

MINUTES
MADISON HOUSING AUTHORITY
February 15, 2022, REGULAR MEETING

Chairperson Lois Bhatt called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM via Zoom video meeting. The following Commissioners answered as present:

Lois Bhatt, Diane Driscoll, Mark McBride, Caridad Reyes, Jeffrey Smith, Mark Chiarolanza and Melissa Elias.

Also present were Tanya Van Order, Executive Director, Karen O’Keeffe, Deputy Director, Terrence Corrison, Attorney, and John Hoover, Council Liaison.

Ms. Van Order read the NJ Open Public Meetings Act Notice: Both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting has been provided by the Secretary of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Madison by preparing an Annual Notice dated January 18, 2022, setting forth the date, time and place of this meeting. Said notice was filed with the Clerk of the Borough of Madison, forwarded to newspapers of local circulation and to the persons requesting it and posted to the Madison Housing Authority website. This meeting is being conducted remotely in accordance with the Authority’s Emergency Remote Meeting Procedures and N.J.A.C. 5:39-1(h).

Approval of the Minutes

Commissioners Smith and Driscoll moved and seconded approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 18, 2022. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Council Liaison Report

Mr. Hoover reported that the plan for the Borough-sponsored 44 units of affordable rental housing to be constructed on Walnut Street (30 units) and Community Place (14 units) will be presented to the Planning Board tonight.

Additionally, the Borough continues to work cooperatively with leadership of Drew University, which has identified three surplus parcels on its campus perimeter and wishes to rezone these sites for residential purposes. The planners for both sides have been exchanging information regarding the potential rezoning of these parcels. The Borough is actively exploring the use of Open Space and Green Acres funding to preserve one of the identified parcels, which consists of 53 acres. This parcel includes the Drew Forest and the Buried Valley Aquifer, which provides public drinking water for Madison and eight other Morris County communities.

Lastly, Mr. Hoover noted that the Borough has agreed to assist the MHA in where possible to make the purchasing process more efficient and less costly for the authority. Additionally, the Borough Qualified Purchasing Agent, Kevin O’Keefe, will assist the MHA in getting enrolled in various cooperative purchasing systems that can simplify and streamline capital plans such as sidewalk and paving projects.

Report of Chairperson

Ms. Bhatt encouraged Board members to attend the Planning Board meeting and asked the Board to support her in providing a statement in support of the Borough sponsored affordable housing project. All Board members agreed that it would appropriate for Ms. Bhatt to make a statement on behalf of the Board of Commissioners of the Madison Housing Authority in support of the project.

Report of Executive Director

Ms. Van Order reported that the state completed the OPEB audit, which was needed to finalize the authority's 2021 audit. The auditor provided an updated draft audit, which was circulated to the Finance Committee. The FYE 3/31/21 audit will be finalized in the next week and the Board will formally approve the audit at the regular March Board meeting.

The FYE 3/31/23 operating budget, adopted by the Board last month, was sent to the state and they have replied requesting minor changes for consistency with the updated draft audit. Our accountant, Bill Katchen, will make the requested changes, the state will then approve the budget and return it to MHA to formally adopt at next month's meeting.

Ms. Van Order continues working with the FEMA claim manager to provide documentation needed to complete our claim for the flood damages to the boiler room at the senior building on September 1, 2021. We anticipate recouping the \$5000 deductible from our insurance reimbursement.

Ms. Van Order noted that the Board will consider a resolution approving a contract to join the Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council, which was recommended by Borough officials during a conversation about partnering with the Borough in certain capital projects, like paving and sidewalk projects. The Borough uses this Cooperative Pricing Council for such work and has offered to provide Borough engineering expertise to create the specifications we need at no cost.

Ms. Van Order reported progress in our request to HUD Washington for a partial release from the RAD Use Agreement. HUD has provided an Amended Use Agreement template, which our attorney from DeCotiis Law completed for each of the four subject properties and returned to HUD this week. Once HUD reviews and approves this submission, they will schedule a signing.

Lastly, Ms. Van Order reminded commissioners that the New Jersey Chapter of NAHRO, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Organizations, and MARC NAHRO (the Mid Atlantic Regional Council of NAHRO) are holding a joint conference at the Hardrock Café casino in Atlantic City from May 1st through the 4th. Commissioners who wish to attend should contact Ms. Van Order.

Report of Deputy Director

Ms. O'Keeffe reported that all but two of the family units are leased. One of those units has a signed lease set to commence on March 1, 2022, and the other unit is being updated with a new countertop and luxury vinyl floors. The senior building currently has three units in turn over. These units are being updated with luxury vinyl flooring and rocker switches. We are actively pulling names from the waiting list, conducting interviews, and gathering documents to have tenants ready to move in when the units are ready.

Chabad of SE Morris County is delivering free bowls of homemade soup, rolls, and dessert to our seniors through their newly established Thankful Thursday Program for the first time this month, will be contacted for about future deliveries.

Madison Elks provided Valentine's Day Cards to all the apartments at Rexford Tucker to spread some cheer – coordinated through resident Alexis Kimball and delivered by Jessica Kirchenbauer.

Zufall Health Center continues to provide programming every Tuesday focused on physical exercise, fine motor functions, memory, meditation and wellness. At their most recent session, the seniors made Valentine's Day wreaths.

The Interfaith Food Pantry continues to deliver the very well received monthly food bag delivery program. All senior residents are qualified to receive this service if they choose to sign up.

The Madison AARP tax site is back up and running at the Madison Senior Center on Wednesdays. There is also another location available to our seniors at the Chatham Senior Center on Fridays.

Madison Fire Department Captain Nunn provided a fire safety and space heater safety session to our seniors on January 19th (see Madison Eagle News Article)

Committee Reports

Strategic Planning: Mr. Chiarolanza highlighted the three priority areas identified in prior Board discussion: procurement of properties for future development, long-range financial planning and administrative operations in that support and enhance the Authority's mission.

Ms. Bhatt thanked the Strategic Planning Committee (Mark Chiarolanza, Melissa Elias & Diane Driscoll) for its work. She noted that the Board's responsibility is to set strategic goals for the organization and the implementation of these goals falls to the Executive Director with the staff and resources available. Mr. Smith stated that, as management works toward these goals, timing, prioritization and feasibility may fluctuate. Ms. Elias noted that Ms. Van Order participated as an ex officio member of the SP committee and is implementing many identified elements in the plan.

Public Comment

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Correspondence

- NAHRO Certificate for Karen O'Keefe for Completion of Ethics for Professionals
- NAHRO Certificate for Jessica Kirchenbauer for Completion of HCV Occupancy, Eligibility, Income and Rent Control
- Certificate of Completion for Jessica Kirchenbauer for Completion of Cyber Awareness Challenge 2022
- Madison Eagle News Article "Madison Housing Authority, fire department strive to keep seniors safe against fires"
- Staff letter of appreciation from family of a former senior tenant

Resolutions

22-15-2-1 Resolution Approving Payment of Invoices

Commissioners Bhatt and Smith moved and seconded approval of the resolution; The roll call was unanimous, and the Resolution was approved.

CONSENT AGENDA – Resolutions 22-15-2-2 through 22-15-2-4:

22-15-2-2 Resolution Approving a Lease Agreement with the Morris County Department of Human Services for a Nutrition Program

22-15-2-3 Resolution Approving Advertising for Professional Services

22-15-2-4 Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Agreement with the Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council to Become a Member for the Period of April 1, 2022, through September 30, 2026

Commissioners Driscoll and Chiarolanza moved and seconded the Consent Agenda; The roll call was unanimous, and the Consent Agenda was approved.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Bhatt moved for adjournment at 5:20 P.M.

Next meeting: March 15, 2022, at 4:30 PM via Zoom meeting video conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Tanya Van Order
Executive Director