

Board of Commissioners – Housing Authority of the Town of Morristown
Board Meeting Minutes
200 South Street, 4thFlr, Morristown, NJ 07960
October 23, 2023 – 6:00 pm

Board of Commissioners

Martha Ballard, Chairperson
Luma Oweis, Vice Chairperson
Nohemy Zabala, Commissioner - Absent
Tina Lindsey, Commissioner
Eva Turbiner, Commissioner
Derrick McCoy, Commissioner

Housing Authority

Keith Kinard, Executive Director
Allison Durham, Deputy Director
Paul Miller, Esq., MHA General Counsel Office

Town of Morristown Officials

Mayor Timothy Dougherty - Absent
Councilman Robert Iannaccone

Orbach Affordable Housing Solutions LLC

Jaime Birman, Director of Construction
Elena Linnik, Director of Operations

Call to Order

Chairperson Ballard called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. The meeting was properly noticed under the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act. Roll call was taken and Chairwoman Ballard, Commissioners Oweis, Turbiner, McCoy, and Lindsey was present. Commissioners Zabala was absent. The flag was observed.

Pledge of Allegiance - Moment of Silence Observed

Approval of Meeting Minutes Summary–October 2, 2023

Upon a motion by Commissioner Turbiner and seconded by Commissioner Oweis, the October 2, 2023 Meeting Minutes Summary was approved. Chairwoman Ballard, Commissioners Oweis, Turbiner, McCoy and Lutz voted in favor.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Kinard reported on the following items:

1. OAHS/MPD/MHA Meeting: Mr. Kinard advised the board of a post summer follow-up meeting held between management and Police recently. Discussions at the meeting centered around July 4th activities at Manahan Village; enforcement of trespassing signs, and review of the eviction process. OAHS will outline in writing to MPD what is needed to be enforced on the property under its trespassing and/or loitering restrictions. MPD will continue to identify police incident reports related to sites and forward to management for review and action where warranted.

2. Chairwoman Ballard mentioned receiving calls from residents about an increased presence of non-residents in and out of the buildings at 31 and 39 Early. Mr. Kinard noted that during the extensive renovations an unfortunate consequence is the presence of a lot of non-residents every day. This can be dozens of construction workers, inspectors, and the typical inflow of guests of tenants. Notwithstanding, the crew and site management needs to be mindful of securing the building at the end of each work day. Mr. Birman mentioned that management is in the process of installing a new access door system to help enhance security at the senior buildings located at 31 and 39 Early Street.
3. Resident Complaints – Mr. Kinard provided an update to the board on the complaints received at the previous board meeting: The complaints were largely addressed by the contractor and property management, the Mayor conducted a tour with MHA and OAHS staff, along with a number of residents. A daily cleaning regiment has been put in place for the common space areas, the air quality reports noted work was conducted within the required EPA parameters and compliant with regulations. We continue to follow up on a weekly basis.

Board Committee Reports

No reports. New Board Committees were formed and the parameter of each reviewed and discussed: Asset Management/Finance Committee and Community Outreach Committee. The Committee members will include the Board Chair.

Old Business

None

Resolutions

- 2023-015 Resolution: Schedule of Bills as of October 16, 2023.

Commissioner Oweis motioned and Commissioner Lindsey seconded the approval of the Schedule of Bills resolution. Chairwoman Ballard, Commissioners Oweis, Turbiner, McCoy, and Lindsey voted yes.

- 2023-016 Resolution: Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Board Meeting Schedule.

The Schedule of Bills was inadvertently not included in the Board packet previously issued. A copy of the document was distributed at the meeting for review. Commissioner Turbiner asked how do we plan to get rid of the housing authority trucks. Mr. Kinard responded that we are looking into using an online auction system for items like the truck. Commissioner Oweis motion for approval and Commissioner Ballard second the approval. Chairwoman Ballard, Commissioners Oweis, Turbiner, McCoy, and Lindsey voted yes.

- 2023-017 Resolution: Late Submission of MHA FY 2023-2024 Budget to Sate of New Jersey

Commissioner Turbiner asked for an overview of the budget. Ms. James stated that the anticipated total budget revenue 10.5 million dollars is a 37.2% increase from the previous year. Other program funds noted in the document of \$288,735 refers to other income comprised of office space rents collected from the resident center, social services funds from OAHS, the Shared Services with Summit Housing Authority. The \$502,661 is interest earned from investment accounts. We also will be receiving another \$16 Million from New Jersey Housing & Mortgage Financial Authority the Aspire program funds. Commissioner Turbiner asked for clarification on if 9 million includes the anticipated administrative fees and rent subsidy from HUD? Ms. James stated that the 9 million includes the fees. The \$550,000 are Capital Funds (2020, 2021, 2022) still due to MHA from HUD. Ms. James further stated that the total Housing Assistance Payments (HAP-payments to landlords) being received from HUD is to be used solely for the Voucher Program and this amount is larger this year as it includes the project-based units of the senior and Manahan Village. Ms. Turbiner asked how many people are on staff currently. Mr. Kinard

responded nine (9) and last year we had 21. No severance was paid as many left MHA for other employment opportunities. Ms. Turbiner further asked if we anticipate not taking any funds out of the investment accounts to fill any operating budget gaps and the response from Mr. Kinard was affirmative. It was also explained that the decrease in public housing funds from HUD is due to less units remaining to receive LIPH funds from HUD as they transition our funds to come out of the voucher program. Mr. Kinard also explained that HUD tends to allocate more funds for the voucher program than public housing as many units in the voucher program have higher rents than public housing especially in the Morristown market. Commissioner Turbiner commented that the public housing program was less funded than the voucher program which would be a benefit to the OAHS company. Mr. Kinard added that the higher rent is also a benefit to MHA as it allows for the agency to take on the RAD project with the goal of addressing the capital needs of the developments. Commissioner Turbiner also asked where the 200 South Street lease rent expenditure is located in the budget. Mr. Kinard responded that it is included Other Miscellaneous Administration expenses totaling \$359,000. She also stated that the budget refers to office lease space as part of a Shared Services Agreement with the Town of Morristown. Mr. Kinard stated the Shared Services Agreement is with Summit Housing Authority not the Town of Morristown and that referral will be corrected on the document, Page N-1. The Commissioner also stated that having a liability of \$173,000 for staff accrued paid time is a very large amount and not fiscally sound. She stated that we really need to have a policy on limits on payouts if we do not already. Mr. Kinard stated that the agency does have a policy in place related to accrued absences and will share with the Board to review if they wish to change it. Commissioner Ballard motioned for approval and Commissioner Oweis seconded the approval with the modification noted on Page N-1. Chairwoman Ballard, Commissioners Oweis, Turbiner, McCoy, and Lindsey voted yes.

Public Comments

Chairwoman Ballard asked for comments from OAHS staff Elena Linnik and Jaime Birman on the work they are doing including any updates they would like to share. Ms. Linnik noted that there are challenges they are facing as well as residents with stress of relocation. However, the feedback has been good once they return to their renovated apartment. She noted that they plan to complete 80 units at Manahan Village by the end of 2023. Mr. Birman spoke about the progress being made on the renovations at Manahan Village and the extent of the work in the units. He welcomed a visit from the Commissioners on site to see the renovated units. Commissioner Turbiner asked if they have been able to respond on matters such as security at Manahan Village, extermination and coordinating with the Morristown Police Department. Ms. Linnik stated that in the last seven days property management has been focused on addressing security matters at the senior and family sites. Mr. Birman spoke about the senior buildings getting a locking system in place and all the doors are locked properly around the buildings. Ms. Linnik stated that staff has established a process to check each senior building door at the end of the day in the evenings to ensure all the doors are secured. Mr. Linnik stated that the police department is working closely with their staff. In addition, a letter was issued to all Manahan Village residents noting consequences for lease violations. Furthermore, new security cameras are being set up at the site and Police will have access. Mr. Kinard stated that his experience with Morristown Police had been very positive in terms of their engagement with property management and addressing issues. Commissioner Turbiner commented that now that the public health emergency is over and evictions are more available, how many evictions have been completed since taking over property management. Ms. Linnik responded that they have not performed any evictions. Ms. Durham stated that all cases taken to court were related to non-payment of rent and no further filings have been made. Commissioner Turbiner asked if MHA gets notified when OAHS moves to evict anyone? What is the process? Mr. Kinard stated that we have not seen any as they have not started any and that MHA must be notified of such action being started as part of the Voucher Program. Commissioner Lindsey stated that she does see a difference in the look of the community due to the renovations. Many residents are very happy with their own washers and dryers in the

apartments. Mr. Kinard further stated that there Morristown has rental assistance agency available to residents therefore, it is very rare that an eviction occurs due to non-payment of rent. Commissioner Turbiner stated that she learned that under RAD there is a difference of people's rights verses living under the Voucher RAD program and public housing and is aware that New Jersey is a tenant-friendly state and was wondering if there has been any changes in evictions since the conversion. Chairwoman Ballard thank Mr. Birman and Ms. Linnik for attending hopes to see them at the next Board meeting.

Mayor's Comments

None

Council Liaison's Comments –Robert Iannaccone

Chairwoman Ballard introduced Councilman Iannaccone to speak on any pending Town Council activities affecting the agency or its residents. Councilman Iannaccone spoke about enforcement by the police as he spoke to the Chief who told him the police have non-clarity on what should be enforced and what the expectation is but he knows that those discussions are still going on. He also spoke about other Section 8 housing in Morristown that are in his ward and that he asks the housing inspection once every three months to walk the sites with him and he will issue violations to the owners of the facility. The Councilman wanted the Housing Authority to know what options are available for the other voucher units in Morristown to help get them repaired for those tenants. He mentioned there is also an issue of overcrowding in units that is a safety matter. He asked for clarification if the MHA is only using interest from the principle from the sale of the properties in its budget not the principle of the accounts and Mr. Kinard confirmed. He further asked OAHS if regular meetings have been scheduled with the residents. Commissioner McCoy stated that many residents at Manahan have been asking him if meetings will be scheduled. Mr. Birman stated that a meeting is scheduled at 31 Early Street as the community room area is suitable now for a large gathering. Councilman also stated that meeting schedules should be shared with the Town Clerk so they put it on the Town's calendar. Mr. Kinard stated that he does not believe MHA has any vouchers in the properties mentioned by the Councilman and he will check. He further stated that MHA uses a third-party vendor to perform annual inspections which is required by the Voucher Program. Any violations noted during the inspections are notified to the landlords and the MHA.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

With no further business, Commissioner Lindsey motioned and Commissioner Oweis seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting. All Commissioners voted yes to adjourn at 7:07 pm.