

Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, January 21, 2021
5:00 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Vineland was called to order via video teleconference by Chairman Ruiz-Mesa on Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. at the office of the Authority located at 191 W. Chestnut Avenue, Vineland, New Jersey 08360.

The following Commissioners were present:

Commissioner Chris Chapman
Commissioner Rudolph Luisi
Commissioner Alexis Cartagena **(absent)**
Commissioner Gary Forosisky
Commissioner Daniel Peretti
Commissioner Brian Asselta
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa

Also present were Jacqueline Jones, Executive Director, Wendy Hughes, Assistant Executive Director, Charles W. Gabage, Esquire – Solicitor, Linda Cavallo – Accountant and Gloria Pomales Executive Assistant.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa read the Sunshine Law.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on October 15, 2020. Tabled for next month.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entertained a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 17, 2020. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta and seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Abstain) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Abstain) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for the Financial Report from the Fee Accountant. Linda Cavallo reviewed the Financial Report for the three months ending December 31, 2020.

Executive Director's Report:

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa requested the Executive Administrative Report. Mrs. Jones provided an update to her written report. A couple of months ago the VHA finished the "COVID room" where the VHA staff can meet with residents without having to be in the same room. It is two offices with a glass window in the middle with an outside entrance for residents to enter. This room is now being used purposes such as initiating repayment agreements with residents who have outstanding balances. The room was a good investment to be able to meet with residents face-to-face.

The RAD conversion for Kidston and Olivio was effective for December 1, 2020. There are renovations to be completed at Kidston and Olivio but are being held off inside the building until the VHA sees what happens with COVID as we are trying to minimize contact with residents at this time. The VHA has begun to work on the roof that was awarded. The roofs at both Kidston and Olivio will be replaced and is in process.

The other activity beginning at Kidston will be the relocation of some of the residents of Kidston to some of the vacant units at Tarkiln, Olivio or D'Orazio. In the resolution section of today's meeting there is a Relocation Plan for Kidston and Olivio Towers for consideration. It details the relocation benefits the VHA will provide the residents to move and to help them move. This includes anything from transferring all utilities to hiring a mover to help with packing, moving and unpack. Some of the major work at Kidston consists of replacing all the pipes internally. This will begin with two of the risers. Both of those risers, which consists of about 20 residents will be vacated as well as the ground floor of Kidston. The VHA has enough vacancies at Tarkiln, Olivio and D'Orazio to move the residents. The first 20 or so will be offered Tarkiln, Olivio or D'Orazio. This will begin sometime in February or March. Once those two risers are completed, the VHA will use those units as "hotel" units to move other residents in and out as work is being done on their units in other risers. This is expected to take approximately 18 months.

The VHA has been working with the Special Application Center (SAC) of HUD on the disposition plan for the VHA's Scattered Sites. The Authority has been working with SAC for about 1 year on this disposition plan. It has been a challenge to have the VHA plan approved as it relates to the selling of the home. The VHA wrote a letter to HUD about 2 weeks ago stipulating what the VHA was told could not be done in the plan. The plan was to enable us to sell the homes to the VHA's public housing residents who are able and qualified. The HUD employee stated we were not allowed to do that. The VHA's letter mentioned that it felt this was a Fair Housing issue. The VHA had a meeting with HUD and there were HUD employees on the call from HUD headquarters and from the Special Application Center in Chicago. HUD stated that we can do what we wanted to do in our plan. The good news is the VHA has an approved plan which was discussed a couple of months. The VHA can start to sell the vacant homes and in the next few weeks the VHA will start Zoom calls with residents to engage in conversation again about buying or not buying a house process. It will be a little more difficult to do and communicate with everyone because of doing it through Zoom. The VHA expects it will have a certain number of residents who will want to buy a house. Pre-qualifications will be conducted with them. If it appears that they may qualify then they will be set up with a homeownership plan. If it appears they do not qualify or are not interested in purchasing a home they will be issued a voucher. They can relocate with that voucher or it is possible that whoever purchases the home may keep them as a tenant. There are also some homes that the VHA will not be able to sell. Those are the homes that are involved in the environmental issues along West Avenue. The VHA will keep them, possibly transfer them to the VHDC and obtain vouchers for them. The residents will have the vouchers and the VHDC can collect the rent and manage the homes. As homes are becoming vacant the VHA will place them on the market. They must be sold at fair market value. The VHA currently has a homeownership policy that is active with the Section 8 program. This policy will be updated and brought back to the Board for review before it is implemented. The Request for Proposals (RFP) for realtors to sell the homes is being finalized and will be sent to Mr. Gabage for review before it is advertised. The general idea is to find 2-3 realtors to go through this process. The VHA is finally making some headway and can see some movement in disposing of the scattered sites. With the income of disposing this program, the Authority can move to the redevelopment of D'Orazio.

As of yesterday, with the new Biden Administration, the eviction moratorium was extended to March 31, 2021. This has affected the VHA with some residents, mostly families, that have some balances. The VHA staff continues to communicate with residents with balances to encourage repayment agreements.

Commissioner Forosisky asked in reference to the high-rises if there was any type of seniority with the relocation of the residents. The Authority is starting with these risers (G & H) for a technical reason. Additionally, if a resident is in a 1 bedroom they will be relocated to a 1-bedroom unit if they are in a 0 bedroom they will be relocated to a 0. Commissioner Forosisky asked since the garden style seem to be the preferred units is there a list for residents to move there. Mrs. Jones stated that is called a transfer list, but as a rule and policy the VHA does not allow transfers because then everyone would always be wanting to move. The VHA does allow transfers for reasonable accommodations. Mrs. Jones explained possible reasonable accommodations.

Commissioner Forosisky asked regarding the scattered sites if there were any lots that can be subdivided and be able to utilize more revenue by selling the lot individually. Mrs. Jones does not believe any of the lots are that large to be subdivided and all have a single-family home or duplex on them.

Committee Report: None.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

With no other discussion in related matters the Chairman moved to the Resolutions.

Resolution #2021-01
Resolution to Approve Monthly Expenses

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa has reviewed the expenses and recommends them for payment in the sum of \$2,042,754.27. Mrs. Jones explained about \$900,000 of the expenses is due the Kidston and Olivio conversion. The \$900,000 amount was taken out of one account and placed into a construction account. This month there was also the insurance payment. January was also the first month that Kidston and Olivio is under housing assistance payment (HAP) that comes from Section 8 at approximately \$88,000, so the total HAP payments will now be at about \$88,000 higher per month. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Resolution #2021-02

Designating Official Newspaper for Business Related Matters and Contracting Purposes

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-02. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

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|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Resolution #2021-03

Authorizing the Execution of a Sub-Grantee Agreement with the City of Vineland for the Computer Learning Center

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-03. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The following vote was taken:

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|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Resolution #2021-04

Authorizing Purchase of Authority Vehicle (Section 8)

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-04. Mrs. Jones stated a Chevy Traverse will be purchased for the Section 8 Program. The Authority has one Chevy Impala that is about 13 years old that will be replaced. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Resolution #2021-05
Authorizing Shared Services Agreement with the Bridgeton Housing Authority for Landscaping Services

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-05. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Resolution #2021-06
Approving Relocation Plan for Kidston and Olivio Towers

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-06. A motion was made by Commissioner Chapman; seconded by Commissioner Asselta. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Resolution #2021-07
Award As-Needed Electrical Services

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-07. Mrs. Jones stated Ron Miller who oversees the VHA maintenance department and requested this resolution. He is a qualified purchasing agent and therefore the Authority can spend up to \$44,000 per vendor if needed. This will allow the VHA to go over the \$17,500 without going out for bid. Commissioner Forosisky asked if this was prevailing wage. Mrs. Jones stated if a job is over \$2,000 and there are employees involved it would be prevailing wage. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

Resolution #2021-08
**Authorizing Conditional Payment of Additional Compensation from the Ocean City
Housing Authority to the Vineland Housing Authority**

Mr. Gabage explained he received a phone call from the Chairman of the Ocean City Housing Authority stating that because the VHA has done such an outstanding job in the operation of OCHA that the Board would like to make an additional payment to the VHA to acknowledge the great job that was done by the VHA. Mr. Gabage stated he will not go over the numbers, but based upon what was going on at the OCHA before the VHA took over comparing it to the numbers that are being done now that VHA has taken over the difference is absolutely astounding and extraordinary. The OCHA acknowledges this and wanted to make sure that it was just not a payment that would go to the VHA but that it would be targeted to those people that that are working from the VHA on the OCHA operation. The OCHA board wanted to designate \$5,000 to Jackie Jones and the remaining \$5,000 to be divided by Jackie Jones among those people at her discretion that were working on the OCHA project. Mr. Gabage stated he put together a resolution for the OCHA, which was passed. Mr. Gabage was concerned that the VHA would get the money and then it might be a forgotten issue on where it is supposed to go. Mr. Gabage stated he suggest the VHA have a resolution whereby the VHA would agree to the \$5,000 of the \$10,000 being paid to Jackie and the remaining \$5,000 to be divided among the other employees at the VHA that worked on OCHA at the discretion of the Executive Director. Commissioner Chapman just wanted to say "Wow". Chairman Ruiz-Mesa stated the Executive Director and the employees should be congratulated for their outstanding work that merits this bonus. Mr. Gabage stated the numbers are unbelievable. Commissioner Chapman stated he was familiar when OCHA came to the VHA and it was literally dropped on the VHA's lap and for them to be at a point where they feel not only that they have the ability to do this he has no doubt in their desire to want to do it. He stated this is truly a testament to the fact that if you want something right and make good decisions, he does not see it as much as an award as much as it is an acknowledgement that things would be done fast and accurate. It is less about the monetary and more about good decisions around the Executive Director. Mrs. Jones thanked everyone for their comments. She acknowledged to hard work of the VHA staff on the OCHA project. It has been a little over 3 years that the VHA has been at OCHA and it has been transformed. There is still more to do. The OCHA is a very supportive Board, Mayor and Council. It is more about the recognition and then it is the money. Commissioner Forosisky stated this is a great acknowledgement and for them to memorialize it into a document. He asked about the other \$5,000 and if the VHA had employees who worked at the OCHA full-time or how the structure is designed. Mrs. Jones stated there are quite a few people that have something to do with the operations of the OCHA, but there are really three individuals that go above and beyond with additional duties at Vineland and they are Wendy, Gloria and Ron. Those are three that have made it happen from the very beginning and continue to make it happen. They are the three that will be recognized. Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-08. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

There is no need for Executive Session.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa asked for comments from the press and/or public. No additional comments from Board Members.

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entertained a motion for adjournment of the Regular Meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The vote was carried unanimously by the Board Members present. The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jacqueline S. Jones
Secretary/Treasurer

Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, February 1, 2021

5:00 p.m.

The Special Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Vineland was called to order by Chairman Ruiz-Mesa on Monday, February 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. at the office of the Authority located at 191 W. Chestnut Avenue, Vineland, New Jersey 08360.

The following Commissioners were present:

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|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | |

Also present were Jacqueline Jones, Executive Director, Linda Cavallo – Accountant, and Gloria Pomales, Executive Assistant.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa stated notice of this Special Meeting was delivered to each member of the Board at least 48 hours prior to the date of this meeting per the By Laws of the Vineland Housing Authority.

New Business: Mrs. Jones reported the Cape May Housing Authority Chairman (CMHA) reached out and asked for assistance with Executive Director services. This is the purpose of this meeting tonight to see if the VHA board would approve a Shared Services Agreement with CMHA for these services. The CMHA is a small agency with 85 units consisting of mostly Seniors with a few family units. They have one person in the office and two maintenance staff members. They have no debt and are a high performer. CMHA has some cash. They are approved for a RAD conversion but there currently is not a lot of movement on that. The resolution tonight includes the Executive Director services and the Shared Services Agreement attached includes additional services as needed, if needed, on Attachment A with a range of hourly rates.

With no other discussion in related matters the Chairman moved to the Resolutions.

Resolution #2021-09

Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to Enter into a Shared Services Agreement with the Cape May Housing Authority

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2021-09. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| Commissioner Chris Chapman | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Rudolph Luisi | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Alexis Cartagena | (Absent) |
| Commissioner Gary Forosisky | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Daniel Peretti | (Yes) |
| Commissioner Brian Asselta | (Yes) |
| Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa | (Yes) |

No need for Executive Session.

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa asked for comments from the Board. Commissioner Forosisky stated now that the VHA is going to assist Cape May Housing Authority as well he would like to see for each of the entities we provide these services for is that just the revenue is accounted for because he is aware bonuses are provided at the end of the year. Mrs. Jones stated this information can be provided to the Board.

With no further business to discuss, Chairman Ruiz-Mesa entertained a motion for adjournment of the Special Meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The vote was carried unanimously by the Board Members present. The Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jacqueline S. Jones
Secretary/Treasurer