



**MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 15, 2009  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Domenico Chieffalo  
Mary Teicholz  
Jim Zeh

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

Raymond Yamin  
Stanley Watkins

**ATTENDEES:**

Carolyn Sistrunk  
Colleen Madson  
Jackie Elam  
Richard Knapp  
Kim Nolan  
Jessie Marengo  
Jim Sabo  
Rose Morrison  
Mildred Brito  
Ella Fraser

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting for the Housing Authority of the City of Danbury was called to order at 5:34 p.m. at Ives Manor, 198 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Danbury, Connecticut. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Mary Teicholz the meeting was called to order.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No public comments

**RESIDENT COUNCIL REPORT**

Ella Fraser, Resident Council President, I would just like to say thank you to the Housing Authority for sending us to Hartford to the conference. Also, thank you for the invite to the Danbury Housing Partnership breakfast. Thank you for putting our consultant in place and we are working on getting our nomination forms out. Thank all very much.



## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh the minutes of the September 17, 2009 regular meeting were approved.

## **DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS**

My name is Jim Sabo, while I am the newest full time Housing Authority employee, my association with the agency goes back almost two years. I began working here part time through a temporary agency with primary responsibility for the weekly payroll. In January of this year, I also assumed responsibility for the agency's human resources functions as a part time employee. I am also responsible for the agency's commercial, auto and liability insurance policies and I serve as the liaison with our outside IT consultant. The successful conversion of the payroll processing system to Paychex at the end of 2008 has been the most significant accomplishment in this area of responsibility. The conversion went very well and Paychex has proven to be a reliable provider. I believe their product is much better than our previous vendor. The process has more checks and balances and does save time. I have worked to enhance the payroll preparation process as well to assure the prompt and accurate distribution of payroll checks each week. Regular maintenance of all payroll data is an important, ongoing process. A complete recreation of the agency's Employee Handbook was completed a couple of weeks ago with distribution of the document to all employees. This process involved many staff members and required the input and cooperation of many people. The end result is a handbook which brings together all of the agency's policies, is current with federal, state and local legislation and complies with the mandates of various external entities that provide funding and oversight. We now have an ongoing, scheduled in-service training program covering a variety of agency related matters including fair housing issues, business ethics, hiring, conflict resolution, workers compensation issues and lift training to name a few. Our computer network is running very well as a result of the efforts of our IT consultant. We have upgraded equipment and software as needed to assure staff has the resources they need to do their jobs properly. Going forward, I have a number of objectives including a complete review of all personnel records. In addition, I have already begun to look at the system we use for recording time and attendance. I believe this can be done in a more cost effective manner. We plan to make additional improvements to our e-mail system and to our main server with particular emphasis on providing adequate speed and space to meet the agency's current and future IT needs.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT**

I have provided the operational results for the month and we have a good start at closing up the year and getting ready to submit our program certifications for the end of the year. I just completed the submission of the 2010 Annual Plan this afternoon at 4:58p.m., so we have put to bed that plan submission for 2010. HUD now has 75 days to respond and that puts in place to have our capital budget ready to go January 1, 2010. We have completed our first quarter reporting on the federal stimulus package and there should be something on the internet regarding Danbury, not only our stimulus money but the City has some money and a couple of other agencies around October 30<sup>th</sup>. The Neighborhood Stabilization Program is underway. We have done our first quarter reporting and put that to bed this past Wednesday. We have completed the procurement of the broker. We have located properties and have completed the development of a procedural manual. We have the legal RFP out and we have one company that



submitted. We are pleased that Cramer and Anderson have responded. We have developed the RFP for the inspections and environmental services related to the Neighborhood Stabilization Program as well the RFP for the construction/rehab work that will be done once we buy these units. The money must be used fully by September 2010, but by December 2009 we are committed to having at least 50% of the funds obligated. If you recall that the amount is \$1.3 million. HUD gave us another \$21,000, which we didn't ask for, but we will not turn it away. It raises the total amount to just a little over \$1.4 million for purchasing these units. Scatter Site disposition continues. We have 5 properties left. The market is moving a little slower, but we still think we have a couple of gems in there that we think should move. We will continue our efforts and make adjustments in accordance where the market is. The capital work at Wooster and Putnam for the parking lots is underway. I would like to thank the Board Chairman for responding to the newspaper inquiry about killing trees over at Wooster Manor. I actually went out there on Monday and depending on which resident you spoke with, one loved it and wants more trees down, while the other said don't take them down, they bring shade to her unit. I think you will like what you see once we are done. A total of eight trees will come down, not five mentioned in the paper and I think another place I saw it was three. It is actually a total of eight trees. There are trees in the direct footprint of the new spaces that are either dead or dying. They will be replaced with other trees, eight other trees, but younger trees positioned not to interfere with the additional parking spaces. I will take any question or comments that you may have.

Commissioner Teicholz asks for clarification on what Shelter Plus Care is. Carolyn Sistrunk explains that it is a special Section 8 program for persons that are homeless facing disability. We work with two organizations, Greater Danbury Mental Health Association, which is one of the resolutions on tonight for renewal for that particular grant. We also work with Connecticut Outreach West which is the second grantee application which we are asking for your approval tonight. They actually service the clients and identify them. For the most part they follow the Housing Authority Admissions and Occupancy Policy, except there are separate procedures for self health care applicants eligible because it is a very different program and usually the type of person eligible may not be eligible for permanent housing. The grants have been around now since 2000-2001 and we continue to apply. We operate as the pass-through and the ultimate oversight for the Danbury Shelter Plus Care grants. The individual agency manages the programs, they provide the service component.

The August financials show a net program income of \$749,000, but the majority of that is going to HUD as a result of the scatter site disposition sales over the next four to five months. We are looking at a deficit for 2010. We have the preliminary budgets done to be submitted to the State. The State side is looking at about a \$300,000 deficit. It is the economy in the sense that the income expectation for the property will be considerably less just based on the number of people unemployed or just underemployed and they have less to pay towards their rent or they are not paying their rent. The State program does not have any other income source. We will be coming to you in November with recommendations to close that gap, the deficit gap for 2010. Preliminarily, it looks like we might be looking at additional layoffs. While this looks like we have a million dollar cash flow that money is going out the door to pay back HUD. We owe them just under a million left to pay them. We think with all these sales we might have money left to put back in, but I cannot count on that. We need to get a sustainable revenue. There is no sustainable revenue on the State side except rents. The inevitability of thinking outside the box



and doing other things, includes as part of our Annual Plan, which we notified HUD, we intend to initiate the federalizing of the state units, which about three years out. There are some other options that are very nuclear options. I will tell you what other Housing Authorities have done. They have done things like gone private and that then is a contract of administration. You are looking at layoffs of about 10-12 employees. The Board Chairman asks for clarification on what "going private" exactly means. Ms. Sistrunk explains that it means we have currently on staff employees that provide management and actually do the work to maintain the properties. Instead we would put out a request for proposal and ask private firms for proposals to manage our properties. There is a battle about whether or not you get better quality with a private firm. I am not convinced you get better quality, but you do reduce costs because of overhead. Our overhead is fairly significant. Our overhead on the administrative side is 48% and on the maintenance side it is over 50%. That is the nuclear option. We are not there yet, but it is something for us to think about and look at.

The Board Chairman asks for a motion to revise the agenda for HACD to add Resolution 815. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh, Resolution 815 was added to the HACD agenda.

#### **RESOLUTIONS AND INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

- A. Resolution 810** authorizes the Executive Director to publish and implement 2010 Board of Commissioners' Meeting Calendar. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Mary Teicholz the Resolution was adopted and approved.
- B. Resolution 811** authorizes the Executive Director to submit an application, via the Danbury Continuum of Care, to the Department of Housing & Urban Development to fund the Shelter Plus Care Program, in conjunction with Greater Danbury Mental Health Association, in the amount of one hundred fifty thousand four hundred and eighty dollars (\$150,480) or as amended by HUD; the Grant period shall cover April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh the Resolution was adopted and approved.
- C. Resolution 812** authorizes the Executive Director to submit an application, via the Danbury Continuum of Care, to the Department of Housing & Urban Development to fund the Shelter Plus Care Program, in conjunction with Connecticut Outreach West, in the amount of four hundred fifty-one thousand one hundred and forty-four dollars (\$451,144) or as amended by HUD; the Grant period shall cover April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2012. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh the Resolution was adopted and approved.
- D. Resolution 813** authorizes the Executive Director to establish Housing Choice Voucher Program's Payment Standards for the Danbury geographical area at 90% of Fair Market Rent and Litchfield County area at 105% of Fair Market Rent according to the following schedule, effective December 1, 2009. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh the Resolution was adopted and approved.

	<u>Danbury</u>	<u>Litchfield</u>
Efficiency:	\$ 930	\$ 701
One Bedroom:	\$1,129	\$ 914
Two Bedroom:	\$1,432	\$1,078
Three Bedroom:	\$1,714	\$1,385
Four Bedroom:	\$2,125	\$1,557



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- E. Resolution 814** authorizes the Executive Director to implement the attached policy for reimbursement of inter-fund activity. Upon motion by Jim Zeh and second by Mary Teicholz the Resolution was adopted and approved.
- F. Resolution 815** authorizes the Executive Director to pay for the emergency procurement to start the heating system at Putnam Tower in the amount of \$11,000. Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh the Resolution was adopted and approved.

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS: NONE**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Upon motion by Mary Teicholz and second by Jim Zeh, it was approved to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 p.m.