

ALLENTOWN HOUSING
AUTHORITY

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

August 23, 2023

The Board of Commissioners meeting was called to order by Mr. Senderowitz, and upon Roll Call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT:	Mr. Donald Senderowitz	Chairperson
	Mr. Zachary Matthews	Treasurer
	Mr. Fred Bañuelos	Secretary

Also participating in the Board Meeting were Julio A. Guridy, Executive Director, Arelis Torres, Executive Secretary; Aida Núñez, Director of Housing Management; Megan Solt, Comptroller; Lou Day, Director of Maintenance Operations; Doryan Campo, Director of Compliance, and Christian Perrucci, Esquire. Also in attendance were Deb Fries-Jackson and Katherine Jackson of the Boys and Girls Club of Allentown. The meeting information was posted so members of the general public could participate in-person.

The board meeting started at 9:07 am with Mr. Senderowitz asking for the roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Mr. Senderowitz asked if there were any comments from the public. Kevin Easterling announced that HUD would be dismantling the Spear System and that all Public Housing authorities that have any reports that they would like downloaded from Spears should do so by August 31, 2023. They are working on a newer system. He also announced that the Pennsylvania Broadband Authority would be hosting an Internet for All Meeting on August 30, 2023 at 6 p.m. at the Fowler Center in Bethlehem for anyone wishing to attend. The state has received \$1.167 Billion in funding for internet digital inclusion and would like to discuss how the Lehigh County and Northampton County housing authorities can receive some of those funds for the tenants.

Mr. Senderowitz introduced Deb Fries-Jackson and Katherine Jackson of the Boys and Girls Club of Allentown. They provided the Allentown Housing Authority a few program highlights, including the Make your M.A.R.K. Program, which is their math and reading intervention program. 20 of AHA residents participate in this program and 50% have improved their reading skills while 55% have improved their math skills. She also touched on their Imagination Station Program that is a computer and iPad-based program that promotes reading acceleration through interactive curriculum. Ms. Katherine Jackson also touched on other programs offered to the AHA residents and provided data showing the numbers of kids their programs have helped and encouraged. She thanked the Allentown Housing Authority for all of its support throughout the year and looks forward to continuing helping the community. Ms. Deb Fries-Jackson answered the Board's questions.

APPROVED MINUTES

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2023 Board Meeting. Mr. Bañuelos made the motion and Mr. Matthews second the motion to approve the Board minutes.

Ayes 3 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

BILLS AND TREASURER’S REPORT

Ms. Megan Solt reviewed with the Board the July financials for this meeting and reviewed the Treasurer’s Report and the Cash and Investment reports for each property. She also reviewed the check register and Section 3 Report. There were no FASS MASS reports for June and July. Ms. Solt then answered the Board’s questions.

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to approve the financials for July. Mr. Matthews made a motion and it was seconded by Mr. Bañuelos to approve.

Ayes 3 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

COMMUNICATION REPORT

Mr. Julio Guridy began by discussing the Gross Towers fire loss incident that took place on June 13, 2023. The fire caused significant water damage and temporary displacement of some residents. Mr. Guridy mentioned that the costs were estimated to be well over \$300,000, which the insurance will be reimbursing. He also indicated that there is an upcoming hearing scheduled on September 29, 2023 at Lehigh County Courthouse against the person responsible for this incident. Mr. Guridy again thanked all of the AHA staff who assisted with this incident for their hard work. He then mentioned that AHA has submitted an application to the Federal Home Loan Bank of Pittsburgh (FHLBP) for \$750,000.00 for the reconstruction of (7) of our scattered sites properties for our Home Ownership Program. He noted that we would not receive a response until about December. Mr. Bañuelos asked if the relocation plan has been put in place for the remaining scattered sites and if the GIN notices have been sent to the residents. Ms. Aida Núñez responded that we have not but are working on doing so. The Board also discussed that funding from the City would be an option at some point in the future. Mr. Guridy then touched on the discussions of the Allentown Redevelopment Authority regarding finding the appropriate agency to absorb them. Conversations have begun but no decision has been made. Mr. Guridy concluded with an update on the Little Lehigh Phase 1 construction and specified the finished work in Buildings 1-5. Completion date is anticipated for the middle of December 2023.

The Board discussed the Union Contract and the status of negotiations. Also discussed was the fact that current counsel that handles these matters will no longer be able to represent AHA. Mr.

Senderowitz suggested hiring our current solicitor's firm to handle these negotiations, as we would not have time to put out an RFP for this contract. After discussion, the Board decided to vote on hiring our current solicitor's firm, Florio Perrucci Steinhardt Cappelli Tipton & Taylor LLC, to handle union negotiations moving forward. A motion was made by Mr. Matthews to amend the Florio Perrucci contract to include labor negotiations and seconded by Mr. Bañuelos.

Ayes 3- Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

Mr. Lou Day began by providing the Board with a summary of upcoming projects. He highlighted the Walnut Manor Landscaping Enhancements Project and the Towers East Elevator Modernization Project, which were a few of the projects that were awarded recently. He also discussed the Walnut Manor Apartment Door Replacements that includes 150 apartments receiving steel doors with steel frames and new locking hardware starting in September. Mr. Bañuelos then asked about funding for the upkeep and renovations of the NSA properties and Ms. Solt replied and indicated that we have enough funds in the money market and savings for 2 million dollars to cover this project. Mr. Day responded to questions from the Board regarding REAC inspections and our property scores.

Ms. Melissa Aclo provided the Board with a summary of programs through the ROSS Grant. She highlighted that they assisted residents with completing applications for the Affordable Connectivity Program, which provides reduced cost for internet service. She continued with an FSS update. There are three tenants scheduled for enrollment/orientation and one tenant has successfully completed and exited the program with her full escrow balance.

Ms. Aida Núñez reviewed the HCV Reports with the Board including vacancies and unpaid rents. The Board thanked her for a job well done with filling Public Housing vacancies. Ms. Núñez answered all of the Board's questions.

Mr. Doryan Campo announced that AHA would soon have 100% utilization by residents of its online portal, the Rent Café. He then reviewed his recertification reports for HCV and PH and answered all of the Board's questions.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 2693 – Update for 2023 and Combine Current Employee Handbook and Policy Manual

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to approve the Update for 2023 and Combine Current Employee Handbook and Policy Manual. Mr. Bañuelos made the motion and Mr. Matthews second the motion.

Ayes 3- Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

Resolution 2697 – Approve Boys and Girls Club of Allentown 2023-2024 Contract

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to approve the Boys and Girls Club of Allentown 2023-2024 Contract. Mr. Matthews made the motion and Mr. Bañuelos second the motion.

Ayes 3- Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

Resolution 2698 - Award Contract for Towers East Elevator Modernization

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to award the contract. Mr. Matthews made the motion and Mr. Bañuelos second the motion.

Ayes 3- Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

Resolution 2699 – Award Contract for Towers East Common Area Hallway Carpet Replacement

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to award the contract. Mr. Bañuelos made the motion and Mr. Matthews second the motion.

Ayes 3- Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

Resolution 2700 - Award Contract for Walnut Manor Security Camera System Upgrade

Mr. Senderowitz asked for a motion to award the contract. Mr. Matthews made the motion and Mr. Bañuelos second the motion.

Ayes 3- Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Matthews and seconded by Mr. Bañuelos at 11:44 am.

Ayes 3 – Senderowitz, Bañuelos, Matthews
Nays 0

ATTEST _____