

Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday – March 24, 2021

The regular meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia was called to order at **6:31 PM on March 24, 2021** by Chairman, Joseph Pinto via Zoom.

Roll Call by Executive Director, Steven Nakano: Joseph Pinto – Chairman, James Prestiano- Vice Chairman, Lorie Vaccaro - Commissioner.

Commissioner, Samuel Levey no longer on the Commission.

Commissioner Matthew Scarpa excused absent.

Chairman Joseph Pinto asked for the minutes to be reviewed and approved.

- **Motion to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2021 Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners.**

Motion by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **Second** by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

Addition to the agenda: Add to New Business to discuss the fire alarm situation at James J. O'Donnell Apartments.

- **Motion to discuss the fire alarm at 63 Woodlawn Avenue apartments.**

Motion by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **Second** by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

Public Session:

Chairman Pinto opened the public session.

Chairman Pinto asked three times if anyone from the public wishes to address the Ansonia Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. Hearing none the Public Session was closed.

Review of Financial Statements:

Executive Director Nakano gave a brief summary of the financials for January and February 2021.

Revenues from operations for the one-month period ending January 31, 2021 were \$134,264 as compared to budgeted operating revenues of \$230,916 showing a 41.86 % negative variance. The drivers for this variance were less than anticipated Federal operating subsidy and CFP grant income.

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Total expenses for the one-month period were \$136,391 as compared to budgeted expenses of \$228,166 producing a 40.22% negative variance which is a net loss of \$2,127, under the agency-wide budgeted net income of \$2,750 for the same one-month period.

This is the first month of the year so it is too early to see the trend of what the positive and negative variances will be.

For the month ending February 2021 the revenues from operations were \$281,052 as compared to budgeted operating revenues of \$461,831 again because of less than anticipated Federal operating subsidy and CFP grant income.

Total expenses for the two-month period ending February 28, 2021 were \$294,910 as compared to budgeted operating expenses of \$456,332 a 35.37 % positive variance. The results from activities at 2/28/21 which is a net loss of \$13,858, below the agency-wide budgeted net income of \$5,499 for the same two-month period.

Again, with only two-months into the current fiscal year, it is too early to see any positive or negative variances as trends.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. Nakano.

- **Motion to accept the January and February 2021 financial statements.**

Motion by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **Second** by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

Monthly Reports:

Executive Director, Steven Nakano gave a brief update.

Director Nakano reported the following:

- During this time of the COVID-19/Coronavirus Pandemic, the AHA has been placing wellness calls to the residents of the housing complexes. Calls are very informative for the Coordinators in that they are aware of the general health of the residents.
- The Ansonia Housing Authority is replacing the electrical panels and outlets in each apartment at the John J. Stevens Apartments, 75 Central Street, Ansonia, CT.
- The Ansonia Housing Authority has had continued success with the unit for COVID-19 Vaccinations at the Community Room of the Monsignor Hynes Complex. This program is being offered through the Griffin Hospital.

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- The Ansonia Housing Authority is working with the Engineering Consulting firm, Silver Petrocelli, with future rehabilitation/redevelopment projects.
- The Five-Year Annual Plan (5YAP)/Annual Statement for the Ansonia Housing Authority FY2020-2025 has been approved by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, through the HUD Hartford Field Office, has scored the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) of the Ansonia Housing Authority as a HIGH PERFORMER. The AHA scored 145 points out of a total of 145 points that can be earned for all indicators.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had any questions for Director Nakano.

Chairman Pinto commended the staff for the high performer status.

- **Motion to accept the Executive Directors Report.**

Motion by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **Second** by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

Administrative Assistant Report, Lisa Thompson presented the monthly report.

Ms. Thompson stated that all HUD reports have been completed and filed through the end of March 2021. The SEMAP certification was submitted as well as the HUD Operating Subsidy Reports.

Public Housing Operations Report, Jared Heon presented the monthly report.

John J. Stevens- 75 Central Street:

Mr. Heon reported there were 14 work orders, twelve were routine, two were urgent, all were completed in an average of one day response time. There is one vacancy at this location. It will be leased by April 1, 2021. This apartment #25 had issues with the fire panel which Mr. Heon will discuss later in the meeting.

Monsignor Hynes Apartments- 70 Woodlawn Avenue:

There were 16 work orders, 15 were routine with 1 emergency and they were all completed in an average of two days' time. There are 2 units vacant at this location. They both are scheduled to be leased on April 1, 2021.

James J. O'Donnell Apartments- 63 Woodlawn Avenue:

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There were 13 work orders, 12 were routine and 1 urgent. They were all completed on an average of 3.5 days. One of the reasons being the staff was waiting on the availability of parts. There are 3 units vacant. Unit 307 has been 95 % turned around and is ready for occupancy. Unit 310 is completed. Unit 409 was a major turn around and it is still in progress.

Scattered Site Property- 11 May Street:

There were 0 work order at this location. There are no vacancies.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had questions, if not a motion should be made.

- **Motion to accept the Administrative Assistant and the Public Housing Operations Reports.**

Motion by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **Second** by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

*All reports presented will be on file with the filing of the minutes of the Ansonia Housing Authority for March 24, 2021.

Report of Director of Maintenance, Facilities & Modernization:

Mr. Heon first introduced himself and then explained that first he would like to discuss a couple of the projects have been ongoing prior to his tenure. He discussed with the Executive Director that these projects would be his priority, to be sure they are going according to plan and in compliance. Mr. Heon stated that on his first day, March 1st, Bill Passage who was handling the Modernization gave his resignation. Mr. Heon did have two meetings with him prior to his leaving and he provided him with all the information on all the current projects to the best of his ability. Mr. Heon does have access to all his emails and files.

Mr. Heon explained the project at John J. Stevens, 75 Central Street, the columns is ongoing. It stopped during the winter months due to the weather, however, painting will begin the first week of April. Comcast has also been called out to reorganize all the wires that were left hanging and to bring them up to normal industry standards. Mr. Heon also stated that he met with Flik's Landscaping and they will be out to do a plantings plan for various plantings throughout the property to replace trees that were removed last year and to make the facility aesthetically pleasing throughout the complex.

The laundry coin machine has been moved from the office to the laundry room at 75 Central Street. There are now two laundry rooms at John J. Stevens Apartments. One on the Beaver Street side and the second on the second floor of the building on Central Street.

Also, at this location, as the Executive Director alluded to, the electrical panel replacement has begun. Mr. Heon received notification from the electrical inspector that in addition to the panels he also wanted the plugs, switches, cable and phone receptacles replaced at the same time as the panels due to

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their age. They are being replaced one unit at a time. A member of the maintenance personnel is accompanying the contractor since the power must be turned off.

Mr. Heon reported that at Monsignor Hynes Apartments, the fire alarm project, buildings 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been completed and turned over to the new fire alarm system. The Fire Marshal is very pleased, he inspected the buildings, and everything is functioning as expected. The rear stairwells to each unit did not have any fire protection in them so first the fire alarms in all the buildings will be switched over to the new panels then the contractor will go back and add appropriate smoke detectors and sounders in the rear stairwells.

Mr. Heon also stated that they are working on a new landscaping project which will include sidewalks for the rear stairwells in buildings 1, 2, 3 and 4. There are several trees that are over hanging and covering the buildings and clogging up the gutters, so Mr. Heon is in the process of getting quotes for tree work as well as some missing/damaged fencing for the back of the buildings, where the landscaping drops so that it will be more secure.

The laundry coin machine in the Community Room has been moved to the laundry room so that the remainder of the building can be secured. Residents have key fobs to enter the laundry room.

The office space inside the Community Room is being updated so that it will be compliant with the COVID protocols.

Mr. Heon reported that new window replacement parts have been ordered for James J. O'Donnell Apartments. Window repairs are now underway.

There were several complaints regarding loitering in the stairwells, Mr. Heon will review the cameras for that area. The building has also been secured with key fobs and the generic code removed, as well as door timers on all the exit doors.

Mr. Heon stated that the fire alarm at this location will be addressed later in the meeting.

Mr. Heon reported on 11 May Street, they are working on some landscaping and also some tree work that needs to be taken care of as well as some fencing and railings. Also, at this location the second-floor carpets need replacing.

Switching from the projects over to the maintenance staff, Mr. Heon explained that he is meeting with staff regularly and they are working on a new purchase requisition form, this will be filled out when they need to purchase equipment. Also, they are establishing a new purchase policy with the credit cards and with the various accounts that the agency has with the different vendors.

Mr. Heon stated that they are working on a new turnover spec for each of the complexes so when turnovers are done, they will all be the same and parts will be stocked, and the turnovers will be completed much faster than in the past.

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As far as the staff, one of the mechanics is on light duty, and this employee is teamed up with the fire alarm contractor, so he is escorting them in and out of the different units at 70 Woodlawn Avenue. The other mechanic is working on all work orders and the laborer is currently working with the electrical contractor at John J. Stevens.

The maintenance garage door openers have failed so they are being replaced by Overhead Door. There is some older equipment at the garage that Mr. Heon is working with Marge to surplus and make space for the newer current equipment.

Mr. Heon explained as far as modernization, he is upgrading the agencies Comcast account and saving money at the Main Office, the Community Room at 70 Woodlawn Avenue and James J. O'Donnell Apartments. He is also prepping for potential inspections and is hoping to achieve a high grade for the inspections. One thing Mr. Heon is going to be upgrading is the antiquated call for aid system in the various complexes. To be sure that they are up to code and to be able to monitor them.

Mr. Heon stated that if anyone had any questions, comments, or requests he would be very happy to meet with them or address anything the Commission may have.

Chairman Pinto thanked Mr. Heon and welcomed him. He feels Mr. Heon is going to be able to help address some issues that the agency has had in the past without the correct personnel in place and he is optimistic that Mr. Heon will be able to help improve the agency a great deal.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. Heon.

Commissioner Vaccaro welcomed him and thanked him for accepting the position and thanked him for his detailed report. He feels Mr. Heon will be an asset to the agency.

Vice Chairman, Prestiano also wanted to comment on how great John J. Stevens Complex is starting to look and that the columns have made a huge improvement.

Mr. Heon agreed and stated that once the painting is finished and the new plantings are completed that will help tremendously as well. Mr. Heon also mentioned that he discussed with Mr. Nakano that they recognized with COVID outside activities in the warmer weather seem to be the way it is going for the entire warmer season.

With no other questions, motion was made.

- **Motion to accept the Maintenance, Facilities & Modernization Report.**

Motion by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **Second** by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

Report of Committees: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

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New Business:

Discussion regarding the fire alarm system at 63 Woodlawn Avenue.

Chairman, Joseph Pinto would like Mr. Nakano and Mr. Heon to explain to the Board what has transpired recently.

Director Nakano explained that the system was apparently replaced in 2018. However, the components are not communicating with the parts that have been replaced. The Fire Marshal has been out and made a few comments/recommendations but most recently there has been several incidences going back to the Fall with a particular tenant who is cooking food and starting fires, not at a point where it is endangering other tenants or herself. Most recently several fire engines from Ansonia and Derby were called out, the tenant was partially incapacitated, and it generated Mr. Nakano, Mr. Heon and the Fire Chief and also the Fire Marshal to respond. Upon a complete and further investigation, they found out that certain components were not communicating. The system must be upgraded to avoid any major issues with involving the health and safety for the other tenants in the building.

Mr. Nakano would like Mr. Heon to explain because he has been working with the Contractor and the Fire Marshal.

Mr. Heon summarized that he and Mr. Nakano were still at the office working and they were alerted to a fire incident Monday evening at 63 Woodlawn Avenue on the second floor. There was in fact a fire in the stove. The tenant left the apartment with food in the stove had returned going back in as viewed on the camera and there was smoke exiting the unit. She went into the unit and returned back out and left the door opened. When the smoke came out of the unit it tripped the fire alarms, smoke detectors in the hallway which turned into an evacuation for the building which resulted in the response of the multiple fire departments.

The smoke detector in that unit was a previous vintage and a separate system than what was installed in 2018. It has older parts, and they are no longer available, they have been discontinued. They do not report back to the main building system. After many discussions with vendors, the Fire Marshal and Fire Chief it was determined that swift action must take place. The building itself is much older with a lot of older systems in it as well as the wiring. Mr. Heon stated that they have come up with a solution for replacement that number one would meet the inspections of not only the fire department but also the housing inspections and will centralize everything into one system. It will also be the same system that is currently being installed at 70 Woodlawn Avenue so when parts are needed, they will be able to be stocked in case there is a need for them should there be a problem. The system will start being replaced on Thursday, March 25, 2021. The Fire Marshal is very happy with the plan.

Mr. Heon explained he was not working at the agency when the other system was installed. From everything the Fire Marshal told Mr. Heon it does not meet the standard that it should have met at the time. Swift action must be taken for life safety purposes and get the new system up to spec.

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Mr. Heon went on to explain that a new system was installed, and the old system was remaining. The old system was not replaced, and it does not talk to the new system. They need to be combined into one system. Just to discount any false alarms it will be set up the same as 70 Woodlawn Avenue were two detectors have to go off before it would alert a full evacuation.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. Heon. Hearing none.



Executive Session:

Pursuant to Section 1-200 (6)(A) and (D) of the Connecticut General Statutes there will be an executive session to discuss a personnel matter and possible real estate acquisition.

- **Motion to go into Executive Session at 7:09 p.m. and invite Director Nakano and Mr. Heon.**

Motion by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **Second** by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

Chairman Pinto stated that there will be no action to vote on in executive session.

- **Motion to adjourn at 7:19 p.m.**

Motion by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **Second** by Commissioner, Lorie Vaccaro. **All in Favor.** Motion passes unanimously.



*These minutes are subject to the approval of the Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia at their next scheduled meeting.