



**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:**

Thursday, April 22, 2021; 5:30 p.m.

Zoom Webinar Phone Access Dial 929-205-2099 Meeting ID 895-6581-7977

In accordance with Executive Order 20-46, the meeting was held entirely by video and telephone conference call. Members and anyone else speaking identified themselves when speaking.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nicolas Retsinas called the meeting to order at 5:36p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:	Absent:
Nicolas Retsinas	John Iglizzi
Thomas Ryan	
Vivian Medina	
Jessica Cigna	
Lonzie Doggett	
Rochelle Lee	
Siri Colom	
Lawrence D'Alfonso	
Mary Kay Harris	
Marcela Betancur	

Ten members were present, constituting a quorum to conduct business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Retsinas called for a motion to accept and approve the minutes of the March 25, 2021 meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner D'Alfonso and was seconded by Commissioner Medina. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT COMMENTS:

None

RESIDENT SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE:

Commissioner Doggett reported on the following updates relating to Resident Services:

- The People's Garden Project funded by a grant from Northern RI Conservation District supports the continuation of community gardening projects at Hartford Park and Chad Brown. The grant will support the creation of a new community garden at Codding Court.
- The YMCA received a grant from their national office for a program addressing food insecurity. The YMCA, working in partnership with Amos House, selected Manton Heights as a site for this program providing food to children aged 18 and under. Resident Service Coordinator, Jennifer Perez, conducted targeted outreach to identify families most in need of food support and assisted in registering to participate in the YMCA program.
- The Parenti Villa food pantry resumed its monthly distribution program today, with changes that reflect COVID precautions. The pantry's last distribution was in March of 2020. The change in the pantry operation was that instead of having residents come

through the site selecting items, food items were prepackaged and distributed to residents. The resumption of the pantry was well received by residents.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE:

Commissioner D'Alfonso provided the following summary of Capital Improvements Projects:

- All unit-by-unit lead inspections at Chad Brown have been completed. We are now waiting on reports on each unit from the testing consultant.
- Manton Heights Bike Path / Greenway project is set to begin on May 2, 2021. This project will create a connection from Manton Heights to the Woonasquatucket River Greenway.
- Notice of Award has gone out to the winning bidder for the Security Camera and infrastructure project at Chad Brown. Included in this project are two new security cameras and a substantial upgrade to servers and overall network.
- The Carroll Tower Penthouse siding project has been completed.
- Work on the lower roof at 335 Hartford Ave has been completed.
- Scattered Sites roof evaluation Request for Proposal has been developed, the deadline for bids is April 14, 2021.
- Chad Brown roofing project is on schedule to be completed on April 30, 2021. There are four more buildings to be completed.
- The stairwell door panic bar at Dexter 1 is now completed.
- Further information is available in the monthly management report.

BUDGET & FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE:

Commissioner Cigna updated the board on the following:

Financial Overview

- AMPS: @ March 31 bottom line reflects a YTD operating surplus of **\$3,698,120**
- COCC: showing an operating surplus of **\$61,664**
- Section 8 Admin: showing an operating surplus of approximately **\$1,255,818**
- Section 8 HAP: has booked **\$921,398** as underspent for FY 2021 YTD.

New Funding Sources Related to COVID-19

- \$75,000 Grant through Strategy and Development to fund food distribution during the crisis- **Expended**
- \$2.54 M CARES Act for Operating Funds- **\$115,000 remaining**
- \$513,800 CARES Act for Section 8 Administrative Fees - **Expended**
- \$542 CARES Act for Mainstream Administrative Fees- **Expended**
- \$34,000 CDBG for food distribution - **Expended**
- \$599,443 Round 2 CARES Act Section 8 Administrative Fees- **Expended**
- \$10,018 Round 2 CARES Act Mainstream Administrative Fees- **Expended**
- \$1,349,437 CARES Act award for HAP for Extraordinary Circumstances- **Expended**
- \$77,112 CARES Act award for Mod Rehab HAP- **\$77,112 remaining**
- \$15,000 Food Program Grant from Amica Insurance – **Expended**
- \$40,000 Food Program Grant from RI Foundation - **\$18,351 Remaining**

Contract Updates

- Delta Mechanical – Fire Protection System @ Hartford Tower – 335 Hartford Ave - \$1,653,900. CO for \$15279 for Total of \$1,707,579. Funding Source is the 2017 Bond Proceeds. **Payments processed: \$1,537,289.99 to date.**
- Delta Mechanical – Fire Protection System @ PV, DX, and CT - \$4,824,300. Funding Source is the 2017 Bond Proceeds. **Payments processed: \$2,502,760.50 to date.**
- Otis Elevator – Elevator Modernization @ Kilmartin Plaza. Funding Source is Bond. Contract total: \$485,000 plus Change Order \$120,025.25 = \$605,025.25. **Payments processed: \$296,534.25 total to date.**
- Otis Elevator – Elevator Modernization @ Dexter Manor. Funding Source is Bond. Contract total: \$831,000. **Payments processed: \$200,097.00 total to date.**

- Otis Elevators – Elevator Modernization@ HP. Funding Source is CFP 19. Contract total is \$661,098. **Payments processed: \$0 total to date.**
- Ahlberg Construction- HP Exterior Renovations - Funding Source CFP 50118. Contract total is \$339,000 plus Change Order for \$12,721= \$351,721 **Payments processed: \$334,135 total to date.**
- Martone Construction – Scattered Sites Exterior Renovations – Funding Source CFP 50118. Contract total is \$364,570 plus CO for \$11,065 = \$375,635. **Payments processed: \$324,499.85 total to date.**
- Martone Construction – Roof and gutter replacement at Chad Brown. Funding source CFP 19. Contract total is \$1,089,460 plus CO for \$477,518. The new contract total is \$1,566,978. **Payments processed: \$1,069,952.36 total to date.**
- Focus Technology – Managed IT Services – Funding Source is OPS/COCC. Contract total is \$143,964 plus CO for \$143,964 TOTAL \$287,928.00 **Payments processed: \$143,964 total to date.**
- Sole Source Construction – Scattered Sites Porch Rebuilt @ 3 Duplexes. Funding source is CFP 50118. Contract total is \$144,400. Change order for \$97,220. New Contract total is \$241,620. **Payments processed: \$217,458 total to date.**
- NES Solutions Security- Additional Security for High Rises due to COVID. Contract total is for \$585,780 plus CO for \$47,580 New contract total is \$633,360. Funding source is Ops. **Payments processed: \$570,153 total to date.**
- Commercial Roofing - Remove and Replace Roof Hartford Park Tower. Funding Source is CFP 50118. Contract total is \$523,000. Change order for \$75,412.75. New total \$598,412.75 **Payments processed: \$499,235.74 total to date.**
- Energy One – HVAC for Elevator Modernization. Funding source is CFP. Contract total is for \$127,500. **Payments processed: \$0.00 total to date.**
- NESCTC – Security Detail for DX, CT, and PV sprinkler projects. Funding source is Ops. Contract Total is for \$107,502. **Payments processed: \$27,393.06 total to date.**
- MTG Disposal- Disposal Contract all AMPS. Funding is OPs. Start date 5/1/21. Contract total for \$405,810. **Payments processed: \$0 total to date.**

CONTRACT APPROVAL:

CONSTRUCTION OF MANTON HEIGHTS PATHWAY, BEAUSOLEIL BROS, \$228,500 TO BE FUNDED BY RI HOUSING ARP FUNDS \$132,700 AND CAPITAL FUNDS:

Status: Commissioner Cigna made a motion and Commissioner D'Alfonso seconded the motion.
Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Doggett, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Harris, Betancur (10)
Votes opposed: none

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Director Sanzaro updated the Board on the following items:

1. HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL UPDATE:

- a) The Housing Authority's healthcare consultant, Gallagher and Associates, carefully reviewed the PHA health insurance claims as well as industry trends to determine where the rate increase for FY2022 should be. Based on this evaluation, they determined the increase to fall somewhere between 4-5%. After negotiation with Blue Cross Blue Shield, we agreed to a 4.4% increase this year. Because employees contribute a percentage of the plan cost, they will share in this cost increase. This increase will result in an additional cost of \$83,781 for the PHA.
- b) Gallagher conducted a similar review of the dental plan. The renewal rate was projected to be 8.64% increase. However, the PHA is in year 3 of a 4-year agreement where rate increases are capped at 4%. A 4% increase will cost the PHA approximately \$5,462.

2. REGULAR OPERATIONS:

a) Mural event:

In order to highlight the community artist work that took place at Hartford Park last month, the PHA and the City of Providence are coordinating an event on May 7, 2021 at 1:00pm. Office of Strategy & Development will send out invitations for those that would like to attend.

b) HUD NSPIRE demonstration regarding inspection standards, REAC, has been on hold due to COVID. A HUD update and training were held in the first week of April with more information to come. The PHA's requirement to inspect every unit has been waived temporarily and the PHA is in planning stages now to prepare.

c) Funding:

- CDBG funds for Thomas Anton Center for Public Service pending - \$43,000 proposed by Mayor – under consideration by City Council
- CDBG funding for new entry doors for Dominica and Dexter Manor - \$85,000 proposed by Mayor – under consideration by City Council
- City for Summer Internship Program – funds requested for 20 youth.

3. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS:

a) Staffing shortages:

Since July 1, 2020 the PHA has had 60 employees who went out on family medical leave which is an 87% increase from the prior year. There were 1,551 days/310 weeks lost which is a 77% increase from the previous fiscal year. The PHA is still running in a staff crisis.

b) For the first time the PHA will be seeking a vendor for labor services to address the increased number of vacant units to catch up. The PHA has devised a request for proposal that is under review & must meet with unions to notify.

c) Requests made by PHA which are still pending:

- CDBG COVID Response from the City \$112,000
- 2 COVID Response CDBG from the State for Workforce development and Housing Search Assistance for Mainstream Vouchers
- HEZ funding for Workforce Development \$35K Coordinator
- Community Health Worker \$25K
- CSBG air conditioners funding is being sought with the Department of Human Services

4. HOUSING PRESERVATION:

a) Internal meetings regarding how to continue the efforts to sustain housing for those struggling with rent & just as importantly determine how to provide the assistance with social and economic resources and messaging effective since the eviction moratorium will expire.

b) The PHA will use its capacity and successes with the United Way's Safe Harbor funds where 100 families/individuals were assisted with more than \$143K with the new emergency rental assistance program administered through Rhode Island Housing called Rhode Island Rent Relief program. Our Property Management, Resident Services, Strategy & Development Departments and Legal are working together to design.

c) Property Management and Strategy & Development have already connected up with the Rhode Island Housing team to begin planning to have a more comprehensive approach in financial supports and planning to retain housing as well.

d) To support Housing Prevention and need an additional VOCA Coordinator was hired, & the Community Health Worker position will be extended for another year.

5. WAIT LIST CLOSING:

On October 1st, the PHA closed the Project Based Vouchers, Public Housing wait lists and the PHA will reassess in May.

6. COVID HOTLINE:

The COVID hotline is still very effective resource for the PHA and Providence community that will be utilized as a main tool in the vaccinations and testing efforts.

7. **TESTING AND VACCINATIONS CAMPAIGN:**

The PHA is considering 2 approaches to testing & vaccinations since Human Resources are scarce:

- Limited vaccination clinics.
- Assisting residents register for community clinics offered by various community agencies, through the PHA's COVID hotline.

Testing:

- The PHA is established a schedule starting the first week in May at all of the high-rises for round 1 which will offer residents a way to monitor their health and give the PHA insight into the continued interest in residents of being tested.

8. **JOHNSON & JOHNSON UPDATE:**

- a) Each and every PHA vaccination clinic has administered the Pfizer vaccine until April 8th when the PHA along with Walgreens, administered the Johnson and Johnson vaccine at Harford Park. The PHA provided the Johnson and Johnson vaccine to 78 people, mostly PHA residents. There was one resident who experienced a reaction to the vaccine which was unrelated to blood clotting and went to the hospital but was released the same day and is doing well.
- b) The PHA connected 15 Coddington Court residents to the PEMA clinic on the same day which was the J&J vaccine.
- c) The PHA sent a fact sheet to all who received the J&J vaccine and followed up with everyone by phone to check in with residents. From those phone calls, no other residents have experienced adverse events. The PHA will continue to monitor this trend.
- d) The PHA is working closely with the Rhode Island Department of Health and other vaccination collaborators during the J&J pause and continue to monitor this situation as it evolves. The PHA will follow state and federal guidance regarding vaccine administration.

9. **MARCH AND APRIL FAMILY CLINICS:**

- a) Since the end of March, four Chad Brown Learning vaccination Clinics have taken place with two collaborators.
- b) A total of 405 people were fully vaccinated through these clinics.
- c) Average of 52.75% were PHA residents. This was due to no shows/unable to make appointment, so the community was able to participate.

PRESENTATIONS:

PEST MANAGEMENT: PREVENTION, CONTROL AND MONITORING

Presented by Allan Pacific and Aida Leon, Facilities Management Department.

Aida Leon presented on the trends in bed bug incidents over the past several years and the efforts across departments to provide support for residents with bed bugs and reduce the continued occurrence of this issue.

PROJECT BASED VOUCHERS: LESSONS LEARNED FROM 2019 AWARDS AND NEXT STEPS FOR A NEW REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Presented by Peter Asen, Director of Strategy and Development.

Peter Asen presented on the results and lessons learned from the last request for proposals the agency issued for Project Based Vouchers, and some of the considerations the agency is looking at in developing a new RFP for 2021. Chairman Retsinas announced that he would appoint several commissioners to serve on a committee that will also include staff to review proposals and asked that any commissioners with potential conflicts of interest not participate on this committee.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner D'Alfonso made a motion that the meeting be adjourned at 6:50pm, seconded by Commissioner Betancur. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Taisha Capo
Recording Secretary

Melissa Sanzaro
Executive Director

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