

**REGULAR MEETING
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TRENTON
HELD WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022, 12:00 PM
In-Person and Virtual via Microsoft Teams**

An Audio/Visual Recording of the meeting is on file with the Authority

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm by Chairman Gentry, who read the following statement:

It is to be noted in the Book of Minutes that the required 48 hours notice of this meeting was mailed to the offices of *The Times*, the *Trentonian*, and the Clerk of the City of Trenton, as well as, having been posted in the main entrance of the Housing Authority in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law also known as the Sunshine Law.

ROLL CALL

| Commissioner | Present | Absent | Late | Early Exit | Time |
|---|---------|--------|------|------------|------|
| Garrette | | X | | | |
| Gentry | X | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | | |
| Taylor | X | | | | |
| Weldon | X | | | | |
| Anderson | X | | | | |
| Also Present: Jelani B. Garrett, Secretary/Executive Director David Truelove, Hill Wallack, LLP, General Counsel | | | | | |

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

| Commissioner | Aye | Nay | Abstain | Motion | Second | Absent |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Garrette | | | | | | X |
| Gentry | X | | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | | X | |
| Taylor | X | | | | | |
| Weldon | X | | | X | | |
| Anderson | X | | | | | |

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| Motion Passed | X |
| Motion Failed | |

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 9, 2022

| Commissioner | Aye | Nay | Abstain | Motion | Second | Absent |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Garrette | | | | | | X |
| Gentry | X | | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | | X | |
| Taylor | X | | | | | |
| Weldon | x | | | X | | |
| Anderson | X | | | | | |

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| Motion Passed | X |
| Motion Failed | |

Questions/Comments

None

REPORT OF SECRETARY

Jelani B. Garrett, Executive Director/Secretary, provided a brief verbal report highlighting the continued operational issues that continue to exist as a result of effects of the COVID 19 Pandemic. He referenced and distributed an article from Public Housing from the Housing Authority Directors Association (PHADA) Advocate publication that was an open letter to Dominic Bloom, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Public Housing that highlighted those same issues. Director Garrett reminded the Commissioners that he had distributed and referenced a similar letter that he authored to the HUD Newark field office.

Director Garrett also informed the Commissioners that despite the challenges the agency had a positive net income as of the most recent financial report.

Director Garrett informed that he anticipated that the 2023 agency operating budget would be available for review in January.

Director Garrett acknowledged the continued work of Resident Services staff, particularly Tanya Grant, Darren Freedom Green, and Lineuri Placencia, who continue to provide services to residents and who have stepped up to the plate to cooperate and collaborate in the absence of a Resident Services Director.

RESOLUTIONS

Jelani B. Garrett, Executive Director/Secretary introduced Resolution 22-36 Disbursements for the month ending November 30, 2022.

RESOLUTION 22-36

RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TRENTON APPROVING THE LIST OF DISBURSEMENT FOR NOVEMBER 2022

| Commissioner | Aye | Nay | Abstain | Motion | Second | Absent |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Garrette | | | | | | X |
| Gentry | X | | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | X | | |
| Taylor | X | | | | | |
| Weldon | X | | | | X | |
| Anderson | X | | | | | |

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| Resolution Passed | X |
| Resolution Failed | |

Questions/Comments

None

Jelani B. Garrett, Executive Director/Secretary called Kenneth Martin, Manager of Procurement and Contracts, to present Resolution 22-37.

RESOLUTION 22-37

RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TRENTON AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF VEHICLES NO LONGER NEEDED FOR PUBLIC USE.

| Commissioner | Aye | Nay | Abstain | Motion | Second | Absent |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Garrette | | | | | | X |
| Gentry | X | | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | X | | |
| Taylor | X | | | | | |
| Weldon | X | | | | | |
| Anderson | X | | | | X | |

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| Resolution Passed | X |
| Resolution Failed | |

Questions and Comments

None

Jelani B. Garrett, Executive Director/Secretary introduced Resolution 22-38 Appointing the Executive Director Fund Commissioner for the New Jersey Public Housing Authority Joint Insurance Fund (JIF).

RESOLUTION 22-38

RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TRENTON (THA) APPOINTING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AS FUND COMMISSIONER FOR THE NEW JERSEY PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY JOINT INSURANCE FUND (JIF)

| Commissioner | Aye | Nay | Abstain | Motion | Second | Absent |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Garrette | | | | | | X |
| Gentry | X | | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | | X | |
| Taylor | X | | | | | |
| Weldon | X | | | X | | |
| Anderson | X | | | | | |

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| Resolution Passed | X |
| Resolution Failed | |

Questions/Comments

None

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Lopez stated that since a new Chairman was appointed, he wanted to revisit holding a Board Retreat.

Chairman Gentry stated that in his honest opinion he thinks that we should have a conversation about it with himself, Commissioner Weldon and Commissioner Lopez and perhaps the Executive Director and come up with a date.

Commissioner Lopez stated he would like to form a sub-committee for planning out the retreat which would include Gentry, Weldon, Lopez, and the Director.

Commissioner Taylor stated she thought this was established at the last meeting.

Commissioner Lopez stated he didn't remember any vote at the last meeting. He said we did talk about it, but we didn't take a vote.

FORMATION OF A SUB COMMITTEE TO INCLUDE THE CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, COMMISSIONER LOPEZ AND THE DIRECTOR TO PLAN A RETREAT

| Commissioner | Aye | Nay | Abstain | Motion | Second | Absent |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Garrette | | | | | | X |
| Gentry | X | | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | X | | |
| Taylor | X | | | | | |
| Weldon | X | | | | X | |
| Anderson | X | | | | | |

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| Motion Passed | X |
| Motion Failed | |

Questions and Comments

Commissioner Taylor asked if Commissioner Garrette was going to be made aware of this so she has an opportunity to join the committee if she would like to.

Commissioner Lopez stated that we will do that and if necessary, we will make an amendment at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Emma Jamison, Josephson Homes, voiced a number of complaints concerning her unit (i.e. bathtub floors, and air filters). She also inquired concerning the process of being transferred. She stated that a number of residents have been living in the building for years in efficiencies and have been denied transfers while new residents are moved in to newly renovated one bedroom apartments.

Several Commissioners engaged Ms. Jamison.

Director Garrett instructed her to speak directly with Clifford Godfrey, Deputy Executive Director and Audrey Walker, Director of Housing Operations.

Darnella White, Donnelly Homes, identified herself as the President of the Donnelly Homes Resident Council President, Manager of the Donnelly Homes food pantry, and a member of the community. Ms. White expressed her concerns regarding the quality of life at Donnelly Homes, specifically around public safety and security. She also spoke about the fear and apathy that exists among residents.

Several Commissioners and Director Garrett engaged Ms. White in dialogue.

Ultimately Ms. White agreed to contact Director Garrett to invite him and his team to a Donnelly Homes Resident Council meeting.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Commissioner Weldon thanked everyone for voting for her as Vice Chair.

Commissioner Lopez thanked the two (2) residents for coming out today and stated that he looks forward to seeing them again.

Commissioner Anderson congratulated the Chair and Vice Chair and wished them success in the new year.

Commissioner Green asked if there is any way the Board can receive a list of titles and duties and the chain of command. She also asked if we could investigate rental assistance for the residents and see if they qualify to help with that back rent.

Director Garrett stated we received close to a million dollars in rental assistance. He outlined the actions that THA staff has taken to assist residents in applying for emergency rental assistance. He stated that THA has a robust operation in that regard, however many residents even after receiving assistance fall back into arrears. Director Garrett agreed to provide a list of titles and duties and chain of command.

Commissioner Taylor informed the Board that MARC Nahro's staff and commissioners are working with Housing Authorities. One of the responsibilities of the commissioners is to ask D.C. for funding because a lot of our money does come from federal money and what we do is send out letters to our representatives asking for their support. I know in the past when I asked for your support, excluding new members, I haven't gotten it and I am hoping that going forward into the new year more will get involved in writing letters to your legislators in D.C. and ask them for their support. The bill on the floor now is S1136/HR2573, the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act to help get more affordable housing. What a lot of Housing Authorities are doing now is not building projects but building affordable housing. The other one that we are asking is for a transportation spending bill for HUD. We only ask like twice a year and the letters are already formed. It only takes about five (5) minutes of your time.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

Chairman Gentry stated that he thought we would have time to have an Executive Session today, but we will wait for next month. He would like everyone present to hear what he has to say. As a body we need to straighten up and do the job we are supposed to do. He thanked the residents who came out and expressed their concerns and stated that we did hear you and I am sure that Mr. Garrett will address the issues. He spoke about the gunshots and stated that it is not only here it is all over the city. But we as a body will get together and talk about it to see what we can do.

ADJOURNMENT

| Commissioner | Aye | Nay | Abstain | Motion | Second | Absent |
|--------------|-----|-----|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Garrette | | | | | | X |
| Gentry | X | | | | | |
| Green | X | | | | | |
| Lopez | X | | | | | |
| Taylor | X | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----------|---|--|--|---|---|--|
| Weldon | X | | | X | | |
| Anderson | X | | | | X | |

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| Motion Passed | X |
| Motion Failed | |

Jelani B. Garrett.

Board of Commissioners
Housing Authority
of the
City of Trenton