

Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

REGULAR MEETING **Thursday, September 17, 2020** **5:00 p.m.**

The Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Vineland was called to order via video teleconference by Chairman Ruiz-Mesa on Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 5:00 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 Rudolph Luisi	(absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	
Commissioner Brian Asselta	
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	

Also present were Jacqueline Jones, Executive Director, Wendy Hughes, Assistant Executive Director, Charles W. Gabage, Esquire – Solicitor, Linda Cavallo – Accountant and Gloria Pomales, Executive Assistant.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa read the Sunshine Law.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on August 20, 2020. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta and seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Abstain)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for the Financial Report from the Fee Accountant. Linda Cavallo reviewed the Financial Report for the eleven months ended August 31, 2020.

Committee Reports: Commissioner Chapman reported Chairman Ruiz-Mesa spoke to him who spoke to Commissioner Cartagena stating they were all in agreement with awarding the professional services contract with a consultant who works with the housing authority with regards to the computer software system the Authority uses called Yardi. The current vendor is Integrated Systems Associates. They were the only vendor to respond and it is the recommendation of the committee to award the contract to Integrated Systems Associates.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa requested the Executive Administrative Report. Mrs. Jones stated there is a person from the public who will be accepted into the meeting. The member from the public introduced herself as Tia Bragg. Mrs. Jones provided an update from her written report. In the resolution section of the meeting there is a resolution to award the contract for the modifications to the office to provide a safe space for residents and applicants to meet with staff.

The RAD conversion process is moving along for Kidston and Olivio. The Authority is hopeful to close by November with a December 1st effective date.

Mrs. Jones reported on the D'Orazio Terrace redevelopment. She stated she has a meeting tomorrow with the VHA's consultant Rick Ginnetti and HUD to discuss the disposal of the Scattered Site project. The conversation will involve how the funds from the disposal of the Scattered Site project can possibly be used on the D'Orazio Terrace project. Mrs. Jones stated there should be more information brought to the Board next month. There have been some rule changes from HUD regarding the disposal of the scattered site properties and how the Authority can use the proceeds from the sale of the scattered sites.

In the Section 8 program, the Authority is in a "short-fall" status meaning the Authority's Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) to landlords have increased beyond the anticipated funding. The increase in HAP payments is attributed to some Section 8 Voucher residents' loss of income, which results in an increase in HAP payments. Wendy Hughes and Mrs. Jones are working with HUD on this issue. It is anticipated that HUD will fund the Authority through the end of year in the event of a short fall.

In the last several years the VHA has taken advantage of a grant called the Resident Opportunity Self Sufficiency Program also known as the ROSS program. This grant funded the VHA nurse with her efforts with helping the elderly and disabled residents to maintain their health and other services. HUD has changed the rules regarding what agencies are qualified to apply for this grant. The rule change concerns properties that have converted to RAD, are converting to RAD and properties that are under a disposition process. Since all the VHA's properties are in various stages of RAD conversions and/or dispositions, the VHA will not be able to take advantage of that grant any longer. However, the VHA will still be able to provide the services that are being provided and the cost will be absorbed by the projects themselves.

There is a possibility of obtaining some more vouchers for the non-elderly and disabled residents in Vineland. Mrs. Jones will be reading through this particular application and possibly apply for those funds. This would increase the VHA's Section 8 voucher capacity to house non-elderly and disabled residents specifically.

Mrs. Jones provided an update on Ocean City (OCHA) and Buena Housing Authorities that the VHA manages through shared services agreements. Buena is quiet and was converted to RAD several years ago. Things are going well at Buena. They had a bad storm last month with some damages. Damages are being repaired. There is a lot of activity at Ocean City. The City has a Fair Share Housing Agreement that they must conform with and the Authority is assisting them in that process to provide additional affordable housing units in the City to low-income families. Currently, the OCHA and the City are working together on the building of a mid-rise building that will replace 20 units of housing that is in an area that is prone to flooding, renovations to Bayview Manor (high-rise with 60 units) and the development of 10 scattered site homes.

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

Resolution #2020-54
Resolution to Approve Monthly Expenses

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa has reviewed the expenses and recommends them for payment in the sum of \$1,073,800.98. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

Resolution #2020-55
Award As-Needed Yardi Consulting Services

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2020-55. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

Resolution #2020-56
Extending Painting Services Contract

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2020-56. Mrs. Jones stated the painting services contract was put out for bid last year and part of the process was to permit the VHA to extend the contract for two years. This will be the first of two possible extensions. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Cartagena. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

Resolution #2020-57
Revisions to Capital Fund Program 2018, 2019 & 2020

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2020-57. Mrs. Jones stated the 2018, 2019, and 2020 Capital Fund budgets have been revised to move funding into the RAD category. Moving the funding into a RAD category will allow the VHA to use this funding when the VHA converts Kidston, Olivio or D'Orazio to make sure all the VHA's money is allocated before

the last project is converted. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Cartagena. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

Resolution #2020-58

Award Administrative Offices Renovation Contract

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2020-58. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

Resolution #2020-59

Approving One-Time Compensation Bonus Payments to Certain Authority Employees Based on Increased Hours and Responsibilities in Connection with the Authority's Shared Services Agreements, Management Agreements and Housing Assistance Payment Agreements

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa combined Resolutions #2020-59 and 2020-60. He requested comment from Vice-Chair Chapman. Vice-Chair Chapman stated these resolutions over the years have come up regarding decisions as they pertain to the compensation of the Authority's employees. He stated everything in this regard should default to the Executive Director. Vice-Chair Chapman stated this type of resolution presented before us, which he agrees with, representing a one-time recognition of a bonus payment to the employees specifically tied to the increased hours and responsibilities they have and the additional revenue which has been generated to the Authority because of their work. In addition, Resolution 2020-60 the Authority itself has been able to perform, in his opinion, exceptionally under the COVID-19 circumstance and has been compensated accordingly. He thinks the Board should recognize this has happened in large part due to Executive Staff and Administration of the VHA staff. He speaks in support of Resolutions 2020-59 and 2020-60 mostly in regard that they represent a one-time narrative as vs. something that the Authority has to pay for the next 50 years. Chapman stated if anyone had any questions he would be happy to answer them. Commissioner Forosisky asked how the revenue stream is from the shared services and how much is the revenue being received is to offset the bonus. Mrs. Jones explained the contracts with the OCHA, Buena and Melrose Court is about \$300-325,000 in revenue and will be increased by another \$30,000 or so by the end of the month. Commissioner Forosisky asked how much the total bonuses equal. Mrs. Jones stated one list is \$93,000 and other list (COVID resolution) is about \$46,000. Mrs. Jones stated additional revenue also comes from administering vouchers for Oakview Apartments. Brief discussion regarding the financial statement regarding revenue streams and the Central Office Cost Center line item. The majority will be charged against the Central Office Cost Center, which is considered non-federal funds and

these funds are earned through management fees, management agreements, property management fees etc.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa call for a motion to approve Resolution #2020-59. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

Resolution #2020-60
Resolution Approving One-Time Compensation Bonus to Certain Authority Employees Related to Exceptional Performance during the Authority's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa call for a motion to approve Resolution #2020-60. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi	(Absent)
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena	(Yes)
Commissioner Gary Forosisky	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Yes)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

There is no need for Executive Session.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa asked for comments from the press and/or public. Tia Bragg stated she is a Section 8 tenant and she wanted to know if anyone could give her a timeframe when the freeze would be lifted from preventing people from moving would be lifted. The VHA is not allowing inspections at this time and she wanted to know if the City of Vineland inspection could be substituted for that. She has found a place to move and the landlord is pretty adamant about her moving into the home. Mrs. Jones requested Tia Bragg to call the office tomorrow and it will get worked out. She instructed Ms. Bragg to call Cori Goldsborough. Mrs. Jones stated there was a time where no new move ins were occurring due to COVID-19. The VHA is a point where some move ins will be permitted. No additional comments from Board Members.

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entertained a motion for adjournment of the Regular Meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; 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 5:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jacqueline S. Jones
Secretary/Treasurer