

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

September 26, 2024

This is condensed transcription of taped minutes taken on Thursday,
September 26, 2024 – Kroll Heights, Secaucus, New Jersey.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Michael Harper
Commissioner Raj Pardasani
Commissioner Richard Fairman
Commissioner Patricia Mondadori
Commissioner Antonio Suarez

Absent: Commissioner Michael Schlemm
Commissioner John Bujnowski

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

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE

“Adequate notice of this meeting is required by the Open Public Meeting 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, 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 OF PRECEDING MEETING – July 25, 2024 Regular Meeting

Motion to approve July 25th minutes made by Commissioner Mondadori; 2nd by Commissioner Pardasani.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Schlemm/Bujnowski

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS – AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2024

Motion to approve bill list made by Chairman Harper; 2nd by Commissioner Mondadori.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Schlemm/Bujnowski

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Commissioners have June 2024 Quarterly Financial Statement from April through June, 1st quarter of fiscal year prepared by Mr. Katchen's office. Commissioner Fairman: (Inaudible) and where is Interest Expense as a line item. It is a component to this and should be shown. ED Marra: I've never seen that as we have used this same format. I'd have to ask Mr. Katchen, as I don't know the answer. It doesn't say "expense", but there is a line "Interest Income", but isn't "interest expense". Commissioner Fairman: What is difference between the two pages? Page 2 shows under budget by some \$40,000. If you track that up to Employee Benefits, is that some annual or item that gets recognized during that quarter. ED Marra: Mr. Katchen explained it once, but I don't recall. One was a program budget specifically related to programs; one was about the overall budget. I will get a better answer and send out an email tomorrow. Chairman Harper: Mr. Marra, you always said one is State form and one is program form, basically showing the same thing. ED Marra: One with Rental Income vs. Voucher Payments; there is a differentiation. When SHA first started it, Mr. Katchen told me that, which was years ago, but not coming back to me at this time. Commissioner Fairman: Maybe have a few different reports at Katchen level so the Board could review.

There is Resolution 2024-19 to renew membership in "New Jersey Public Housing Authority Joint Insurance Fund (JIF)". Current membership terminates at end of 2024, which is for 3 years, beginning January 1, 2025 ending 12/31/2027. This is our 3rd renewal, beginning year 7, ending year 10. I've been here 13 years, first 4 was private insurance either right after Hurricane Sandy. JIF was always going to beat them. Legislature has law we don't need to go out and bid this, just renew it.

RESOLUTION #2024-19 – RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE NEW JERSEY PUBLIC HOUSING JOINT INSURANCE FUND

Motion to approve Resolution #2024-19 made by Commissioner Suarez; 2nd by Commissioner Pardasani.

VOTE: All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Schlemm, Bujnowski

Bank Balances: These are as of 8/31/24. Six month CD showing \$224,680 was closed on 9/5-9/6. Money then deposited into Account #4, account where Section 8 checks are written out of. \$220,000 came out of Account #1 and put it into TD Bank - \$220,000. Account #1 will be down \$220k and see a new CD. We have an 8 month CD/Bogota which matured today. That \$186k will go into a different bank instead of Bogota. Commissioner Bujnowski, Treasurer of volunteer fire department, sent me contact at Provident Bank that he deals with. He has money in many banks to avoid \$250k number.

Commissioner Fairman: We have a window here regarding CD rates where short-term CDs aren't going to drop that rapidly. First calendar quarter next year, they will be much more insidiously dropped. I recommend you create new ones or renew existing CDs going for longer tenures than what we historically went through. ED Marra pointed out 3 CDs not with TD will mature in 2025; 9/26 CD maturing in March 2025 with TD Bank. Next CD with Bogota is April 3, 2025. We will try to create a new longer one with Provident in early October.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Four people were interviewed for Maintenance, Chairman Harper, Commissioner Schlemm, Ronnie Gallo and I participated in that. We will possibly hire one person before October meeting, doing reference checks and other things. I will inform Board about that and make resume available to you; memorialize it in a resolution at October meeting. Sometimes we've gotten 5 candidates that weren't suitable, a difficult job to fill for amount of money we pay.

POLICY COMMITTEE

Commissioners were given notebooks containing updated Employment Handbook, Non-Civil Service dated June 1, 2023 that's when JIF supplied SHA with it; handed out to employees. I updated it and also Policies & Procedure Manual. I wanted to make sure it was updated as one employee is retiring at end of this year, and why we are hiring new maintenance person. Updating manual was necessary for new employee.

Tonight we're introducing updated version of Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan, which needs to be noticed in newspaper. Commissioners received that please look it over. It includes things we've talked about including HOTMA and NSPIRE, which are now delayed until 2025. HUD has given out guidance what happens when you adopt an admin plan, as SHA is not only one that adopted new admin plan this year, and had this wording in it called HOTMA and NSPIRE. If we are still doing HQS inspections, how does that follow with our admin plan? HUD sent out a document on how you can manage that until these changes become official.

We are not at The Elms tonight and The Elms doesn't know how much is going to be happening there over next few weeks. I'll have a meeting there; we have talked about installing WYND device there in each unit. This required me to put in a wifi installation into The Elms on every floor – our wifi – not accessed by residents and now devices from WYNE are on transport to us. We install them into an outlet, having supplied WYNE with list of apartments, as #101 device doesn't go into Apt. #102. This is beginning of enough evidence for Mr. Natoli, Esq. to go to court for those continuously smoking in their units. Just touching the device will be enough that you've broken your lease, putting bag over device will also be noticed to me – notice will state "there's no air in apartment – no oxygen in apartment". I'm looking forward to residents coming into compliance, not in being evicted. I will remind The Elms residents how much this cost, which took away from something else we could have done at The Elms.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Resolution emailed to Commissioners yesterday - #1 a bid dated August 30th was to do interior painting of The Elms, not painted in more than 15 years (common areas). All is being repainted. If you've lived there for more than 5 years, you will have an opportunity to get your apartment painted – a total of 55 living there more than 5 years. Only half of people in Rocco wanted to have their apartment painted. Resolution #2024-20 rejects bids because architect said too high, some people read time incorrectly when they were supposed to arrive.

Resolution #2024-21 – Award for Contract for Relighting Common Areas at The Elms. At nighttime, hallways are very dark even though there's a window at the end and in middle.

Kroll Heights built 28 years later lighting is much better. It will be partially to save some money, more energy efficient and much brighter. Lee (architect) rebid project right away, received 4 bids on Tuesday; sent me letter of recommendation. If you accept that bid tonight - #2024-22, which is award of contract for apartment and common area painting at The Elms – winning bid was \$118,800. Mr. Suarez was correct when he said it would cost more to paint The Elms than Rocco, although half the size. Rocco cost \$107,000; this is \$118,000; but historically that cost was \$93,000 as \$118,000 bid is for painting 40 units. If you only paint 20, each worth about \$1,000 to paint, you save \$20,000. Lee vetted these painters, memo sent to Commissioners by ED Marra from Lee, having done due diligence, had other clients and housing authority work.

RESOLUTION 2024-20

REJECTING BIDS FOR COMMON AREA PAINTING AND APARTMENT PAINTING AT 777 FIFTH STREET AND AUTHORIZING REBID

WHEREAS, on August 30, 2024, the following bids were received for COMMON AREA PAINTING AND APARTMENT PAINTING AT 777 FIFTH STREET

Name of Bidder Bid Amount

- 1) J&B Contractors, LLC \$137,900
- 2) George Balaikas, \$143,650
- 3) A&A Painting \$198,300
- 4) A1 Construction Services, Inc. \$486,000

WHEREAS, the bids received for Common Area Painting and Apartment Painting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street exceeded the budgeted amount for this project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Secaucus Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, that the bids received for Common Area Painting and Apartment Painting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street are hereby rejected.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to re-advertise for and receive bids for Common Area Painting and Apartment Painting at The Elms 777 Fifth Street.

RESOLUTION 2024-21 (RESOLUTION AWARDED THE CONTRACT FOR Common Space Lighting Upgrades at The Elms, 777 Fifth Street)

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus (hereinafter referred to as SHA) has determined that it needs to procure services for the upgrade to common space lighting at The Elms.; and

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

WHEREAS, the SHA received bids from five (5) bidders on Friday, August 30, 2024; and

WHEREAS, on the public opening of the bids Vanore Electric, Inc. Hackensack, NJ with a base bid of \$78,000 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 Company has been reviewed by the architectural firm of Habitech Architecture who recommended the contract be awarded to Company; and

WHEREAS, the bid submitted by Company 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 Vanore Electric, Inc., Hackensack, NJ in the amount of \$78,000; 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.

***RESOLUTION 2024-22
(RESOLUTION AWARDDING THE CONTRACT FOR
APARTMENT AND COMMON SPACE PAINTING AT 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 apartment and common space painting at 777 Fifth Street; and

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

WHEREAS, the SHA received bids from four (4) bidders on September 24, 2024; and

WHEREAS, on the public opening of the bids Balanikas Painting & Contracting of Eatontown, NJ with a bid of \$118,800 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 Balanikas Painting & Contracting has been reviewed by the Habitech Architecture who recommended the contract be awarded to Balanikas Painting & Contracting; and

WHEREAS, the bid submitted by Balanikas Painting & Contracting 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 Balanikas Painting & Contracting in the amount of \$118,800; and

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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.

(There were no issues or comments regarding rejection of #2024-20 and approving award for relighting at The Elms and painting at The Elms.)

Motion to approve Resolutions #2024-20, #2024-21, and #2024-22 made by Commissioner Suarez; 2nd by Commissioner Pardasani.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Schlemm/Bujnowski

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM

Commissioners have analysis of how program has worked from July-September. On 9/1/2024 255 vouchers were funded, albeit SHA only allotted 254, 1 over is allowed. SHA spends approximately \$307,000; we are losing 1-2 in September and adding 1 in October.

SHA received their CMAP score: Terry Weinbrecht, Linda Fanning and Angie Oliveros are responsible for as they run voucher program. Terry is Project Based Voucher, Linda running HCVs. SHA's final CMAP score for year ending 3/31/24 is 135; following are indicators and at the bottom it says "Thank you for your cooperation of the CMAP process and congratulations on being rate a high performer. Commissioner Fairman: Was 135 greater or smaller number than previously received? ED Marra: I think it was a little higher, going back to Jake Naszimento; SHA has always been a high performer. It has been 120 and 125. Commissioner Pardasani: How do we compare to other housing authorities? ED Marra: Good question and I will try to give you a report on that at next meeting.

REMARKS OF CITIZENS

GARY MONGELLI - #215 – Here since April, everyone fine. Lady living across from him was fine in beginning, now has problems with him and others. She accuses him of spraying in hallway, which he has no reason to do so. Maintenance men remove trash, trash room right next to his apartment. She asked him to call ambulance two months ago as she needed to get to hospital. She came back a few months later, said she was fine and now back to her old routine – he's spraying and last incident was her banging on his door, screaming and other incidents also. She's also been disruptive to others. Chairman Harper: We can't talk about specific people here this evening. We know its one person you are dealing with, to document and get it on record. (Discussion ensued with many adding comments.) Mr. Natoli: It is a legal matter, We'll speak with Mr. Mongelli, ED Marra and I speaking privately, assess what needs to be done. Chairman Harper: Most of this is documented; we know what's happened when. We'll sit down with ED Marra and codify that, so if there is something to do down the line, we have (inaudible).

ANNA MINERVINI - #509 – Anna spoke about fans in the hallway; she turns them on. Perhaps 5-6 hours later, someone has turned them off again. She turned fan on again. Anna goes back 5-6 hours again, fan is off. Fan isn't in other person's apartment. (Another lady said she knew who turns off the fans. Man does at 3 A.M., 2 A.M., 9:30 A.M. Raced her up in elevator so he could shut fan off right outside her door. It's ridiculous. Something happened to him

since the vaccine.) Chairman Harper: Mr. Marra, I think we should speak to everybody on that floor and make arrangements to do so.

SAM - #517 – Sam talked extensively about phone and internet service. XFINITY is available for approximately \$30/month, which is what he pays; \$22/month for phone. Some residents pay between \$65-\$230 month. All this information is available online or perhaps sales people could come here, do a sales pitch at a residents' meeting. They do require prepayment for their services - \$45 up front. ED Marra: Would you like us to make a flyer for residents to make them aware of these two services, is that what you're asking? We can give out the flyer, but it is up to them to decide. We can do it in a few days and prepare the flyer in English and Spanish; also do a flyer for The Elms.

SUE - #511 – Sue spoke in July about bugs coming in through her A/C. She showed Commissioner's photo of centipede in her bed. ED Marra trying to help her, suggested she call an outside exterminator. She called 3 and they said no, we can't do it: fix an A/C to rid of bugs. She is being bitten by these bugs on her face. ED Marra: SHA's exterminator came after last meeting, sent him to back of building (Sue faces west), men fumigated the weeds there. They went into Sue's apartment, took A/C in living room out of sleeve; sprayed entire sleeve and window sill. Put A/C back in sleeve. #311 was a lot easier to solve, she had bugs as well. We discovered that about 3 months before this, woman brought plants into her apartment, which had organic soil, and it isn't Sue's problem. We suggested to #311 resident after exterminator was there, that she remove plants in organic soil – there were no more bugs. Exterminator was in #311 and #511 and took care of #311. We did A/C in living room, not one in bedroom, as it was chalked when installed. Sue: I bought screens, taped it over A/C, but no one came to see it. Bugs are there dead behind screen. There are lives in living room, as I have cameras and we can see them. Exterminator didn't identify bugs. ED Marra: What would you like me to do? Will you move to another apartment? You could move next door. Sue: No, not next door. I've hired a painter, cleaning company and contractor, but you said no. ED Marra: If you want to me, we'll have to create a new association. First time you moved, you got deluxe deal, but not giving you deluxe deal any more. First time there was an issue with a neighbor. Sue: I'm by the trees. Trees were trimmed. Commissioner Suarez: What are you asking for? You got exterminator, we brought an exterminator to your apartment. They've addressed it best they can, and still saying you have a problem. Even exterminators you find aren't able to resolve your situation. Sue: They won't touch A/C. ED Marra: Maintenance pulled it out, sprayed there. Sam #517 – I have chalking and will offer it. ED Marra: I'll speak to Sue, come up with new plan to figure out how to address this issue, talked to Sue about a variety of scenarios and we'll continue discussing about scenarios. We've been trying them. We need to figure out where you can live without the bugs.

LINDA CROWLEY – 600 County Avenue - #304 – Who is retiring from Maintenance? ED Marra: Joe is retiring December 31st.

(Motion to adjourn and go into Closed Session made by Chairman Harper; 2nd by Commissioner Suarez.)

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Schlemm/Bujnowski

**SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION NO. 2024-23
AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

WHEREAS, while the Sen. Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.) requires all meetings of the Secaucus Housing Authority to be held in public, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) sets forth nine (9) types of matters that may lawfully be discussed in “Executive Session,” i.e. without the public being permitted to attend, and

WHEREAS, the Secaucus Housing Authority has determined that 2 issues are permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) to be discussed without the public in attendance shall be discussed during an Executive Session to be held on September 26, 2024 at 7:50 P.M, and

WHEREAS, the nine (9) exceptions to public meetings set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) are listed below, and next to each exception is a box within which **the number** of issues to be privately discussed that fall within that exception shall be written, and after each exception is a space where additional information that will disclose as much information about the discussion as possible without undermining the purpose of the exception shall be written.

1

“(4) Any collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions of which are proposed for inclusion in any collective bargaining agreement, including the negotiation of terms and conditions with employees or representatives of employees of the public body” The collective bargaining contract(s) discussed are between the Board and _____

_____;
_____;

1

“(8) Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting.” Subject to the balancing of the public’s interest and the employee’s privacy rights under South Jersey Publishing Co. v. New Jersey Expressway Authority, 124 N.J. 478, the employee(s) and nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality are

_____;

WHEREAS, the length of the Executive Session is estimated to be 20 minutes after which the public meeting of the Secaucus Housing Authority shall (circle one) reconvene and immediately adjourn or reconvene and proceed with business.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Secaucus Housing Authority will go into Executive Session for **only** the above stated reasons;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) will be made public at a time when the public’s interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure. For each of the above items, the estimated date by which such disclosure can be made and/or the occurrence that needs to take place before disclosure can be made are listed below (attach separate sheet if necessary)

Subject of Discussion	Estimated Date	Necessary Occurrence
Personnel	Not Known	
Hiring of New Employees	10/24/24	

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary, at the present public meeting, shall read aloud enough of this resolution so that members of the public in attendance can understand, as precisely as possible, the nature of the matters that will privately discussed.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary, on the next business day following this meeting, shall furnish a copy of this resolution to any member of the public who requests one at the fees allowed by N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.

Michael Harper, Chairperson

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A TRUE COPY OF THE RESOLUTION APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY AT ITS PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON __September 26, 2024.

Christopher Marra, Secretary

ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Schlemm/Bujnowski

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber