

REGULAR MEETING – April 14, 2023

Chairperson Susan Bannon called the March Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority to order at 1:00 pm. Attendance upon roll call:

PRESENT: Chairperson Susan Bannon, Sean Hadden, Steve Wakefield, Carl Shaffer, and Kathleen McCarthy. Executive Director Betsy R. Soto, Wendy Ng, Michael Patrick, VHA Attorney Michael Wrona came in at 1:30pm.

ABSENT: None

Public Comment: Lori Jeffers, resident at 6D Court Towers, requested an additional routine stop to a big supermarket such as Shoprite or Stop & Shop. The transportation is provided by Hockanum Valley Community Council (HVCC). This company has a scheduled weekly routine. VHA pays for this tenant service. The Executive Director will talk to the company about this request.

Executive Session: at 1:04 pm, A motion was made by Commissioner Sean Hadden to go into Executive Session to review and discuss the Executive Director, Betsy R. Soto Performance Review moved from December 2022 and tabled to April 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Steve Wakefield. All voting in favor. Motion carried. Wendy Ng, Michael Patrick and Betsy R. Soto left the meeting at 1:04pm. Betsy was invited back at 1:35pm. Wendy Ng and Michael Patrick were invited back into the regular meeting at 2:01pm.

2:02pm, A motion was made by Commissioner Sean Hadden to return to the Regular Meeting. Commissioner Steve Wakefield seconded. All present voted for the approval of the motion. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Sean Hadden to increase the Executive Director's 2023 salary by 2% and retro pay to January 1, 2023. Seconded by Commissioner Steve Wakefield. Tenant Commissioner, with 4 ayes and 1 nay votes, Motion carried.

MINUTES: A motion was made by Commissioner Sean Hadden to adopt the March 2023 Regular Meeting minutes as offered. Commissioner Kathleen McCarthy seconded. All present voted for the approval of the motion. Motion carried.

BILLS: After review and discussion of the invoices paid, Commissioner Sean Hadden made a motion to approve the payments, Commissioner Kathleen McCarthy second the motion. All present voted for the approval of the motion. Motion carried. The checks approved were: Revolving #68644-68691; Federal #25510-25540; Franklin Park East #1729-1732; Windermere #1954-1961; State #15391-15400; Congregate #13280-13307; HCV# none and Local #3460-3464. The Housing Authority's credit card invoice was reviewed and approved along with the bills. Commissioners Sean Hadden questioned check numbers 25526. Executive Director explained, and commissioner

accepted. Commissioners Steve Wakefield questioned credit card payment. Executive Director Betsy R. Soto explained, and the commissioner accepted. All questions answered.

Cash Report: The Cash Balances were reviewed with the Board of Commissioners.

Executive Director Report: Grove Court Major Renovation – 4 bids received. Application for “priority needs” finding has been submitted. Secondino is the apparent low at \$6,149,500. On 03.30.23 Secondino withdrew their bid. A meeting was held on 04.04.23 to discuss “value engineering” (product substitution and scope of work reduction). A follow-up meeting is scheduled for 04.11.23. The project will be re-bid soon.

Congregate-Upholstery of damaged furniture - Requested less expensive solutions. Pending

Franklin Park East, West, and Windermere- Signage and Sign Lighting-Design has been finalized. Architect seeking preliminary P&Z approval. Environmental Review has been executed. Project to go out to bid soon.

Franklin Park East-Roof Replacement- 1st building under construction (weather dependent). Construction to resume when temperatures allow.

Franklin Park West - Roof Replacement-Will go out to bid in the Spring of 2023.

PHA Wide Carbon Monoxide Alarms/Detectors Assessment-Assessment complete. VHA to install new CO and smoke detectors at scattered sites. Final inspection report complete. Project complete.

Becker Place-Demolition of garage foundation is complete. Contract work on project is 99% complete. Project is in punch list phase. Additional work on exterior foundation wall and basement underway. Pre-bid walk-through for site package to be held 04.03.23. Site package bids due on 04.20.23.

Local Section 8 - The department ended March with a count of 358 HCV, 1 more from the previous month. The Section 8 program is working diligently towards the continuance of increasing the program to maximize the number of participants on the program.

State of Connecticut DOH-Housing Choice Voucher and Rental Assistance Programs - The Department ended March with a count of 1,144 Vouchers and RAP state certificates, 5 more from the previous month. The program is working towards accuracy in both programs and getting full participation from clients.

Francis Pitkat Congregate Living Center – The Vernon Housing Authority continues to follow all CDC rules and Governor’s Executive Orders by providing quality and safe services to all residents. Residents and their visitors are required to wear masks and remain at least 6 ft. apart. All common areas in the building continue to be sanitized on a regular basis and before and after scheduled activities.

Thursday, March 2nd Sandy Robinson, piano player, singer/storyteller entertained the residents in the parlor. On Thursday March 16th, Alex Lentini, guitar player and singer performed for the residents.

Fr. Tadeusz Zadorozny from St. Joseph’s Church was here on Friday, March 24th @ 10:00 for the Catholic Mass in the Arts & Crafts room.

We celebrated two March birthdays in the dining room with a beautiful cake and sang “Happy Birthday”. Our eldest resident, Jane, turned “104”!

Pet Therapy continues to be well received by the residents. On Friday, March 17th, we had a 16-year-old Tibetan Spaniel and former show dog named Star come to visit. The Library and Arts & Crafts room on the second floor are open daily for the residents to read, socialize or play games.

We have scheduled different card games, such as LCR on Sunday evenings, Pokeno on Tuesday, and Thursday evenings and BINGO on Wednesday and Saturday. They also enjoy building puzzles and playing board games in the parlor or sunroom.

Our Bulletin Board area is the “Communication Gateway” for the Pitkat Residents to keep them informed regarding pertinent information, Pitkat & Community Activities. Our Bulletin Board consists of the following: Monthly menu provided by Glendale Senior Dining, Weekly Bus Schedules, Monthly Vernon Senior Center Newsletter and interesting articles, games and puzzles, the weekly lunch menu and activity calendars. Other postings are frequently added to the bulletin board.

Bread/Pastry – Every Tuesday of every week community volunteers from Foodshare deliver bread & pastry from Stop & Shop or Shoprite. This is a service that the residents look forward to receiving on a weekly basis.

HVCC “Dial a Ride” provides transportation to the residents such as grocery shopping and doctor’s visits.

HVCC Food Pantry provides weekly deliveries to Residents. Vernon Senior Center provides weekly transportation for grocery shopping.

UCONN-SNAP-Ed Program through their Dept. of Allied Services provides Pitkat with monthly information for nutritional wellness for our Residents.

Homebound Reading Program with the Rockville Public Library continues to be a successful and rewarding program for the Residents. We also have Pitkat Book Club that our Residents enjoy participating in.

Old Business: None

New Business:

2023/2024 Congregate Rent Increase and Management & Congregate Services Budget. Ms. Soto presented to the Board the proposed Congregate Management Plan and Congregate Services Budget for approval. Ms. Ng gave an overview of the Management Plan which includes a \$60 increase in the base rent. The Services Budget would increase the cost of the Core Services to \$970. After some discussion, The Board approved both plans in Resolution #418. Commissioner Carl Shaffer made a motion to approve the Management Plan and Congregate Services Budget as presented and accept Resolution #418. Commissioner Kathleen McCarthy seconded with the vote being 3 ayes and 2 nays. Motion carries.

Housing Conferences – The Executive Director will attend 2 conferences in the months of June and August this year. A motion was made by Commissioner Sean Hadden for both conferences. Second by Commissioner Kathleen McCarthy. All present voted for the approval of the motion. Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL:

Commissioner Carl Shaffer requested changes to Maintenance Call out hourly pay. Executive Director to review the Personnel Policy and propose necessary policy changes at the next board meeting.

Quarterly Federal Budget Update: Board of Commissioners provided with quarterly report. Next quarterly report due at the July Regular Meeting.

Press Released April 5, 2023. Article provided to the board. Executive Director, Betsy R. Soto has been Inducted into the Prestigious Marquis Who's Who Biographical Registry – Recognized for her expert leadership of the Vernon Housing Authority.

The next meeting will be held on May 11, 2023, at 21 Court Street, at 1:00 pm in the Community Room.

The April Regular Meeting was adjourned at 2:58 pm on a motion by Commissioner Sean Hadden; seconded by Commissioner Kathleen McCarthy all voting in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy R. Soto
Executive Director, PHM, VEM