

IRVINGTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, January 12, 2022

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWNSHIP
OF IRVINGTON, HELD ON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2022, HELD
VIRTUALLY AT 5:05 P.M..

I. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT/READING OF SUNSHINE LAW

I, Darlene Brown, Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Township of Irvington and presiding officer at this meeting do hereby state that it is now 5:05 p.m. on January 12, 2022 and we are convening virtually and I do hereby announce publicly that notice of this board meeting has been provided in accordance with the law, that notice of same containing date, time and location was delivered or telephoned to the Irvington Herald or Star Ledger and also filed with the Municipal Clerk of the Township of Irvington and that formal action may be taken if said adequate notice has not been provided.

II. ROLL CALL

MR. BORIN: Commissioner Lockhart?

COMMISSIONER LOCKHART: Yes.

MR. BORIN: Commissioner Figueroa?

COMMISSIONER FIGUEROA: Here.

MR. BORIN: Commissioner Francis, III?

COMMISSIONER FRANCIS, III: Present.

MR. BORIN: Commissioner Salaam?

COMMISSIONER SALAAM: No response.

MR. BORIN: Commissioner Griffin?

COMMISSIONER GRIFFIN: Here.

MR. BORIN: Vice Chairwoman Beasley?

VICE CHAIRWOMAN BEASLEY: No response.

MR. BORIN: Chairwoman Brown?

CHAIRWOMAN BROWN: Present.

ALSO PRESENT:

FRANK BORIN, ESQ.
PAUL MATTURRO
ESTHE7777R EVEILLARD, Finance

MR. BORIN; You have a quorum Madam Chair.

III. SALUTE TO THE FLAG/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. PUBLIC PORTION: No members of the public

V. MONTHLY REPORTS:

MR. RIVERA: He stated they do have the finance report which was discussed in committee yesterday. He said the report was a highlight of what they have accomplished over the last month. He said it is important to elaborate a little bit as well, but they recently negotiated a new contract with their electric company which will reduce the electric costs significantly for the upcoming year and they are also going to receive a \$60,000 rebate for the January 20 to December 21 period.. He stated he wanted to commend the finance team for that.

He stated they completed an inspection of eight vacant Amp 3 units, which is Building 64, which will, from a finance perspective, allow us to seek funding to convert those units to a MOD classification, which will allow IHA to get funding for those units, even if they are vacant. He said in other words, they were destroyed by one of the recent hurricanes and received significant damage or are just beyond repair. IHA can still receive funding from HUD for those units even if they're not occupied.

He said they have also completed the financing for the required CFP, which is basically the documents necessary for the demo/disposal to be approved. Those documents in the refinance that they talked about. They have finalized all the required documents and are one step closer to getting that process done and hopefully by the next Board meeting, they will have closed or at least have a date for closing so they can move forward with the demo/dispo.

Mr. Rivera said they have finalized their Worker's Comp Billing so that they can reduce the annual cost by approximately 60,000 per year, which is significant, but at the same time retain the same coverage. He said the finance team actually worked with Frank Oren to assist us to negotiate a reduction there, which is great news.

On the FEMA front, which is all resulting from Hurricane Ida, we finalized are first state of FEMA filing for reimbursement for the removal of debris and mitigation of costs, so that process is moving along nicely so that they can be reimbursed for their costs.

And finally, yesterday there was a meeting with our landlord tenant council to work on a

strategy to improve our collections of unpaid rent from our tenants and to reduce the receivable balance now that the eviction moratorium ended in January and we are going to be able to file the necessary paperwork for folks who owe the boss at least three months of rent or more. He stated the first step is to try to get them to come in and reduce what they owe us to a payment plan or pay it and if they are not responsive or they're unwilling to work with us, we will have to start the process for a potential eviction if necessary.

In addition to that, Mr. Rivera stated in the finance packets you will see our bill list and the bills that are paid over the month as well as information on our vacancies and just expenses that were paid. He stated they did go over that with the Finance Committee. He added one update that they will be revising the report so that the information will be easier to digest going forward for the members.

PAUL MATTURRO: He stated that he thinks they accomplished a lot in the last month or so and to add to that today they got their first annual payment refund from the electric company, the rebate in the amount of \$25,000 and will be getting 25,000 a year for the next three years. He added that starting the first week in January, their actual consumption rates are going to go down from 21 cents a kilowatt to 13 cents, which was a significant thing.

Mr. Matturro stated they had the architects and engineers review the eight apartments and get them qualified as MOD and potentially bring them in and so even if they are vacant, we can get some additional funding. He said that he got a call from the insurance company and he brought them back in to inspect a number of additional apartments after the initial go-round for Henry and Ida and as a result they will be getting an additional check for \$23,000 as reimbursement for additional losses that they didn't identify during their first visit.

CHAIRWOMAN BROWN: Wished Happy New Year to everyone. She said she hopes this new year brings changes, good health and good wealth for everyone.

VI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RAMON RIVERA'S REPORT: He also wished everyone a Happy New Year and said he is looking forward to 2022 and they have started to continue to take steps forward and improve in many of the areas they were working on at the end of last year.

As an update on the DCA inspection that occurred last month. He said they got a surprise when the State inspectors came in and said they were inspecting all of the units for safety issues and IHA had about two weeks in order to inspect all of the units and also fix any issues that had to do with smoke detectors, doors that needed to close properly and any other issues around safety. He said they got that done and were able to make all the repairs that they could make in order to have a really good inspection.

The feedback from the inspectors was that the units were in much better shape than what they had heard in terms of complaints that were coming out and overall it was a really good inspection and they were able to remedy issues around doors that close and they put up new smoke detectors. He said they had to come back several times to residents' units where they were taking down the smoke detectors and they put them back up again. He

said that now gives them a baseline to work from to make sure all the units are in proper condition.

Mr. Rivera added that given the issue in the Bronx with the terrible fire there, he was happy that they did this and all the doors close properly and the smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors are up. He said they do have a lot of work to do on the leaks and the elevators continue to go down, but overall he thinks they ended the year on a good note from an inspection and maintenance standard. He said they still have a lot of work to do in order to continue to improve, but he looks forward to doing that work.

He stated that last month they had a tenant meeting with the folks at 624 and 81 with Silver Street. They did several meetings with several groups and overall it went very well. The process for a RAD development and the partnership with Silver Street was explained to the tenants. They explained issues that might come up like having to temporarily move while the work is being done and explained the scope of the work and the timing.

He said the questions the tenants asked made sense, but he also hasn't heard that many tenants had a negative reaction to what was being discussed. He said they did hear about concerns the tenants had that had nothing to do with the change, conditions that existed before he got here and they are addressing those concerns and issues.

Mr. Rivera said that on the agenda tonight is a resolution to reappoint and emergency contract for Bug X and they need to be brought back in. He said their contract ended in November and unfortunately they are seeing a bit of an uptake in past issues in 624, and Bug X was really successful last year in getting the pest issue under control and he is asking for the Board to approve this once more because in his opinion pest issues clearly fall in the purview of being an emergency given where they were when he came in with rodents falling out of the ceilings in 624 and just creating a hazardous condition. He said that will be a temporary measure and then at the February meeting you will have a resolution before you to appoint Bug X for the full year pursuant to an RFP that IHA put out in 2021. He said the rates that Bug X quoted were on the lower end of the three quotes they got and IHA will still get the excellent service that they provided.

Mr. Rivera said they are continued vaccinations and are using the Community Room at 624 to be used for vaccinations and testing every Thursday. That will be ongoing through this month or longer, depending on need.

They are continuing to press the Section Eight Partner and the tenants in Amp 1 who were impacted by the hurricane to come in and work to process their Section 8 applications.

He said they lost Alison Atullo (phonetic), who was the Amp 1 manager who resigned effective at the end of the last year. Jennifer Jacobs is in her place. Ms Jacobs was brought on to work with Allison and is now taking over the management of Amp 1, which is Crescent Lane. They will be looking for a replacement, but from a budget standpoint Mr. Rivera is considering trying to maintain the staffing levels as they are and see if they can get away with it with the managers they do have.

Mr. Rivera said they have a lot of other work to do to improve in some other areas, including making sure security is as tight as it should be and the finance at human resources. Just making sure they are continuing to hit the marks.

CHAIRWOMAN BROWN: She said she has a question in regards to Section 8 tenants that are or have moved out. Where are we with the doors that we spoke about in our last meeting?

RAMON RIVERA: Mr. Rivera said he did request an update from Purchasing on that. He said they don't have confirmation that they've been ordered and it's not on your agenda today to approve, but I will have it by this Friday, a definitive update on the status of those orders for the metal doors that were talked about last meeting, but he thinks it is in process. He said Sharon is working on getting the doors ordered and she said she would have confirmation by Friday as to when they can expect to be getting the doors in.

COMMISSIONER LOCKHART: She asked what is being done to secure the apartments until they get the metal doors.

RAMON RIVERA: He stated the apartments have been secured with plywood and two by fours as well as being locked and putting a boot on the door. He added as of last month they did go out and get plywood to secure some of the vacant units in Amp 1 and will continued to do that for the units in Amp 1 and Crescent Lane where there might be potential squatters. He added they did address an issue with a squatter last month and they did successfully remove the squatter from the building. He added the long term goal is to secure the units with the metal doors as discussed at the last meeting. The plan is to start with a small number, maybe 10 and see how they work and continue to order more as we need them.

CHAIRWOMAN BROWN: She asked what was the procedure when someone moves out, do you send someone to check the apartment and keep a checkoff list for that? What is the procedure?

RAMON RIVERA: He answered when someone moves out, he is notified and he notifies maintenance and they secure the door with a lock and they are securing doors that were broken into after they were locked with two by fours and plywood.

CHAIRWOMAN BROWN: Do you backtrack and check again or do you wait until you hear that somebody is in that apartment?

RAMON RIVERA: He said maintenance is in the building and they did inspections of every unit last month, so when they saw broken doors, maintenance worked on fixing those last month, so they have a good handle on that now. If Security sees something then we go and check it and repair it. That's how the issue came up last month.

VII: RESOLUTIONS:

1. 2022-01 APPROVING THE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING ON DECEMBER 2021.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Francis, III, seconded by Chairwoman Brown.

ROLL CALL:

YES: Commissioner Lockhart, Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Francis, III, Commissioner Griffin, Chairwoman Brown

VII: COMMISSIONER REMARKS:

COMMISSIONER FIGUEROA: Will save her remarks for the Chair.

COMMISSIONER FRANCIS, III: He stated there are problems with people sneaking into the buildings when the security officers go on tour, people are sneaking into the building.

COMMISSIONER GRIFFIN: Will save remarks for the Chair.

COMMISSIONER LOCKHART: Will save remarks for the Chair.

VIII EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RAMON RIVERA'S REPORT:

IX RESOLUTIONS

2. 2022-2 APPROVAL OF MONTHLY BILLS FOR DECEMBER , 2021 TO DECEMBER 31, 2021 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$837,077.35.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Lockhart, seconded by Commissioner Figueroa.

ROLL CALL:

YES: Commissioner Lockhart, Commissioner Figueroa, Commissioner Francis, III, Commissioner Griffin, Chairwoman Brown

3. 2022-3 ACCEPTING AND AWARDING EMERGENCY PESTS SERVICES CONTRACT TO BUG X PEST CONTROL, LLC. FOR AN INTENSE CLEAN OUT TO BE PERFORMED WEEKLY FOR THREE MONTHS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,883.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Francis, III, seconded by Commissioner Figueroa.

ROLL CALL:

YES: Commissioner Lockhart, Commissioner Figueroa,
Commissioner Francis, III, Commissioner Griffin,
Chairwoman Brown

(MEETING CLOSED BY VOTE OF ALL AYES)

CERTIFICATION

I, JENNIFER WILSON, the assigned transcriber, so hereby certify the foregoing minutes of January 12, 2022, from 05:05 pm to 5:08 pm. digitally recorded and is prepared to the best of my ability.

/s/ Jennifer Wilson

Jennifer Wilson AD/T 623

AUDIOEDGE TRANSCRIPTION
FLORHAM PARK, NEW JERSEY

January 31, 2022

Date