



**MINUTES OF THE JULY 16, 2009
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Raymond Yamin
Stanley Watkins
Mary Teicholz
Jim Zeh

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Domenico Chieffalo

ATTENDEES:

Carolyn Sistrunk
Lorraine Coffey
Jodie Seigel
Colleen Madson
Kevin Barry
Floyd Banks
Ella Fraser
John W.
Jackie Elam
Deborah Gottschalk
Everette Spencer
Richard Knapp

CALL TO ORDER

The Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting for the Housing Authority of the City of Danbury was called to order at 5:33 p.m. at HACD Main Office, 2 Mill Ridge Road, Danbury, Connecticut. Upon motion by Stan Watkins and second by Mary Teicholz the meeting was called to order.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: First for the record, I am Floyd Banks, Resident Council Member, Glen Apartments. These 2 items can be checked on tomorrow, but any way, I happen to get a hold of the paper today and I saw all that work is going to start being done at the Housing Authority property and I think that this very good news for the Housing Authority and residents. Glen Apartments is pleased that the roofs being done even though there is one roof that was not

BY: *TC*



done. I'm not complaining about that because I know money only goes so far and maybe that is why that one has not been done. Just a couple of quick things: we haven't yet heard about the Farmer's Market coupons or the Senior picnic if they picked a date. If this is not the appropriate place for that I apologize other than that, that's it for today.

RESIDENT COUNCIL REPORT

Ms. Ella Fraser, President of Resident Council, I'm from Putnam Towers. I would like to announce that we have all sites covered now, a new member from Laurel Gardens. I would like to bring up that CT Coalition Convention will be held in Hartford on Wednesday, October 7, 2009 and we would like to attend. Convention is all about HUD's actions and housing. It is very rewarding.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resident Commissioner Jim Zeh, addressed that at last month's June meeting, he has correction on the resident council report that he did for Ella Fraser and that is it should not be Ella Grasso, but Governor Jodi Rell. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh the minutes of the June 18, 2009 regular meeting were approved.

DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS - Capital Project Update

Carolyn Sistrunk, Executive Director, provided updates. Ms. Sistrunk states that the article in the newspaper today captures all the capital work that is underway. It did leave out a couple that I will share today. We did just finish Glen Apartments roofing project as well. We just started the work up here at State Moderate Rental. We have planned to reconstruct all the steps at Eden Drive and budgeted about \$200,000. We will give that property a little sparkle by changing the fencing in front. If you notice that it is chain-link and all old looking. In the back of the property there is wooded area that leads down next to the sewer plant, and then Putnam's concrete garage. We are looking to put fencing there as well to create a solid wall, a different style fence which would be a little higher in the back to control some of the garbage that is thrown down there. It doesn't seem to be as much anymore. When I first got here it was the most disgusting thing that I have ever seen. It was unfair to the residents out there. It is less and less and less, but we still think that this will help deter illegal dumping back there as an issue. We also if you can imagine that property it has cement between the buildings instead of grass on the second tier and they have apparatus's to hang clothes lines and dry clothes. If we have any dollars left we are looking to do is to take that cement up and put down some sod and trees and make it more park like. So while we don't have a lot of dollars for Eden because we are focused on the capital needs at the senior properties with the federal stimulus money, Eden does need a little sparkle so we are looking to do that. At Wooster and Putnam, in addition to looking at the community room, we are starting the parking lot work by the end of August and hopefully completed by the end of fall. At Laurel Gardens, we are looking at changing out the heating system out there. It costs close to a \$1 million to \$1.5 million a year for the heating out



there because of the nature of the system. It is not an efficient way in terms of how heat is distributed to the units and we are going to look and first do a study, find grant funds for it and then change out the heating system to save that property some money, and make it profitable we believe so we can focus on some other rehab work at the other sites. We have a lot going on. It is rewarding. We have residents that have thanked us and that has not happened in a long time.

Commissioner Yamin comments that this is all good news and as the article described it very well. A lot of these properties needed stuff for many years, basic stuff. Need to extend the life span of these properties, make them more efficient to be able to spend money elsewhere. Can't be blowing heat out the windows.

Ms. Sistrunk comments that that is the number one issue at Laurel Gardens, is the heating system. It is a dual system correct, Richard. It is just gas. The furnace is here in one spot and the buildings are over there in another. The heat is piped underground to the buildings so the furnace thinks that it is 50 degrees and so it is telling it that it needs more and more heat, so it is constantly running. It doesn't know that it has reached the temperature in the buildings.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

We are doing well. A couple of things that I want to respond to, Floyd's two questions in my report; one is that yes we have the farmers market coupons and I think they were distributed on Wednesday. Richard Knapp commented that Dubra, Resident Coordinator, was distributing them today. The second thing is; yes, we have the senior picnic it is going to be at Hatters Park and the date is the August 25th, you will get something soon. We are as you know required to submit a strategic plan and the draft will be sent to you for your attention next week. We have tentatively scheduled a public hearing for September 3, 2009 at Ives Manor, 2pm to 4pm. The legal notice regarding the hearing has a 45 day notice requirement so it goes in the paper next week we hope Monday, maybe this weekend if we get lucky. We are in the process of looking at a couple of other grant opportunities. We just applied for an additional \$422,000 to do additional ADA 504 upgrades to our senior properties, Federal. It is the stimulus money, we applied and submitted last Monday and if we are lucky it includes some dollars that we can use towards the heating system at Laurel Gardens. It is a national competitive grant/process and the total pot is \$4 billion. We are hoping to get a part of that, but there is a lot of need out there, it is not just us, it is all over. Jackie and I are getting geared up to apply for additional designated housing vouchers. We are also looking at applying for a grant to open a computer center for our kids. There is a very special grant coming out from HUD and we have been invited to apply for it and that is a very good sign when you are asked to apply. Those are the big things going on. I'll take any questions you have. Commissioner Watkins asked Ms. Sistrunk who does most of our grant writing for the agency. Ms. Sistrunk answered that she does. Steve Ball, our consultant, did the grant for the roofs from DECD. The others like NSPI, I did that with the City, and then the NSP II, I did alone. I now have grant writing staff; Jackie can write grants, Deborah is not only an



attorney but she also knows how to write grants and our payroll person, Jim Sabo, I just found out has done a lot of grants in his life. You will see a lot more. Most public housing authorities are having to do now because of funding, find grants to run the business.

Commissioner Yamin asks if there is anything to highlight regarding the financials. Ms. Sistrunk comments that we are only \$5000 off our budget so that is great news. That is less than 3% deviation from the budget. Even though that was very painful when we had to lay off employees, we made a tough decision in a tough economy and it turned out ok. I have shared I think with everyone by email the results of the fair housing cases. If you have any questions I will be happy to take those one on one to protect the privacy of the people involved in the cases.

I ask that you adopt the financials and accept the Executive Directors report and I stand by to answer any questions. Oh, I'm sorry; the scattered site sales, we started at \$2.6 million have widdled it down to \$1.6 million. We have \$700,000 in an account that we are going to be making payments over the next three months that will take the debt down to under a million. We have four pending sales that is another \$700 to \$800 thousand. We believe that we will have some proceeds left where we can put it back into the operations and get rid of our debt. We have closed on Triangle, Morris Street, Hospital Ave, Lake Avenue, that's 4. We have pending offers on Farview, Oil Mill Road that is a vacant lot, Boxwood, we just got an offer that we accepted on Whitlock today, 4 pending. We still have Montgomery, Cleveland, Blackberry, E. Pembroke and Old Mill Plain Road, and Olive. We are going to make our mark and if they are priced right. We have 2 that are not moving and we just instructed the broker to use repair incentives on the one property because there is a lot of capital work and it is a good \$20,000 to \$25,000 plus to fix it then put it back out. If we fix it then we might as well keep it, but that is not the intention here. We are proceeding. MLS was March 1, 2009 for all but 3 of them. The 3 went out on mid-March. Each have their own particular closing issues, but it's moving.

Commissioner Yamin asked for a motion to adopt the financials and accept the Executive Directors report. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Stan Watkins the financials and Executive report were approved.

RESOLUTIONS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS - NONE

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

ADJOURNMENT:

Upon motion by Stan Watkins and second by Mary Teicholz, it was approved to adjourn the meeting at 5:52p.m.