

**COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR BOARD MEETING, MAY 17, 2023**

The Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority held its regular meeting on Wednesday, May 17, 2023 by a zoom meeting. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Prescille Yamamoto at 1:32 p.m.

- 1. **ROLL CALL:** Commissioner Allen Harrison  
 Commissioner Hazelann Cook  
 Commissioner Debra Crockett-Hatzidakis  
 Vice Chairman Prescille Yamamoto

Absent was Chairman James Kate.

Also present were: Debra Bouchard, Executive Director, Christopher Pliszka, Finance Director and Brenda Pliszka, Executive Secretary/HR Director.

2. **Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes, April 19, 2023**

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of April 17, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no one from the public present to address the Board.

4. **Request for Additional Agenda Items**

Ms. Bouchard said she would like to add under New Business b. Review and Approval of Section 8 Payment Standards and under Executive Session – Pending Claims and Litigation.

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to approve the additional items to be added to the Agenda -- under New Business b. Review and Approval of Section 8 Payment Standards and under Executive Session – Pending Claims and Litigation. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

5. **FINANCE REPORTS**

a. **Payment Vouchers, April, 2023**

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to accept the Payment Vouchers for March, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Crockett seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if there were any questions on the April, 2023 payment vouchers. In regard to the payment vouchers, the following questions were asked: #64893 Professional Promotions – Mr. Pliszka said we hired a couple new maintenance staff and that is where we purchase our uniforms. #64891 – JD Solar Solutions, LLC – Mr. Pliszka said they installed our solar panels so if we have an issue with the roof where the panels are they may have to remove the panels in order to repair the roof. Commissioner Cook asked where do you have solar. Mr. Pliszka said most of our sites do have solar all the high rises, Elms Village community room. Commissioner Cook said that the Housing Authority

received funds through HUD financing grant. Ms. Bouchard said that we went through TD Bank and entered our EPC through HUD. Commissioner Harrison said there is no longer a warrantee. Mr. Pliszka said there was a year's warranty, but we are past that now and it had nothing to do with the solar panels, it was a leak in the roof. Commissioner Cook asked if this reduces the heat or electricity for all your tenants. Ms. Bouchard said no that most of the tenants don't pay for their electricity, especially in the high rises. The tenants who pay for their own electricity are in the low rises, we only have solar on the community buildings.

The motion made and seconded was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

b. Aged Receivables – April, 2023

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to accept the Aged Receivables for April, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Crockett seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

c. Rent Collection Report, April, 2023

There was a discussion when this report was prepared and that it has to do with the new Cares Notice to Quit rule.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto said the Scattered Sites was at 100%. Ms. Bouchard said it's primarily because one of the habitual late payers paid rent on time. The Housing Authority gave her 90 days to move out, so she is trying to pay now .

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to accept the Rent Collection Report for April, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Crockett seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

d. Monthly Actuals for Period Ending April, 2023

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to accept the Monthly Actuals for Periods Ending April, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Crockett seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to approve the Consent Agenda as follows: a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Report (April, 2023); b. Occupancy Report (April, 2023); c. Section 8 Voucher Report (April, 2023); d. Scattered Sites Properties Report (April, 2023); e. Attorney's Report (April, 2023); and f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT (April, 2023). Commissioner Crockett seconded the motion.

Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if there were any questions on the following:

- a. Capital Fund & Major Maintenance Reports – April, 2023 – Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if they have begun the work on the basketball court at Hockanum Park. Ms. Bouchard said they

have finished the work with a new court and we are going to use another contractor to put in a couple of benches and trash can and some signage will be put up as well.

- b. Occupancy Report – April, 2023 – Vice Chairman Yamamoto said at Meadow Hill there were move-outs and move-ins, but they didn't gain in occupancy. Mr. Pliszka said two people were housed and two people moved out.
- c. Section 8 Housing Voucher Report – April, 2023 – Ms. Bouchard explained that the Manager of Leasing has been out on leave for a few weeks, and we realized that the Housing Authority is severely under-utilized. Mr. Pliszka and I went through and looked at all the active HCVs we had, and it is less than we thought. Ms. Bouchard said that the Housing Authority is doing a briefing at the end of the month and issuing 50 vouchers to get them out on the street and hopes to get some vouchers leased up. Commissioner Cook asked when does the manager plan on returning? Ms. Bouchard said that she is due back to work on Monday. Commissioner Cook said that she is happy to see that the Housing Authority is going up on the payment standards. Ms. Bouchard said between issuing out 50 vouchers on the 31<sup>st</sup> and then doing another 50 after that will bring up our numbers. Commissioner Cook said that you are doing everything you can. Ms. Bouchard said it is hard to find housing mainly because there is not enough of it. Commissioner Cook said the only reason why she can stay on top of it is because they have a very long list of portables, and they absorb. Ms. Bouchard said that we absorbed five yesterday. There was further discussion regarding payables.
- d. Scattered Sites Properties Report – April, 2023 – Vice Chairman Yamamoto said this report looks quite good. She said that the late payer must have paid on time. Ms. Bouchard said we did increase all our regular market renters and did a significant increase to be comparable to the market and they will become effective between June and July.
- e. Attorney's Report – April, 2023 – Ms. Bouchard said that we are going to court with the woman from Hutt Heights that will not move her stuff to allow us to replace her windows. She cancelled her first court hearing, and it is rescheduled for this Friday. Vice Chairman Yamamoto asked if she will be allowed a second cancellation. Ms. Bouchard said she hopes not but is not sure what the court will do.
- f. Unit Turnaround AMP 1, AMP 2, VT – April, 2023 – There were no questions on this report.

The motion previously made and seconded to approve the Consent Agenda was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

#### 7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT/COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

New Positions –Maintenance Aide – Ms. Bouchard said the men in-house who applied for the maintenance aide position will be interviewed tomorrow. She stated that if either of those two do not work out we will have to post the position to the public. Family Unification Program (FUP) – Ms. Bouchard said the FUP vouchers, there is nothing really to report on since we have been so busy covering other things that was put on the back burner. Real Estate Acquisition – Ms. Bouchard said there is really no update on that. Attorney Alexander has been back and forth with the real estate

agent. Ms. Bouchard said they know we want it cleaned up otherwise we are not going to purchase the property. The Commissioners shared their concerns regarding the issues with that property. **Annual Plan** – Ms. Bouchard said the Annual Plan is in draft form. She said that a public hearing will be held the beginning of June. This is a report we send to HUD every year informing them of our goals and objectives in the five-year plan and each year thereafter what we have accomplished and we review any comments from the public. There was a discussion about where the notice of the annual plan hearing is published **Public Updates** - Ms. Bouchard said that we are working on our Admission and Continued Occupancy Plan and our Section 8 Administrative Plan, which will be submitted to the Board in June. Ms. Bouchard explained to the Board some of the changes that need to be made to those policies. **Veterans Terrace Redevelopment Project – Phase 1** – Ms. Bouchard said that Phase 1 is complete. We did reach out to Carabetta regarding our developer fee, and we are still waiting because they need to get another form through and it is going through our investor, Regions. She said once that is finalized, and it goes through CHFA then the money will be released. **Phase 2** – Ms. Bouchard said that is under construction. We were informed that there was a meter issue in powering the buildings and there were components that they did not have and were waiting for and as of this date they still do not have the components. Therefore, the units are not going to be ready yet to move people from Phase 3 to Phase 2. **Phase 3** – Ms. Bouchard said that we are hearing that they are not going to be closing on Phase 3 probably until September. She said that becomes a problem because they want to start the demolition early and if that happens all the people in Phase 3 that are in legal and people in good standing will have to move off site. There was a discussion with the Board regarding the relocation specialist as well as moving the people to Phase 3 and the Board believes this could be a big problem. Ms. Bouchard stated that the one bedroom have to go off site because there will not be enough one bedrooms until Phase 3 is complete. **NERC NAHRO Conference** – Ms. Bouchard said the NERC NAHRO conference is coming up June 25 – 28, 2023 in Portland, Maine and there are a couple of sessions for commissioners. Please let Brenda know if you are interested in attending and she will send the information.

8. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **Review and Approval of Change Order for Hot Water Heater at Meadow Hill**

Ms. Bouchard said originally the Board approved two boilers to be replaced at Meadow Hill. Since the project did not cost as much as we had expected, we are requesting you to update the hot water boiler so they all match and they are energy efficient and work together. Ms. Bouchard said we are asking for this change order for the same company to do the work at the cost of \$112,772.81. The Board agreed that this makes sense to do it at the same time.

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to approve accepting the change order to add the hot water boiler for Meadow Hill to Pro-Mech in the amount of \$112,772.81 as presented. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

b. Review and Approval of Section 8 Payment Standards

Ms. Bouchard explained back in October or November of last year the new fair market rents come out from HUD between September and October every year and they publish the fair market rent, and it needs to be between 90 – 110% of the fair market rent. We approved them last year and they went up to 105% but because we are having such a hard time leasing up and having a hard time for people to afford the rents and turn people away, we are kind of stuck. Ms. Bouchard said we are trying to go up another 5% from now until the end of the year. She said because the new fair market rents come out in September or October the Board will need to approve them again in October, but they will not become effective until January 2024. Therefore, she said, for the rest of the calendar year from August through December we are looking for an increase in payment standards now and get another one in January of next year. Commissioners Cook and Harrison said that the Housing Authority needs to do it. Ms. Bouchard asked if anyone had gone to 120%? They said they didn't believe so and the only way to go up to 120% is if you get a waiver from HUD. Ms. Bouchard said by going up you are not able to lease up to as many people.

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to approve Resolution No. CT013-206-05-2023 approving the change in the Section 8 Payment Standards FYE September 30, 2023 to 110% of the current SAFMR. Commissioner Cook seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present.

9. OLD BUSINESS

There was nothing to discuss under this heading.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The motion was made by Commissioner Harrison to go into Executive Session to discuss Pending Claims and Litigation. Commissioner Crockett seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present 2:15 p.m.

The motion was made by Commissioner Cook to come out of Executive Session. Commissioner Crockett seconded the motion, and it was carried by unanimous vote of the Commissioners' present 2:31 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Commissioners, Vice Chairman Yamamoto entertained a motion to adjourn which was made by Commissioner Harrison and seconded by Commissioner Cook said the motion being carried by the unanimous vote of the commissioners' present the meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Prescille F. Yamamoto  
Vice Chairman of the Board

ATTESTED BY:

Debra Bouchard, Executive Director