

Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia

Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday – August 25, 2021

The regular meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia was called to order at **6:30 PM on August 25, 2021**, by Chairman, Joseph Pinto via Zoom.

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

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

- **Motion to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners.**

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

Additions, deletions, or corrections to the agenda: None.

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 July.

Revenues from operations for the seven-month period ended July 31, 2021 were \$1,311,340 as compared to budgeted operating revenues of \$1,616,409 for the same period. The drivers for this variance were less than anticipated CFP grant income and ROSS grant income.

Total expenses for the seven-month period ending July 31, 2021 were \$1,285,282 as compared to budgeted operating expenses of \$1,597,161 a 19.53% positive variance. The results from activities provided for an agency-wide net income of \$26,058, above the agency-wide budgeted new income of \$19,248 for the same five-month period.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had any questions for Director Nakano. If not, a motion would be in order.

- **Motion to accept the July 2021 financial statements.**

Motion by Commissioner, Matthew Scarpa. **Second** by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **All in favor.** Motion passes unanimously.

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Monthly Reports:

Executive Director, Steven Nakano gave a brief update.

Director Nakano reported the following:

- The Ansonia Housing Authority is still in the process of outside upgrades to the four Federal and State Housing complexes.
- The Ansonia Housing Authority has experienced lower than usual available housing stock in apartments. This is attributed to the existing sale of houses where there are lower inventories available and sales exceeding exorbitant amounts over asking prices. Through cause and effect, this has filtered over to available rentals in that rental amounts are increasing astronomically. Therefore, the AHA has had to increase the Fair Market Rents (FMR's) to one hundred and ten percent over the current FMR's in efforts to meet market demand.
- The Ansonia Housing Authority was awarded and will be managing the second development of Liberty Park 2, Apartments in Ansonia, CT. Which is consisting of 8 units and back in 2017 AHA was awarded the agreement of managing Liberty Park 1., by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development.
- The AHA is also working with TAG Associates, Consulting on Restructuring funding through RAD Rental Assistance Demonstration program which is only provided to Housing Authorities that operate and manage Federal Public Housing Programs; (Elderly/Disabled housing, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Section 8 program).
- The AHA had the acquisition closing for One Holbrook Place, Ansonia, CT., on July 27, 2021. Through The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Hartford, FHEO office, and Under the Uniform Relocation Act, all existing tenants can remain and benefit from the subsidized rental amount provided they meet the program requirements.
- The AHA is working with the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Financial Management Center with utilizing the CARES funding prior to fiscal year end with the emphasis on substantial rehabilitation of the Scattered-Site Project Based Voucher (PBV) complex at One Holbrook Place, Ansonia, CT.

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

Vice Chairman Prestiano inquired as to what this will mean as far as extra work.

Director Nakano responded it would basically state managing it, through annual recertification, and annual inspections for the 8 units. The agency would benefit by the additional administration fees.

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There would be no extra work for the maintenance department because a management team handles that work.

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

Motion by Commissioner, Matthew Scarpa. **Second** by Commissioner Lorie Vaccaro. **All in Favor.**
Motion passes unanimously.

HUD Report, Lisa Thompson presented the monthly report.

Ms. Thompson stated that all HUD reports have been submitted and filed through the end of August 2021.

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

John J. Stevens- 75 Central Street:

Mr. Heon reported there were 12 work orders, and 11 were completed on an average of 2.91 days. There is 1 incomplete. We are waiting on quotes from contractors regarding an issue with the doors, it is more extensive than originally figured. There is 1 unit that is vacant, unit 6, which is a tenant relocation. There was a leak in the heating system which caused damage to the apartment. She was moved into a unit that was just turned over.

Monsignor Hynes Apartments- 70 Woodlawn Avenue:

There were 31 work orders, 29 were completed on an average of 1.76 days. Two units became available. Unit 48 became available on June 1, 2021, the tenant went into a convalescent home. Maintenance turned over the unit and will be ready to be leased on September 1, 2021. Unit 29 became available mid-June. Maintenance started to paint but the unit is not ready as of yet to be leased.

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

There were 20 work orders, all but 1 have been completed in an average of 2.63 days. There are several units that have been turned over and leased up at this location. Unit 404 was a major turnaround and is currently occupied. Unit 206 was the unit that had a fire in it. It has been turned around and is leased as well. Unit 403 is completed and will be leased on September 1, 2021. Unit 202 will be vacant on the 22nd, the tenant passed away and the agency could not reach the next of kin, therefore had to wait the 60 days in order to dispose of the contents of the unit.

Scattered Site Property- 11 May Street:

There were no work orders, and there are no vacancies.

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Chairman Pinto questioned if he is able to access the units at 11 May Street in regards to the tenant not allowing maintenance staff and vendors in to do the necessary work.

Mr. Heon replied Comcast was allowed in with the assistance of Sargent Pela and Officer Soras from the Ansonia Police Department. Also, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro's office has been very helpful in reference to dealing with one of the tenants at this location. Mr. Heon also stated that he has a renewed relationship with this same tenant, so work has been getting completed.

Commissioner Vaccaro questioned Mr. Heon about this past weekend regarding the hurricane and the possibility of losing power. He would like to know what the contingency plans were for the residents.

Mr. Heon replied that Thursday and Friday the maintenance staff and himself went out and prepped the properties as best as they could. They added some extensions to the leaders and cleaned out and secured several things. Ran all the saws and fueled everything up. The goal is to house in place in the event of an emergency.

Mr. Heon stated that he also works on the city side for emergency management, and they did have a standby ready for a shelter at the Ansonia High School should the need have arisen to locate folks due to storm damage.

Mr. Heon added that he is working with Mr. Nakano to come up with a plan to start getting some generation to some of the properties. Currently there is no backup generators. Hopefully this can be accomplished through grants and CFP funds.

Commissioner Vaccaro thanked Mr. Heon for the explanation and for being proactive.

Report of Director of Maintenance, Facilities & Modernization:

Mr. Heon reported on the ongoing projects.

15-2 John J. Stevens Apartments

- Structural Façade & Columns
 - Project has been completed
 - Planting will begin the first week of September

15-3 Monsignor Hynes Apartments

- Fire Alarm System Replacement
 - Phase 1 Complete All Buildings
 - Phase 2 to begin September 13th, rear hallways & removing the old detectors in the units that are still remaining
- Building 3 Stairwell Issue- obtaining remediation quotes
- Tree Trimming & Egress Sidewalk
 - Tree work completed
 - Sidewalk & site work beginning week of 9/7

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15-6 11 May St

- Exterior Stair work beginning
- Fence work beginning after stair work is done

Mr. Heon explained that it has been very difficult to get any work done at this location due to the tenant not allowing access to get in to have the work done. This has been an ongoing issue.

15-5 Main Office

- None

E75 James O'Donnell Apartments

- Comcast wiring issue waiting construction team from Comcast

Maintenance Status

15-2 John J. Stevens Apartment

- Completed repairs to Laundry Room Drain completed patch work in progress to sidewalk area
- Comcast needs to return to neat up wires

15-3 Monsignor Hynes Apartments

- Investigating stairwell lighting issue solution
- Community Building Offices nearing completion

15-6 11 May St

- Quote in progress for new carpets on second floor – ON HOLD
- Investigating installation Comcast for cameras/alarm system garage

Mr. Heon explained that there were no other issues, everything is listed on his report which is included in the packet.

Miscellaneous

Maintenance Organization

- New truck is in, awaiting equipment upfit. We now have a third truck on hand

Mr. Heon stated that he is working with the Executive Director on some Capital Needs Assessments in preparation for the potential RAD application.

Mr. Heon has been working with the tenants of 1 Holbrook Place and held a tenant meeting. They have been going through and taking care of maintenance needs. Also, he is working on the bid spec for the renovation of that property.

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Vice Chairman inquired if the tenants in this building are happy.

Mr. Heon replied they are ecstatic. The maintenance staff and vendors have been repairing issues that have been ongoing for years. The tenants have been very cooperative and thankful.

Mr. Heon also reported that the summer vacations are now over for the staff. Workloads have been moved around to accommodate this but starting next week they will have a full staff.

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

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

Motion by Commissioner, Matthew Scarpa. **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 August 25, 2021.

Report of Committees: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:



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Resolution 2021-10

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AMENDMENTS FOR THE HOUSING CHOICE
VOUCHER (HCV)/PROJECT BASED VOUCHER (PBV) ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN.
ALSO, TO BE INCLUDED IN THE AGENCY'S PUBLIC HOUSING ADMISSIONS
AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCE PLAN.**

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WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia (AHA) has modified its Administrative Plan for its federally funded Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program and the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP); and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the modification is to revise the previously approved Project-Based Voucher Program in the Administrative Plan for the HCV Program and the ACOP; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ANSONIA THAT:

1. The Administrative Plan and the ACOP for the Housing Choice Voucher PBV Program is hereby approved and adopted by the Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia.
2. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

AYES

NAYS

ABSTENTIONS

ABSENT

Signed by: _____

Steven Nakano
Executive Director

Chairman Pinto asked Director Nakano to please explain this resolution.

Director Nakano explained that in an effort to try to increase program and utilization to be able to match the current rent the landlords are requesting. The rents in Ansonia, Seymour and Shelton have increased dramatically. The Section 8 staff has requested permission to port through the portability provision their vouchers to other locations because they cannot find housing here. This resolution will help to make it more marketable. To be able to meet these high rental demands AHA has gone to 110% above the current fair market rent standards. This was a recommendation from the HUD Hartford Field Office.

Mr. Heon added to this explanation by stating that he heard from a couple landlords telling him that they wanted to terminate the lease with the tenants if we couldn't increase their rent as well.

Chairman Pinto questioned if a landlord could terminate a lease mid-term.

Director Nakano replied no they would have to wait until the lease was up for renewal.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had any other questions, if not a motion would be needed.

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- **Motion to accept Resolution 2021-10.**

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

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Resolution 2021-11

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AMENDMENT FOR THE HOUSING CHOICE
VOUCHER (HCV)/ PROJECT BASED VOUCHER (PBV) PROGRAM;
ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN. REFERENCING REASONABLE ACCOMODATIONS TO
MEET THE NEEDS OF A FAMILY MEMBER WITH A DISABILITY.**

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the City of Ansonia operates a HCV/PBV Rental Assistance Program; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority has updated its HCV Administrative Plan to accommodate HCV/PBV participants with a disability, an exception payment standard to increase the payment standard to 120 percent above the current FMR, through a reasonable accommodation for that family or individual; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority is making a revision to the Administrative Plan to ensure compliance with all HUD regulations regarding the approval of the exception payment standard for the HCV/PBV Program as a reasonable accommodation; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ANSONIA THAT:

1. A rent reasonableness analysis was conducted in accordance with the HCV Program regulations at 24 CFR 982.507; and
2. The family or individual requested lease approval for the unit and requested an exception payment standard as a reasonable accommodation; and

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3. The unit has features that meet the needs of a family member with disabilities. For example, a unit may be suitable because of its physical features or for other reasons, such as having the requisite number of bedrooms, location on an accessible transit route and/or accessibility for employment, education, individual services or recreation; and
4. The AHA is requiring that a request can be made verbally to the housing specialist who will document the request as whether it is approved and then the request will be placed in that tenant's file. The housing specialist may request further documentation on a case-by-case basis at their discretion. Any appeal to the housing specialist must be made in writing to the Executive Director if the request is denied; and
5. The Executive Director is hereby authorized to implement the new Amendment to the Administrative Plan.

AYES

NAYS

ABSTENTIONS

ABSENT

Signed by: _____

Steven Nakano
Executive Director

Date

Chairman Pinto asked Director Nakano to explain.

Director Nakano gave a brief synopsis. He explained the reason for this resolution is there is a disabled individual who was living at 63 Woodlawn Avenue on the 4th floor and at one point there was issues with the elevator. He had since been in the hospital then moved into a rehab unit. He found an apartment in Ansonia that met his needs. Now his lease is up, and his landlord called and requested a substantial increase in the rent. The staff told him they couldn't do that, so the landlord was not going to renew the lease for this individual. The client was very upset and stated that he didn't think he would be able to withstand the process of moving again and that it took him so long to find a rent that met all his health needs. Mr. Nakano contacted HUD and spoke with Jennifer Gottlieb-Elazhari at the Hartford Field Office, and she explained that the Housing Authority could ask for a reasonable accommodation of an exception payment standard for a family member or a family that has a disability. In this particular incident the agency can go up to 120 percent above the current FMR. Mr. Nakano explained that to go to 120 percent it would need approval from the Board and from HUD. The Field Office will approve it as long as the Board does. They are familiar with the Section 8 individual that has the disability.

Chairman Pinto asked if anyone had any questions. Hearing none motion was made.

- **Motion to accept Resolution 2021-11.**

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

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- **Motion to adjourn at 6:59 p.m.**

**Motion** by Commissioner, Matthew Scarpa. **Second** by Vice Chairman, James Prestiano. **All in Favor.**

Motion passes unanimously.

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