modernization at 600 County Avenue; no bids on first bids and 1 bid on second time. Bid was not in compliance. However, company is called Excel Elevators & Escalators, located Secaucus, and are interested in negotiating with SHA based upon price they gave us, which was \$555,000. Price may be modified, as they're coming back to look at some work they have to do on a steel structure at top of elevator shaft. We're hoping that in March, we'll have something to approve.

SHA removing and replacing 84 apartment doors at 600 County Avenue; project going out to bid soon.

Woman who asked about windows: we are working on a project in which we would remove gigantic block panels – ones that have leaks/cracks and we tried to fill in – referred to EIFS. We would pull EIFS off the building and taking windows out of people's apartments, replacing with new EIFS and new windows in those apartments. B&G Committee is working on this with architect. This project gets done in phases – one season this part/next season another part; not done in wintertime. It is only way tenants will stop getting leaks in your windows. People would have to leave building for 5 months if we wanted to do it all at once. We can do a phase this year, one next year. SHA has money to do it, but cannot be done all at once.

## **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCF) PROGRAM**

HCV Program Report given December through February. It's been slightly adjusted.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

On Monday, ED Marra received email from attorney handling PHADA/NAHRO Lawsuit. It has been settled; SHA tax ID number given to them 3 weeks ago. Email says they received 544 housing authorities in this case. Have received 540 tax ID numbers; must wait for all of them before starting to release money, but they're going to go back to Judicial System saying we have 540 and can we begin to release money in phases. Perhaps in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, SHA should receive our portion of settlement. Number for SHA might be between 60-\$70,000. SHA

spent about \$6,000 in terms of paying PHADA/NAHRO contribution toward lawyers' fees.

**OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS – nothing at this time**

ED Marra thanked Commissioner Pardasani for connecting with tenants here and bringing items to forefront to talk about them; that SHA is working on some of those. He will bring door man back so explanations can be given to tenants; show him the issue, which also occurs at Kroll Heights. It is a safety mechanism.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Suarez.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez  
Secretary/Transcriber