

MORRISTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
29 Ann Street
Morristown, NJ 07960
Monday, December 22, 2014
Commencing at 6:00 P.M.

RE: Regular Open Public Meeting

TRANSCRIPT
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS

M E M B E R S P R E S E N T:
MICHAEL A. CHERELLO, Chairman
DOROTHY HOLMAN, Vice-Chairman
VERA WHITE, Commissioner
MARY DOUGHERTY, Commissioner
MARION E. SALLY, Commissioner
JEANINE CRIPPEN, Commissioner

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

LEANORA GROSS, Acting Executive Director
CYNTHIA SARGENT, AMP Manager
JEAN WASHINGTON, Accounts Manager
DARLINGTON POUNDER, Senior Mechanic
ALISON DEEB, Councilwoman

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

JOSEPH MANFREDI & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
50 Harrison Street
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030
BY: JOSEPH MANFREDI, ESQ.
Attorney for the Morristown Housing Authority

REPORTED BY:

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1 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: I, Michael Cherello,
2 chairperson of the Board of Commissioners of the
3 Housing Authority of the Town of Morristown,
4 presiding officer at this meeting, hereby state
5 it is now 6 o'clock in the evening on
6 December 22, 2014, 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 New Jersey Open Public Meetings
11 Act. Roll call, please.

12 (Roll call was taken.)

13 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Pledge of
14 Allegiance.

15 (Flag was saluted.)

16 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: We will have a
17 moment of silence.

18 (A moment of silence is observed.)

19 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Thank you. First
20 public comment. Just come up and state your
21 name clearly.

22 MS. STURGEN: I'm Shirley Sturgen (ph).
23 I live here at 29 Ann Street, apartment 107. I
24 don't think what I'm going to say anybody can do
25 anything about what I'm going to tell you about.

1 I was at a Christmas party, very nice, in
2 Morristown. And they gave us, among other
3 things, how to cross the street. Now, I'm going
4 to refer to Ann Street, which has a steep, steep
5 hill, and as you want to cross on the street to
6 go to Schuyler Place you're still on that hill,
7 and I think it's dangerous. And especially so
8 nobody stops. Everybody goes zoop (ph).
9 Amazing. I see cars going 50 miles an hour
10 on -- what street is that.

11 COMMISSIONER SALLY: The one coming down
12 the hill? Washington:

13 MS. STURGEN: Mccullough Avenue. That
14 has nothing to do with us. So there are two
15 stop signs on either side of the sidewalks, on
16 either side of the road, here and here. Now, in
17 order to cross the street, this is what you have
18 to do. I learned this from living opposite
19 King's. What you have to do is step out in the
20 road, you have to step out in the road and let
21 them see you, this way, this way. That doesn't
22 help. You have to continue standing there
23 hoping you're not going to fall over on that
24 hill, and do it again. Lucky if they stop.
25 Sometimes what I do is I wave them down and I

1 point to that stop sign, point to this stop
2 sign, no affect. Now, this may be the wrong
3 group that I'm talking to, but I think I should
4 go and speak about this at the council meeting
5 maybe.

6 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Councilwoman Deeb is
7 sitting right here taking it all in, so keep
8 going.

9 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Yes, you should come
10 to a council meeting. This is not the right
11 forum.

12 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Well, you're
13 listening so you can convey.

14 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Absolutely. There's
15 the whole council body and administration should
16 hear this as well.

17 MS. STURGEN: I'm going to say this, how
18 can you stop this. You can't dig up the road
19 and make it different. But you can post
20 policeman not so visible and let them give out
21 tickets, and the housing authority will become
22 rich. These are the tickets. Two points
23 failure to observe the law in the crosswalk.
24 Two points. \$200 fine plus court costs.
25 15 days community service. Insurance

1 surcharges. And for pedestrians, we also can be
2 fined if we walk across the street at the wrong
3 designation. So that we have to pay a \$54 fine.
4 But I don't know, this is a rampant thing all
5 over Morristown. I've never seen a policeman
6 anywhere in this area stopping a car for any
7 reason. I see people going through red lights.
8 But that's not the point I'm making. Nothing is
9 done. And it's a dangerous corner always
10 because of that big hill.

11 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Which corner is she
12 talking about? Can you clarify?

13 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Which corner are
14 you talking about?

15 MS. STURGEN: The corner --

16 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Of this street here?

17 MS. STURGEN: The corner where you go
18 down the block on the way to 202.

19 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: And Ann? There's
20 two crosswalks there. There's a crosswalk here.
21 But the hill is a hill, we can't change a hill.

22 MS. STURGEON: I just said that.

23 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: The next town
24 council meeting is when?

25 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Tuesday, January --

1 it's not the 1st. It's the 6th.

2 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Probably the 6th of
3 January would be the time for you to go to the
4 council meeting and address this. And
5 Councilwoman Deeb is now aware of it. And we
6 will already mention it to the other council
7 people that you're coming and we will see what
8 can happen.

9 MS. STURGEN: Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Any other comments
12 from the public?

13 Okay. We are going to close the first
14 public session. Approval of minutes. Do I have
15 a motion to approve the minutes? Then we will
16 have any questions.

17 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: I'll move them.

18 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: We have a motion to
19 move the minutes.

20 COMMISSIONER WHITE: I'll second it.

21 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Can we have a roll
22 call. No, I'm sorry, now we will open up to any
23 questions.

24 COMMISSIONER SALLY: I have a question.

25 I read the minutes, the regular minutes.

1 Page nine, last paragraph, I think Ms. Gross
2 inadvertently said we have the senior wait list
3 open all the time, so every Thursday of each
4 month we have applicants coming in so we never
5 run out of applicants. Actually that should be
6 we have the senior waiting list open all the
7 time, every third Thursday of the month. That's
8 what it should be, the third Thursday.

9 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Any other questions
10 on the minutes? Seeing none now we will have
11 roll call on the minutes.

12 (Roll call was taken with all voting in
13 favor.)

14 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Executive director's
15 report.

16 MS. GROSS: For public housing currently
17 there are 16 vacancies project-wise, five units
18 scheduled for January move-in. The housing
19 department continues to work diligently along
20 with the maintenance department to occupy and
21 ready all units. The Housing Choice Voucher
22 Program we are currently at a 97 percent
23 utilization rate for our voucher program, and
24 there were no new vouchers issued in the past
25 month. For maintenance there was a total of 272

1 work orders for the month of November, all
2 completed well within the PHAS guidelines, and
3 there was no modernization, no finance.

4 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Does anyone have any
5 questions?

6 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: If I might ask a
7 question. I'm still getting my feet wet. Is
8 there a target completion time for apartments as
9 they become available, like is there a standard
10 time that we try to turn them around in, or is
11 it just --

12 MS. GROSS: Yes, there is a standard we
13 try to turn them around. Depends on the
14 condition of the unit as to how long it's
15 vacant. For an efficiency should be three to
16 four days. Correct?

17 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: I'm just going by
18 the vacated date and the ready date, and there's
19 a lot of variability.

20 MS. GROSS: That's because we're short
21 in the maintenance department, and now we're
22 preparing for REAC. We just hired two --
23 actually one part-time, new part-time employee
24 in the maintenance department to try to ready
25 these units faster.

1 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: Which property
2 has a REAC coming up?

3 MS. GROSS: Manahan Village and the
4 three seniors? COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: Oh, so they
5 all get done together.

6 MS. GROSS: Two different dates but --

7 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: I wasn't aware of
8 that. Thank you very much.

9 MS. GROSS: You're welcome.

10 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: On that we have been
11 trying to address this the last year. We have
12 had some problems on this. We had a lot of
13 move-outs at the same time plus we had downsized
14 on our maintenance staff, and we kind of -- but
15 we're working on that and making progress on it.

16 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: Are the
17 vacancies, does the marketing begin right away
18 as soon as there's a vacancy, that whole
19 process?

20 MS. GROSS: As soon as there's a vacancy
21 we begin to process applications. Most of the
22 time we already have applicants available. It
23 depends where the vacancy is. We have a lot of
24 people denying apartments in building 39,
25 because we need to do some work in 39.

1 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: And there's a lot
2 of zero bedrooms.

3 MS. GROSS: A lot of people don't want
4 those.

5 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: Thank you very
6 much.

7 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Committee reports,
8 let me just, I don't -- did we have any
9 committee meetings at all this --

10 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: No, sir.

11 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Let me take this
12 time to -- Commissioner Holman and myself met
13 today along with Ms. Gross, and we have some new
14 committee assignments for the upcoming year
15 which I might as well give out right now.
16 Myself and Commissioner Crippen will be on
17 buildings and grounds, personnel will be Marion
18 Sally and Dorothy Holman, finance will be
19 Commissioner Vitolo and Dougherty. Commissioner
20 White has expressed a desire to put her effort
21 into Manahan Village liaison. And again
22 Commissioner Holman will also follow up with
23 seniors on that.

24 As we start the new year, and with our
25 new director, all meetings will go through him

1 and more than likely with him. And I think
2 probably every three to four months at the least
3 we should take some time and sit down and go
4 over some things with him. And it's also a good
5 time when you do that, because you tend to go on
6 a few other things that he'll bring you up to
7 speed on what's going on in the housing
8 authority. So again, that's our lineup for the
9 year. And just remember, everything goes
10 through our director. And that's that. If
11 there's any questions we can address them later
12 on.

13 Old business. Under old business I'd
14 like to say we had appropriated funds for the
15 purchase of a new pickup truck and a Bobcat.

16 MR. POUNDER: Not a pickup truck, a van.

17 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: I'm sorry, a van.
18 And a Bobcat for snow removal.

19 MR. POUNDER: Right.

20 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: And this money has
21 been appropriated already, and we've had a
22 request to make a move on it. So unless there's
23 any problem, we are going to go ahead and do
24 that, purchase those two items. Okay. And
25 those things will be done through either the

1 state -- Joe, why don't you pick up on that?

2 MR. MANFREDI: State contract list
3 purchase, the board, so that we complied with
4 competitive practices, and Mr. Pounder has
5 undertaken all this, in accordance with the law
6 the purchases will be made from the state
7 contract list, which means we do not have to
8 engage in any bid or competitive procurement.
9 And enables us to procure the materials quicker,
10 which I know he and his department need. And
11 Mr. Chairman, I would ask the board for a
12 resolution on that this evening since it is a
13 purchase.

14 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Sure.

15 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Do we have a
16 resolution?

17 MR. MANFREDI: We can add one. Do you
18 have the numbers, Cynthia?

19 MS. GROSS: I think it's 25.

20 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Do we have a
21 dollar amount for that?

22 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Mary, can we have a
23 motion, and then we can have our questions?

24 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: I'll move it.

25 COMMISSIONER WHITE: I'll second it.

1 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Go ahead.

2 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Do we know the
3 money amount we're going to be spending on these
4 two items?

5 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: It's in the budget.
6 I can't tell you offhand.

7 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Is it up to a
8 certain number or --

9 MS. WASHINGTON: I think it's about
10 \$40,000 for the van, and the Bobcat is about
11 \$20,000 I think.

12 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: They're not open
13 numbers. It's fixed. It has a lid on it.

14 MR. MANFREDI: What I'll do, Mr.
15 Chairman, is for the resolution, I'll confirm
16 the exact numbers, so the board's approval will
17 reflect the exact purchase numbers Mr. Pounder
18 has secured from the state contract list.

19 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Okay. We probably
20 want to have a vote on that.

21 MR. MANFREDI: Resolution of the board
22 to approve the purchase of a van and Bobcat from
23 the state contracts list.

24 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: We have a motion and
25 second. Can we have a roll call, please.

1 (Roll call was taken with all voting in
2 favor.)

3 COMMISSIONER WHITE: My question, it
4 wasn't about this, I was going to address Mr.
5 Pounder about the -- and thank him first of all
6 for trying to obtain a contractor for, a secure
7 contractor for the residents center. He did
8 inform me that someone was coming in to work on
9 the grease trap.

10 MR. POUNDER: It's been ordered. And a
11 contract for periodically cleaning it has been
12 established. Because the old one, because it
13 wasn't used, it rusted out, so when they went in
14 and pumped it out they found a lot of leaks, so
15 they suggested we change it. So I called Ryan
16 Plumbing and Heating, and they came in, took the
17 specs and the model number from it, and we have
18 to replace it with the same one that's in there
19 in order for it to fit properly. And that's
20 under contract now.

21 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Thank you for that.
22 And also we were concerned about the amount of
23 keys being given out are being duplicated, so I
24 asked Mr. Pounder look into having keys that
25 can't be duplicated, and he's also done that, so

1 I want to thank him for that.

2 MS. GROSS: Mr. Pounder also passed his
3 state test.

4 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY:
5 Congratulations. Merry Christmas to you.

6 COMMISSIONER SALLY: That's great.

7 COMMISSIONER WHITE: The refrigerator,
8 did we look into the refrigerator?

9 MR. POUNDER: I just had the
10 refrigerator done, the freezer.

11 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Okay. I'll talk to
12 you about that at another time. But thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Any other questions
14 under old business?

15 We will move on to paying our bills.
16 We will have a motion and any questions. Do I
17 have a motion to pay our bills?

18 COMMISSIONER WHITE: I move it.

19 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Second?

20 COMMISSIONER HOLMAN: I second it.

21 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: We have a motion to
22 second it to pay our bills. Any discussion?

23 Seeing no discussion, can we have a
24 roll call, please?

25 (Roll call was taken with all voting in

1 favor.)

2 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: I don't see any
3 resolutions. Right, Joe?

4 MR. MANFREDI: Correct. That was it,
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Okay. New business.
7 Anybody have anything under new business?

8 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: If I might, we
9 hosted a luncheon on Saturday at 39. And I was
10 wondering, I went to use the restroom, and I --
11 I couldn't believe the shape the restroom was
12 in, and the fact these people, visitors,
13 whatever, have to use the restroom in this
14 shape. Not only was it filthy dirty, the
15 ceiling was falling, the handrails that you hold
16 to get up on have got stains all over them, and
17 it's not as if -- excuse me, the toilet itself
18 was clean, but the surrounding areas, the floor
19 was disgusting, the rails were gross, the
20 ceiling was falling in. It just really
21 disheartened me that this is how we're forcing
22 our residents to have to live. And I was
23 wondering if there's something we could put into
24 place to perhaps take an extra look at how the
25 restrooms are in the facilities or, I mean --

1 MS. GROSS: In 39, that whole building
2 needs to be revamped. And that bathroom is
3 really, really, really, really old. And the
4 floor is -- you can't get those stains and stuff
5 off those floors. The ceilings, they were doing
6 something in the pipeline up in the ceilings in
7 that bathroom. There was a leak or something.

8 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Because it's
9 just left hanging.

10 MR. POUNDER: They didn't put the tile
11 back because it was still seeping. And they
12 didn't put the tile back because somebody
13 flooded upstairs.

14 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Is there a plan
15 to put the tile back?

16 MR. POUNDER: We usually wait until the
17 water seeps out, and later on put the tile back.
18 If you put the tile back right after we repair
19 the leak, it just stains and does the other
20 tile.

21 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: What kind of
22 time frame do you wait before putting in new
23 tile?

24 MR. POUNDER: Two, three days.

25 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Even the rails

1 you can tell there's dirt, the toilet paper
2 holder, it's just dirt, like it hadn't been
3 cleaned in forever.

4 MS. GROSS: I'll look into that.

5 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Do we have the
6 money to revamp the bathroom?

7 MS. GROSS: That was in our five-year
8 plan, do the bathrooms, the hallways in that
9 building to bring it up to have it look decent.
10 It's in the plan.

11 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Can you do it? How
12 long do you have to wait?

13 MS. GROSS: I'm going to discuss that
14 with Rogers when he comes in, that whole
15 building. That's one of the things I wanted to
16 sit down and discuss with him about when we can
17 begin the work in that building. And that would
18 help us to rent those units too. A lot of
19 people don't want those efficiencies, but it
20 will help if the building is bright. We're
21 going to be competing against other places,
22 other housing authorities. We need to bring
23 that building up to snuff.

24 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: We also have
25 problems with the carpets. There's a number of

1 items over there that have to be addressed, and
2 it's really a matter of money.

3 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: Most importantly
4 is when is the REAC inspection?

5 MS. GROSS: The REAC is January.

6 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: The carpet is not
7 an inspectable item. Other than just good looks
8 and marketing, if we have pieces that are loose
9 and not attached, sounds like the place needs to
10 be --

11 MS. GROSS: We've had problems with
12 those carpets for awhile. In order to get
13 through REAC we kind of do a patchy, patchy,
14 kind of get through so we don't get fines for
15 tripping hazards and things of that nature. We
16 need to pull that up. And I would suggest they
17 don't put carpet down, and just put linoleum
18 down.

19 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: That would be
20 much cleaner.

21 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Much cleaner.

22 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: And much less
23 expensive.

24 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Okay.

25 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: Thank you.

1 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Second public
2 comment? Does anyone have a second public
3 comment?

4 MS. STURGEN: This is a question. Last
5 time we were here we were discussing the washing
6 machines and dryers, and I'm just wondering how,
7 if anybody was able to --

8 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Correct them?

9 MS. STURGEN: Not correct them, but get
10 new ones, whatever it is.

11 MS. GROSS: We did have someone come
12 out. We were talking actually about replacing
13 or putting a new machine in there. They said
14 no, there's no space for it. You can't put
15 another machine in there. And we had them do an
16 inspection of the machines that are there, and
17 they said nothing is wrong with the machines.
18 Those machines are okay.

19 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: The feedback
20 was the dryers weren't drying. Correct?

21 MS. GROSS: Right, but he said the
22 machines are proper, there's nothing else they
23 can do.

24 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: Is that
25 out-sourced to a laundry company?

1 MS. GROSS: There's a contractor.

2 MR. POUNDER: A contractor.

3 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: All the laundry
4 services are with an outside vendor? So they
5 really get the say so on the machines.

6 MR. POUNDER: Right.

7 MS. GROSS: The other thing we're
8 talking about is possibly replacing the
9 machines. But that's going to be -- we probably
10 would have to put that in a five-year plan. It
11 costs so much money to replace these things.
12 Possibly the housing authority could maintain
13 them and not do an outside thing.

14 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: We own the machines,
15 which we take in the revenue. So it's one of
16 those things.

17 COMMISSIONER CRIPPEN: So they're not
18 owned by an Coinmach or --

19 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: No, they're owned by
20 us but serviced by an outside contractor. So we
21 get the benefit of the revenue. But it seems to
22 be a constant question and something we
23 continue to look at and address. One of the
24 problems is that the drying takes two cycles,
25 which takes more money. So we're trying to

1 figure this out. Probably know what the problem
2 is with that. But we're trying to figure it
3 out. But we're working on it.

4 Okay. The mayor is not here, so he
5 doesn't have anything to say. But we do have
6 our council liaison who will -- what would you
7 like to say?

8 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Thank you, and
9 congratulations on your new chairperson. I
10 guess I wasn't there at the last meeting so I
11 missed that. I don't really have anything to
12 say, but I have a question based on what you
13 said earlier. There's a new director?

14 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Yes.

15 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: That person, is it
16 public information? And is that person
17 starting -- when is that person starting?

18 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: He'll be starting
19 right after the -- shortly after the first of
20 the year.

21 MR. MANFREDI: January 11th.

22 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Does this person
23 have a name?

24 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Yes, he does. It is
25 public record. So Roy Rogers.

1 COMMISSIONER WHITE: The famous Roy
2 Rogers.

3 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: He's presently the
4 executive director of the Harrison Housing
5 Authority. He used to have a consulting firm.
6 He has quite a bit of experience in public
7 housing. So he'll be starting. We're very
8 happy to get him. So a lot of these little
9 things that we hear, we'll get him on board.
10 Hopefully he'll have some ideas on how to get
11 some money.

12 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: Great. I'll relay
13 that information back to the council and
14 governing body. And no issues. I mean, we have
15 a meeting -- unbeknownst to me I didn't realize
16 we meet the first of the year after an election
17 year, but when it's not an election year we meet
18 the first Tuesday. So unfortunately I made
19 vacation plans months to go away with my sister,
20 so I'm not going to be at that meeting that
21 maybe you intimated to the Shirley woman, so
22 I'll follow that up with her and --

23 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: She can make the
24 next one I'm sure.

25 COUNCILWOMAN DEEB: And happy holidays

1 to all.

2 COMMISSIONER WHITE: Same to you.

3 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Help yourself to any
4 coffee or donuts. And can I have a motion to
5 adjourn, please?

6 COMMISSIONER DOUGHERTY: So moved.

7 CHAIRMAN CHERELLO: Roll call.

8 (Roll call was taken with all voting in
9 favor.)

10 (Meeting was concluded.)

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