

Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, December 15, 2011
7:30 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Vineland was called to order by Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio on Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. at the office of the Authority located at 191 W. Chestnut Avenue, Vineland, New Jersey 08360. The following Commissioners were present:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(arrived 7:32)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	

Also present were Jacqueline Jones, Executive Director, Wendy Hughes, Assistant Executive Director, Charles W. Gabage, Esquire – Solicitor, Dan Avena from the VHA's fee accounting firm and Gloria Pomales, Executive Assistant.

Chairman D'Orazio read the Sunshine Law.

Chairman D'Orazio stated the first order of business is the Election of Officers. Mr. Gabage distributed ballots for the annual election of the officers who will take position next month. The Board voted for Chairman. Mr. Gabage tallied the ballots and Commissioner D'Orazio was voted in as Chairman. The Board voted for Vice Chair. Mr. Gabage tallied the ballots and Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa was voted in as Vice Chair. A voice vote was taken and Executive Director, Jacqueline Jones was voted in as Secretary/Treasurer.

The Chairman entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on November 17, 2011. A motion was made by Commissioner Diaz and seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Chairman D'Orazio called for the Financial Report from Avena's office. Mr. Avena reviewed the Financial Report for the two months ending November 30, 2011. Chairman D'Orazio questioned the significant increase in materials and contract costs. Mrs. Jones explained these are some expenses for South West Boulevard and Oxford Streets. These are the houses the Authority has off-line. Homeownership accounts will be reimbursing public housing back for those expenses so this number should straighten out by next month.

Chairman D'Orazio requested the Executive Administrative Report. Mrs. Jones stated the Capital Projects listed on her report are all moving along. In regards to the tax credit project for Parkview/Asselta, it is continually being evaluated. The plan is to work with the consultant and look at this a little bit closer the next month or so. Probably come back and report to the Board in

February with some ideas on furthering affordable housing with some of the funds that we have as well as an update on Chapman Terrace.

Mrs. Jones stated the Authority was suppose to hear today about the subsidy the Authority would receive for the next fiscal year, but to date the Authority has not heard anything.

Mrs. Jones stated that HUD has made some changes on the way they handle the Section 8 Program. HUD is recapturing reserve money that Housing Authorities have in the Section 8 area. HUD has called it the "new" Cash Management Program. A webinar was given explaining the changes. HUD is leaving the Authority's with (1) one month of reserve money in the Authority's account. This is about \$180,000 for the VHA. The VHA currently has \$500,000 right now. HUD will take it and hold the reserve. The VHA always likes to keep a little bit of reserve because you never know when the government will not be able to disburse the VHA's subsidy. Typically, the electronic payments for the landlord's HAP is ready to go on the first. The VHA would process the landlord's payment two days before the first and the landlord would get their money in their account on the first. The VHA will no longer be able to do this. VHA will not get the money from HUD until the first and then we can process payment to landlord therefore the landlord will get their money maybe two days later. It is not that big of a deal, but it is something different than what they are use to. A letter has been composed to be mailed out to all the landlords explaining this new process. In essence, HUD has recaptured 650 million dollars from this process. Mrs. Jones doesn't think it is a bad thing from the cash management prospective on the federal government's part.

Chairman D'Orazio questioned Mrs. Jones written report regarding the "Difficult to Develop Area" (DDA) on page six. Mrs. Jones explained that is a designation that the IRS puts on certain cities in the country and they change the designation from year to year. This is related to the tax credits. If you are in a "DDA" you get a 30% bump in tax credits. The VHA was in that area last year. This year they have changed it and the VHA is not in that area any longer. Mrs. Jones stated she does not know how and why they change it other than possibly it being based on the census. This is what put the hold on the Parkview/Asselta tax credit project at this point. The VHA would have to come up with the 30% to fill that gap and/or VHA waits and possibly next year Vineland is back in the Difficult to Develop Area. This is something the VHA has no control over.

With no other discussion in related matters the Chairman moved to the Resolutions.

Resolution #2011-86
Resolution to Approve Monthly Expenses

Chairman D'Orazio called for a report from Commissioner Asselta. Commissioner Asselta reported he reviewed all the bills and recommended payment in the sum of \$688,119.19. Commissioner D'Orazio called for a motion to approve the monthly expenses. A motion was made by Commissioner Diaz; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2011-87

Resolution to Dispose of Furniture and Equipment Utilizing the Disposition Policy

Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2011-87. A motion was made by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2011-88

Resolution Approving Dates for 2012 Board Meetings

Chairman D’Orazio stated it has been tradition that the Board Meetings are held the third Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. There has been some talk about moving the time. Chairman D’Orazio asked the committee appointed to revising the By-Laws if the time change has been discussed. Mr. Gabage stated the proposed by-laws are going to change it to 7 p.m. There was a brief discussion on changing the time to 7 p.m. All Board Members approved. A motion will be made to pass a resolution to amend the By-Laws and change the time of the meetings. Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2011-88. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2011-89

**Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Sub-Grantee Agreement
with the City of Vineland for the Computer Learning Center**

Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2011-89. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Gordon. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2011-90

Resolution Awarding Landscaping/Grounds Keeping Services Contract for the period
April 2012 through November 2012

Mrs. Jones explained the low bidder was Perfect Touch Landscaping for \$22,805. She deferred to Mr. Gabage regarding their bid package. Mr. Gabage stated he is not aware if the Board knows the mechanism of a bid. The bids are opened by the Housing Authority and then they are sent to

him for review to make sure the bids comply with the bidding documents as well as bidding law. When Mr. Gabage reviewed this bid they were missing a few documents. Mr. Gabage spoke with Ron and confirmed they were not submitted. Under normal circumstances Mr. Gabage would recommend to the Board that this bidder be disqualified, but this bidding package, when it went out, was a little different. Normally the package states these are the documents required if you do not have these documents your bid will be rejected. This language was not in the bidding documents. The mandatory language that you have to reject a bid was not there. In addition to that there was language that said that the Board reserves the right to waive any irregularities. There is a door open to the Board to accept this bid if they waive the irregularities of the four documents. Mr. Gabage stated the four documents are not critical and Mr. Gabage pointed out that when the bidder was notified regarding the absence of the four documents he provided them immediately. Mr. Gabage does not feel comfortable in telling Ron this was okay. Mr. Gabage believes this is up to the Board because he doesn't think the waiver of irregularities is up to the Administration. Mr. Gabage stated he reviewed the four documents missing were the resumes of the owners, the summary of the work plan; the summary of the bidders experience in similar projects and evidence the bidder meets the minimum requirement. It is up to the Board to vote on awarding this to the lowest bidder. There is a difference in price of about \$12,000 if Board decides to go to second lowest bidder. Mr. Gabage reviewed the second bid and it had an irregularity as well. Mr. Gabage stated sometimes with these smaller projects where you are dealing with people who are not sophisticated in paperwork you have to be a little bit more lenient than you would be if you were doing a \$3 million dollar bathroom renovation. The intention here is probably to keep it a little bit more flexible. Mrs. Jones agreed. She stated it has been discussed how complicated some of the bidding documents are and being sensitive to that Mr. Gabage makes a great point. Often times these companies that are geared more two the blue collar services are not very good with paperwork. The contractor did produce them when we told them we needed them by. Mrs. Jones also stated Perfect Touch has the landscaping contract for the Voorhees Public Schools. Ron Miller spoke with someone from the Voorhees Public Schools and received a very good reference. Commissioner Diaz asked who was awarded the contract last year. Thorobred was the contractor and they were the second lowest bidder. There was a discussion regarding waiving the irregularities or rebidding. The majority of the board agreed to award the contract to Perfect Touch and waiving the irregularities.

Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution Awarding Landscaping/Grounds Keeping Services contract to Perfect Touch Landscape, Inc. in the amount of \$22,805.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(No)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2011-91
**Resolution Authorizing Payment under the Capital Funds Appropriations Program to
Charles J. Collins/Architect**

Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve payment to Charles J. Collins/Architect in the sum of \$300.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2011-92 Executive Session

Chairman D'Orazio entered a motion to hold an Executive Session. A motion died for lack of need.

Resolution #2011-93
**Resolution Authorizing Expenditures with Homeownership Funds
for Purchasing Authority Owned Vehicles**

Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2011-93. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2011-94
Resolution Amending the VHA By-Laws

Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2011-94. A motion was made by Commissioner Diaz; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Joseph Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Beatrice Corbin	(Absent)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

No comments from the press or the public.

There is a member from the public present. She stated her name was Gloria Gonzalez a resident at a scattered site on High Ridge Road. Ms. Gonzalez stated she was observing. She wanted to know where the meetings are posted. She was informed they are posted online and advertised at the beginning of the year in the Daily Journal and Atlantic City Press. The City Clerks Office is also notified of the meeting dates. They are also posted in the foyer entrance bulletin board of the VHA.

Chairman D'Orazio asked for any comments from any Board Member. Mr. Gabage had distributed a draft copy of the By-Laws. He stated when he was initially reviewing the By-Laws that maybe the Executive Director should be spelled out in the By-Laws. After having done so, he had some severe second thoughts because the Executive Director position is really spelled out as the other positions are in the personnel policy manual. He stated when the Board reviews the draft copy he suggests they disregard that portion since it is dealt in the personnel policy manual. If the Board wanted to add any of that language it should probably be added in the personnel manual rather than the By-Laws. Mr. Gabage stated he took the existing By-Laws and made changes to them in writing. He reviewed some items the Board needs to make decisions on regarding the By-Laws. Mr. Gabage stated he reviewed ten to fifteen sets of By-Laws and they are very general. No one seems to have a great detailed set of By-Laws. The frame work of these By-Laws will get the job done and everything else is done by resolution. There is also a Personnel Manual that goes into all the different positions and what the rights and responsibilities are of the different employees. Mrs. Jones stated in the coming months the Personnel Manual also needs to be cleaned up. Mrs. Jones stated some of the benefit language needs to possibly reviewed and changed for new employees. Commissioner D'Orazio stated a few months ago he appointed a committee to review the By-Laws. He thanked the committee and Mr. Gabage for their efforts, but there is still not a finished product. He suggested on reviewing the draft and clearing up items now rather than waiting another month. It was decided that a clean rough draft copy be provided to the Board. The appointed committee would meet once again and provide the Board with a clean, clearer rough draft that can be read and then ultimately make a final copy. Commissioner Diaz stated the committee wanted further input from the remainder of the Board. Mr. Gabage stated the original By-Laws go back to 1974 and this idea of changing the By-Laws came up a couple of months ago. Mr. Gabage and/or the committee were of the opinion that there was a fire burning on this if it wasn't passed by the December meeting. He thinks this is something that can be done without any pressure on anybody. Mr. Gabage would like to have everyone study it adequately and give some input. Chairman D'Orazio agrees and understands, but the purpose of the committee is to study something and come back with a recommendation to the Board. He understands Mr. Gabage's point, but the Board is asking for a recommendation from the Committee. Mr. Gabage stated the committee will comply with the request. Between now and the third Thursday in January the committee will meet with Mr. Gabage and come up with a clean copy to be recommended to the Board. There was a brief discussion regarding a commissioner's absenteeism. It was discussed whoever appointed the commissioner would be the person to remove or not remove the commissioner for absenteeism. There would also need to be a resolution at a Board Meeting whether or not the Board would notify the appointing body regarding the absenteeism. If the Board is aware of a good reason then they would not recommend a resolution, but it should not be at the Board's discretion. Commissioner Asselta stated the Board would have to take into consideration various reasons and then they have to apply that. If the reasons are good enough to maintain the person on the Board then that is what needs to be done. Commissioner Asselta also stated if they have no reason for continually being absent then that is another story. Mr. Gabage is requesting recommendations by January 9th. The Committee will meet again after receiving recommendations to draw up a clean copy.

With no further business to discuss, Chairman D'Orazio entertained a motion for adjournment of the Regular Meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The vote was carried unanimously by the Board Members present. The Regular Meeting of The Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline S. Jones
Secretary/Treasurer