

**SARATOGA SPRINGS HOUSING AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2019
STONEQUIST APARTMENTS
2:30 P.M.
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Ann Bullock
Joanne Foresta, Chair
Joy King
Lu Lucas
Stephen Sullivan

ABSENT: Bobby Dixon
Michelle Roddy, Vice Chair

ALSO PRESENT: Paul Feldman, Executive Director
Scott Peterson, SSHA Attorney
Cindy Gaugler, Finance Director
Arthur Kirker, Asst. Facilities Director
Katie Sicko, Executive Resident Advisor

CALL TO ORDER

Joanne Foresta called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

COMMENTS

Joanne Foresta opened the public comment period.

There being no one wishing to speak, Joanne Foresta closed the public comment period.

RESOLUTIONS

FY18-R46 – Acceptance of the Previous Month’s Board Meeting Minutes

Steve Sullivan moved and Joy King seconded to adopt the following resolution:

Acceptance of the January 17, 2019, Board Meeting Minutes

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has reviewed the minutes of the January 17, 2019, monthly Board Meeting,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority approves, at this meeting on February 21, 2019, the minutes of the January 17, 2019, Board meeting of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority.

There were a few minor typographical corrections.

Ayes: four; Nays: none; Abstentions: one (Lu Lucas). Motion carried.

FY18-R47– Acceptance of Vendor Payments January 2019

Ann Bullock moved and Lu Lucas seconded to adopt the following resolution:

Acceptance of Previous Month's Payments

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has reviewed the monthly vendor invoices for payment of the financial obligations of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority for the month of January 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners has reviewed and signed off on each vendor invoice prior to payment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority approves the disbursements for January, copies of which were forwarded to Board members prior to this meeting.

Steve Sullivan asked about the underground expenditure. Paul Feldman said it was a camera to view the sewer lines. He said the lines are showing some wear and there is some work to be done. They plan to do a relining of the interior of the lines.

Lu Lucas asked about trash removal services and how often we bid it out. Paul Feldman said we bid it out every two years and it is currently out to bid.

Ayes all.

FY18-R48 – Approval of Authorizing Mortgage or Line of Credit for SRDI Project

Lu Lucas moved and Joy King seconded to adopt the following resolution:

Approval of Authorizing Mortgage or Line of Credit for SRDI Project

WHEREAS, the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority (Authority) and its Board, proposes to undertake a new project consisting of (24) twenty-four residential rental units on the Authority's property at Jefferson/Vanderbilt Terraces, 51 Jefferson Street in Saratoga Springs, NY. The scope of work includes constructing two new residential buildings, associated parking, utilities, landscaping and site amenities; and

WHEREAS, the Authority has received a 3.2 million dollar grant for said project through the Small Rental Development Initiative (SRDI) through the New York State HOME Program; and

WHEREAS, the project is projected to cost roughly 4.1 million dollars creating a budget gap of approximately 800,000 dollars; and

WHEREAS, if other funds cannot be obtained to close the budget gap, the Authority wishes to take out a mortgage or line of credit to satisfy the existing budget gap;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority authorizes the Executive Director to secure a mortgage or line of credit not to exceed 600,000 dollars.

Paul Feldman said this resolution was for “just in case” we need to take this step. He said with the grants and other funding sources, we may not have to do this. He said if we need to take this step, we will then determine whether it is a mortgage or a line of credit.

Ayes all.

FY18-R49 Budget Revision #3 for the 2017-2018 Operating Budget

Ann Bullock moved and Joanne Foresta seconded to adopt the following resolution:

Budget Revision #3 for the 2017-2018 Operating Budget

WHEREAS, in the course of administering the Public Housing Operating Fund, situations occur which require amending the operating fund budget; and

WHEREAS, a budget revision is needed to book the required GASB 68 entry and adjust other budget line items effected by unit turnover and tenant caused damages; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has been supplied with a copy of the budget revision for review;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority approves the proposed budget revision #3 to the 2017-2018 Operating Fund.

Paul Feldman said the GASB 75 requirements prompted this resolution. Cindy Gaugler said all government funded entities are required to book the GASB entries. She said these costs are the pension, health insurance, etc., costs for retirees. We must show they are fully funded. She said it is a paper entry. She said we have always had the liability, but we must now show it.

Ayes all.

FY18-R50 Amend ACOP/Admin Plan Value of Veterans Preference Point

Steve Sullivan moved and Joy King seconded to adopt the following resolution:

Amend ACOP/ADMIN Plan Value of Veterans Preference Point

WHEREAS, January of 2015, the SSHA Executive Director was asked by the Mayor of Saratoga Springs to Co-Chair the newly established Housing Task Force; and

WHEREAS, the original mission of the Task Force was to respond to the challenge put forth by First Lady, Michelle Obama, to eliminate Veterans Homelessness across the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, in order to assist in achieving this mission, the SSHA implemented a value of (3) three preference points for Veterans which would automatically move Veterans to the top of the SSHA waiting lists; and

WHEREAS, in July of 2017, the Executive Director participated in a conference call with the Mayor and other Task Force partners with HUD Secretary Julian Castro to receive congratulations on achieving the goal of eliminating Veterans Homelessness in the Saratoga Springs, New York; and

WHEREAS, there are currently no persons identifying as Homeless Veterans remaining in the City of Saratoga Springs at this time according to the Veterans & Community Housing Coalition (VCHC), the SSHA now wishes to return the value of the Veterans Preference Point to one point. This change will allow the SSHA to equally meet the need of Victims of Domestic Violence, the Elderly and Disabled and Working Families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority approves the amendment to the ACOP and Section 8 Administrative Plan to return the value of the Veterans Preference to one point.

Paul Feldman said a few years ago there was a push to ensure that all veterans had housing. At that time, we increased the point value for veterans. Now, however, because there are no identified homeless veterans, it was time to put all housing authority applicants on equal footing and to reduce that preference point from three to one. Ann Bullock asked how other housing authorities handle this. Paul Feldman said he was not sure.

Ayes all.

FY18-R51 Amend Public Housing Lease

Joanne Foresta moved and Lu Lucas seconded to adopt the following resolution:

Amend Public Housing Lease

WHEREAS, the SSHA Executive Director, Maintenance and Occupancy Staff's review the public housing assisted lease on a semi-annual basis to evaluate the need for lease amendments which help to protect the health and safety issues of the housing authority and its residents; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director recently held meetings with key occupancy and maintenance staff to identify health and safety issues which must be addressed along with issues impacting the safety and sanitary conditions of apartments; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Director has consulted with other PHA Directors to identify best practices being utilized in the industry to properly enforce housekeeping standards to protect SSHA assets from abuse;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority approves the amended lease for which a copy was provided to each Board member prior to the meeting for review.

Paul Feldman said he talked to his peers and compared our lease with other housing authority leases. Upon that review, our lease has been modified and made more comprehensive. He said the detail in this lease will help if we need to go to court. Lu Lucas asked about increasing the security deposit. Paul Feldman said many of the applicants struggle to find \$100. Scott Peterson pointed out that no matter what the security deposit is, it will never be enough. Lu Lucas asked about the \$50 returned check fee. Paul Feldman said the charge to the housing authority is less than \$50. Ann Bullock asked about pets. She said that they often create issues. Paul Feldman said we could review our pet policy. He said though there is a difference between a pet, an assistance animal and a service animal. Many residents have documentation from the doctor

which allows them to have an assistance animal. However, if there is an animal that is a threat to other residents, the SSHA could go to court to have the animal removed. Joy King asked about residents “misrepresenting” the facts. Paul Feldman said it was subjective, however, again sometimes they must go to court for a ruling. Ann Bullock asked when all residents would be renewed under this new lease. Paul Feldman said new residents would have this lease and existing residents will be phased in. Joy King asked that in the future, that documents that are being changed to be “redlined” so that Board members can see what is being changed.

Ayes all.

FY18-R52 Resolution Directing the Executive Director to Continue the Process for Converting the Stonequist Building to RAD

Joanne Foresta moved and Ann Bullock seconded to adopt the following resolution:

FY18-R52 Resolution Directing the Executive Director to Continue the Process for Converting the Stonequist Building to RAD

WHEREAS, the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority (SSHA) submitted an application to HUD for the Rental Assistance Demonstration for the conversion of its housing portfolio from the current funding type of subsidy to Project Based Section 8 funding; and

WHEREAS, the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority (SSHA) received notification on December 10, 2018, that the RAD application had been approved and that a CHAP award was provided. The notification also directed the SSHA to complete the required milestones as required by PIH Notice 2012-32;

WHEREAS, the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority has completed a RAD Physical Needs Assessment of the portfolio and have determined that the physical needs of the Stonequist Building require a RAD conversion to attain the financing needed to correct building deficiencies; improve the living standards of the building residents and make the building marketable in an increasingly competitive affordable housing market;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Saratoga Springs Housing Authority does hereby authorize and direct the Executive Director to continue completing the milestones required by PIH Notice 2012-32 Revision 3 to complete the RAD conversion of the Stonequist Apartments.

Paul Feldman said this resolution authorizes the SSHA to move forward on this project. He said we are still able to back out at any time. The further we are into the process though, we could start to lose some money. He said he talked to Commissioners Madigan and Franck and Mayor Kelly on the possible use of the Senior Center building for this project. He said the senior center could be demolished and then mid-rise buildings could be constructed. Ann Bullock said we need to take into consideration the living arrangements for our residents so there is minimal disruption and relocation. Paul Feldman said an RFP will go out seeking a consultant who has experience in RAD conversions. After, we would need to engage a development partner and then the vision would be developed. He said the senior center could be displaced for a while; but in the end, it could be relocated to the bottom floor of one of the new buildings. He said there was some concern though with that line of thought. The land is City owned so the City would need to do a long term lease so the project could move forward. Lu Lucas asked about funding. Paul Feldman

said that throughout this process if we determine that the project is not cost feasible, we will not move forward. Joy King asked if Paul Feldman had any photos of the RAD conversions that were completed in Yonkers and White Plains. Paul Feldman said he would look for some. Paul Feldman said that with the soft costs included it could cost upwards of \$300,000 per apartment to do this project. Paul Feldman said we were still many months away from a decision.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Finance

Cindy Gaugler said that there was a loss last month due to the GASB entry. Ann Bullock asked about the site improvements. Cindy Gaugler said that cost was for the concrete bottoms. Joanne Foresta said the vacated apartments were up. Cindy Gaugler said there were damages to some of those apartments at the Terraces. Paul Feldman said we are at the mercy of the courts on some of these damage issues.

Facilities

Joanne Foresta asked about the water meters. Art Kirker said we own the meters. Joanne Foresta asked about the 30 day notice from code enforcement officials. Paul Feldman said there is a new person in charge of code enforcement in the City, so he hoped that the 30 day time period that is given to residents could be reduced. Lu Lucas asked for the monthly trends on work orders. Art Kirker said it is up, but he would provide that information. Paul Feldman said staff reviewed the maintenance calls on the elevators. He said over the past 12 months there were 31 calls, however, the charge to the SSHA was only \$2,151.

Occupancy

Joanne Foresta asked what was "abusive behavior". Paul Feldman said it could be swearing at other residents or staff.

Director's Report

Paul Feldman introduced Skidmore intern Jaeyeon Kim. He said that last year, Skidmore provided two interns that were quite valuable to the SSHA. He said that in their studies last year they showed that the SSHA should have social workers readily available to residents. Joanne Foresta asked about our funding score. Paul Feldman said in prior years it was over 90, however, he expected the current number to increase. Joanne Foresta asked about the meeting with Bonacio on the SRDI project. Paul Feldman said they talked to several modular companies and have found that the prices are similar. Joanne Foresta asked about maintaining operations after the homes are constructed. Paul Feldman said in White Plains and St. Johnsville, all of the staff has been maintained. None were laid off. Paul Feldman said normally the tenant participation money would be given to the Resident Councils. However, because there is no Resident Council at the Terraces, the money will be used for scholarships for students. Joy King said years ago, the Police Department would offer funding for things like this. Paul Feldman said we are still having some heating issues, but it is getting better.

OLD BUSINESS

Smoking Policy

Paul Feldman said at the last meeting there was some discussion on whether we might want to make the SSHA smoke free. He said the discussion lead to the thought that it might just push more residents to smoke inside their apartments. He said there are monitors that can detect whether a resident is smoking in their apartment, however, those monitors are expensive. He estimated that about half of the residents smoke in their apartments. It was agreed that Scott Peterson would look into this a little more. Lu Lucas said we should take action when we find someone smoking in their apartment.

NEW BUSINESS

RAD Discussion

Previously discussed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Steve Sullivan moved and Lu Lucas seconded to move to executive session at 4:00 p.m. to discuss the Executive Director's contract. Ayes all. Board members returned at 4:11 p.m. and the regular meeting was continued.

Executive Director's Contract

Joanne Foresta stated that the Board discussed Paul Feldman's performance and compensation and decided to recommend a 5% salary increase. The board thanked Paul for the job he is doing. The board also instructed Scott Peterson to see if giving a bonus to Cindy Gaugler, Finance Director was allowable since Cindy's salary increase is set according to the CSEA labor agreement. Scott will report back to the board.

ADJOURNMENT

Lu Lucas moved and Joanne Foresta seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:13 p.m. Ayes all. There being no further business, Joanne Foresta adjourned the meeting at 4:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine A. Moran
Clerk