

**MINUTES**  
**MADISON HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**April 20, 2021 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, Melissa Elias, Mark McBride, Gary Ruckelshaus, Jeffrey Smith and Mark Chiarolanza.

Also present were Tanya Van Order, Executive Director, Jacqueline Gray, Housing Manager, Astri Baillie, Council Liaison and Terrence Corrison, MHA Attorney.

Ms. Van Order read the NJ Open Public Meetings Act Notice and noted that the meeting was conducted held remotely in accordance with the Authority's Emergency Remote Meeting Procedures and N.J.C.A. 5:39-1(h).

**Approval of the Minutes**

Commissioners Smith and Driscoll moved and seconded approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 16, 2021. The minutes were approved unanimously by voice vote.

**Council Liaison Report**

Ms. Baillie reported that, in response to a published RFQ, the Borough has engaged the services of the Housing Partnership to act as the Affordable Housing Administrative Agent for the Borough. Ms. Baillie further noted that the Affordable Housing Committee has reviewed the RFP submissions for the planned development on Walnut Street & Community Place and will choose between the four finalists in the coming days. Lastly, she noted that the Borough will be going before Judge Gaus once again next week to provide a status update on our progress in meeting the terms of the Affordable Housing Settlement Agreement.

**Report of Chairperson**

Ms. Bhatt introduced the Housing Authority's new attorney, Terrence Corrison, from Breslin & Breslin. Terrence is a highly regarded attorney in the public housing field, providing legal services to eleven NJ PHAs and serving as the Executive Director of the Fort Lee Housing Authority.

Ms. Bhatt recognized and thanked Commissioner Ruckelshaus for his many years of service not only to the MHA Board, but to the town of Madison as well. She wished him and his wife well as they prepare to relocate and begin a new chapter in their lives. The Board has requested that the Mayor nominate a resident commissioner to replace Mr. Ruckelshaus, as there is not currently one on the Board.

Ms. Bhatt noted correspondence from a resident of the Rexford Tucker Apartments expressing her gratitude for the staff's extraordinary efforts in organizing an on-site vaccination clinic, staffing the two-day vaccine events and assisting residents throughout the process.

## **Report of Executive Director**

Ms. Van Order reported that the new fiscal year began April 1, 2021 and the accountants will be finalizing the end-of-year financials for FYE 3/31/21 in preparation for the independent audit. The budget to actual for FYE 3/31/21 is tentative and will be finalized in the next weeks.

Ms. Van Order reminded the Board about the CARES Act funding of \$228,800 that was received. Approximately \$142,800 of that total is for MHA activities and the remaining balance is for the 195 RAD PBV units administered for the Summit Housing Authority. In addition to supplies, cleaning, security and technology upgrades, a prorated portion of the maintenance and janitorial salaries has been applied for deterrent mediation response during the pandemic.

Ms. Van Order reminded the Board of the request for the transfer of the administration of Summit's RAD PBV to the Passaic County Housing Authority, which has been denied at the field office level. The Housing Authority, together with SHA, had requested a review of that decision from HUD headquarters. Due to a leadership transition at SHA, we have agreed to pause the request. MHA will continue as SHA's contract administrator for the foreseeable future, for which we receive a portion of SHA's administrative fees.

Ms. Van Order updated the Board on the John Avenue Conversion construction project. There have been several material supply delays, but the windows will arrive sooner than projected. The insulation and sheet rock installation have been scheduled now that the framing inspection has been completed. The Housing Authority is hoping that the four two-bedroom units will be completed for lease up in early summer.

Ms. Van Order announced that bids for the Loantaka Way AC Installation and for the flooring replacement at turnover are both due next week. It is anticipated that contracts will be approved at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Van Order participated in a NAHRO training on HUD's proposed new inspection protocol (NSPIRE). She also attended a virtual meeting organized by the Affordable Housing Professionals of New Jersey related to impact of the pandemic on affordable housing administration.

Ms. Van Order is updating The White Paper, which provides a history of the Housing Authority's activities and accomplishment as well as articulates future goals. Revisions will be included in the next Board package for review.

Ms. Van Order reminded the Board that New Jersey financial disclosure statements are due by soon. The Borough Clerk will send all Commissioners a reminder email.

## **Report of Housing Manager**

Ms. Gray reported on RAD/PBV rent collection and vacancies. Overall rent collection is stable. There are currently four vacancies, one at the senior building and the other three at the family sites.

Ms. Gray informed the Board that the Housing Authority has developed a plan to reopen the senior building. Phase I of the reopening started on April 2nd. Small group gatherings are now permitted for activities such as movie night and Bingo. When tenants are participating in activities in any of the

common areas, they must wear a face mask at all times and practice social distancing. No activities involving eating are permitted during this phase of reopening. Visitors are now welcome, except if they are experiencing symptoms of Covid, have had a recent exposure to Covid or have been asked to quarantine.

Ms. Gray announced that Zufall will be bringing back activities for the seniors twice a week, starting in May. They will offer exercise and different workshops for topics such as medication management, breast cancer awareness, mental health and fall prevention.

Ms. Kirchenbauer has set up transportation services for the seniors with GoGoGrandparents. Tenants will be permitted to travel anywhere they want within a 25-mile radius. The service will be paid for with the Cares funding until the end of the year.

The Borough notified the Housing Authority of a private donor that would like to donate \$5,000 to assist families in need with their electric bill. We are working to identify families that would benefit most from this very generous donation.

### **Committee Reports**

**Development Committee:** Mr. McBride reported that he has been assisting the Borough in its deliberations as it selects a LIHTC developer for the Walnut Street/Community Place affordable housing project. Mr. McBride noted that all four finalists are highly qualified. He noted that the Housing Authority's ability to assist the project with eight Project-based Vouchers has become an important component of the project and will provide the opportunity for the Borough to conserve money in the affordable housing trust fund or/and to achieve a higher quality construction project with energy efficiency characteristics above and beyond the standard requirements.

### **Public Comment**

None.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

Ms. Bhatt reported that a revised mission statement of the Housing Authority has been drafted by Ms. Van Order. Ms. Bhatt will email the current and proposed mission statements to solicit Board input. The Board will approval the new mission statement at a future Board meeting.

### **Correspondence**

Letter from Theresa Arce re: Review of Third Request for Transfer of Summit HA Sect. 8 PBV  
HAP

Tenant Thank You for Connie Brill

Tenant Thank You to MHA Board Members and Staff

## **Resolutions**

### 21-20-4-1 Resolution Approving Payment of Invoices

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

### 21-20-4-2 Resolution Approving Writing Off Outstanding Tenant Accounts Receivables

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

Commissioners Smith and Elias moved and seconded to accept (with regrets) the resignation of Commissioner Ruckelshaus effective April 21, 2021; The roll call was unanimous and the motion was approved.

## **Adjournment**

There being no further business before the Board, Commissioner Bhatt moved for adjournment at 5:30 P.M.

**Next meeting: May 18, 2021 at 4:30 PM via Zoom meeting video conference.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline Gray  
Housing Manager