

MORRISTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
29 Ann Street
Morristown, NJ 07960
Monday, November 26, 2018
Commencing at 6:00 P.M.

RE: Open Public Meeting

TRANSCRIPT
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS

M E M B E R S P R E S E N T:

MAUREEN DENMAN, Chairwoman
ALTON ROBINSON, Commissioner

A L S O P R E S E N T:

KEITH KINARD, Executive Director
NICOLE PARSONS, Administrative Specialist

A P P E A R A N C E S:

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REPORTED BY BETH A. BENSON, Certified Court Reporter

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1 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: I, Maureen Denman,
2 chairperson of the Board of Commissioners of the
3 Housing Authority of the Town of Morristown and
4 presiding officer at this meeting do hereby
5 state that it is now 6:11 in the evening on
6 November 26, 2018, and we are convening at 29
7 Ann Street, Morristown, New Jersey, and do
8 hereby announce publicly that proper notice of
9 this regular meeting has been provided in
10 accordance with the New Jersey Open Public
11 Meetings Act.

12 Roll call.

13 (Whereupon, roll call was taken with
14 all members noted being present.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Pledge of
16 allegiance.

17 (Flag was saluted.)

18 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: A moment of
19 silence. And I would ask us to remember Barbara
20 Dougherty. Mayor Dougherty lost his mother a
21 couple of weeks ago. Keep her and all those in
22 our prayers.

23 (A moment of silence is observed.)

24 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: We will have to
25 skip the approval of the minutes for the

1 December meeting.

2 Mr. Kinard, executive report?

3 MR. KINARD: Certainly, chairwoman.

4 There are a few things I just want to
5 raise for the board and the public. First and
6 foremost, we continue to work on capital work
7 issues associated with the properties. I did do
8 a lighting scan on the portfolio, and
9 unfortunately lighting, the lighting portfolio
10 is in poor condition. At Manahan Village alone
11 there's at least one light out at 21 of our 27
12 buildings. In some instances several lights are
13 down at each building. The affected buildings
14 are listed in the report. You can see them.
15 They cover all the streets.

16 Really given the magnitude of the
17 lighting issue at Manahan Village, we're going
18 to be proceeding expeditiously to fix all
19 halogens and deal with them. This work is
20 considered exigent to health and safety,
21 especially the fact it's getting darker earlier
22 this time of year.

23 With regard to buildings 31 and 39
24 Early Street and 29 Ann Street, we have a few
25 lights out, and we are going to also be

1 repairing them through this process
2 expeditiously. This just isn't the magnitude we
3 have at Manahan. We are also working with JCP&L
4 because we have some pole lights that belong to
5 them, one especially right in front of 31 Early
6 Street that is down. So if you bear with us
7 over the month of December, early January, we
8 hope to get all these lights back up and
9 running.

10 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Can I just ask, are
11 they going to address the pole that's leaning by
12 the family units down at Manahan Village right
13 on Clyde Potts past the resident center?

14 MR. KINARD: Light pole or wire?

15 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: You know what, it
16 may not be a light pole.

17 MR. KINARD: We will talk about that in
18 just a moment.

19 So there were several other issues
20 raised by the buildings and grounds committee at
21 last month's meeting that we attempted to
22 address. First and foremost, building ten
23 around Flagler, the railing is now in place that
24 was missing. There is a 14-inch high step
25 there, a higher step than normal. We actually

1 have the contractor back on site, Victory, who
2 is dealing with the concrete issues from phase
3 one. We have a whole slew of issues to deal
4 with on phase two, and the 14-inch high step
5 will be dealt with shortly.

6 Lighting will be addressed as I just
7 previously mentioned. The PVC pipe behind
8 building 36 has been removed. The area below 13
9 Flagler has been trimmed back. The trees were
10 on the sidewalk and people did have to work
11 their way around them, so now they should have
12 unimpeded access. The paint has been ordered in
13 order for us to address the adjacent retaining
14 wall in that area, but also the retaining walls
15 throughout Manahan Village.

16 Verizon has been contacted and are
17 fully aware of the low-hanging wires and leaning
18 utilities poles on Clyde Potts Court. They
19 advised us they will be addressing the issue.
20 We have a number of them leaning. I believe
21 they are as a result of Verizon hanging
22 fiber-optic lines as opposed to running them
23 underground. Fiber-optic lines are pretty
24 thick. You can see them throughout the
25 community. And as you're riding around Clyde

1 Potts you'll see a number of poles being pulled.
2 I believe they have too much wiring on them now,
3 as this has added to the electrical wiring. In
4 fact, in one instance I see they actually took a
5 wire from the fiber-optic back to a tree to
6 actually add extra support. You'll see that
7 down by the swimming pool area. And as if the
8 tree branch isn't going to break at some point
9 in the future. There's one wire hanging that's
10 this thick hanging about seven and half, eight
11 feet off the ground.

12 We thought it was JCP&L, turns out
13 these issues are Verizon, and they took the
14 cheaper route and hung the wires as opposed to
15 running them underground. So we are, myself and
16 Darlington, will be meeting with Verizon in
17 attempting to address these issues.

18 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: So if it is
19 determined that it would be best to go
20 underground, that would not be at our expense,
21 would it?

22 MR. KINARD: No, that would be at
23 Verizon's expense, and it would be a hard pill
24 for them to swallow to determine that. I think
25 what they'll end up doing is coming out and

1 addressing these wires because they need to tack
2 them up higher and string them appropriately.
3 This looks like me and a couple of my friends
4 just wired up the community. That's what it
5 looks like. And they just really ran through
6 there quickly, and you'll see it kind of
7 zigzagging across the street in areas. Poles
8 are really distressed. It's not going to be
9 long before they're worse. But it's an
10 expensive endeavor for them to wire the
11 community by going underground.

12 The resident center at Clyde Potts,
13 well, this is one of those issues that watch
14 what you wish for I guess. That's the best way
15 to put it. I can say the good news is the HVAC
16 system is installed on the roof, and almost
17 fully operational. It actually is providing
18 heat to the building right now, which we haven't
19 had in the past.

20 We did run into another issue though
21 which is a gas line that is now required to run
22 the new HVAC system. It has to be installed by
23 PSE&G. It appears the new HVAC system in all
24 its glory requires a thicker wire gas line, not
25 a one-inch but more like a three-inch gas line

1 because of the type of system it is. We don't
2 have that gas line there right now. We have a
3 smaller one-inch. So PSE&G will have to come in
4 and run that. But in the meantime they were
5 able to test the system, get the system up and
6 running, it's just not 100 percent fully
7 operational. And that will rectify one of our
8 main issues which is getting heat into the
9 building.

10 However, because the building was down
11 for so long, as I mentioned in a previous
12 meeting the pipes froze in a lot of areas of the
13 building. Pipes are frozen behind the wall.
14 I'm going to be doing a walking tour with a
15 plumbing contractor in the next week or so, and
16 he'll be showing me the various areas in which
17 the pipes behind the walls are frozen. He'll
18 turn the water on and see the seepage. They're
19 going to have to tear into the walls throughout
20 the building, fix the frozen pipes, and then
21 depending of the extent of the demolition work
22 that's required we're going to have to get the
23 building renovated in various areas.

24 The bathroom areas we already know is a
25 big problem, because the bathrooms, the toilets

1 themselves cracked due to this, but even in the
2 kitchen area we believe we are going to have
3 some pretty significant issues.

4 So we are now moving into another phase
5 of this resident center, which is going to be
6 some demolition, surgical, some renovation, in
7 order to try to get it up and running. We still
8 haven't moved to just the painting and the floor
9 tile and the ceiling tile that's been damaged or
10 knocked out. That will come up, and the
11 furniture that's required. But this, there's a
12 lot of costs that are still yet to be
13 determined, and a time frame that is still yet
14 to be determined in terms of getting this
15 community center up and running.

16 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: So once you have
17 the walk-through with the plumber you should be
18 better equipped to give us an idea of what the
19 dollar figure is associated with --

20 MR. KINARD: Yes, that's the game plan,
21 a dollar figure and the time associated with it.
22 And we're going to try to do it comprehensively
23 to include furniture, the painting, everything
24 to really get this building done.

25 Also attached to your reports, just

1 kind of a strategic plan overview, since
2 everybody is so busy, and I know we don't have a
3 lot of time to really download issues, I thought
4 it would be helpful to try to give you an idea
5 of what we've been working on and what we've
6 been thinking internally, and after six months
7 and a few weeks here now I've really got a
8 pretty good feel for the agency as a whole, what
9 the strengths and weaknesses are and where we
10 need to improve.

11 So just quickly going through this,
12 you'll see that as an overview really focusing
13 on three areas; people, processes and
14 properties. These are the three main areas that
15 I see that we need to improve or strengthen.

16 On the people side, it's very simple,
17 we need training, we need to focus on excellent
18 customer service, and we need to focus on
19 superior job performance. It will come out in
20 just a moment through this presentation. I just
21 want to get through the top sheet.

22 On the process side there are really
23 several areas, five areas. A lot of them deal
24 with policies and standard operating procedures.
25 A number of our policies have been revised, a

1 number of them have not been revised. When you
2 start getting into the weeds, those policies
3 have not necessarily been revised, and we really
4 don't have standard operating procedures here at
5 the agency in terms of decision trees and things
6 like that. A lot of it has really been how
7 people have done it for awhile, and I've heard
8 that -- if I had a dollar for every time I've
9 heard that here, I'd be doing pretty well. So
10 we're looking at that. We're looking at the
11 connectivity of our systems, our work order
12 system, our management system, our camera
13 system, all those things, how they can better
14 link up, and also how we can stop actually
15 operating manually with the systems in place.

16 It appears that in some areas we have
17 purchased good systems, but we haven't stopped
18 doing the manual processes associated with those
19 systems. Some areas the systems have failed us,
20 so we're doing manual processes, but we haven't
21 held a vendor responsible for the failure or
22 fixing the failure or upgrading. So there's
23 this kind of strange mix there that's hurting
24 our efficiency across the board.

25 We really don't have an updated

1 organizational structure. I know that, because
2 I'm not represented in the organizational
3 structure, so -- and we don't have -- we don't
4 do a lot of compliance here, third-party
5 reviews. Primarily the third-party reviews here
6 are an audit, annual third-party review, and we
7 also have like a REAC, pre-REAC inspection, but
8 we're not really doing third-party reviews on a
9 lot of other important issues we deal with here
10 at the agency. So that's one of the things the
11 staff and I have been talking about, getting a
12 Section Eight area especially, or pertaining to
13 SEMAP and things like that. We really need to
14 be getting some reviews done before we get --
15 before HUD does theirs.

16 On the property side it's pretty
17 obvious. Building conditions, exterior site
18 conditions and internal apartment conditions, we
19 need and are working on reviews, planning and
20 improvement in all those areas. The building
21 exterior conditions, we've got windows, we've
22 got roofs to look at. There are a number of
23 areas that come up in the physical needs
24 assessment that we have on hand that we really
25 haven't addressed, so some of that is because we

1 don't have the money to address it, some of it
2 is we prioritize other things, like the resident
3 center, things like that. But those building
4 issues are boilers, things like that, starting
5 to come to the surface and causes problems.

6 Exterior site conditions, one of the
7 biggest issues HUD has is the site conditions
8 across the board. Tripping hazards, broken
9 concrete, erosion of soil. It's a whole host of
10 things and we have it all throughout. Some of
11 it we've addressed, some we clearly still need
12 to address. And Victory is on site now again
13 helping us address some of those issues, but we
14 have got to work hard there.

15 And last but not least, the internal
16 apartment conditions, pest control and the
17 actual issues in the apartments that are dated
18 and need to be addressed. So I just included --
19 I'm not going to spend a lot of time here, but
20 you'll see when you read this the people and
21 processes in the system. Some of the things we
22 are beginning to address in terms of customer
23 service and organizational structure, we plan on
24 getting third-parties in here to do a lot of job
25 training. What I found is even in places where

1 we have updated policy, a lot of the staff
2 doesn't know the policy. They haven't reviewed
3 it, they haven't been trained on it. Again,
4 there's no standard operating procedures. So
5 we've checked one box, but in reality we really
6 didn't take that next step yet, and we need to
7 do that.

8 And also with resident services, it's
9 another area in which we're really kind of
10 behind the eight ball. We need -- we've talked
11 about resident programming. We have a lot of
12 residents that need help, case management
13 services, counseling services, housekeeping
14 services, whatever. We can link them with
15 third-party providers and get those services
16 provided. And we also need to have a better
17 decision matrix when it relates to those things.
18 How do we intervene, what questions should we be
19 asking, when these things happen what should our
20 next step be. It shouldn't be things that we
21 guess or we rely on experience, we really should
22 have rock solid standard operating procedures.
23 So those things is what you'll see on the people
24 side.

25 The process side you'll see really a

1 list that's not exhaustive, but some of the
2 manuals and handbooks and plans that we are
3 addressing, plan on addressing, that we really
4 want to make tight, and in addition to making
5 tight we really want to make sure every member
6 of the staff understands it, and understands it
7 to a level that we need them to understand it.

8 And on the last side, the property
9 side, it's really all those issues that we tend
10 to talk about when we come to these meetings and
11 during the month, it's everything from garbage
12 shoots to housekeeping inspections, which we
13 will start in February of '19, the housekeeping
14 inspections. It's an inspection and repair
15 program, fire escapes, waste services,
16 comprehensive extermination. It's all of those
17 things that really make up the strategic plan,
18 the MHA moving forward.

19 We're going to more clearly refine this
20 so you'll see something coming up not every
21 meeting, every other meeting, that you'll see
22 more skin on top of these bones, and you'll
23 start to see metrics come in play, and a
24 clearcut timeline in terms of when each one of
25 these things are in place, trained on, etcetera,

1 etcetera, or if we have any problems.

2 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Great. I know you
3 had mentioned, and I'm assuming the uniforms for
4 the maintenance staff are part of the plan.

5 MR. KINARD: Yes.

6 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: And the equipment,
7 did you order that snowblower leaf chopper?

8 MR. KINARD: We did. It's on board.

9 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Great.

10 MR. KINARD: And the uniforms should
11 start in the next two, three weeks or so, we
12 should have the Carhartt uniforms here, part of
13 the professionalism. And also the management
14 staff is going to start wearing some uniforms
15 too. Theirs is more like a blazer and trousers.
16 But it's all part of just professionalizing the
17 staff.

18 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: That's great. Long
19 overdue. And I'm sure the staff appreciates it
20 as much as we do and the residents will
21 recognizing the uniform. I mean, I hear that
22 often, they don't know if they're an employee or
23 not.

24 MR. KINARD: Right.

25 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Excellent. You put

1 a lot of time and effort into that.

2 MR. KINARD: Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: That's terrific.

4 Okay.

5 MR. KINARD: One more thing, the
6 residents are also, unfortunately Commissioner
7 Banks is not here, but they are moving forward
8 with an election process for resident council or
9 councils. We recently sent an amended notice
10 out to the residents. I don't have it in front
11 of me. But it pushed back the petition date
12 until December, mid December. It brought down
13 the petition requirement, so now residents are
14 looking for about 20 signatures on the petition
15 as opposed to 50 that they were trying to get at
16 Manahan Village. It was 20 for the senior
17 buildings. And it also pushed back the election
18 date until late January.

19 And all that was done to make sure
20 that -- it's to really give the residents enough
21 time to try to get enough signatures and go
22 through the process. And it just was stressful
23 also with the holidays. But they've been
24 working diligently, trying to get a tenant
25 council or tenant councils across the board.

1 And I don't know how it's going to end up, but
2 there's a third-party who's overseeing the
3 process. And I would be remiss if I didn't
4 mention that.

5 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Okay. The
6 postponing or the pushing back of the date isn't
7 going to cost us anything extra with the
8 third-party oversight. Right?

9 MR. KINARD: Not a dime.

10 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Great. That would
11 be my only concern.

12 All right. Well, you got any
13 questions, Alton?

14 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I'm good. Very
15 detailed report.

16 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Excellent. So we
17 have got no committee reports other than thank
18 you, Mr. Kinard, for providing the update on the
19 resident outreach.

20 Old business, we can't approve the
21 schedule of bills.

22 That brings us to public comment. Any
23 members of the public wishing to address
24 Commissioner Robinson and myself?

25 MS. HAMLET: I'd like to make comments.

1 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: State your name and
2 address and apartment for the record.

3 MS. HAMLET: Marsha Hamlet, 29 Ann
4 Street, apartment 110.

5 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Thanks, Marsha.

6 MS. HAMLET: One of my comments I had
7 is right here in the front of the building
8 there's this alarm or something that goes off
9 all the time constantly, and I was wondering if
10 that could be addressed. It's on the board
11 there where the names are, some beeping and all
12 this, you know. And I live right on the first
13 floor, so I continuously hear this all weekend
14 long. So I was wondering if perhaps the system
15 could be checked so that it would stop going off
16 continuously.

17 MR. KINARD: Absolutely. We will be on
18 it tomorrow.

19 Daisy, you're aware of this?

20 MS. ROSARIO: Yes, I called it in. I
21 know what you're talking about.

22 MS. HAMLET: And also it was mentioned
23 about having pest control, which is desperately
24 needed, because I know in my apartment I have
25 roaches and I had previously bed bugs. And I

1 continuously have the roaches in there, and they
2 are in the bathroom and in the kitchen.

3 MR. KINARD: Marsha, in terms of where
4 they're coming in from, did you ever see them
5 coming from a vent, under the front door strip?

6 MS. HAMLET: No, they're coming from
7 where the toilet and the tub and all that, the
8 sink around in that area, all around there,
9 they're coming through there.

10 MR. KINARD: Okay.

11 MS. HAMLET: And in the kitchen, you
12 know where the cabinets are right underneath
13 there, that's where they're coming from. I know
14 exactly where they are.

15 And I know I called to have
16 extermination done, and I know they come in and
17 put the little spray down, which I have myself
18 because I have been using that too, but it needs
19 an entire extermination, perhaps this building,
20 and then also of the apartments.

21 MR. KINARD: We are -- it will take us
22 probably another month or so to get it right,
23 but we are looking to bring a new extermination
24 company on board. We are also not satisfied
25 with the level of extermination. So we can

1 really do comprehensive or regular
2 exterminating, not only per apartment, because
3 we have a list they run off every Tuesday, but
4 also building-wide to do the entire building
5 exterior, interior more frequently.
6 Extermination is -- the pest infestation has
7 been really, really bad, we've been pushing
8 back. It's a war that we haven't been able to
9 win, but we are bringing a new company on board,
10 hoping to have more success with it. In the
11 meantime I'm going to get an exterminator back
12 out to your apartment.

13 MS. HAMLET: I appreciate it. I have
14 another comment. When we had that bad
15 snowstorm, and it took me about nine hours to
16 come from Clifton. Now, when I came here and I
17 got right to the parking lot area to come in, I
18 got stuck right there. I couldn't even get the
19 car in. It spun around. And I was still right
20 there because that area right in the front was
21 not cleared off enough for me to come through.
22 So I called Morristown Police Department and
23 they came and they helped me to get in the
24 parking lot to get in a space.

25 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Can I interrupt

1 you? Was it on the street or in the lot?
2 Because I know they did not get out and do the
3 streets until late.

4 MS. HAMLET: When I came through at
5 1:30 in the morning all the streets were cleared
6 very good. I was very impressed. But when I
7 got right here, when you get ready to come in, I
8 was able to get -- this is the entrance, I was
9 able to turn in, and the car spun around, and I
10 was like where nobody could get past me. So I
11 had to get out and dig as much as I could. And
12 when I felt a little pull in my back I said I'm
13 calling Morristown Police Department. And so
14 two police officers came and they helped me get
15 in. That was nice.

16 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Very nice.

17 MS. HAMLET: I couldn't leave the car
18 sitting there. They wouldn't have been able to
19 get past me. So I feel that if they -- within
20 the -- the next morning when we got up to go
21 outside, they plowed, but what they did is when
22 they plowed they plowed right up against the
23 cars, so then we had to go out there and dig in
24 front of the cars. But I called the office, and
25 I know another lady called too, and I spoke to,

1 what's her name, Ajorie, and I told her can
2 somebody come over with a snowplow or a smaller
3 one to help us get out, because that's a lot of
4 snow to be digging from in front of your car and
5 on the sides. So she did, she sent more people
6 over. There was somebody doing the sidewalks
7 and stuff like that. But she sent the small
8 little snowplow, and then the guy came with the
9 truck, and we were moving cars and we were able
10 to get the parking lot cleared very well. But
11 initially it was really in bad condition. And
12 for me personally, I didn't appreciate that,
13 because it was late and it was cold. And you
14 know, I had to get in. I couldn't leave the car
15 there.

16 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Thank you.

17 MS. HAMLET: You're welcome.

18 MS. FUGMAN: One day, I know what she
19 means, by the sidewalk --

20 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: State your name for
21 the record, please.

22 MS. FUGMAN: Dorothy Fugman. I got to
23 sit.

24 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: What apartment
25 number?

1 MS. FUGMAN: 401. I had to go into the
2 middle of the road. Well, a few people, they
3 helped me. But sometimes when the light is
4 changing I almost got hit one day, because the
5 sidewalk and the road was covered with ice, and
6 I couldn't --

7 MR. KINARD: I can say we learned some
8 valuable lessons from that snowstorm.

9 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Everybody did.

10 MR. KINARD: State-wide. We could
11 definitely have done a better job. I know the
12 difficulties that I'm hearing here today I
13 experienced myself, because it took me about six
14 hours to get home from here, and then I had
15 trouble getting into my street. Fortunately I
16 have a truck, but I had trouble. And I saw cars
17 on the side the whole way home. It was really,
18 really, really bad.

19 One of the things we are going to be
20 looking into as a result of this storm is a
21 third-party snow removal company when the
22 prediction of snow is over a certain level just
23 to have them on retainer. The challenge with
24 them to be honest with you is that they are
25 under retainer for a whole host of folks, so it

1 depends on where you fit in their pecking order,
2 priority order, how big your property is,
3 whatever, how quickly you get service. But we
4 will definitely try to do better. I think that
5 that snow shocked a lot of people. And yeah, I
6 feel for you, I really do.

7 MS. FUGMAN: I appreciate it.

8 CHAIRWOMAN DENMAN: Thank you.

9 Okay. Mayor Dougherty could not be
10 with us this evening, Councilwoman Davis could
11 not be with us this evening.

12 With no further ado, the meeting is
13 adjourned.

14 (Meeting was adjourned.)

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