

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

June 27, 2024

Condensed transcription of taped minutes - Thursday,
June 27, 2024, The Towers, 600 County Avenue, Secaucus, New Jersey
Commencing at 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL;

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

Also Present: Executive Director Christopher Marra
Stephen J. Natoli, Esq.

Excused: Commissioner Michael Schlemm
Commissioner Patricia Mondadori

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, 2023. 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

MINUTES – MAY 23, 2024 REGULAR MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes of May 23, 2024 made by Commissioner Pardasani; 2nd by Commissioner Bujnowski.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Mondadori/Schlemm

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – JUNE 2024

Commissioner Pardasani asked about the \$1,055 for ED Marra. ED Marra: SHA purchased a Nordic Track for \$890. Sam Greenlaw has been requesting a "good quality" machine and it was purchased. Balance was for renewal of one year Zoom membership. They would not accept a check, so ED Marra had to use his credit card. Optimum Contract was for \$32,036, part of which is for this room.

2024 June 27

Commissioner Fairman asked about multiple telephone systems SHA has. Phones for emergencies, security, etc. which is 7 vendors @ \$7,000; then \$11,000 for maintenance vendors. Would it be strategically something that we should take a look at communications/phone matter; perhaps someone could look at all the services, programs, capabilities as it's such a changing world and to upgrade what we have and consolidate to save some money or at least get upgrades. ED Marra: When you look at Granite Telesystems, during Covid SHA switched over to Voit – the Granite Service is primarily used for balance of all other telephone lines: fire alarm, emergency alarm, telephone in elevators. Recently, over time the Granite bill gets chopped down. Just recently fire panel was upgraded at Kroll Heights; Johnson Control bill was \$4,000. They took telephone line away, made it a cellular line; that telephone line then canceled. Verizon for \$350 for RIT and The Elms – for Verizon for Kroll it's to have wifi and also IP addresses for SHA, because now we only use Verizon FIOS for SHA computer system and internet use in the Office. RIT and The Elms \$155.60 – next month or so, that bill should go down because for each building, bill should go down about \$45 because: when we did this building over, SHA purchased a new smart TV, which is connected to wifi, meaning no more need for box from Verizon – now having 1,000 channels. Comcast will be taken off the bill list. We do have a Verizon wireless maintenance bill. Yes, it would be worth looking at because maybe there's something we can do once we get rid of these “boxes”. We could save perhaps \$100/month, which is \$100 a month saved, and might get an upgrade in service.

Maintenance: many times SHA is buying maintenance materials: generally, Granger, HD Supply and then men go to Home Depot using credit card. We've instituted that they give that to me, as I'm a Purchasing Agent in the office. I just pay them online and, therefore, I pay them within 10-15 days, we save money off of actual bill, plus getting a break using this card. There is better security in regards to keys/locks; American Paper says maintenance material, but its specific things. Any other maintenance seen there, Culinary Brothers is for fixing lawnmowers, etc. Ferguson is maintenance materials; buying air-conditioners, stoves, refrigerators from them. We purchased something else from them for \$2,300 – a pump for Kroll Heights. J.P. Landscaping does lawn maintenance and Jerrod Landscaping is lawn maintenance.

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Mondadori/Schlemm

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monthly account balances are at \$3,299,000. Updates: over next month CD at Valley and BCD will mature, review them. There was a 10-month CD that matured at Bogota, just renewed it for 9 months at a little over 5%. If you look at front page of 5/31/2024, TD Bank balance is \$30,117. That \$30,117 plus two-20 in there puts SHA over 250K mark for FDIC. You'll see that balance go down in July, as I withdrew \$21,000 from there to pay for floor in this building. No current washer/dryer problems – that money is from washer/dryers.

Commissioner Fairman acknowledged and appreciated all attention ED Marra does in moving away from risk at Bogota and documentation of risk. SHA has total funds of \$3,300,000; how much cash does it take to run SHA every month. I look at bill list; add 100 on top of that; what's the Cap-X outlook for next year – 100,000, that nets SHA down to \$2,950,000 net liquidity. There are CDs of \$1.18 million, leaving \$1,770,000, which I call unutilized liquidity. If SHA invested that today @ 4.5% - that's \$80,000. If we got into a box

somewhere, we could cash one CD very easily. ED Marra: Went to M&T Bank this week in Lyndhurst, explaining who I was, and they said SHA is only entitled to a business CD rate just over 1%. I explained I've been to TD Bank, Valley National and all gave SHA what their advertised rate was, but that's how M&T Bank does it. ED Marra will look at other banks within a drivable distance, maybe Bergen County. Commissioner Fairman said other banks might do renewals online or telephone.

Security Loss Control Report from J.A. Montgomery came out of JIF. It is a little different than property loss control, a new thing JIF has taken under. They come in, you've lost your property, they take a look and see what do you have, what don't you have, give you some management configurations at the end, and have emergency plan if something happens to the building. Happy to know we have a way to contact residents through PHA Webb, through text or email. We do have a key management system to track things in the buildings, but they wanted to see it done in a more, normalized way. Previously, SHA employees had ID cards, now we have fobs. They wanted First Aid kits and AEDs in public areas, we don't have that, plus they want a few other things. Never had training for child abuse or child exploitation, no children living here, but they suggested it because some children are watched here.

Audit will take place July 22, 23 and 24th. Our next meeting is July 25th.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

1. RESOLUTION #2024-16 – AWARD OF CONTRACT TO HABITECH ARCHITECT FOR INTERIOR PAINTING OF THE ELMS
2. RESOLUTION #2024-17 – AWARD OF A&E CONTRACT TO HABITECH ARCHITECTURE FOR INTERIOR LIGHTING AT THE ELMS

We have enough money to paint The Elms; it's old, brown, dark. Commissioners don't see it, but I do. Going on elevator at Floors 2-5, as you walk down hallways, specifically to the right, there isn't much light; light fixtures updated by Bill Snyder in early 2000, clearly need to be updated and provide better light. One resolution is to paint interior at The Elms; other is contract to change interior lighting at The Elms. Cost is \$12,500 for painting. Lighting might be \$5,000.

Motion to approve Resolution #2024-16 and Resolution #2024-17 made by Commissioner Suarez; 2nd by Commissioner Bujnowski.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Mondadori/Schlemm

RESOLUTION #2024-16 – (Award of Contract for A/E Services for Interior Painting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street)

WHEREAS, the Secaucus Housing Authority (hereinafter referred to as SHA) has need for A/E services for Interior Painting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street; and

WHEREAS, SHA is permitted to contract for such services, pursuant to both the New Jersey Redevelopment and Housing Law and the New Jersey Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to SHA's Procurement Policy Guidelines, the SHA solicited a professional service companies for proposals; and

WHEREAS, SHA received a proposal from one A/E firm, and

Habitech Architecture
12 Pinecrest Drive
Medford, NJ 08055-9774

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus that a contract for A/E services for Interior Painting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street be awarded to:

Habitech Architecture
12 Pinecrest Drive
Medford, NJ 08055-9774

in the amount of \$12,500.00 and

BE IT, FURTHER, RESOLVED that a copy of the proposals are on file in the office of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus and funds for this contract have been declared available by the Executive Director and Fee Accountant.

**RESOLUTION #2024-17 –
(Award of Contract for A/E Services for Interior Lighting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street)**

WHEREAS, the Secaucus Housing Authority (hereinafter referred to as SHA) has need for A/E services for Interior Lighting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street; and

WHEREAS, SHA is permitted to contract for such services, pursuant to both the New Jersey Redevelopment and Housing Law and the New Jersey Public Contracts Law; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to SHA's Procurement Policy Guidelines, the SHA solicited a professional service companies for proposals; and

WHEREAS, SHA received a proposal from one A/E firm, and
Habitech Architecture
12 Pinecrest Drive
Medford, NJ 08055-9774

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus that a contract for A/E services for Interior Lighting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street be awarded to:

Habitech Architecture
12 Pinecrest Drive
Medford, NJ 08055-9774

in the amount of \$5,000.00 and

BE IT, FURTHER, RESOLVED that a copy of the proposals is on file in the office of the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus and funds for this contract have been declared available by the Executive Director and Fee Accountant.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – INFORMATIONAL

SHA brought back Intern from 2023 and hired for six weeks Betsabe Paulino, a scholarship winner last year through NAHRO, paying half of her pay/other half paid by NJNAHRO. She attends Fairleigh Dickenson University. Betsabe worked in the office and will work there again. NJNAHRO has changed the way they publish these scholarships. Prior to now we'd get about 8 applicants, select 3-4. Now they've decided they'll award everybody, but only for 2 years, which is between \$3,000 to \$1,500. We had 2 scholarships people, 2 were awarded. I hope to have them at our meeting in July, so you are able to meet them. One scholarship was for \$3,000, one for \$2,500.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Big news for people working in housing industry: HUD has protocols called HQS – Housing Quality Standards. HUD is gearing up for 5 years, maybe longer, to change the way inspections are done through NSPIRE – which is supposed to take effect 10/1/2024, but HUD not ready. They've moved it back to 10/1/2025. We will continue to inspect our properties. Also, we submit information to HUD – PIC system, which has what rent/income is. They are trying to transition to new system – Housing Information Portal (HIP). If HIP isn't ready, you can't implement HOTMA – which is a law that passed in 2016. Over past 8 years HUD has been writing new regulations for HOTMA. One of more striking ones is: if you're on the list and HOTMA is in effect and you own a home in Secaucus, you won't be eligible to apply for a unit, no matter what your income is. If you're not living in a home, but you have more than \$100,000 in assets, you're not eligible, unless those assets are in a 401K. (Inaudible) they're going to exclude the 401K. If you just sold your house, have \$100,000 in a CD or bank account, you won't be eligible. By law, we're expected to go back 2 years to look at what transpired in the past 2 years, what did you do with all that money. All this will probably take at least another year.

Smoking Policy Enforcement – Still working on trying to get Verizon to come to The Elms to install wireless wifi on each floor so those smoking alarms for each apartment can be installed. More information on progress in July.

BUILDING & GROUNDS

Update: It is anticipated that by 3rd week of July, elevator work at The Elms is expected to take one week – removal of existing jack at bottom of shaft and installation of new jack.

EMAIL READ BY ED MARRA: “As we were not able to remove the existing jack earlier due to timing, we will be removing the jack and installing the new during this mobilization. We are looking at about a 7-9 day complete turnover time prior to the final inspection.”

In an earlier email, they indicated that they would begin that process probably somewhere around July 22nd, the same week as our meeting and our audit, but hopefully, by August 1st we'll have 2 elevators running at The Elms.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (HCVP)

Commissioners given information about where we are through month of June 1st.

INFORMATIONAL

Commissioners got report April to June and demographic report showing you demographic compilation of people living in our 3 buildings.

ED Marra explained he wrote a memo earlier in June to Gary Jeffas, copy to Mayor Gonnelli and others. Happy to report Antonio Suarez and Patricia Mondadori, who were not appointed last year, have been appointed for a 5-year term – 2028 AND Michael Harper and Richard Fairman were reappointed as well – now until 2029. Chairman Harper thanked ED Marra for his work on this.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Suarez; 2nd by Commissioner Pardasani.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Mondadori/Schlemm

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber