

Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, October 18, 2012
7:00 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, October 18, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the office of the Authority located at 191 W. Chestnut Avenue, Vineland, New Jersey 08360.

The following Commissioners were present:

Commissioner Chris Chapman
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa
Commissioner Brian Asselta **(Absent)**
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio

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

Chairman D'Orazio read the Sunshine Law.

The Chairman entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on September 20, 2012. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman and seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman (Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon (Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz (Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa (Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta (Absent)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio (Yes)

Chairman D'Orazio called for the Financial Report from Avena's office. Linda Cavallo reviewed the Financial Report for the twelve months ending September 30, 2012. There was brief discussion regarding the year end Financial Report in regards to the utilities.

Chairman D'Orazio requested the Executive Administrative Report. Mrs. Jones reported the Authority was awarded the Section 8 Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) grant. The Authority had already received one for Public Housing FSS as well as the ROSS Grant a couple of years ago. This is a bonus for the Section 8 Department. The Public Housing FSS and the Ross Grant relieve the public housing budget of the Social Services Department's salaries. The public housing budget was being used to pay for the nurse and for Pat who is the Social Worker of the Department. Mrs. Jones hopes this funding will continue. The FSS grant is a year to year grant and the ROSS grant is a three year grant. The Authority will continue to apply for these grants. The grants came through Rick Ginnetti's company the Brooke Group. His company has a grant writer and is very successful in obtaining grants.

Mrs. Jones updated the Board on Melrose Court. Things are moving along on this project. The Authority has heard from the HMFA with several attachments in their email requesting additional information, which is a good sign. When you apply for the bond and the 4% tax credits there is no hard deadline. They look at the project to see if it looks viable or not. The Authority had already completed that process about 3 months ago and at that time HMFA pretty much gave the Authority the green light. Now there is back and forth process of communicating certain documents that they will need to take to their Board. The next Board Meeting date for the HMFA is November 20th and we are hoping to be on that agenda. If we do not make the November meeting we should make the December meeting. At that point HMFA will give the next green light and we will continue moving through to the next stage.

In regards to the South East Boulevard property, a meeting with the City was held about two weeks ago. The meeting included Kathy Hicks, City Planner, Alex Curio, Community Development Director, Denise Monaco, City Administrator and Mike Fralinger, Attorney as well as the Executive Director, Ron Miller and Rick Ginnetti, the Brooke Group. Kathy Hicks said the sewer was in the maps for this property and it was taken out. Her guess for why the sewer wash removed is that it was based on the City wanting to get their overall plan approved. This isn't good because the property is not any good to the Authority without the sewer. Mrs. Jones contacted somebody that happens to be on the Glassboro Housing Authority Board that worked for the DEP at the State level in the past. He knows people who do the mapping up at the State level. He made a phone call and they said that the property never had sewer. Basically, the way that the map sits right now is the way it is going to be approved. Then there is a cooling off period and then you can ask to have it put in. The Authority is not satisfied with the answers. There are too many different responses regarding the sewer. The property had a preapproval with no sewer, which does not make sense and does not add up. Mrs. Jones will continue to pursue this issue and get some answers to see if it is a viable opportunity or not. Mrs. Jones stated she will move to talk the County and also to the State to see what information she can find out.

Mrs. Jones discussed the Olmstead Act. The Olmstead Act basically is in regards to taking individuals with developmental disabilities out of institutions and having them live in the community. There are many states that are under mandated deadlines to move a certain number of people by a certain deadline. Last month Mrs. Jones was invited to a meeting at Human Services in Trenton to discuss this issue. They are reaching out to housing authorities to possibly support this initiative. It was an interesting conversation because of the housing authorities that attended the meeting felt as though they were already serving this population already but without services. The idea is to house individuals that are disabled, typically developmentally disabled in a group home setting. Mrs. Jones wanted to see what the Board's feeling was on getting involved in this initiative. Authorities may start feeling the pressure from HUD to do this. Right now it is just suggested to get involved. Commissioner Gordon asked if the Authority already had disabled people on the waiting list. Mrs. Jones indicated it really does not at this level of disability. These are people who can not necessarily live on their own, but could live in the community. Chairman D'Orazio asked where there would typically live now. Mrs. Jones stated they are institutions or some in facilities like ARC, Devereux and Elwyn who have scattered group homes throughout the state. Typically, they will have a house of four females or four males and they are in neighborhoods. Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa's concern with that is if they do not put pressure on the VHA to do it then stay away from it because right now there may be funds, but down the road the funds may be cut and it may cause a burden on the VHA. Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa stated he belongs to the Board of Cumberland Homemakers which helps senior citizens stays at home. It is closing at the end of the year because the State keeps cutting the funding and they can not make the expenses. Commissioner Chapman asked if the VHA would provide the oversight of the care for them. Mrs. Jones stated that someone else would provide the oversight. The VHA is just providing the unit with a lease. Commissioner Chapman asked if Public Housing would allow this. Mrs. Jones indicated yes and that is why they are reaching out to us. Chairman D'Orazio asked

for Mrs. Jones to get more information particularly the ability for the VHA to serve the residents of Vineland as well as Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa's concern of starting something that the VHA won't be able to finish. Mrs. Jones will get more information and bring it back to the Board.

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

Resolution #2012-64
Resolution to Approve Monthly Expenses

Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa reported he reviewed all the bills and recommended payment in the sum of \$807,272.15. Commissioner D'Orazio called for a motion to approve the monthly expenses. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Absent)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2012-65
**Resolution Approving Application for Payment No. 2
for Melrose Court Predevelopment Loan**

Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve Payment No. 2 for Melrose Court Predevelopment Loan in the amount of \$10,809.14. A motion was made by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa; seconded by Commissioner Diaz. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Abstain)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Absent)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2012-66
Accounts Receivable Decreed as Uncollectible

Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2012-66. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Absent)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2012-67
**Resolution Designating an Official Newspaper for the Publication of Advertisements
for Contracting Purposes or Various Other Items**

Mrs. Jones explained this has been prompted by Ron Miller and the purchasing requirement from the State. The Authority should also be advertising in two official newspapers in regards to the Sunshine Law also known as the Open Public Meetings Act. Resolution appointing those two newspapers will be done yearly in January at the reorganization meeting. Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2012-67. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Diaz. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Absent)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2012-68

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

Resolution #2012-69
Resolution Adopting State Budget FY 2011-2012

Wendy Hughes explained the State Budget process of the VHA approving, the State approving and the VHA adopting the State Budget. There was also an amended budget for 2011-2012. Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2012-69. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Diaz. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Absent)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2012-70
Resolution Adopting State Budget FY 2012-2013

Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2012-70. A motion was made by Commissioner Diaz; seconded by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Absent)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

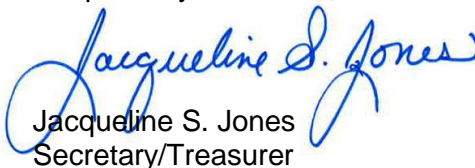
No comments from the press and/or public. Commissioner Chapman stated he was in training the last couple of days and one of the things in his training was in regards to the Local Government Ethics Law. He stated having been a Board Member for the VHA for so long he really never had it so explicitly explained to him. He feels it would be very relevant for all the Commissioners to have

copy of the Ethics Law because while the decision they make as Board Members and particularly as government entities are certainly held to what the Board may think are reasonable standards, the Ethics Law is pretty clear on what decisions the Board should be making and what they shouldn't be doing. There has been a renewed interest in the State of the New Jersey under the Pay to Play legislation to revisit the NJ Ethics Law and there have been quite a few cases now that are being raised against Boards. Commissioner Chapman thinks it might be good for the next meeting to have a copy of the law 40A:9 22.1. He feels it is really relevant for the Board Members to read due to the decisions they all make as members of the Board. When and if there is ever a conflict of interest there are ways to deal with it. This does not mean the Board is doing something criminal, but it is clear that there are some guidelines for the Board. Mrs. Jones suggested Mr. Gabage do a brief presentation next month regarding the Ethics Law.

Mrs. Jones asked how everyone liked the iPads. Everyone seemed to be ok with using them. Mrs. Jones stated the VHA is trying to be more efficient and use technology as much as possible. The Authority uses Yardi as its software for Public Housing. The Authority is in the process of being 100% electronic with it's purchasing and paying its bills. Hopefully, in a few months it may be possible for Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa to review the Authority's bill list online from his office and if he has a question on a certain expense he will be able to drill down all the way back to the scanned copy of the invoice. The issues are being worked out from converting from paper to electronic as far as the approval process. It is another way of being more efficient. The Authority has been in the process of scanning the tenant's files. Eventually the auditors will be able to look at the file electronically online. Chairman D'Orazio asked about looking at history of the minutes. All the approved minutes are on the VHA's website as well as audits, budgets and contact information. Mrs. Jones briefly explained the VHA's portal for timesheets, time off calendar, vehicle sign out and human resource policies/videos. The Authority is also working on making the VHA's housing application electronic. For those who do not have computers, the Authority may install a kiosk in the lobby and can provide assistance as needed. Another option is using computers at the public library. Mrs. Jones reported a new server is currently being installed. There was a brief discussion regarding the waiting list.

With no further business to discuss, Chairman D'Orazio entertained a motion for adjournment of the Regular Meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The vote was carried unanimously by the Board Members present. The Regular Meeting of The Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jacqueline S. Jones
Secretary/Treasurer