

# Housing Authority of the City of Vineland

*REGULAR MEETING*  
**Thursday, April 20, 2023**  
**6:00 p.m.**

The Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Vineland was called to order by Chairman Ruiz-Mesa on Thursday, April 20, 2023, at 6:00 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 Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	
Commissioner Albert Porter	
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	

Also present were Jacqueline Jones, Executive Director, Wendy Hughes, Assistant Executive Director, Harry Furman, 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 March 16, 2023. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta and seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Albert Porter	(Yes)
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	(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 six months ending March 31, 2023.

## **Executive Director's Report:**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa requested the Executive Administrative Report. Mrs. Jones provided a quick update on Audit FYE 2021. The auditors do have the information from the State for the post-employment health benefits. The plan is for the auditors to be at next month's meeting to present the audit to the Board. It is a clean audit report.

The Authority is working on the Kidston/Olivio elevator refurbishment project. The project will be going out to bid in the next couple of days.

The Kidston Towers exterior project is almost finished. The close out paperwork is being processed. The interior project at Kidston and Olivio is also about finished. There are few items left to complete due to supply chains issues.

The Authority is working with the residents of the Scattered Site Homes that will be sold. These residents will be moved to the houses that are closer to the office the Authority will keep and are vacant.

Melrose currently has one vacancy and another vacancy is anticipated, but the project is financially healthy. The audit was just finished on Melrose as well and will be brought to the Board next month. The development fee for this project has been paid in full to the Vineland Housing Development Corporation.

Mrs. Jones spoke about the voucher funding last month where HUD indicated there would be about a 7.7% increase in the Authority's funding from last year. Mrs. Jones will believe it when the money is received. It is anticipated to be received in May. The calculations do work out fairly close to a \$520,000 increase in Housing Assistance Payment funding. With the Authority's average housing assistance payment of about \$800, the Authority anticipates leasing up 54 new families with these vouchers. There is another voucher program called Mainstream, which is a special allocation of vouchers. The Authority was allocated 40 of those. About 20 of those have been leased.

Mrs. Jones reported there are some changes in HUD rules regarding how the rent is calculated with the tenants. This has been kicked around for about 6 years. The Authority will have to change the Administrative Plan for Section 8 and the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy for public housing. The changes have to do with over-income residents as well as some medical benefit deduction differences. There are also asset limitations of approximately \$100,000. If an applicant has \$100,000 in assets they would not qualify for housing or if they own a home and it is livable, they would not be qualified for housing either. The Authority is working on scheduling training and Mrs. Jones will provide an update at next month's meeting.

Commissioner Porter asked for the status of working with the tenants in regard to the furniture for the Towers. Mrs. Jones reported she is waiting for the samples from the furniture company.

Commissioner Porter asked how the \$100,000 asset limitation would impact the residents. Mrs. Jones does not know if it will affect current residents. Over-income issues would affect current residents. The Authority has not received the full training on the new rules yet. Residents will be notified of all the changes. Discussion about residents moving their assets and the current rule of disposing of an asset calculation.

Mrs. Jones provided a copy of a letter received from HUD to the Board. The year-ending date of June 30, 2012 on the letter is an error and Mrs. Jones believes they are referring to September 30, 2022 as the year ending date. Also, they did not include the PHAS score report with the letter. Mrs. Jones provided a copy of the PHAS score report to the Board. Mrs. Jones explained this is a method for HUD to score public housing authorities on certain indicators such as the physical condition of the property, financial condition, management condition as well as the Capital Fund. The last time the VHA was scored was in 2017 and the Authority was a high performer. The Authority was given a pass for a year or two because of being a high performer. COVID hit and at that time, Authorities maintained their previous score because HUD was not inspecting units during COVID. Last September, there was a rush to get units all inspected, which is the physical inspection indicator. The financial, management and Capital Fund information comes from various means. The financial indicator is determined when the Authority files the financial information at the year end. The management score comes from partly financial and part occupancy information along with a couple of other items. The Capital Fund is checked to make sure the funds are expended timely. This letter refers to the management score and indicates substandard management. The reason they are calling it substandard is because according to HUD the Authority is at 58% of the maximum score allowable and considered a near failure. This refers to only the public housing properties, which are D'Orazio and the Scattered Sites because

the remainder of the VHA properties have converted to RAD, which is considered Section 8. Mrs. Jones researched this further by logging into HUD's website and found out what is really going on with the management score. Mrs. Jones believes she found where HUD got their information and where the Authority believes it is inaccurate. She provided the Board with a document to review and explained her findings regarding accounts payable and the impairment loss as well as vehicle and tractor purchases, which are capital expenses, not operating expenses. The reason these expenses were not paid by the end of the year was because of supply chain issues. These are very odd occurrences that do not normally happen. The occupancy scoring was based on how occupied the property was. The Scattered Site Program was in an approved disposition status so all of the units were not rented because the Authority is selling them. This scoring system does not account for that for some reason. This needs to be adjusted as well. Lastly, this is a score based on the unaudited financial data schedule, which is known as the FDS. Once it is audited, HUD goes back and rescores the Authority. Mrs. Jones believes this will be re-scored and the Authority should be back to at least a score of 83, which is standard performer.

Mrs. Jones is going respond to the HUD and Chairman Ruiz-Mesa will cosign the letter. The Board will be copied on the response. Brief discussion regarding HUD inspections.

**Committee Report:** None.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** None.

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

**Resolution #2023-17**  
**Resolution to Approve Monthly Expenses**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa stated the bills have been reviewed and are recommended for payment in the sum of \$1,844,190.15. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Albert Porter	(Yes)
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

**Resolution #2023-18**  
**Approving Revised Organizational Chart**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-18. Mrs. Jones explained the changes. A motion was made by Commissioner Porter; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Albert Porter	(Yes)
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

**Resolution #2023-19**  
**Amending Health, Dental, and Prescription Coverage Policy**  
**Retired Employees Hired before 6/18/2015 – Retiree/Spouse Only**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-19. Mrs. Jones explained the post-employment benefits and the amendment being made. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Albert Porter	(Yes)
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

**Resolution #2023-20**  
**Approve As Needed Electrical Services**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-20. Mrs. Jones stated this is formalizing a relationship with three different vendors in an amount not to exceed \$44,000 each. This amount is because Ron Miller is a Qualified Purchasing Agent and it allows the authority to contact up to \$44,000 with each vendor without going out to bid. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Porter. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Albert Porter	(Yes)
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

**Resolution #2023-21**  
**Approving Change Orders #26 for**  
**Kidston & Olivio Towers Interior and Plumbing Renovations**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-21. A motion was made by Commissioner Porter; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Albert Porter	(Yes)
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

**Resolution #2023-22**  
**Granting an Official Leave of Absence (FMLA) – Ana Soler**

Chairman Ruiz-Mesa called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-22. Mrs. Jones explained the resolution. A motion was made by Commissioner Asselta; seconded by Commissioner Chapman. The following vote was taken:

Commissioner Chris Chapman	(Yes)
Commissioner Daniel Peretti	(Absent)
Commissioner Brian Asselta	(Yes)
Commissioner Albert Porter	(Yes)
Commissioner Iris Acosta-Jimenez	(Yes)
Chairman Mario Ruiz-Mesa	(Yes)

There is no need for an Executive Session.

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

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 Board Members unanimously carried the vote present. The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jacqueline S. Jones  
Secretary/Treasurer