

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

July 25, 2019

This is a condensed transcription of the taped minutes as taken on Thursday,
July 25, 2019 at Kroll Heights, 700 County Road, Secaucus, New Jersey
Commencing at 7:10 P.M.

Chairman Michael Schlemm welcomed everyone and called meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Chairman Michael Schlemm
Vice-Chairman Michael Harper
Commissioner Richard Fairman
Commissioner Carmen Rivera

Also Present:

Executive Director Christopher Marra
Deputy Executive Director Jake Naszimento
Charles D'Amico, Esq., Counsel to the Authority

Absent:

Commissioner Patricia Mondadori
Commissioner Antonio Suarez

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 in December 2018. 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.

FLAG SALUTE – recited by all present.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Motion to accept minutes of June 27, 2019 made by Commissioner Harper; 2nd by Commissioner Rivera.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (3)
Abstain: Schlemm

Absent: Mondadori/Suarez

PAYMENT OF CLAIMS

Motion to approve payment of claims for month of July made by Commissioner Harper; 2nd by Commissioner Rivera.

Commissioner Fairman inquired about carpeting; ED Marra said it was 6, nothing special, just run of the mill. Chairman Schlemm asked about door at The Elms. Problem was noticed at last month's meeting. ED Marra explained there was steel door at bottom of staircases – north door/south door. After water main break south door was replaced in 2018. North tower door (barely used) was replaced for same amount of money; both doors lead to outside. These were original doors from 1975. Front door has been repaired.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Absent: Mondadori/Suarez

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Bank balances through June 30th presented to Commissioners.

Email forwarded to Commissioners on July 15th regarding Carol Friedman and NJSEM. First year of 2-year agreement completed. This was first time it appeared SHA lost money; ED Marra sent it to Carol; she answered there appears to have been an error on South Jersey Energy's part; she is waiting their response. Hopefully, there will be an adjustment next year.

On Monday/Tuesday, SHA will have its annual audit; at 4 PM Tuesday, Finance Committee will meet with Anthony Policari and Bill Ketchen to hear a briefing about audit.

No **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OR POLICY COMMITTEE** at this time.

BUILDING & GROUNDS

A memo/document re: INVESTMENT GRADE AUDIT FOR THE ELMS – part of PSE&G's multi-family program. Thursday, July 19th, this Committee met with PSE&G personnel and a company, MaGrann Associates. The memo outlines what meeting entailed, i.e. upgrading heating/cooling systems at The Elms to provide the Authority with savings. There is an upfront capital cost. PSE&G

provides 30% of total cost as incentive; SHA would pay off an \$848,000 over 60 months – estimated to be about \$14,000/year. Estimated payback on the project is 10.6 years.

There are additional projects SHA would have to do. PSE&G provided SHA with recent updated, received today by Commissioners, stating 100 electrical panels (each apartment) as they are 1975 Pacific Federal Stab lock circuit breakers, needed to be upgraded for new equipment. A major service line would be rerouted near the building also. Once the air-conditioners are removed from that building, it would have to be refacaded either totally or a piecemeal way.

PSE&G thought project cost \$848,000; SHA has \$872,616 in the fund specifically for this project, still earning interest. When you pay that amount over 5 years, there is no interest on that \$848,000. Interest free loan. So if you kept that \$872,616, continued to be invested; ED Marra said it would cover the 8-48 and have some amount of money left over. With what is leftover, it might help offset the other costs.

Commissioner Harper noted it is probably the biggest project in history of SHA. He explained The Elms was built during the gas crises in late 1970's, everything is electric. Converting all or some to gas has been spoken about for a long time. He has seen many big projects; they are always nerve wracking when you get into them – like the RAD conversion. Commissioner Harper feels very comfortable with this Board and positive about going into this big project. Commissioner Fairman – financial acumen; Chairman Schlemm's engineering background, for example. With an interest free loan it is an opportunity that has to be seriously looked at. ED Marra explained there is one meter at The Elms – SHA pays it all.

Commissioner Fairman asked if building would be meterized and converted from electric to gas. ED Marra said amount does not include meterization of 100 units. After RAD, SHA had meetings with PSE&G and MaGrann Associates, but at that time PSE&G had no money left in their budget to fund a project like this. What PSE&G presented was not electric to gas but a “better project” – still electric but they would save SHA money by putting in a VRF system, which is cooling and heating, less obstructive to residents. Plan presented to SHA last Tuesday was they would not drill hole into each floor of building, but run a tube down side of the building cased in plastic tubing. This would be less invasive inside tenants' apartments.

This project was revitalized after a Building & Grounds Committee meeting in late February, Chairman Schlemm suggesting calling Rachel Fredericks, see if they have money. ED Marra emailed her and next day answered, PSE&G has money and interested in SHA project. Building would stay electric, but technology enables a different delivery of cooling/heating and that is what they would fund. Rachel gave estimate of changing breaker boxes was \$150,000; to

move around main power line was \$25,000 equaling \$125,000. There would be 100 holes in the building where there's a sleeve. PSE&G would fill that hole on the inside facing the elements that would hold the elements; insulate and put a piece of wallboard over it. In the end, SHA has to do something to seal that.

No price for third project, but first two, Rachel is estimating \$175,000. Chairman Schlemm brought up waterproofing on the façade with all these holes. How does this come about? Number would be bigger than just patching a hole. He thinks attaching the waterproof items would be his choice. Commissioner Fairman asked if it would be greater than \$600,000/\$700,000. ED Marra will have the answer tomorrow. He noted going back in 2009, entire building was waterproofed and will find out what that cost – probably between \$200,000-\$300,000 back in 2009. Commissioner Fairman added money in funded budget would wash by what PSE&G will do for SHA; only change is to take care of water problem and sum of those 3 numbers. Is any of that in the budget?

ED Marra answered it will be a fuller discussion on upcoming Tuesday, but answer is SHA probably has some of that money; also a discussion about approaching Secaucus to get community development money for some of that project: i.e., upgrading of the boxes, code upgrade. It's possible it could be funded by some outside entity. Commissioner Fairman and Chairman Schlemm noted 5-year no-interest loan, so SHA is making money being held, allowing SHA to do other things.

Major discussion ensued about funding. ED Marra will ask if 35% funding is possible.

UPDATE ON FIRE PUMP AT THE ELMS – JUNE 5 PRESSURE TEST OF EXISTING FIRE PUMP

Resolution 2019-20 – Award of contract to A&A Industrial Piping – at last meeting it was noted this project was bid 2 times, receiving no responses. Under New Jersey Public Contract Law, SHA accepted bids on April 11th and June 13th – no bids received, SHA is then allowed to negotiate bids. SHA talked to a few fire pump manufacturers, telling us that for them project was too complicated, involving both electrical and installation of fire pump – what SHA needed was a general contractor. Several were reached out to: Cerullo Fire Protection, Magic Touch Construction, A&A Industrial Piping and Leighton Industries. A&A Industrial came in at \$149,027. Magic Touch came in lower, but A&A Industrial was hired to install the air handler on top of 600 County Avenue and fans on top of this building. They are subcontracting with Cerullo. Cerullo's \$74,000 was incomplete, didn't include anything about electrical control, etc. as they didn't know how to do it. This number is about 80-\$90,000 more than CMA initially thought project would cost. This building has 2 standpipes, no sprinklers, original equipment from 1975; hasn't passed a test in 2 years. The Fire Inspector says there is no case where firemen will go into the housing authority and open up

the standpipe and connect their hose. If it's there, it has to work. Mr. Marra said if allowed, he'd rip out the standpipe at a cost of less than \$149,000, SHA is stuck with it.

People did walk through the project, upon seeing, they determined they couldn't do it. Magic Touch Construction was \$4k less, didn't look at project; wanted to charge SHA to send 2 men out to visit site; no free estimate; look at it and if they got contract, they would take that off cost of project. Others did look at the job to be done.

RESOLUTION 2019-20

Award of Contract for the Replacement of Fire Pump, Jockey Pump, Controller and other devices associated with the equipment at The Elms 777 Fifth Street

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Secaucus (hereinafter referred to as SHA) has determined that it needs to procure the services of a contractor to replace a Fire Pump, Jockey Pump, Controller and other devices for the Elms Building at 777 Fifth Street; and

WHEREAS, SHA accepted bids on Thursday, April 11, 2019 and there were no responsive bidders: and

WHEREAS, the SHA again accepted bids on June 13, 2019: and again there were no responsive bidders; and

WHEREAS, under NJ Public Contracts Law 40A:11-5 Bids have been advertised pursuant to section 4 of P.L. 1971, c.198 (C.40A:11-4) on two occasions and {a} no bids have been received on both occasions in response to the advertisement,...any such contract may then be negotiated and may be awarded upon adoption of a resolution by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the authorized membership of the governing body authorizing such contract; provided, however that

- {1} not available from an agency or authority of the United States or the State of New Jersey or of the county in which the county of the contracting unit is located;
- {2} The terms, conditions, and restrictions and specifications set forth in the negotiated contract (Bid specification package) are not substantially different from those which were the subject of competitive bidding
- {3} Any minor amendment or modification of any of the terms, conditions, restrictions and specifications which were the subject of the competitive bidding pursuant to section 4 of P.L. 1971, c.198 (C.40A:11-4) shall be stated in the resolution awarding the contract;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED on this 25 day of July 2019 by the Board of Commissioners of the Town of Secaucus Housing Authority that:

1. That the Authority received no bids for the above project and following NJ Public Contract Law, as cited above, in conjunction with their professional service provider (architect/engineer) began negotiating with separate qualified parties to undertake this assignment.

2. Based upon the receipt of three proposals from qualified contractors it is the recommendation of CMA that the Authority award A&A Industrial Piping, Inc. Fairfield, NJ for \$149,027 for the replacement of existing fire pump at The Elms.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners hereby authorize and Direct the Executive Director of the SHA to execute said contract and take any and all necessary administrative actions to implement this Resolution.

Motion to approve Resolution #2019-20 made by Commissioner Harper; 2nd by Commissioner Rivera.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4) Absent: Mondadori/Suarez

UPDATE ON 600 COUNTY AVENUE – GROUND FLOOR LEAKAGE OR CONDENSATION PIPING

In January Commissioners and ED Marra walked through buildings, 600 County has a basement, damage noted on wall & floor, water infiltration. It was determined condensation pipe leaking – building has a chiller unit. Yesterday floor was dug up in Apt. #107, saw break which was fixed. All will be put together but wait to see if more water is detected, costing about \$14,000.

16 replacement doors ordered for 600 County, all will be replaced over next 3-4 years – door knobs, etc. Cost \$19,000.

ED Marra ready to write up specs for Community Room flooring, vinyl planking looking like wood flooring. ED Marra stated parking lot on Centre Avenue needs repair.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (HCV) PROGRAM – DED JAKE NASZIMENTO

In July \$183,604 – broken down as \$155,893 on 187 families in town; remaining \$27,711 spent on 31 families outside of Secaucus; 6 new vouchers issued in July. Almost all of them will be released; some attrition in the program within last 1-2 months for various reasons – families falling off program.

REMARKS OF CITIZENS

BARBARA - #1209 – spoke about difficulty with 2nd door in breezeway. ED Marra didn't know it was broken and will have it checked tomorrow.

TENANTS OF #401 & 410 – she's been here 19 years and wondering when apartments will be painted. Mr. Marra said they were painted in 2010. She would pay to have apartment painted but has no one to do it. ED Marra said no plans on painting for 1-2 years in any of the buildings. Rugs in hallway were replaced in 2011 – tenant said dirty and bathroom cabinets are rotted. ED

Marra knows about vanities and hoping to get them replaced. There is a company coming in every Monday to vacuum. Rugs are extracted 2 times a year – May/November.

MICHELLE - #406 – hallways are always so hot, there are fans at each end, but her apartment is in the middle. Could you put big fan near elevator. She uses towels at her door to keep out the heat. No elevators are air-conditioned in any of SHA buildings. ED Marra will see what can be done about fans, perhaps they could go near the elevator.

Michelle also noted people haven't parked in #15 or #16 in a year. They're taking up a spot, but where are their cars. ED Marra will speak with Terry about that; she manages parking spaces. Terry has instituted a plan, tenant must bring insurance card once a year, now done when insurance expires. Person gets a notice "bring me your new registration/new insurance card".

CAROL STEWART - #216 – Carol said Greg did a very good job regarding garbage during hot spell, no smell in garbage room and it was checked often. Could new tenants be advised that they should not bring large boxes to garbage room, but break them up, call office and leave in hallway? There also had large suitcase outside their door and were blasting music.

CARMEN CERTISIMO - #415 - requesting bath tub be cut for her 95 year old brother. Mr. Marra asked that he come talk to him tomorrow. His sister is in #510.

CORRESPONDENCE

Commissioners have memo re: continuing issue of Operating Reserve Offset Lawsuit – ED Marra attends meetings for NAHRO Board; HUD lost money and likely to use this case again. He is learning that HUD is extraordinarily annoyed about this and plans on having retribution against housing authorities. They've already started some, but have not impacted SHA at this time. Interesting how Federal Government works – HUD gets sued, pay out a big lump sum, but not out of their budget. There is an entire area of Federal Government that pays out lawsuits. Judge said HUD messed up twice.

Nan McKay training class was in May, which everyone in office attended. 4 out of 5 passed. Jake and Mr. Marra were two of those that passed.

NAHRO has a summer conference in 2020 that will be held in NYC. Mr. Fairman and Mr. Harper have perhaps attended once over the years. NAHRO means National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials. There is usually one in October, one in summer and one in D.C. in March. ED Marra hasn't attended in eight years. Being in NYC, no hotel expense, if anyone wants to go next year, SHA will pay registration, reimbursement for transportation. They are good conferences.

FYI: There is no mold in Apartment #777.

OLD BUSINESS

Please read email from JIF per Mr. D'Amico, Esq.

There may be a special meeting in August re: PSE&G item.

Commissioner Fairman brought up 2 items previously discussed: has there been any action re: property owners not taking Section 8 – Mr. Marra answered NO.

Mr. Marra said on smoking --- yes, but he hasn't gotten to the point where someone has been given Notice to Cease – which is a notice before eviction. A woman on 6th floor called police Saturday night as she smelled marijuana. Police came, said they smelled it as well in the bathroom. People who live right below here and 2 floors below – he went to see them, doesn't believe they smoke marijuana nor use medical marijuana, but cannot answer the question, but there is no question about it – that building has most smokers. 3 smokers in this building and 6 next door. Enforcement has to be continued there.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Harper; 2nd by Commissioner Rivera.

VOTE: AYES/All Present Commissioners (4)

Absent: Mondadori/Suarez

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah L. Alvarez
Secretary/Transcriber