

Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, March 21, 2013
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, March 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 **(Absent)**
Commissioner Brian Asselta
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio

Chairman D’Orazio stated Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa called him about a week ago that he would be missing tonight’s meeting, but he was able to review the bills for tonight’s meeting. Chairman D’Orazio apologized for missing last month’s meeting.

Also present were Jacqueline Jones, Executive Director, Wendy Hughes, Assistant Executive Director, Sandy Velez, Assistant Asset Manager, Charles W. Gabage, Esquire – Solicitor, Dan Avena and Linda Cavallo from the VHA’s fee accounting firm 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 February 21, 2013. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman and 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	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Abstain)

Chairman D’Orazio called for the Financial Report from Avena’s office. Linda Cavallo reviewed the Financial Report for the five months ending February 28, 2013.

Chairman D’Orazio requested the Executive Administrative Report. Mrs. Jones reported she just returned from Washington attending the NAHRO Legislative Conference. There is not any good news in regards to funding. The funding level is expected to be 77% for the year for Public Housing. This is the worse it has ever been. The Authority believes it will get more than 77%, but this is not known for sure. Mrs. Jones received an email late today that the House and the Senate both voted on a continuing resolution, which means the government will not shut down on the 27th. They voted on an increase to the Authority’s levels above the sequestration amounts. The VHA’s budget is written with three months of funding from last year, which was more favorable. The Authority is actually in a better position because it can make up some of it from the funding from last year. The

Avena's have done a projection and it was discussed today at our meeting. The VHA could potentially lose about \$46,000 worth of funding this year. Mrs. Jones doesn't believe it will be that bad if the funding level comes up to about 80%, but right now at least as far as the public housing budget goes the Authority is fine. The funding for the administrative side of the Section 8 Program is really tight. The Authority will spend everything it receives due to the 69% funding of the administrative fee. Administratively, this program is as lean as it can be. There are only one and half people working on the tenant files and a part time person doing the inspections. There is no word regarding Capital Fund yet. It is expected that will be at least 10% below where it was last year.

Mrs. Jones learned from the conference she attended that Washington is working on trying to alleviate some of the administrative burden for the work the Authority does in both Public Housing and Section 8. This relates to how tenant files are calculated and how tenants are reevaluated. One area that will alleviate some administrative burden would be to allow re-certifications on a biannual basis for those residents on a fixed income. This has been talked about literally for 10 years at HUD and Congress and they have not been able to come to an agreement. Mrs. Jones believes at this point since they are cutting the funding so severely it might be a good bargaining chip. If this is done it would help alleviate a lot of the work and can lead the Authority to reevaluate its workload, caseload and staffing. Mrs. Jones is not saying that there would be any layoffs, but through retirements some adjustments can be made in reducing administrative cost. There may be a couple of retirements in that area in the next 2 years.

In regards to Melrose Court, Mrs. Jones reported there is a resolution tonight to approve the Term Letter with Capital Bank, which is basically the Authority's and the Bank's understanding on how they both will be involved in the Tax Credit Project for Melrose Court. The VHDC Board approved the agreement last night and it just needs the VHA's approval since it is also an investor in the project.

Mrs. Jones updated the Board regarding the Section 8 Family Self Sufficiency Program. A Resolution is included in the revised agenda. A resolution was added for the revised budget requesting the funds to keep this program moving. As previously reported at a previous Board Meeting, the VHA was awarded the Section 8 FSS grant in October 1, 2012 and then the Authority received notice from HUD stating the Authority could not have the grant. Needless to say the program was already moving forward and it is moving very well. The program already has 5-6 people escrowing. Mrs. Jones is requesting funds to operate this program through October of 2013 and in the meantime the Authority will apply for the grant for next year. Hopefully, we will receive the grant and be able to keep the program rolling next year with the funding from HUD. There is a possibility that the Authority will be able to get the administrative funding for this program because HUD made this mistake. Mrs. Jones requested this money and is awaiting an answer.

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

Resolution #2013-17
Resolution to Approve Monthly Expenses

Chairman D'Orazio stated Commissioner Ruiz-Mesa reported he reviewed all the bills and recommended payment in the sum of \$553,347.24. Commissioner D'Orazio 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	(Absent)

Commissioner Brian Asselta (Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio (Yes)

Mrs. Jones requested to add to her report. She reported the Authority is going out to bid for flooring at Kidston and Olivio. The lobby floors at Kidston and Olivio were replaced several years ago. At Kidston the first 5 floors were replaced due to the fire. The tile at Kidston will be replaced in the remaining floors and the carpeting at Olivio will be replaced. It is about a \$200,000 project and the VHA will use Capital Funding.

Mrs. Jones spoke about redevelopment of projects. This may evolve into a Saturday work session/retreat. She believes the next project in need for redevelopment would be D'Orazio Terrace. The physical needs assessment which have been completed are being reviewed right now by Ron Miller. He will let us know which projects will need redevelopment. Having said that there is a lot of money that was awarded to the State of the New Jersey because of Hurricane Sandy. Most of the money has to be spent in the severely affected areas, but 20% of it can be spend anywhere in the state. The VHA's consultant and Mrs. Jones think there is an opportunity to apply for some of this funding to redevelopment D'Orazio and also the piece of land next to it possibly some additional affordable housing, which may include some type of special needs housing. The reason Mrs. Jones is throwing in the special needs housing is because there may be funding for this purpose. This can be further discussed next month.

Resolution #2013-18

Resolution Appointing Revisions to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan and the Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy

Mrs. Jones briefly explained the revisions. Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-18. 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 (Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta (Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio (Yes)

Resolution #2013-19

Resolution Approving Application for Payment No. 6 for Melrose Court Predevelopment Loan

Chairman D'Orazio called for a motion to approve Payment No. 6 for Melrose Court Predevelopment Loan in the amount of \$44,439.85. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; 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 (Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta (Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D'Orazio (Yes)

Resolution #2013-20

Resolution Accepting the Proposal from Capital Bank for the Outline of Business Terms regarding the Acquisition of Limited Partnership Interests in the to be formed Ownership Entity of the Melrose Court

Mrs. Jones explained this is an agreement between VHDC, VHA and Capital Bank to invest in the Melrose Court Project. Essentially, Capital Bank will be purchasing the tax credits. Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-20. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; 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	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2013-21

Resolution of Compliance (Commissioners’ & Executive Director)

This Resolution is at the request of the DCA. All Commissioners and the Executive Director are in compliance except for new Commissioner Asselta. Commissioner Asselta is scheduled for some courses. Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-21. 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	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

Resolution #2013-22

Resolution to Enter Executive Session

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

Resolution #2013-23

Resolution Authorizing use of Homeownership Program Proceeds for the Section 8 Family Self Sufficiency Program

Chairman D’Orazio called for a motion to approve Resolution #2013-23. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The following vote was taken:

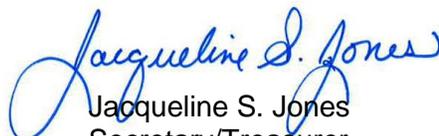
Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Elizabeth Gordon	(Yes)
Commissioner Carmen Nydia Diaz	(Yes)
Commissioner Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Robert A. D’Orazio	(Yes)

No comments from the press and/or public. Chairman D'Orazio stated Mrs. Jones did mention something briefly in regards to a Board Retreat. He would like to bring this up for discussion. In the past the Board met on a Saturday at the Ramada and spend the entire day there. The retreat consisted of discussing everything and anything. Anytime when more than 4 commissioners get together it is a meeting so the retreat had to be publicized. Notes were taken, but it is not something that is open to the public for discussion. It is basically a brainstorming discussion. Chairman D'Orazio asked if this is something the Board would be interested in doing. Mrs. Jones stated she thinks it is important to this this for several reasons. The VHA needs to have a direction. Mrs. Jones believes there are several areas that she sees as issues. For example, personnel issues because salaries and benefits are a large part of the budget. Her concern is not only for this year, next year or even 5 years from now but 20-30 years from now. In particular, the Authority pays for post-employment health benefits. Something needs to feed that and a discussion needs to be had on ways to reduce that liability in the future. Mrs. Jones believes a serious look of the VHA's facilities is needed to see what can be done to bring them up to today's standards and beyond. With some of the funding that is going to be available in the next few years and some changes in the way the Authority will receive its funding, which would mean taking on debt for capital improvements. She believes this needs to be discussed and talked about it in a more in depth way than the Board can at the monthly meeting. Those are the two major areas of Mrs. Jones concern. There is a lot of small areas in those two topics that would more than fill one day, but she thinks this is a good way to start. Chairman D'Orazio stated one way to do something like this is to have a facilitator. Mrs. Jones stated she know of a couple who would probably be suited for this and they do a lot training for NAHRO. Commissioner Diaz feels it is a great idea and does not have any problem with it depending on the date. Chairman D'Orazio asked Mrs. Jones to start looking into a facilitator, putting together a list of some topics and come back to the Board with a preliminary plan for the next meeting.

Chairman D'Orazio also discussed the Executive Director's review and contract. Commissioner Chapman has given Mrs. Jones the framework and defined with very specific things that he thought he would like for her to address prior to the committee getting together to evaluate. He is waiting on Mrs. Jones for these items. He is hoping this will happen prior to the next meeting. Part of this framework is to set a process to be used with future Executive Director and how they are evaluated.

With no further business to discuss, Chairman D'Orazio 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 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jacqueline S. Jones
Secretary/Treasurer