

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF MORRIS
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
February 13, 2025

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

PLACE: Zoom Meeting, Meeting ID: 865 0868 6059, Passcode: 377057

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Meringolo called the meeting to order at 6:01PM

ROLL CALL: Executive Director Stephens called roll.

PRESENT

Commissioner Zacone
Commissioner Bevacqua
Commissioner Rubino
Vice Chairwoman Ullah
Chairman Meringolo

ABSENT

Commissioner Poli

Also attending meeting:

Kate Coffey, Day Pitney
Kelly A. Stephens, Executive Director
Gina Bozzi, Finance Director
Azalia Goitia, Public

Gina Bozzi read adequate notice to the public.

I hereby announce and state that adequate notice of this remote meeting being held on this the thirteenth day of February 2025 provided by the Executive Director of the Housing Authority County of Morris by preparing a notice specifying the time, date, and place of this meeting. The electronic notice has been posted on the Authority's website and the notice mailed to the Daily Record for inclusion in the minutes of this meeting, all the above in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et.Seq. "Open Public Meetings Act."

Meeting open to the public: Opened at 6:02PM. No one from the public was in attendance at the time.

Correspondence: None.

Committee Report: Chairman Meringolo reported the committees should be finalized by next month. Executive Director Stephens requested the Personnel Committee meet in the next month.

Chairman Report: Chairman Meringolo asked Executive Stephens for a financial report if HUD funding was cut off for a brief time. He also noted someone from the public had signed on and stated he could reopen the meeting to the public but Azalia Goitia did not wish to speak.

Executive Director Report: Executive Director Stephens began her report with the Housing Authority investments and how many months it could carry us through. Based upon 2024 unaudited number, Public Housing would be able to meet operating expenses for approximately five months and Morris Mews about the same time frame. With Housing Choice Voucher, the investment money would not be able to cover any HAP payments, which is approximately \$700,000 each month, therefore landlords would not be paid unless we received funding from HUD. Discussion ensued regarding the investments and expenditures.

Executive Director Stephens explained that as per prior emails, all Housing Authorities were locked out of ELOCCS a few weeks ago, which includes Operating Fund, Capital Fund and Family Self Sufficiency. The only money we were guaranteed were HAP Payments for the month of February. We were advised by the local Field Office to award the Capital Fund project to be voted upon tonight as we need a contract to obligate funding but include verbiage in the contract that it is contingent upon the availability of federal funds. The Housing Authority has been drawing down on monies as permissible.

We have an issue with bedbugs at one of the senior buildings. The exterminator has been aggressively treating the infested and surrounding units. While this is inconvenient for many of the tenants, we want to ensure it does not spread to surrounding units.

As a follow up regarding the use of body cameras, Executive Director Stephens received information from the Risk Manager she wanted to pass on to the Board. The JIF would not provide any specific advice and recommended the Authority should make that decision in conjunction with their legal counsel.

Activities at the senior buildings for the month of February included chair exercise, quarter exchange, food pantry/vegetable pickup, cards, bible study, bingo and birthdays and Living Healthy with Chronic Pain. The Housing Authority also hosted Valentine's pizza parties at all three sites.

The door lock project is underway at Morris Mews and will move on to the other senior properties. There is one fob for both the exterior and apartment doors and is cloud based, which provides the Housing Authority the ability to easily activate and deactivate fobs.

Regular Minutes – Chairman Meringolo made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 9, 2025 meeting. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

Schedule of Payments – A motion was made by Commissioner Zaccone and seconded by Commissioner Bevacqua Approving the Schedule of Payments for February 13, 2025. The following votes were cast:

AYES
Commissioner Zaccone
Commissioner Bevacqua
Commissioner Rubino
Vice Chairwoman Ullah

ABSTAIN

NAYS

Chairman Meringolo

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Legal Update – Attorney Kate Coffey stated Day Pitney has two ongoing items they are working on – one being a tenant who passed an inquiry on the Rockaway project which will be discussed later in Executive Session.

Day Pitney also attended the HVAC bid opening and provided guidance as the second lowest challenged the lowest bid. There were no material defects in the winning bid that prevented it from being awarded. Day Pitney will also be attending the landscaping bid opening in two weeks.

In litigation matters, one matter was settled with the collection of full rent owed and three others have been concluded. There are five new actions: four for non-payment of rent and one for non-compliance. A warrant for removal has been issued and the Housing Authority is awaiting the court officer. Lastly, Day Pitney provided assistance regarding a foreclosure against a former tenant. The Housing Authority is listed as a defendant since it received a judgement, however, the plaintiff listed the County as a lien holder which needs to be corrected. The Housing Authority is behind the bank in priority although it is unlikely we will see any monies.

New Business – Chairman Meringolo asked if the Housing Authority participated in Project Homeless Connect. Executive Director stated two of her staff, LeKeisha Harris-Gray and Hope Summerset, attended the event to look up and process applications, and give out pens and blankets. Discussion ensued regarding the numbers of homeless in Morris County, increasing 30% in 2025.

Old Business – Executive Director Stephens reached out to the engineer, but no disposition applications are being processed at this time, particularly with all the changes at HUD.

Resolution 2025-2 – A motion was made by Commissioner Zaccone and seconded by Vice Chairwoman Ullah Awarding the Contract for HVAC Upgrades at India Brook Village Buildings A and B. The following votes were cast:

AYES
Commissioner Zaccone
Commissioner Bevacqua
Commissioner Rubino
Vice Chairwoman Ullah
Chairman Meringolo

ABSTAIN

NAYS

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Resolution 2025-3 – A motion was made by Chairman Meringolo and seconded by Commissioner Zaccone Approving the updated Tenant Service Charges List. The following votes were cast with changes to the violation amounts as noted in Section H:

AYES

Commissioner Zaccone
Commissioner Bevacqua
Commissioner Rubino
Vice Chairwoman Ullah
Chairman Meringolo

ABSTAIN

NAYS

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Resolution 2025-4 – Chairman Meringolo made a motion Authorizing Executive Session. Motion carried by unanimous consent. The board will be discussing privileged information regarding the purchase/lease of property. No action will be taken, and the board will immediately adjourn afterwards.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:07PM.

March 13, 2025

Date Adopted

Kelly A. Stephens (Original on File)

Kelly A. Stephens, Board Secretary