

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

March 24, 2023

This is condensed transcription of taped minutes taken on Thursday,  
March 24, 2023, Kroll Heights, 700 County Road, Secaucus, New Jersey.

**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 15, 2022.**

**FLAG SALUTE**

Vice-Chairman Michael Schlemm welcomed everyone in the audience.

ED Marra called the Roll Call.

**ROLL CALL;**

Present: Chairman Michael Harper  
Vice-Chairman Michael Schlemm  
Commissioner Raj Pardasani  
Commissioner Patricia Mondadori  
Commissioner Antonio Suarez  
Commissioner John Bujnowski  
Commissioner Richard Fairman

**CEREMONY HONORING TWO 30-YEAR  
RESIDENTS IN KROLL HEIGHTS**

Executive Director Christopher Marra began the program recognizing Linda Fanning, Tanya Oquendo, Terry Weinbrecht, Fran Pine, and Ron Gallo – Office Staff. Ron Gallo had the brainstorm a month ago to inform ED Marra that these two residents practically opened Kroll Heights. **Sophie Sciancalepore Deliberto**, born March 28, 1921, one of 4 children (including 3 brothers). Her brother, Ralph, had the ice cream truck that he drove around Secaucus in the 1970's. Sophie's husband, Louis, was a WWII Veteran, raising their family in Union City, where Sophie was an embroidery seamstress in North Hudson. Her family moved in 1967 from Union City to Garfield, where she lived until 1993 when she moved into Kroll Heights on August 1, 1993. Each lady was a seamstress.

ED Mara also recognized **Delores Hernandez Concepcion**, born August 1, 1934 in Cuba. She met her husband and they were married in 1957 in Cuba. They came to USA in 1971 where they raised their three boys in Union City. They moved to Fairview Avenue in Secaucus. Delores' husband passed away in 2014. Delores was also a seamstress and her husband worked in an embroidery company as well. They moved into Kroll Heights on June 1, 1993. Each woman living in Kroll Heights for 30 years. (Applause)

ED Marra explained Chairman Harper will present two plaques to each woman. (Debate at this time as to where plaques will be displayed; perhaps outside their doors for others to read.) (Applause)

Chairman Harper noted in 1993 he was starting his senior year at St. Peter's Preparatory, and appointed to the Board of Commissioners 3-4 years later. Sophie and Delores were thanked for being such special tenants, happy to have them here. (Applause)

(Delicious cake and other desserts were shared by those present in the audience.)

ED Marra stopped the meeting at this point for photographs of Sophie, Delores and their families, a few tenants and Commissioners, hoping to get photographs in Mayor's newsletter and other publications.

**(MEETING PAUSED AT THIS TIME FOR PHOTOGRAPHS)**

**(REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING BEGAN AT THIS POINT)**

Chairman Harper welcomed those still present at Commissioners' Meeting.

### **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – February 2023**

Motion to accept minutes made by Commissioner Mondadori; seconded by Commissioner Pardasani.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (6) Abstain: Harper

### **PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – March 2023**

Motion to approve payment of claims made by Vice-Chairman Schlemm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Suarez.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

### **REMARKS OF CITIZENS**

SAM – TOWERS #517 – In the Towers exercise room, treadmill broken for a few years; not known if it was donated or acquired. Towers does not have Tenants Association or a club. ED MARRA: SHA does purchase that equipment. One there now

purchased by SHA. If broken and not working, another can be purchased. Are others functional? If not, we will get rid of them and try to get replaced.

SAM also spoke about President Biden making internet available in rural areas of USA – called AFFORDABLE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM (ACP). Most of seniors here qualify here; tenants here sign up for cable @ \$120-\$180/month. That was program two years ago – “INTERNET ESSENTIALS” and system available now called “**INTERNET ESSENTIALS PLUS**” – cable. Cost is ZERO. Four people on it; paying \$100/month and works perfect. It is difficult in getting local offices/ reps to get it done, but on internet you can do it in 15 minutes.

SAM also said Ford Motor Company made available for people to have a free check up.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### FINANCE

#### **RESOLUTION 2023-10**

#### **2024 ADOPTED BUDGET RESOLUTION SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY FISCAL YEAR: FROM: 4/1/2023 TO: 3/31/2024**

WHEREAS, the Annual Budget and Capital Budget/Program for the Secaucus Housing Authority for the fiscal year beginning April 1, 2023 and ending, March 31, 2024 has been presented for adoption before the governing body of the Secaucus Housing Authority at its open public meeting of January 26, 2023; 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 \$7,408,546 Total Appropriations, including any Accumulated Deficit, if any, of \$7,311,468 and Total Unrestricted Net Position utilized of \$0.00; and

WHEREAS, the Capital Budget as presented for adoption reflects Total Capital Appropriations of \$1,550,000 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 23, 2023 that the Annual Budget and Capital Budget/Program of the Secaucus Housing Authority for the fiscal year

beginning, 4/1/2023 and, ending, 3/31/2024 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.

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(Secretary's Signature) (Date)

#### 1. RESOLUTION 2023-10 – ADOPTION OF BUDGET FOR APRIL 1, 2023

Motion to approve budget for April 1, 2023 made by Chairman Harper; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Suarez.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

Monthly bank balances through February 28, 2023 and Federal Home Loan Letter of Credit issued every 60 days by Federal Home Loan Bank given to each Commissioner. This is how Bogota Savings Bank secures SHA money instead of keeping reserve on the side; they pay for letter of credit from Federal Home Loan Bank. In discussion with Commissioner Fairman, ED went online obtaining Federal Home Loan Bank of N.Y. Letter of Credit Beneficiary form; reviewed them in case SHA ever had to use Letter of Credit. ED has no communications from Bogota Bank in any way – negative/positive. Business as usual. SHA is taking some precautions just in case.

Commissioner Fairman asked several questions regarding finances – account balances of \$4.7 million; L/C of \$1.5 million; trying to guarantee or coverage from the 4.7 to the 1.5. There's a layer of FDIC in that; gap between 2 numbers is large. ED will investigate if it has to do with loan at Bogota. ED will check it out. Commissioner Fairman believes some consideration should be given to immediate opening of a few deposit accounts at alternative bank, so SHA will have accounts open; checks printed ready to go in case there is banking issue. ED said every year there is resolution stating certain banks that SHA can open deposits in – 3 banks named there. Chairman Harper suggested ED Marra speak with Bill Katchen.

#### PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

ED Marra announced Charles D'Amico, Esq. has been SHA attorney since April 1, 2017, noting Mr. D'Amico is Municipal Court Judge in West New York; was General Counsel to City of Bayonne; worked at Hudson County Prosecutor's Office – submitting his resume in February 2017 via RFP; was hired and been attorney here for

past 6 years. Mr. D'Amico revised and gave SHA new lease for tenants in 2020 – old one was 20 years old. Also revised and rewrote By-Laws for SHA, which take a long time to get done; helped in negotiating cell tower contract; had many informal hearings re: broken rules under Section 8 voucher, but SHA obligated to give them informal hearing – presiding over those in a fair, complete just way. ED Marra graciously thanked Mr. D'Amico for all his efforts over past 6 years. Chairman Harper thanked him as well. (Applause.)

Mr. D'Amico told the audience in working for City of Bayonne, he dealt with every committee there, but wanted audience to know that SHA's Board puts much more time and effort into what they do than any Board he's ever been associated with – all good, but Secaucus is great.

ED Marra introduced Stephen J. Natoli, Esq., new attorney effective April 1, 2023; having also worked for Hudson County Prosecutor's Office, offices in Secaucus. Mr. Natoli answered the RFP; Board interviewed him; hired him for April 1, 2023. (Applause.)

## **PERSONNEL**

ED Marra informed audience Fran Pein has worked for SHA 27 years this June, and will be retiring June 1, 2023. (Applause.) ED Marra thanked Fran for her work during those 27 years, noting that all accounting for CPA and Auditor starts at Fran's desk and that is why there are no problems. (Applause) Chairman Harper also thanked Fran, noting how long he's known her family, way before being here at SHA.

SHA now advertising for Fran's job, receiving 10 resumes. Tuesday a committee of this Board will interview some of those candidates. At April meeting, also at Kroll Heights, we will know who new bookkeeper will be.

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

Smoking Enforcement Actions – ED gave **verbal warning** to a couple, who moved into The Elms in past 90 days, their upstairs neighbor reported they had smoke in their apartment. Maintenance man checked it out – knocks on couple's door – calls me. ED reminded them there is **no smoking** in building, knowing they smoke outside, but 24/7 x 365 they don't always go outside. They did sign a **no smoking agreement**; next time it happens they will receive a letter; of course, insisting they don't smoke in their unit. No other letters handed out – person that received 1<sup>st</sup> letter, hasn't had to get another one – also at The Elms. Only occasionally does ED receive complaints from people in The Heights or Tower re: people smoking. There are also less smokers living in these 2 buildings than at The Elms.

## **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS**

Rocco Towers update on elevator equipment: 1 elevator is new; tomorrow crane coming to lift equipment to top floor. Contractor claims by late May/early June, they will be finished with 2<sup>nd</sup> elevator. 1<sup>st</sup> elevator took 8 months to do. ED gathers they did work on 2<sup>nd</sup> one also, learning while they went along too; were given a certain time limit and needed to finish it before end of June.

Bids received for painting of Rocco Towers and work at The Elms. GOOD NEWS: Low bid of \$107,000 to paint Rocco Towers – all common areas from 1<sup>st</sup> floor to Community Room and apartments – those that **asked** to have apartments painted. 2<sup>nd</sup> highest was \$133,000 – 2 above it were \$195,000 - \$297,000 and never visited SHA. BAD NEWS: The Elms – 3 bids there - \$2.4, \$3.2 and \$3.5 million – to remove face of The Elms, all of the side, remove all windows and replace them. Architect in conversation with contractor who has \$2.4 bid. There are alternatives -- \$1,250,000 that is for east side of building – part we always talk about and widest open part. \$847,000 is area around the entrance of building. Looking at Equi-Design at 8-79 and 5-48, it's in neighborhood of \$1.5 million just to do front of building. Lee Mestres talked to this contractor today and his references – there may be some issue that he did not count the window costs correctly; checking on that. If he did, a letter would be submitted to SHA citing that incorrecion to withdraw the bid so that he did not lose his bid money. Then it would be the \$3.2. Buildings & Grounds will reconvene about this. We have about \$1.2 million for this project; already written to Hudson County Division of Community & Housing Development, which gave us \$90,000 grant to investigate more grant money OR something called **HOME MONEY** – HOME funds were funds that Leased Housing Corporation used for rehabilitation of Patriot Commons and for construction of Colonial Court, which were in millions. They were called “forgivable loans” – on books as a loan, but as long as you maintain property as an affordable housing for either 15 or 20 years, it then is forgiven. SHA will investigate if we are an eligible candidate for that Federal money – all coming from HUD.

## **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM**

Commissioners received report up to March 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **REMARKS OF CITIZENS**

DEBORAH - #0902 – Is hot water heater run by battery? Woke her up other evening with a loud noise. ED explained its electric hot water heater and has a sensor on it. Sensor is there in case it begins to leak. If it does leak, sensor shuts it off so water doesn't go down into apartments below. Perhaps the battery in the sensor needs to be changed. We will have it checked.

ANN - #804/Rocco Towers – potholes in parking lot are getting bigger and she parks in Kroll Heights parking lot. ED stated 2-3 years ago Rocco Towers parking lot in very bad condition; parking lot and road leading into it was repaved. It won't get repaved this year, but maybe next summer or fall at Kroll Heights it will get done.

Luckily, winter wasn't bad so we hope to live with it for another year. ED will look at patching them for now.

COMMISSIONER FAIRMAN: Re: new elevators and consideration for B&G Committee – will there be performance guarantees when elevators are done, that will last for a specific period of time. If there's an opportunity to revisit that performance guarantee before work is completed as to – is it fully adequate to SHA, do we have any negotiating leverage relative to where they are, what they've done to enhance that multi-year guarantee. ED will write everyone what SHA has now in the contract re: how much of a guarantee there is, what do we have in terms of service contract after that from the company – all within the bid price.

Commissioner Fairman: If they haven't met deadlines and opportunity for SHA to reopen it, SHA should reopen, get what SHA wants and be done.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Vice-Chairman Schlemm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Mondadori.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (7)

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez  
Secretary/Transcriber