

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
SECAUCUS HOUSING AUTHORITY  
700 COUNTY ROAD  
SECAUCUS, NEW JERSEY

March 22, 2012

This is a condensed transcription of the taped minutes as taken on  
Thursday, March 22, 2012, Secaucus, New Jersey.

Chairman Michael Harper welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Executive Director Christopher Marra called the roll.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairman Michael Harper  
Vice-Chairman Louis Canavari  
Commissioner George Broemmer  
Commissioner Michael Schlemm  
Kenny Koch, Mayor's Liaison  
Commissioner Nicholas Costantino\*\*

Also Present: Executive Director Christopher Marra  
Deputy Executive Director Jacob Naszimento  
James Burke, Esq., Counsel to the Authority

Absent: Commissioner Frances Jodice  
Commissioner Arlene Kroll

Mr. Marra read the Open Public Meetings Act.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

**“Adequate notice of this meeting, as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, has been provided by the filing of a Regular Meeting Notice with the Municipal Clerk, the posting of said notice on the official bulletin board in the Municipal Government Center, and delivery of same to the Jersey Journal and Secaucus Homes News on December 15, 2011. This body wishes to advise you that, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 26:3D(1), et seq. (Smoking in Public Buildings), smoking is prohibited while this body is in open or closed session.”**

## **FLAG SALUTE**

(At this point in the proceeding, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.)

## **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES of February 23, 2012**

Motion to accept minutes made by Commissioner Broemmer; seconded by Commissioner Schlemm.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)  
Absent: Costantino/Jodice/Kroll

## **PAYMENT OF CLAIMS FOR MARCH 2012**

ED Marra discussed a bill in the amount of \$27,4810 listed on page 2 of the bill list to Thyssen Krupp Eleveator. This bill is for work done in previous months dating back to November 2011. The elevators in this building (RIT) were down for four-five days in January. This company was also doing work on week-ends, which is more expensive. Mr. Marra will send an email to the Commissioners tomorrow explaining the breakdown of the costs. SHA has the company under contract, rates are set and the Authority pre-approves any costs that go above that, i.e., weekend work. Back in November, the elevator broke down on Veterans Day, which is a holiday, and that was an added expense.

Motion to approve payment of claims made by Commissioner Canavari; seconded by Commissioner Schlemm.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)  
Absent: Costantino/Jodice/Kroll

## **FINANCE, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, PERSONNEL OR POLICY ITEMS – nothing for this evening's meeting**

Executive Director Marra did indicate one item under Policy that might come up in the future is: he had a meeting with the Tenants Association. A new policy might come back to the Commissioners regarding bulletin boards within the Housing Authority buildings in terms of anything that goes on those boards. At this time, the boards are "the wild west". Anyone can put anything up there that they want, for the most part, and they take it down. Many items do not go through the Authority Office to be "approved". Mr. Marra has been approached by the Tenants Association regarding some thought about what goes on the bulletin boards.

## BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

Mr. Marra explained about a memo for the Commissioners regarding being contacted back in November 2011 by Comcast. They sent service agreements for each building that the Authority owns. They want the Authority to executive these agreements, which isn't to give them the monopoly on providing service here, but is to that they never formally executed any agreement to put their equipment on the Authority property. Mr. Marra is of the opinion that Comcast just purchased NBC and there is a possibility Comcast has become slightly more "corporatized", more bureaucratic. He's surprised there was no agreement in the past 30 years that Comcast could have their equipment in the buildings. The kicker says, if the Authority helps them with marketing, they'll pay the Authority a certain amount of money one time. ED Marra sent the memo to Mr. Burke, Esq. for review. Initially, it stated the Authority could not tell anyone what was in the agreement. ED Marra explained to the woman this would be discussed at a public meeting and records, based on New Jersey law, had to be open to the public. Comcast removed the clause. Comcast included "Frequently Asked Questions" and a Power Point material to explain the agreements.

Commissioner Schlemm asked about "it's not exclusive for their service," but they are taking exclusive use of the wiring. Does that mean if another company came in instead of Comcast, the other company would have to wire the buildings. He asked did Comcast originally wire the buildings. Mr. Burke said that company would have to do its own line. He believes Comcast did its own wiring, but he's not sure. Mr. Burke advised Mr. Marra it is against Federal Law – exclusive. Other companies have to have the right to come in, but they can use their own wire. Mr. Koch added back in the beginning of 2006, Comcast did a certain amount of extensive wiring into the apartments. Mr. Marra explained there were three packets of documents and it took three weeks of going back and forth with people at Comcast to come to the realization, they just wanted some sort of documentation that they were allowed to be in the building. The memo does state "This does not preclude FIOS."

Commissioner Schlemm asked about the relay antenna on this building. Mr. Marra indicated he has never seen that agreement in the time he's been here. Is it a relay antenna that has to do with cable television or with Comcast? Mr. Marra said as of this date, the Authority does not have towers on any of its buildings in which they collect a rent for that antenna. ED Marra said back in early 1990's the Housing Authority had an agreement with the Port Authority for emergency services and there was a fee paid for that. There was a rental fee, but over time, they no longer needed that antenna. Kenny Koch said that Channel 7 does have a traffic feeder that trains on the N.J. Turnpike.

Commissioner Schlemm asked Mr. Marra if the Commissioners were in favor of adopting a resolution and taking in the \$13,750 one-time payment from Comcast or not, and whether the Commissioners will provide Mr. Marra with some direction this evening regarding the disposition of those funds. Mr. Marra said he would have just put it into Operating Revenue, but does not have a specific project in mind. Commissioner Schlemm asked about the length of time it covered. ED Marra said when a new tenant comes into the building, they get a package and in that would be a brochure about Comcast. Mr. Marra is dealing with a woman in Dallas, Texas. Mr. Burke added sometimes Comcast sends a representative to speak with tenants about their services.

Mr. Marra said at the present time he is working on small projects, but doesn't have anything in mind for those funds. Commissioner Broemmer suggested Mr. Marra speak with Mr. Katchen and not put the funds in Operating Expenses. ED Marra said it would be adopted by resolution and that would empower Mr. Marra to enter into the service agreement, which would be returned to Comcast.

Motion to approve signing service agreement with Comcast for a one-time payment of \$13,750 made by Commissioner Schlemm; seconded by Commissioner Canavari.

**(Prior to the vote, ED Marra indicated Commissioner Nicholas Costantino was present.)**

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)

Absent: Jodice/Kroll

#### **UPDATE ON REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR ENERGY PERFORMANCE CONTRACT**

Commissioners received notes on six companies. Another company, Johnson Controls, walked through the Authority's buildings today. Next Wednesday, it is contemplated seven proposals will be received for the Authority's Energy Performance Contract. Johnson Controls is very interested in this project as they are relocating their 70-person office from Hasbrouck Heights to 300 Lighting Lane. The people in that office would be working on this project. Last week Siemens visited the buildings. After next Wednesday, the Committee will get together and pick 3-4 companies to interview and go forward from there.

#### **REGARDING RESTORATION & WATERPROOFING AT KROLL HEIGHTS**

Mr. Marra explained yesterday morning, a dozen contractors showed up for the non-mandatory pre-bid conference meeting. April 3<sup>rd</sup> bids will be received at 11 AM. Once the bids have been opened and reviewed by the architects, specifically the low bidders, Mr. Marra will contact Chairman Harper and

hopefully schedule a special meeting in early April to award the contract. It is hoped to have the contractor on-site by May 1<sup>st</sup> to work on the water infiltration issues that are occurring at Kroll Heights. Commissioner Schlemm said his only objection was it said bids should be sent to Morristown Housing Authority. Mr. Marra said that was a typo, having been forwarded to him from the architect. Everything else states Secaucus Housing Authority. Commissioner Broemmer asked if it was possible to have the special meeting other than a Tuesday or Thursday in April. ED Marra said they'd work with everyone's schedule to get the maximum number of Commissioners at the special meeting.

## **DISCUSSION REGARDING THE TOWERS**

Mr. Marra said many people know there is an exhaust for a generator on the third floor. Every Monday morning it is tested for 30 minutes. For many of the tenants on the third floor, it is a nuisance. Some tenants on the third floor have indicated they would like to relocate. There is a relocation policy and many of these residents do meet that issue of being here for five years, but the relocation policy is very strict and very cumbersome. Because the policy is strict, Mr. Marra is going to try to relocate the exhaust out to the roof where the other exhausts are, but in order to do that, he needs to do an RFP for architectural engineering services and then have a contractor do the work. Rudox Engineering was here, the company that maintains the diesel generator in the ground floor. Mr. Marra asked them if they had an alternative idea on how he could redirect the exhaust, and filter the exhaust from where it is. The only way to do that is by taking the pipe and running it up from the third floor to the 14<sup>th</sup> floor and having it come out at the roof. One of the Commissioners asked about the generator. Mr. Marra explained the generator is in the basement, ground floor, and it's really the exhaust that's the problem. Not every resident on the third floor has this issue, but those on the south end have it more than others or the people that face the east end of the building. ED Marra will see what the cost is in regards to architectural engineering expense. The architect was here and he told Mr. Marra and Joe, he thought the entire job could be done for less than \$15,000. Everyone commented perhaps use \$13,750 from Comcast. The item will come back to Building & Grounds. Mr. Marra is trying to resolve it. Commissioner Schlemm said it was a big quality of life issue.

## **UPDATING ON LEVERAGING FUNDS**

Mr. Marra said there was \$20,000-\$21,000 remaining from the leveraging pool from 2008. He wrote letters in 2012 asking for an extension. He received an email from the New Jersey Housing Mortgage Finance saying Secaucus Housing Authority did not need to ask for any more extensions because the funds that are left are interest and Secaucus HA can apply for that. When Wonderstar comes back some time in April, the Authority will draw down the money to pay them.

## **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM – DED Naszimento**

DED Naszimento explained there was not much change during this month. One new family was added. Approximately \$181,914 was spent during the month, which is basically where the Authority wants to be. Next month another family possibly will be added to the Program. It is the policy in the Program to only add one family as a family drops off, which would be a total of 220 next month. 75 percent of landlords are on direct deposit. Average amount of funds spent on an individual unit this month is \$829, which has been the amount over the past 3-4 months, since opening the list. There were no questions or comments.

## **TOWERS/HEIGHTS TENANT ASSOCIATION**

Commissioners had the financial report of the Tenants Association Financial Report for February 2012. Some positive tenant correspondence was included regarding the staff.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT & UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Today Linda Fanning received her certification in the State Health Insurance Assistance Program Certification Evaluation. Linda took those five classes on Fridays in January and February; passed a test that provides her with the ability to offer seniors counseling on the health programs offered by the Federal Government.

Another item, Mr. Marra brought up was in regard to Meadowlands Hospital. Representatives visited last October during a regularly scheduled meeting. The hospital wanted to put a monitoring system into tenants' apartments. No one has really signed up for that. It is ready to be implemented in Unico Towers and another housing authority in Jersey City. After they've had it up and running for a while, Mr. Marra will speak with several Commissioners and see if they are interested in visiting the facility.

## **MAYOR'S LIAISON KENNY KOCH**

Kenny said people using the dryers are not cleaning the filter after every use. It is a potential fire hazard. Everyone should be aware of this and do their part. He also said newer residents are leaving shopping carts either in the elevator or outside the elevators instead of returning them to the proper place. If an emergency should occur, those carts would be a hazard to the First Responders. Kenny asked people to speak up and say something to the person leaving the cart, or call Kenny and he'll talk to the person.

**REMARKS OF CITIZENS**

A gentleman said someone is misusing the television in the Community Room and it cannot be turned on. The man also wanted to know if the windows could be washed.

Mr. Marra reiterated to the tenants about cleaning the filter in the dryer. Signs have been put up in the Laundry Room, but people are still ignoring the requests. He also said he was not aware of the issues with shopping carts in elevators and on the floors, but he will write a memo to the tenants.

One woman asked if it was possible to put up a notice on each floor regarding meetings. While the notice is put on the ground floor bulletin board, someone takes it down before everyone has seen that notice. Mr. Marra thought the entire schedule for the year had been placed on each floor's bulletin board and in the Laundry Room. He will make sure it is done again.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Schlemm; seconded by Commissioner Canavari.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (5)  
Absent: Jodice/Kroll

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez, Transcriber