

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

April 23, 2020

This is condensed transcription of taped minutes taken on Thursday,  
April 23, 2020 done through the software Zoom.

Chairman Michael Schlemm called meeting to order.

**ROLL CALL**

Present:

Chairman Michael Schlemm  
Vice-Chairman Michael Harper  
Commissioner Richard Fairman  
Commissioner Patricia Mondadori  
Commissioner Rajkumar Pardasani  
Commissioner Antonio Suarez

Also Present:

Executive Director Christopher Marra  
Deputy Executive Director Jake Naszimento  
Charles D'Amico, Esq., Counsel to the Authority  
John Smith, EMEX, LLC

Absent: Commissioner Carmen Rivera

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY 5 YEAR PLAN**

Executive Director Marra explained that the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development requires Housing Authorities to submit Annual Plan and Five Year Plans. Chris explained that since leaving the Public Housing Program of HUD at the end of 2016, the Authority had not submitted any Annual Plans and he believed the Authority was not required to submit the 5 Year Plan. These types of plans are generally done so that Authorities can align their future capital project with the Capital Grant Funding received by agencies in the Public Housing Program.

He told the Board members that the HUD Newark office wanted the plan the 5 Year plan, even though we were no longer in the Public Housing Program and they wanted a Noticed Public Hearing on the plan. ED Marra briefly went over the plan. There were no comments or questions. Chairman Schlemm asked for a motion.

Motion made by Commissioner Harper and Seconded by Commissioner Suarez

**RESOLUTION #2020-10**  
**(Approval of Five Year Plan)**

WHEREAS, the Quality Housing & Work Responsibility Act of 1998 (QHWRA) mandates that public housing authorities prepare an annual and five year plan which must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development 75 days prior to the commencement of the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus is required to submit their annual plan for the fiscal year commencing on 4/1/2020; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority has complied with all aspect of QHWRA with respect to developing the plan documents; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus that the Five Year Plan for the fiscal year commencing 4/1/2020 be hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chairperson and Executive Director are hereby authorized to execute the attached certification concerning compliance with applicable plan regulations.

VOTE: All in favor                      Absent: Commissioner River

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT – Chairman Schlemm**

**“Adequate notice of this meeting, as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, has been provided by the filing of a Regular 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 19, 2019. This body wishes to advise you that, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 26:3D(1), et seq. (Smoking in Public Buildings), smoking is prohibited while this body is in open or closed session.”**

**FLAG SALUTE**

Executive Director Marra waived the flag salute and the reading of the open public meeting minutes.

## **ANNAUL REORGANIZATION**

ED Marra asked for nominations from the floor for the position of Chairman. Commissioner Michael Schlemm nominated Commissioner Harper for Chairperson. The nomination was seconded by Commissioner Suarez.

Commissioner Fairman nominated Commissioner Schlemm for Chairperson, but there was no second.

VOTE: AYES/Schlemm, Harper, Suarez, Mondadori, Pardasani (5)  
NAYES: Fairman Absent: Rivera

At this point in the meeting, with Commissioner Harper ascending to Chairperson, he took over the meeting and asked for nominations for Vice-Chairperson.

Commissioner Suarez nominated Commissioner Schlemm for Vice Chairperson and Commissioner Fairman seconded the motion:

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

Chairperson Harper then asked for nominations for Treasurer. Vice Chairperson Schlemm nominated Antonio Suarez for Treasurer, it was seconded by Commissioner Pardasani

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

## **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – March 26, 2020**

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Harper; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Pardasani.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4) Abstain: Suarez Absent: Rivera

## **PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – March 2020**

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5) Absent: Rivera

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Results of Reverse Auction by EMEX, LLC

John Smith of Emex, LLC participated in the meeting and gave a report to the Board on the results of the reverse auction that the Authority had participated in earlier that day.

Mr. Smith who had met previously with the Finance Committee in early 2019 explained how the Reverse Auction worked and provided the Authority with a choice of a 1 year contract or a 2 year contract.

Ultimately, the Commissioners decided to take up a one year contract in which the cost of the energy would be \$0.04993/kWh. This rate would apply to all three buildings, for the Authority's electrical usage. Mr. Smith estimated an annual savings of \$3,377.45. The savings could be more, but that is what his analysis stated.

The Authority then voted in a resolution authorizing the executive director to enter into an agreement, based on the results of the auction.

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

#### **RESOLUTION #2020-14**

**A RESOLUTION OF SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY COUNTY AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY SERVICES FOR PUBLIC USE ON AN ONLINE AUCTION WEBSITE**

April 23, 2020

WHEREAS, the Secaucus Housing Authority of Hudson County has determined to move forward with the EMEX Reverse Auction in order procure electricity for Secaucus Housing Authority County

WHEREAS, the Local Unit Technology Pilot Program and Study Act (P.L. 2001, c. 30) (the "Act") authorizes the purchase of electricity supply service for public use through the use of an online auction service; and

WHEREAS, the Secaucus Housing Authority County will utilize the online auction services of EMEX, LLC, an approved vendor pursuant to the Act, waiver number EMEX LLC-1, located at [www.energymarketexchange.com](http://www.energymarketexchange.com); and

WHEREAS, EMEX, LLC is compensated for all services rendered through the participating supplier that a contract is awarded to; and

WHEREAS, the auction will be conducted pursuant to the Act; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director of the Secaucus Housing Authority is hereby authorized to execute on behalf of the Secaucus Housing Authority County any

electricity contract proffered by the participating supplier that submits the winning bid in the EMEX Reverse Auction.

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

As part of its reorganization meeting, the Authority then took up two resolutions:

**RESOLUTION #2020-11**  
***Adopting Cash Management Plan***

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus to earn additional revenue through the investment and prudent management of its cash receipts; and

WHEREAS, P.L. 1983, Chapter 8, approved January 18, 1983 is an act concerning the Local Fiscal Affairs Law and amends N.J.S.A. 40A:5-2 and N.J.S.A. 40A:5-14; and

WHEREAS, this law requires that each local unit shall adopt a cash management plan,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following shall constitute the Cash Management Plan for the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus and the Executive Director shall deposit and manage its funds pursuant to this plan:

Definitions

1. Executive Director shall mean the Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus.
2. Fiscal Year shall mean the twelve month period ending March 31st.
3. Cash Management Plan shall mean that plan as approved by resolution.

Designation of Depositories

At least once each fiscal year the governing body shall by resolution designate the depositories for the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:5-14. The Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus designates the, Bogota Savings Bank, TD Bank, Santander Bank and other Government Unit Deposit Protection Act (GUDPA) approved banking institutions.

Audit Requirement

1. The Cash Management Plan shall be subject to the annual audit conducted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:5-4.

Authority to Invest

1. The Board of Commissioners shall pass a resolution at its first meeting of the fiscal year designating the official who shall make and be responsible for municipal deposits and investments. The Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus is so authorized.

Investment Instruments

1. The Executive Director shall invest at his discretion in any investment instrument as approved by the State of New Jersey in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15.1.

#### Records and Reports

1. The Executive Director shall report all investments in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15.2.
2. At a minimum the Executive Director shall:
  - a. Keep a record of all investments.
  - b. Keep a cash position record which reveals, on a daily basis, the status of the cash in its bank account.
  - c. Confirm investments with the Board of Commissioners at the next regularly scheduled meeting.
  - d. Report monthly to the Board of Commissioners as to the status of cash balances in bank accounts, revenue collection, interest rates and interest earned.

#### Cash Flow

1. The Executive Director shall ensure that the accounting system provides regular information concerning the cash position and investment performance.
2. All monies, shall be turned over to the Executive Director and deposited in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:5-15.
3. The Executive Director is authorized and directed to invest surplus funds of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus as the availability of the funds permit. In addition, it shall be the responsibility of the Executive Director to minimize the possibility of idle cash by depositing the monies in interest bearing accounts wherever practical and in the best interest of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus.
4. The Executive Director shall ensure that funds are borrowed for Capital Projects in a timely fashion.

#### Signatories

The signatories of the Housing Authority shall be Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Executive Director. Transactions must be supported by at least two of the aforementioned officials.

### **RESOLUTION #2020-12** ***Indemnification Resolution-Civil***

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 59:10-4 permits local public entities to indemnify public employees and officials from damages from civil violations of Federal or State law as long as the governing body believes the acts or omissions did not constitute actual fraud, actual malice, willful misconduct or intentional wrong; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Secaucus Housing Authority believe that this indemnification should include payment of any deductible from any insurance coverage.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners do hereby grant all commissioners/employees for the Secaucus Housing Authority indemnification in accordance with N.J.S.A.59:10-4 for any and all actions taken on behalf of the Authority for the year beginning April 1, 2020 through March 31, 2021.

Motion to approve Resolutions 2020-11 and 32020-12 made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Mondadori.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)          Absent: Rivera

ED Marra then referred all commissioners to the Monthly Account Balances Report. He specifically cited the low interest rate now being offered by Santander Bank and told the Board he would be withdrawing those funds and moving them to a bank with a better return.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

ED Marra reminded the Board that its agreement with the Leased Housing Corporation of the Town of Secaucus was up for renewal effective April 1, 2020. He told the Board that LHC had passed a resolution renewing the agreement for 2 years with a 2% increase each year.

This agreement, which was detailed in an attachment for with the resolution called for the management of both Patriot Commons property (20 units) and Colonial Court property (8 units). It includes groundskeeping/landscaping as well as management of the units and the move-in and move-out of tenants.

### **RESOLUTION 2020-13 (Renewal of agreement with LHC)**

WHEREAS , the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus (SHA) has established a policy of being innovative and entrepreneurial is searching for other sources of income; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, 2014 and again in 2017, the SHA had entered into an agreement with the Leased Housing Corporation of the Town of Secaucus (LHC) for purposes of managing and maintaining two properties located at 1178-1190 Paterson Plank Road (Patriot Commons) and 160 County Avenue (Colonial Court); and

WHEREAS, the SHA and LHC desire to continue with this agreement for an additional term of 2 years; and

WHEREAS, the terms of the agreement are enumerated in the “Management Agreement” attached to this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the term of this agreement shall be from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 through March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022; and

WHEREAS, those annual payments shall be

**4.1.20-44,379**

**4.1.21-45,266**

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the SHA that the attached management agreement is hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the SHA Executive Director is authorized to execute the agreement on behalf of the SHA.

Motion to approve Resolutions 2020-11 and 32020-12 made by Commissioner Suarez; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Mondadori.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)          Absent: Rivera

### **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS COMMITTEE**

ED Marra gave an overview of three recently completed projects or one just about to begin:

- The removal and replacement of the Fire Pump at The Elms has been completed. It will be inspected next week by the Town of Secaucus and is expected to receive its permit.
- On May 1, ACI Electric will go into an empty unit and look at a panel. This has been delayed 6 weeks due to COVID-19.
- ED Marra stated that he had been in touch with MaGrann Associates, but they had been delayed in the project due to PSE&G restrictions put into place by COVID-19. ED Marra stated he had received an e-mail from Rachael Fredericks just reaffirming PSE&G continued interest in the project and that she was just waiting for restrictions to be lifted.

### **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM**

Jacob Naszimento, Deputy Executive Director gave the report on the Housing Choice Voucher Program

210 payable landlord transactions / 4 family transactions
\$189,739 in HAP expense (overall money sent to landlords)
\$181,092 direct deposits to landlords
\$7,706 paper checks including \$171 sent to 4 families for utilities
\$19,741.83 port out direct deposit payments (all port outs are dd) paid to 8 housing authorities

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

ED Marra noted the following pieces of correspondence were sent to the Authority



- Reminder for all Commissioners to submit their Financial Disclosure Forms online by May 15
- A copy of the Leased Housing Corporation of the Town of Secaucus annual audit for the year ending 3.31.19 was enclosed
- An update on the NAHRO/PHADA Public Housing Lawsuit
- Memorandum from ED Marra to the Buildings & Grounds Committee on the Capital projects prioritized for 2021-2025

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Rivera

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Marra