

*These minutes are not verbatim, but a condensed version of what transpired at the Lakewood Housing Authority (LHA) Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting held on **Thursday, September 15th, 2022 at 7:05 pm.***

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mr. Stafford-Smith called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Teresa Acosta announced that consistent with the Open Public Meetings Law: P.L.1975 c231, which requires that all meetings of public bodies shall be open to the public at all times, both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting was provided to the clerk of the Township of Lakewood, the Ocean County Library, the Asbury Park Press, and the Star-Ledger on August 30th, 2022 and was posted on the Authority's official designated public bulletin board at the LHA Administration Building and website.

ROLL CALL

On roll call, attending Commissioners were:

- Gregory Stafford-Smith – *Chairperson*
- Shabsi Ganzweig – *Vice Chairperson*
- Angela Caldwell – *2nd Vice Chairperson (via Zoom)*
- Denise Douglas – *Commissioner (via Zoom)*
- Eli Rennert – *Commissioner (7:18 pm)*

Also attending:

- Scott Parsons – *Executive Director*
- Terrence Corriston – *Attorney (via Zoom – 7:21pm)*

Absent were:

- Ray Coles – *Township Liaison*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of July 7th, 2022 were reviewed. A motion was made by Mr. Ganzweig, seconded by Ms. Douglas. All commissioners present were in favor. Minutes were approved.

COMMENTS FROM HOUSING AUTHORITY RESIDENTS - None

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Michael McNeil from STEPS mentioned that he has received the next round of funding for back rents for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Mr. McNeil stated that there are two things discussed as concerns in Ocean County, rent control/high rents and the amount of time to find homes when on Section 8 based on the 120-day rule. Mr. Parsons mentioned that a waiver was received from HUD which extends the date through December 31st, 2022. Mr. McNeil mentioned that the Lakewood Housing Authority has been very helpful with servicing town residents and would like to commend the LHA and office staff with their ongoing assistance.

BILLS AND APPROVAL OF SAME

Bills were reviewed. After discussion, a motion to approve was made by Mr. Ganzweig, seconded by Ms. Caldwell. All present were in favor. Bills were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE - None

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mr. Parsons presented the Board with his Executive Directors report including the following items:

Current leasing percentage: the HCV program was 97.3% leased up with 99.1% of the HAP budget expended through July 2022.

FSS Action Plan: The Final Rule implementing the re-authorization of the FSS program that was passed as part of the Economic Growth Act in 2018 has been signed by HUD Secretary and published in the Federal Register on May 17, 2022. Mr. Parsons mentioned that the draft Action Plan is included in the board Package for review and reviewed the highlighted changes. After the Board approves the plan it will be sent to HUD for review/approval. New participants will not be able to enroll in the FSS Program until HUD approves the plan.

Peter Ward Laundry Room:

Currently the contractor is waiting on permits from the Township in order to begin the renovations.

HCV Waiting List:

The intention is to open the waiting list in late September/early October. As previously discussed, adding a preference for those that can/will lease in place will help clients get on the program quickly and minimize applicants receiving vouchers that will be unable to find housing and thus losing their vouchers. Mr. Parsons expressed that the Board needs to come to a decision on how the LHA will implement a preference before there is any advertisement that the waiting list is opened.

Lulu Duffy Boiler Bid:

The LHA went out for bid for the boiler replacement. The bids were received on August 18th, 2022. Mr. Parsons has been in the process of applying through Ocean Count Weatherization Program to have the boiler replacement funded through this program. There are guidelines that require information to complete the application process which may be time consuming with hopes that it can be completed prior to the heating season being in full swing. Mr. Parsons stated that he will monitor the progress however, if the progress is not moving as quickly as needed, the Board will have to make a decision at the October meeting to award the contract to the lower bidder from the LHA solicitation.

2023 HUD Published Fair Market Rents:

Mr. Parsons provided the Board a copy of an email that was sent to HUD regarding the FMR's. The information is very disappointing and misleading considering the reality of our situation. Mr. Parsons stated that the FMR in Lakewood went up about 2% but still lower than 2021, which makes no sense in Lakewood and Ocean County. We are anticipating PHADA and NAHRO will approach HUD regarding the matter.

REPORT OF COMMITTEES –

Personnel Committee was solicited to complete the Executive Directors annual evaluation. Mr. Stafford-Smith will have a targeted date to have this completed.

LHA BUDGET REPORT

The budget report through July 31st, 2022 was provided and briefly discussed.

REPORT OF ATTORNEY

Mr. Corrison stated that with the increase in evictions which are actions for cause, the LHA staff has been on top of tenants with video evidence to prepare cases for trial. Two tenants were referred to contact STEPS for assistance in bringing them in compliance.

REPORT OF TOWNSHIP LIAISON – None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Stafford-Smith briefly mentioned that he had reached out to Lieutenant Marshall inquiring about any available security grants to fund facial recognition products for the authority. Once there is a response, the information will be passed on to the Executive Director.

NEW BUSINESS - The following new business came before the Board:

A motion was made by Mr. Ganzweig and seconded by Ms. Caldwell to approve the following Consent Agenda. On roll call approving, Mr. Stafford-Smith, Mr. Ganzweig, Ms. Caldwell, Ms. Douglas and Mr. Rennert. The following Consent Agenda was approved.

a. Resolutions:

Resolution 5321: Ratification of Full-Time Case Worker

Resolution 5322: Awarding Contract for A/E Services – Various Projects

Resolution 5323: FSS Action Plan

b. Additions:

Mr. Ganzweig mentioned the Shared Housing with HUD. Expressing that this would give more opportunities for places applicants can lease up. A motion was made by Mr. Ganzweig to amend the Administrative Plan to allow Shared Housing and add a preference. The motion was seconded by Ms. Douglas. All present were in favor, Ms. Caldwell abstained.

A motion was made by Mr. Ganzweig to have the Executive Director write to the Congressional Legislature to advocate the Fair Share Housing issue. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rennert. All present were in favor.

A motion was made by Mr. Ganzweig to allow the Executive Director to allocate a 10k budget to hire a lobbyist to advocate for Fair Share Housing issues and the Fair Market Rent Value in Lakewood. The motion was seconded by Ms. Caldwell. All present were in favor.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY PROPERLY COME BEFORE THE BOARD – None

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS - None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ganzweig, seconded by Ms. Caldwell. All present voted to adjourn at approximately 8:57 pm.

I hereby certify that the above is a true copy of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Township of Lakewood, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey, as held on Thursday, September 15th, 2022.



Scott Parsons, Secretary
Executive Director