

Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, February 21, 2013
7:00 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Vineland was called to order by Vice Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa on Thursday, February 21, 2013 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
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio **(Absent)**

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 and Gloria Pomales, Executive Assistant.

Vice Chairman Ruiz-Mesa stated Chairman D'Orazio called to excuse himself from the meeting this evening.

Vice Chairman Ruiz-Mesa read the Sunshine Law.

The Vice Chairman entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on January 17, 2013. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman and seconded by Commissioner Gordon. The following vote was taken:

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

Vice Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for the Financial Report from Avena's office. Linda Cavallo reviewed the Financial Report for the four months ending January 31, 2013. Commissioner Diaz questioned the increase in tenant services. Mrs. Jones explained under the tenant services under other the number represents FSS escrow payments which were not part of the budget when it was written. The FSS escrows is a family self-sufficiency escrow which is part of the public housing program. There are currently 25 people on that program who are working towards goals such as education or purchasing a home. When a resident signs a contract to be in the program and their rent changes because of an increase in employment the difference of what the rent was and what it would be goes into an escrow account. Once they reach their goals after a certain period of time based on their program they will receive that money as a reward for reaching their goals. Mr. Chapman stated there has been much success in the FSS Program in the past.

Vice Chairman Ruiz-Mesa requested the Executive Administrative Report. Mrs. Jones discussed the Authority's funding. Currently, the Authority is under a Continuing Resolution as well as the sequestration. The Authority will probably get cut 5-10% immediately. The Authority does not know the amount of the cut yet.

Mrs. Jones updated the Board on Melrose Court. A letter from HMFA was received stating they approved a "Declaration of Intent". The importance of this letter is the expenses that were incurred 60 days prior to this letter will be reimbursable through the tax credits when they come through. The tax credits were being shopped through a local bank, Capital Bank. Capital Bank is interested and the agreement was approved today as a preliminary agreement by their Board of Directors.

Mrs. Jones reported a resolution has been added to the Agenda. The Resolution is for committing 17 project based vouchers to the Melrose Court Project. Currently, the Authority has tenant based vouchers and the voucher moves with the tenant, but these 17 project based vouchers will be secured for this project. It is a way of actually insuring financial success for this program because the unit will be subsidized which insures income for the project.

Another Resolution was added to the agenda as well. Mrs. Jones was contacted by the Executive Director of the Clementon Housing Authority approximately 2 weeks ago because the Section 8 employee was leaving. She wanted to know what Mrs. Jones thought they should pay a new hire for their Section 8 position. Mrs. Jones spoke to her about a shared services agreement. The Clementon Housing Authority Board is in agreement to move forward with a shared services agreement. Mrs. Jones has discussed this with Chairman D'Orazio. Mrs. Jones has projected that the VHA can earn about \$15-18,000 a year after expenses. The Authority currently has someone that can do this work. Mrs. Jones explained she would not be taking anyone from the Vineland staff. Last month, Mrs. Jones was contacted by a former employee of the Millville Housing Authority that was let go who has a lot of housing certifications and experience. The VHA hired this person on a temporary basis to help us out with an unanticipated absence of an employee at the Glassboro Housing Authority (GHA). With her experience the Glassboro work load will not be enough for her. The Clementon Housing Authority will be a great filler for her and Mrs. Jones idea is that she will be at Clementon once a week because they only have 45 vouchers.

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

Resolution #2013-09
Resolution to Approve Monthly Expenses

Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa reported he reviewed all the bills and recommended payment in the sum of \$979,506.43. Vice Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve the monthly expenses. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. 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	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Absent)

Resolution #2013-10
Resolution Authorizing Purchase of Authority Owned Vehicles

Mrs. Jones stated the Authority owns a 1997 van that the Congregate Services Program has been using. It is really at its end of its useful life and needs to be replaced. The new van will have a plastic floor because the van is used to deliver food and it will be easy to keep clean.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-10. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. 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	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Absent)

Resolution #2013-11
**Resolution Approving Application for Payment No. 5
for Melrose Court Predevelopment Loan**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Payment No. 5 for Melrose Court Predevelopment Loan in the amount of \$7,605.00. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Gordon. 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	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Absent)

Mr. Gabage stated the legal bills for Melrose appeared to be paid out of the general fund and charged against the legal budget. He asked if that would be changed. Linda Cavallo stated that another account has been set up for this in the general ledger so the VHA knows what is due back. It is just not presented in detail in the financial statement. Going forward it will be separated on separate line.

Resolution #2013-12
Resolution to Adopt Revised Executive Session Resolution

Mr. Gabage explained the VHA received a letter from a gentleman who appeared to be a concerned citizen. Under the Open Public Records Act, he wanted copies of our Executive Session Resolution and OPRA Request Form. Mr. Gabage wrote to him as well as spoke to him and he is with the Libertarian Party. In conclusion, Mr. Gabage recommends the VHA to update its forms accordingly.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-12. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. 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	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Absent)

Resolution #2013-13
Resolution to Adopt OPRA Request Form

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-13. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. 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	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Absent)

Resolution #2013-14
Resolution to Enter Executive Session

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entered a motion to hold an Executive Session. A motion died for lack of need.

Resolution #2013-15
Resolution for Project Based Vouchers for Melrose Court

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-15. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. 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	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Absent)

Resolution #2013-16
**Resolution for the Intention of Providing Management Services
to the Housing Authority of the Borough of Clementon**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-16. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. 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	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio	(Absent)

No comments from the press and/or public. No comments from any Board Members. There was a brief discussion regarding the Section 8 Waiting List. Mrs. Jones does not foresee the opening of the Section 8 Waiting List mostly due to the lack of funding. Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa asked if someone is in Public Housing for a 5-year time period or are they there forever. Mrs. Jones explained they are there forever. Public Housing has no limitation on income. Once a tenant qualifies they are never "over income" based on the current regulations. The tenant can reach flat rent which is paying a flat rent rather than a percentage of their income. On the Section 8 side once the tenant is paying

the full contract rent they can remain on the program for 6 months. After 6 months of the Authority paying no Housing Assistance Program to a landlord they have to go off the program. That is built into the Section 8 Program. The regulations do stipulate a timeframe that residents can remain on assistance, but it has never been enforced by HUD. The only agencies that do enforce and time limit are agencies that are called Move to Work Agency. A Move to Work Agency is typically a large agency like Philadelphia. A Move to Work Agency can pool all of its money, which goes into one big pot (Section 8, Public Housing etc.) and a lot of the rules are relaxed on how you can implement your program. One of the things that a lot of the Move to Work Agencies do is they have a 5 year and you are out rule for Public Housing and Section 8, but part of what is built into that is a lot of FSS Training Programs and heavy Social Services to get people to become self-sufficient and off of the programs. There are very few move to work agencies. Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa stated that Senior Citizens that go into a Senior Citizen project eventually they pass on and an opening is created. As for other people that go in the program when they are young and they have no incentive to get out there is no room for another family that it in need. This is unfortunate. Mrs. Jones stated one of the other problems the Authority faces on the Voucher Program more than the Public Housing Program is low or no income and inconsistent income. This become more apparent when we have Utility Rent Payment (Negative Rent). Based on the calculation when the utility allowance throws it to a point where the Authority pays the tenant to live there.

With no further business to discuss, Vice Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entertained a motion for adjournment of the Regular Meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The vote was carried unanimously by the Board Members present. The Regular Meeting of The Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jacqueline S. Jones
Secretary/Treasurer