

MINUTES
MADISON HOUSING AUTHORITY
March 14, 2023, REGULAR MEETING

Chairperson Jeffrey Smith called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM. The following Commissioners answered as present:

Commissioners Diane Driscoll, Mark McBride, Caridad Reyes and Jeffrey Smith

Commissioner Bhatt and Chiarolanza were absent.

Also present were Tanya Van Order, Executive Director, Karen O’Keeffe, Deputy Director, John Hoover, Council Liaison, Mary Sue Salko, member of the public. Terrence Corrison, attorney, participated by phone.

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 17, 2023, 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, posted to the Authority’s official bulletin board on January 17, 2023, and posted to the Madison Housing Authority website.

Approval of the Minutes

Commissioners Driscoll and McBride moved and seconded approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 21, 2023. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

Council Liaison Report

Borough Council liaison, John Hoover, delivered the following report:

- The Borough is pursuing \$4.4 million dollars in supplemental funding from the N.J. Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA) for the Walnut Street affordable housing development. Approval is anticipated at the NJHMFA May Board meeting which will allow construction to start in June.
- The Borough has requested to meet with the full Trustee Board of Drew University to discuss the preservation/acquisition of the “Drew Forest.” The Borough intends to submit a grant application for this purpose to the Morris County Open Space Program. The submission deadline is June 9.
- Residential development proposals have been submitted for the partially occupied Giralda #1 commercial office building and the vacant Giralda #3 building.
- HQM, Inc. has submitted a development proposal to demolish the four (4) unit rental property at 30 Central Avenue and build a new six (6) unit rental building.
- Drew University has purportedly executed a contract to sell 10.2 acres along Madison Avenue to Avalon Bay for a substantial residential development.

Report of Chairperson

No report.

Report of Executive Director

In light of the recent upheaval in the banking industry, Ms. Van Order reminded the Board that all PHA accounts are protected by both the FDIC and New Jersey's Government Unit Deposit Protection Act (GUDPA). GUDPA requires banks serving government entities to pledge additional collateral to cover the full balance of government banking accounts.

Ms. Van Order reported that we received the letter from HUD Washington officially closing closed out our public housing annual contributions contract (PH ACC). With this close-out letter we are no longer restricted to using our cash reserves for the sole purpose of addressing the needs of the 134 RAD converted units. This is important to us since we have plans to develop additional affordable homes on excess land as identified in six parcels on four sites. HUD signed off on a partial release of the RAD Use Agreements last year allowing us to pursue subdivision of these parcels.

Ms. Van Order provided an update on various capital improvement projects:

1. Bids were received for flood mitigation construction work at the senior building on 2/23/23. The low bidder was Straight Edge Construction (\$108,770). Accurate Electric is working with Deputy Director O'Keeffe to coordinate the replacement of the sewer ejector pit control panel. Ms. O'Keeffe will notify tenants of any water shutoff requirement for this work. Initial estimates for these mitigation projects were \$75,000; revised estimates total \$135,150. We will request additional mitigation funding from FEMA once we begin making payments to contractors.
2. The CDBG grant application presentation to the Community Development Housing Review Committee is scheduled next week via Zoom. This application is to address additional flood mitigation activities at the Rexford Tucker Apartments, namely moving the transformer and redesigning/replacing the rear access driveway.

Ms. Van Order reported that she and Ms. O'Keeffe conducted the annual file review for the Summit Housing Authority last week. This is a required function of MHA's role as Contract Administrator for SHA's 195 RAD PBV vouchers. Additionally, MHA oversees the annual Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections for SHA's units, conducts an annual Rent Reasonableness study, calculates and approves the OCAF, reviews and approves utility allowances and provides ongoing support to the Housing Manager. For these Contract Administrator services MHA receives 50% of the administrative fees earned for Summit's 195 RAD units, approximately \$120,000 each year.

Ms. Van Order reported that the Belmont Avenue subdivision application is moving forward. The attorney, engineer and architect are completing their work in advance of meeting with Borough officials. While this process is unfolding, Commissioner McBride, Ms. O'Keeffe and Ms. Van Order met with HQM Properties, Inc. CEO Lou Riccio to review a draft proforma for the project. We are looking at funding the project through the national housing trust fund administered through NJ DCA. This fund is designated for small projects of 1-4 units and could provide up to \$1.5 million for four 2-bedroom units based on the proposed new funding formula for this program. Other discussion items included a technical issue related to sewer connection, making the units 100% electric, and temporarily transferring the property to the nonprofit for the purpose of developing the project in a more cost-effective manner since the national housing trust fund does not require prevailing wage.

Lastly, Ms. Van Order informed the Board that she and Deputy Director O’Keeffe will be attending the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Organizations (NAHRO)’s annual Legislative Conference next week.

Report of Deputy Director

Ms. O’Keeffe reported that as of March 1, 2023, 55 of 56 family units and 76 of 79 senior units are leased.

Annual reviews with the Office Administrator and Rental Assistance Program Manager were completed. The maintenance staff reviews will be completed within the next week.

The Section 8 voucher utilization rate has improved over the past year. In April 2022, 174 vouchers were utilized and currently 186 vouchers are being utilized. The higher utilization rate is due in part to recent increases in the payment standards as well as the efforts of Rental Assistance Program Manager, Jessica Kirchenbauer’s, efforts in building relationships with local landlords.

A few months ago, a Drew University student and the President of the Residents Council board met and put together a program called Conversations Across Generations. They have held two meetings with residents at the senior building and have another planned for March 16th. About six or seven Drew students met with residents to talk about what life was like when they were younger. One resident shared his draft card from the 1960s. Another talked about what it was like living through IRA bombings in Ireland and another resident, who is in her nineties, shared what it was like living under German occupation in WWII. The President plans to invite the Madison Eagle to the next meeting.

The Madison high school recently hosted the Rexford Tucker seniors for dinner and a performance of Little Women. Two busloads of seniors attended the event.

The LSNWJ presentation was postponed until March 28th due to inclement weather.

Committee Reports

No reports.

Public Comment

Mary Sue Salko, Madison resident, complimented the Housing Authority on its good work in the community.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Commissioner McBride suggested the YMCA may be interested in working with the Housing Authority to increase accessibility for housing residents. Ms. Van Order will follow up with the Executive Director of the YMCA.

Correspondence

Apartment Unit Performance Trend Report

Proposal for Professional Landscape Architectural Services for Belmont Avenue Subdivision

Letter of Appreciation from U.S. Army Veteran John Larkin

RUTGERS University Certificate of Completion: Financial Management for Karen O’Keeffe

NAHRO Family Self Sufficiency Certification for Lisa Jorgenson

Resolutions

23-14-3-1 Resolution Authorizing the Payment of Invoices.

Commissioners Reyes and Driscoll moved and seconded approval of the resolution. The roll call was unanimous, and the resolution was approved.

CONSENT AGENDA Resolutions 23-14-3-2 through 23-14-3-7

23-14-3-2 Resolution Authorizing an Agreement for Landscaping Services for the Period of April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2025

23-14-3-3 Resolution Approving a Contract with J. Morano Contracting for Floor Replacement

23-14-3-4 Resolution Approving a Contract with Straight Edge Construction, LLC for Flood Mitigation Work at the Rexford S. Tucker Senior Apartments

23-14-3-5 Resolution Authorizing an Award of Contract to Novogradac & Company LLP for Audit of Housing Authority’s Financial Records for the Period of April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

23-14-3-6 Resolution Authorizing an Award of Contract to William Katchen Certified Public Accountant, LLC for Professional Accounting Services for the Period of April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024

23-14-3-7 Resolution Adopting the 2023 Budget for the Fiscal Year April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024

Commissioners Smith and McBride 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 Smith moved for adjournment at 5:18 P.M.

Next meeting: April 18, 2023, at 4:30 PM in the 2nd Floor Committee Room of the Hartley Dodge Memorial Building at 50 Kings Road, Madison, NJ.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen O’Keeffe
Deputy Director