

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, October 22, 2020 – commencing at 7:00 P.M.
Secaucus, New Jersey.

Executive Director Christopher Marra called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Present:

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

Also Present:

Executive Director Christopher Mara
Deputy Executive Director Jake Naszimento
Charles D'Amico, Esq., Counsel to the Authority
William Katchen, CPA to the Authority
Emma Raymont, MaGrann Associates, Engineer
Deborah L. Alvarez, Secretary/Transcriber

Absent: Commissioner Carmen Rivera

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 19, 2019. 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 – SEPTEMBER 24, 2020

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Rivera

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – OCTOBER 2020

Motion to approve payment of claims for month of October 2020 by Commissioner Suarez; 2nd by Commissioner Schlemm.

Commissioner Schlemm asked about 3-4 refunds. ED Marra said 2 are for Jake Calderon and James Molenus (ph). In July Molenus had problem in his apartment on a Sunday morning, busted tub causing his apartment to flood and one below to flood. Their rents put in for month were put into insurance claim; insurance accepted them as men needed to leave their apartments. SHA did not provide them place to live; they found a friend/family. Men were reimbursed their rent out of insurance money received.

Other one was J. Mercado – refund of Hernandez – a person vacated their apartment on August 31st, but didn't come out of system; we took their rent in September for \$280.95, including rents/fees. SHA had to pay them back \$280.95 as they were not living here – a man going into nursing home. His family was still in charge of bank account.

Motion to pay bill list as submitted made by Commissioner Suarez; 2nd by Commissioner Schlemm.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Rivera

FINANCE COMMITTEE

ED Marra sent William Katchen a PDF of audit. Commissioners Harper, Pardasani and Fairman involved in after-meeting of audit.

(THIS PORTION TRANSCRIBED VERBATIM.)

MR. KATCHEN: "Good evening, everybody. Hope everybody is well. Polcari & Company completed your audit dated March 31, 2020 and with that they issued the report in Final Form. The report includes three specific reports generated by Polcari. The first is: on the financial statements themselves. You received the highest level of assurances called an 'unmodified report' without any exception.

The next is on compliance with governmental auditing standards. No items found in that.

Third is compliance with specific audit requirements of HUD. No recommendations noted there. You would have seen them in the rear of the report where it says **No audit findings identified.**

It's very difficult to really look at what your financial position is because you haven't included our new financial statement. You have included on your financial statements Non-Cash Large Expenditures titled Accrued Pension & OPEB – Other Post Employment Benefits. But you did have an excess of revenue over expenses for the year. The Authority is stable; you're paying the debt. You've increased your Housing Assistance payment. Chris and Jake have made a concerted effort to try to grow the program to the extent that we almost got caught in a short-fall situation, but that's okay because it was with an aggressive nature, right, Chris? ED MARRA: Yes.

And at this point, it's a good audit; it's solid. You have a good amount of surplus and if anybody has any questions, I'm here to respond. Thank you.")

(END OF VERBATIM PORTION OF MR. KATCHEN.)

There were no questions, comments or concerns.

RESOLUTION #2020-20 – ADOPTION OF FY 2019 (3.31.20) AUDIT REPORT & AUDIT REVIEW CERTIFICATION

RESOLUTION #2020--20

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 3/31/2020 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 3/31/20 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
October 22, 2020

CHRISTOPHER W. MARRA

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2nd by Commissioner Suarez.

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

ED Marra added there is Audit Review Certificate that needs to be signed by all 7 Commissioners, sworn to and subscribed by Charles D'Amico. ED Marra hopes to coordinate a time with Commissioners to sign this in person; mailed back to Trenton with the Resolution before Veterans Day.

Commissioners have received monthly balances for bank accounts.

(Commissioner Mondadori was absent from Zoom at this time.)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

RESOLUTION #2020-21 (Consulting Services for EIFs Study on 777 Fifth Street)

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus has need for a professional service to investigate, evaluate, and report on the Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems (EIFs) at 777 Fifth Street in helping the Authority best determine the capital improvements needed to the property; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority may award by resolution without public bidding a contract that involves professional services as defined by the NJ Local Public Contract Law, N.J.S.A 40A:11-1 et. Seq; and

WHEREAS, the Authority working with other licensed professionals from the Architecture and Engineering field were referred to and solicited a proposal from Cliff Kapson Consulting and expert in this field of building consultation; and

WHEREAS, the proposal was reviewed and rated by the Executive Director and the Building & Grounds Committee and has been determined that the contract should be awarded; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus that the proposal submitted by:

Cliff Kapson Consulting, Ltd.
933 W. Van Buren Street #912
Chicago, IL 60607

in the annual amount of \$17,500.00 be hereby approved;

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

Resolution for Professional Services Contract for Cliff Kapson Consulting, Ltd., which is a company recommended to SHA by Lee Mestres; have been on site at The Elms; doing a study on the EFIS. Study was concluded on EFIS, giving good insight into Apartments #405 and other units. Report forthcoming which Buildings & Grounds will meet with them. 2 things: They thought EFIS, considering it's 45 years old in good condition; they claimed especially 5 windows recently replaced –all windows replaced in 1997. Specifically we'll discuss 5 most recent.

Consultant asked if we had specification for these people when they replaced windows. ED Marra said no, I didn't have a specification. Well, windows that go into buildings that have EFIS in this clad, they need to be put in a certain way. If not put in, in that way, they're going to leak. More will be reported on Buildings & Grounds when we talk them. ED Marra has a contractor SHA may have to engage quite soon to come back and do #405 correctly. If he does #405 correctly, and leaking stops, we'll have him do other ones that only leak a little bit. It is unclear to ED Marra if new window is needed, or take them out and install correctly back into the space.

Buildings & Grounds Committee talked to Lee about windows; a Professional Service Contract. Their cost is \$17,500 and unless someone has a question about them, their proposal is behind the resolution. Commissioner Fairman inquired if people that came on-site were local or out of Chicago? ED Marra answered 1 from Long Island, but "the Cliff Kapson" was on-site all 3 days along with 3 others. Two from Illinois and 2 from Long Island.

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Schlemm; 2nd by Commissioner Suarez.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6)

Absent: Rivera

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Harry Kowalewski is retiring effective December 31, 2020, meaning SHA paying him until end of year. Last day on the job is October 30th, because when you take holidays remaining in last two months, which are 5 and his accumulated vacation time, he has enough to stop October 30th.

ED Marra developed a job description as last time SHA hired a maintenance person was Harry Kowalewski – 18 years ago, and we cannot find that job description. In looking on line at several and merging with this one, showing to Joe and Gallo; sent it to Buildings & Grounds for their comments. ED Marra spoke with man in charge of Buildings & Grounds/Secaucus re: starting salary. Town of Secaucus, when they hire a new not-working for the Town maintenance person, salary is \$38,000+. Hiring a full-time custodian for the Town, its \$35,000. If you authorize me tonight, ad will go on Town of Secaucus web site and SHA web site, hoping enough candidates will apply between those 2 web sites and word of mouth. Interviews will be conducted and hopefully bring prospective candidate before Board at December 10th meeting, so they can be hired by December 10th and start soon after.

All present members in agreement.

No draft lease at this time, but it will be ready for December 10th meeting. Mr. D'Amico added all terminology is in lease, but cross-reference to administrative plans sections needed to go into lease. Meeting held last week and lease gone over line by line/page by page. Lease has not been updated for 20 years.

Staff received memo clarifying use of sick, vacation and personal days related to COVID. Concern now is that SHA has very small staff; what happens IF ED Marra gets sick or Jake, how does Authority operate. In the past, in 5 month window when Bill Snyder retired from SHA and ED Marra hired on June 1st, Mike Harper was Executive Director of SHA. While he didn't necessarily come to work every day, he was Signatory. ED Marra wrote: if he got sick "short term" – 14 days and Jake not sick, Jake would be Executive Director. If there was situation where both were sick, currently while Mike Harper would be ED in terms of signatory of things, no one would be here operating on day-to-day. Hence, there was some discussion re: hiring a management company, whether for 1-2 months, to take over day-to-day operations of SHA working in cooperation with Chair Harper.

Commissioner Fairman spoke of email of 11/16 – he forwarded 2 emails to President, BP and Mayor re: Commissioner Fairman is concerned with risk of something unfortunate happening to either ED or DED during this period of

uncertainty. Amount of people served by SHA and risk, Commissioner Fairman feels a game plan should be mapped out to have an outside 3rd party step in under various prescribed manner to assume those responsibilities, to avoid the risk of performance of taking care of property, people, etc. His feeling is since HUD gave CARES Act money, he feels “boots on the ground” to fill in while ED/DED are out, is critical and who knows what duration might be, or circumstance of it. It is good Jake is available, and in reading the email, SHA could temporarily or permanently suspend Brick Housing deal, which raises questions from a revenue point of view as well as responsibility. The Board needs to consider asking ED Marra to try and find a 3rd party vendor/consultant like Bill Snyder and SHA sign them up now. If we have a problem in the future, it will be difficult to find resources, and not fair to Town Authorities: Mayor/Council – to have a “naked position” on this, as they will be counted on by the people SHA serves. Board should invest and go out and arrange a backup contract, pay for it, if needed, so we have this protection in everyone’s best interest.

Mr. D’Amico added he doesn’t know if an outside agency could be hired to do job of Executive Director unless permitted by law, which could be amended. You need a simple majority to amend by-laws, but it isn’t something that could be done by Resolution. You’re giving all duties/responsibilities of person that’s sworn to perform the job to an independent agency that’s not an employee or a Commissioner. Without having by-laws in front of Mr. D’Amico, you cannot do that without by-laws saying it is allowed.

Commissioner Fairman asked Mr. D’Amico, if Board requested that of him, how would he find a way to accomplish that? Mr. D’Amico answered amend the by-laws of SHA. Commissioner Fairman suggests that Board do that as these kinds of things happen. If bad things happen, many people are at risk. If not in by-laws, then he suggests it be a concurrent action.

ED Marra asked Mr. D’Amico: Mike Harper is still Chairperson. We are not looking for someone to be Executive Director; but for someone to manage. What if the contract talks about managing the Authority? Mike Harper still signs off on decisions. That’s not being Executive Director. Someone cannot come in and say I’m going to spend \$50,000 on this contractor or hire all new professional service people. What about in terms of management?

Mr. D’Amico guessed that the by-laws say in absence of Executive Director and DED, Chairman of the Board takes over the duties. ED Marra answered yes, they say that. It’s cleaner to have a designee. You don’t want someone in a year from now to say, this particular act that they did, they were unauthorized to do and, therefore, we have to undo whole thing. Cleaner just to amend by-laws. Just give a month’s notice, put it on agenda; simple majority of Commissioners voted. ED Marra said Execu-Tech/Bill Snyder occasionally gets a job where a Director has been fired, no one hired. They hire Execu-Tech/Bill Snyder becomes in effect the Executive Director. Perhaps he’s there every day, 10-15 days a month. Their by-

laws may be changed to allow him. ED Marra here 9 years and knows Bill Snyder in that position 6 times in other Authorities in New Jersey. Director is fired or retires, haven't hired anyone yet – he's a bridge to a permanent Director.

Mr. Katchen believes SHA could run into a few stumbling blocks: to the extent SHA needed someone immediately, because you are bringing in a private vendor, there would need to be under HUD regulations and under N.J. law, some type of formal competitive solicitation and to do that at this point, with a potential of stepping up to the plate, he doesn't know how SHA would structure that. Second thought may be if there's a concern about a backup, why not look into entering into a shared service with another housing authority. That could be done by competitive solicitation; sharing of information between authorities and that authority, as some do throughout New Jersey, can step into shoes of running the Authority on an interim basis at an agreed upon amount.

Commissioner Fairman asked if a back-to-back swap on that? They cover for us, we cover for them, and wouldn't that be a solution? Mr. Katchen answered SHA could ask them to come in, but for them to agree to take you in would require their Board's action, of course. SHA would probably be the first Housing Authority in New Jersey to have an emergency back-up plan in place; not saying it's a bad idea, but you might do better under a shared service, to go out for a proposal for something that is a "what if" for a private vendor – how would it be priced or what it would encompass at this time. Commissioner Fairman just looking for coverage, whatever makes it the most immediate sense and easiest/cleanest to do to get in place as rapidly as possible. Mr. Katchen added it is a good idea, but shared services, as another government agency, it saves some money. You might have to spend money up front to get them oriented to your operations here, but they'd be on-call and available, if you needed them. No amendment to by-laws needed.

Mr. D'Amico noted it can be done without changing by-laws; done by Resolution, assuming you get someone to agree.

Mr. Katchen said the RFP would say that once a quarter, the Authorities would get together, you pay them for their time, ED Marra bring them up to speed on capital projects, how the Authority's doing, make audit available, discuss personnel. So if something happened, they could step into the shoes to run day-to-day operations on a usual basis. Commissioner Suarez asked was Secaucus Housing really first ones doing this. Is no other Authority out there wondering or concerned about the same thing that we know of? Mr. Katchen answered no, not that he knows of. If you want to accomplish it within confines of what N.J. law allows at the least cost, shared services might be best way to go. Commissioner Suarez didn't think it is an easy task at all. Discussion followed. Mr. D'Amico said legally you could do it in a Resolution, but not a simple thing to accomplish. Commissioner Suarez: if ED or DED fall ill, no one else in the State has considered or even thought about a Resolution, so for us to move forward, it's not a 30-day Resolution; we need to delve into waters that no one's done before. It's a complex concept – even

sitting down once per quarter to get this all right. By the time we get up and running, A – not until spring.

ED Marra added Mike Harper is Executive Director. What about utilizing 1 of 2 professionals who Authority already has under contract – Charles D'Amico or William Katchen, because Mr. Katchen could be ED of Authority. He's got all the credentials and he's already under contract as a Professional Service. Mr. D'Amico said General Counsel not permitted to do day-to-day operations as his job is to give legal advice, and would be giving legal advice to myself.

Mr. Katchen stated he has been asked to be Executive Director and was an ED, besides an assistant. If that is something that SHA would like to consider, he would make himself available. Commissioner Fairman thought it a good idea as Mr. Katchen is familiar with SHA, issues, etc., as well as timeline. Timeline worries him re: what may have to be done, and way has to be found to work around to get coverage in place in case the worse happens, so SHA just "pushes the buttons". Commissioner Suarez agreed. Chairman Harper said SHA went months prior to this without an Executive Director between Messrs. Snyder and Marra. This problem is not specific to COVID. Directors die, quit, and move on. Commissioner Fairman noted the crises everyone is in, resources and availability could be very stretched, and why he feels boots on the ground is an important consideration.

Commissioner Suarez asked Chairman Harper about the gap before ED Marra, what did SHA do for that period? Chairman Harper said he was Chairman at that time; stopped 3-4 days a week to keep some consistency going and dealt with Staff and moved forward and handled everything. Commissioner Fairman asked what if we have crises in a building from an infection point of view. This is different from other circumstances and what worries him. 300 people on site of an age bracket that's high risk/high profile. If it costs money to make sure our tenants are taken care of, so be it. ED Marra said Mr. Katchen lowest hanging fruit as a possibility and then start to investigate some other authority, but someone like SHA size – Cliffside Park, as an example, or Englewood. Maybe we can enter into a 6-month, until the end of June 2021. Some kind of interlocal agreement where if something happens, their Director becomes our Director. ED Marra knows them or perhaps Hackensack. Ten years ago Hackensack had an interlocal agreement with Secaucus HA, so let's investigate the easiest thing is Mr. Katchen, and then investigate over next few weeks, idea of other housing authorities, whether they would be willing to enter into something like that – maybe from December 1 to June 30 – seven months.

Mr. D'Amico: the fact that Mr. Katchen has experienced doing it, doesn't subvert the needs to have some legal entity document that says the Acting Executive Director or Chairman of the Board has the authority to designate someone to do the job. By-laws still have to be changed, if it's Mr. Katchen. You do not have to for a service agreement or another entity.

ED Marra suggested a call tomorrow: Commissioner Fairman, Chairman Harper, and Mr. D'Amico to see what can be worked out. Mr. Marra will read By-Laws this evening and send copies to everyone else. Commissioner Schlemm asked Mr. Fairman if he was looking to replace Chairman Harper. You are looking for someone to run day-to-day operations. Commissioner Fairman said just boots on the ground – Chairman would have all the authority, functionality and responsibility that accrues to him, but would have an interim ED day-to-day boots on the ground. Who would a resident call if they had a water problem? Mr. Suarez answered maintenance staff – emergency line and get maintenance, adding Chairman Harper has been around before. It worked before; which is not to say that consideration and thought process isn't there, but it's not a fire drill where SHA needs to have something actively done within next 14 days. I

ED Marra will work on a call tomorrow including Mr. D'Amico along with Mr. Fairman, Mr. Harper and Mr. Pardasani to figure out what's one possibility and another possibility so SHA can at least pursue it. Commissioner Fairman requested Mayor also be included, if available, via Zoom.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

ED Marra introduced Emma Raymont, Engineer, from MaGrann Associates. She has been working on SHA project. Please look at paper, which are results of 2nd bid.

MS. EMMA RAYMONT: MaGrann has done a 2nd round of bidding. There are a few pieces to the project: primary one is removal of electric baseboard and through-the-wall air-conditioners to be replaced with heat pump units to save significant amount of energy, particularly in heating season. Initial bid process produced only 1 bidder with a high bid. MaGrann rebid mechanical project again and received 4 bids. Results on paper in front of Commissioners. MaGrann has been looking at refining those bids and qualifying them in time since bid process having been able to do a good amount of refinement to figure out where additional cost is coming from. A lot coming on electrical upgrade side and MaGrann is working with PSE&G administration to figure out how best to make project still work within PSE&G Program. Intent of PSE&G Program is to fund, upgrade 2-family buildings and there is intent to split cost for projects that meet their cost-effectiveness goal. MaGrann is trying to figure out with additional costs that are coming in, and have now 2 qualified bids very similar in price; so MaGrann is fairly confident price is good and will meet somewhere in the range. The 2 bids MaGrann has been qualifying are Reiner and Evco, because they both did electrical scope as well. MaGrann's intent is to see what can be done to find a way to make project cost-effective for PSE&G Program so the incentive can be realized for scope of work, and at same time, given that that means some of the scope/dollars will have to be paid by SHA out of their pocket outside of the program. MaGrann trying to get all financial information in order so it can be presented to SHA and team for evaluation. MaGrann trying to find best way to

get best deal so SHA can get incentive from PSE&G to help make this project work and minimize out-of-pocket expense, staying within PSE&G Program guidelines. MaGrann sent calculations back to PSE&G 2 days ago, waiting for them to be reviewed and hope to, in next week or so, have information to share with ED Marra and team to evaluate next steps.

Commissioner Schlemm asked if SHA has the ability to do cost-effective study – where is SHA at with finding out if SHA can actually do this project and where SHA can save some money.

Ms. Raymont said calculations were sent back to PSE&G, having taken out as much as MaGrann thought could be taken out in cost, to keep in the PSE&G Program to try to hit cost-effectiveness requirements of the program. Once MaGrann establishes what they've given PSE&G works, they will give incentive to MaGrann -- \$200,000-\$300,000 – and will see what remaining piece that could not be included in PSE&G Project, then SHA will have the financials – how much SHA would have to put up of its own money to do electrical service work, but other \$1 million+ will be paid for under PSE&G Program, of which 1/3 is free money and other 2/3 gets paid on bill over period of loan, zero interest loan. It will come back to SHA team first to evaluate where it's too much money to spend. MaGrann will have in it their projected savings number is for SHA also to see how much to expect to save each year to offset loan and repayment amounts.

Ms. Raymont noted SHA is free to negotiate with contractors that MaGrann thinks are viable and established amount of money PSE&G can spend, SHA is free to “beef them up” on price and see if you can negotiate a lower price. MaGrann would work with SHA to make it a little cheaper. Commissioner Schlemm said during meeting that there were a few ideas on how to be more cost-effective. One bidder can bring down the price by doing the project a little differently, which Ms. Raymont would speak to smaller group about, because some of them seemed reasonable to her, but would make sure they are good with ED Marra and team on-site. One suggestion was to not run refrigerant lines up outside of building, to bring them in, but then need to core drill through floors inside apartments, which is not ideal, but if cheaper and makes maintenance in long-term easier, maybe it's worth it. Commissioner Schlemm looking for ideas to lessen cost. SHA knows something has to be done, it's just how. Ms. Raymond added electric measures are not as cost-effective as gas, which is coming to forefront. PSE&G wants it to happen, but they're tied by the rules of Board of Public Utilities.

Commissioner Schlemm said SHA trying to use heat pumps. Does the manufacturer have any programs, grants or something SHA could leverage with them in order to help SHA? Ms. Raymont said not as far as she knows, and MaGrann has worked with manufacturer closely to pick a cost-effective product line There are other rebates available but all funded through Board of Public Utilities. You cannot double-dip. Commissioner Schlemm asked if it was possible that SHA be the guinea pig and show case for them. Ms. Raymont said there is a

new evaluator at PSE&G who will look at these calculations next week for the first time. Perhaps there will be a way to find a more cost effective way, but she doesn't know for sure yet.

(7:50 P.M. - AT THIS POINT IN THE MEETING, MS. RAYMONT LEFT THE MEETING.)

ED Marra said there are 4 more projects hopefully in 2021 and a description of funds available for these projects. If there are no questions regarding that memo, we will continue.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM – DED JAKE NASZIMENTO

DED Naszimento reported there are 213 landlord transactions and 4 family transactions. \$205,903 was spent. \$192,285 of that were direct deposits to landlords. \$13,618 was in paper checks to landlords/tenants. \$7,062 port out for direct deposit payments to 5 housing authorities. SHA is currently not issuing vouchers.

RESOLUTION #2020-22 – Establishment of Payment Standards for HCV Program.

ED Marra explained every year new payment standards are provided by HUD, dramatically increased this year from last year. Basically, it establishes new payment standards meaning what SHA is willing to pay a landlord the whole rent for that type of unit. DED Naszimento is issued an FMR – Fair Market Rate – and then housing authority can then set what they call their “payment standards” at either 90 to 110% of the FMR. Depending on where you are in your economic area, you're going to choose 90-100 or even 110%. Ten years ago, Secaucus was choosing to go up to 110% of the FMR. In recent years it has increased very dramatically, even in Secaucus, where we then started shaving down and choosing to have our payment standard equal 100 to match FRM or at this point, SHA is going to the allowable 90% of FMR because numbers are rising, but going up \$200 annual now as to what we can offer landlords. SHA has to be careful in how much SHA is offering landlords in order to make sure we can help as many families as possible. A challenge right now for SHA. ED Marra said 10 years ago SHA was in Hudson County Region – all 12 municipalities had same zero bedroom/1 bedroom/2 bedroom/3 bedroom/4 bedroom payment standard; not mattering if you were in the Heights, Secaucus, North Bergen, Bayonne. Four years ago HUD broke it down by zip code. Jersey City doesn't have one payment standard – they have 5 – 5 zip codes. Secaucus is broken out from everyone else. To rent 1-2 bedrooms in Secaucus is fairly expensive and these rates are now starting to represent that.

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

**RESOLUTION #2020-22
ESTABLISHING THE PAYMENT STANDARDS FOR THE
HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, on November 16, 2016 HUD published its final rule in the Federal Register establishing Small Area Fair Market Rents (SAFMR) parameters and naming 24 metropolitan areas that met the selection criteria, for which the Town of Secaucus, specifically zip code 07094 was included and were designated for mandatory use of SAFMRs commencing on October 1, 2017; and

WHEREAS, on August 10, 2017 HUD exercised its authority under 24 CFR 888.113(c)(4)(iii) to suspend SAFMR designation for 23 of the 24 designated areas that would have gone into effect on October 1, 2017 until October 1, 2019; and

WHEREAS, On December 23, 2017 the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia entered a preliminary injunction, voiding that suspension, thereby giving Public Housing Authorities until April 1, 2018 to implement these new rates; and

WHEREAS, a Public Housing Authority (PHA) uses the published SAFMR as a guide to establish Payment Standards per bedroom size for the Housing Choice Voucher Program; and

WHEREAS, a PHA may establish Payment Standards anywhere between 90 to 110 percent of the published FMR without obtaining HUD approval; and

WHEREAS, the Payment Standards are used to calculate the housing assistance payment (HAP) that the PHA pays to the owner on behalf of the family leasing the unit; and

WHEREAS, the Payment Standard set by the PHA directly effects the amount of subsidy a family will receive and the amount of rent that will be paid by the tenant; and

WHEREAS, a PHA must also determine that its annual budget authority for the Housing Choice Voucher Program will support the established Payment Standards; and

WHEREAS, a PHA must also ensure that the program participants will be able to find safe, decent and affordable units within the PHA's jurisdiction within the standards established; and

WHEREAS, applicants/participants have experienced cost related obstacles to leasing safe, decent and affordable units within the SHA jurisdiction, and;

WHEREAS, HUD has released its 2020 SAFMR for all bedroom sizes in zip code 07094; and

WHEREAS, the Secaucus Housing Authority has determined the Payment Standard shall be set at 90% of the 2020 SAFMR for the 0 bedroom, 1, 2, 3, and 4 bedroom units, the payment standard per bedroom size will be:

2020 Secaucus Housing Authority Payment Standard

Bedroom Size	SAFMR
0	\$1,791
1	\$1,953
2	\$2,268
3	\$2,817
4	\$3,078

WHEREAS, the Payment Standards have been reviewed and approved by William Katchen, our accountant; and

WHEREAS, his review has confirmed that sustaining the payment standard for all bedroom sizes is within the best interest of the SHA and the clients they serve

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus that the payments standards as set forth above are to continue for the period commencing November 1, 2020 through September 30, 2021.

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Copy of letter to Mayor Gonnelli thanking him and DPW for striping parking lots of 3 buildings: The Elms, Rocco and Kroll Heights. Email in Commissioners' packages from Carl Leppin where there are open permits. More recent ones are projects not yet completed yet: breaker box project completed yesterday. They will come in next week for inspection on break box project. Some have to do with when Verizon was installing FIOS at The Elms – all permits at The Elms. ED Marra will speak personally with Mr. Leppin about bathrooms that were done 5 years ago or replacement of air handler in community room 4 years ago. In some cases, contractors no longer exist. Roof contractor went out of business as SHA was his last job. Fire pump project is not yet completed.

ED Marra received letter from Debbie Alvarez requesting an increase in her monthly pay from \$175 to \$200. ED Marra realized he's been with SHA for 9 years and Debbie has not requested an increase in 9 years. When he began 9 years ago, her pay was \$150 and raised to \$175. Does anyone have an objection to that increase? Commissioners all agreed with increase. Debbie thanked everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Pardasani; 2nd by Commissioner Mondadori. VOTE/AYES: All Present Commissioners (6) Absent: Rivera

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:08 P.M.