

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF NEW BRITAIN
16 ARMISTICE STREET, NEW BRITAIN, CT 06053

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES FOR

December 20, 2023
6:00 PM Eastern Time

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of New Britain held a meeting on December 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Anthony Bianca
Vice-Chair Stanford Lebby
Commissioner Paul Edwards
Commissioner Alexandra Rivera

Also present: Executive Director John T. Hamilton
Director of Operations Tracy Blackwell
Director of Finance Cheryl Thibeault
Director of Community Affairs & Programs Lisa Cretella

Chairman Bianca opened the meeting and called for roll call at 6:02 p.m. Declaring a quorum present he opened the floor for public participation.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Nate Simpson, Common Council Liaison for NBHA, introduced himself as the recently appointed liaison for the New Britain Housing Authority. He highlighted his role as a communication bridge between the housing authority and the Common Council, expressing anticipation for collaboration with NBHA in the future.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Bianca called for a motion to approve the minutes for September 20, 2023. Moved by Commissioner Rivera, Seconded by Vice-Chair Lebby. Motion carried.

Acknowledgment of the 2024 Board of Commissioner's Meeting Schedule

Acknowledgement of the 2024 NBHA Holiday Schedule

ACCEPTANCE OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S & FINANCE EXPENDITURES REPORTS:

During the December board meeting, John invited Lisa Cretella, Director of Community Affairs and Programs, to update the board on the progress made at the Center of Excellence. Lisa presented a comprehensive report, emphasizing the center's active engagement in various partnerships and the successful implementation of full programs. NBHA's significant outreach efforts have fostered collaboration with agencies, aligning with the overarching goal of the Center of Excellence to provide beneficial programming and training for New Britain residents. Notably, Lisa Cretella has played a key role in revitalizing the previously vacant building, with the collective efforts aimed at restoring vibrancy to the center and amplifying its positive impact on the community.

Lisa also shared an update on the progress of the YWCA, indicating that the "Y" is in the final stages of preparation for its upcoming opening. Currently, they are actively collaborating with the City and addressing licensing issues, particularly those related to bathroom requirements. Furthermore, Lisa reported that one of our residents has been chosen to participate in Y's program aimed at training small businesses to establish daycare services within the Center of Excellence under the YWCA program. This initiative is designed to support small businesses in developing their ventures within a nurturing environment.

Lisa mentioned ongoing efforts to identify the right agency partnership concerning the industrial rooms, intending to provide specific training that complements the existing setup tailored for industrial-type training.

Tracy Blackwell, Director of Operations, provided an update on the community room project, stating that it is nearing completion. Currently, we are collaborating with the contractor to address the final punch list items. Concurrently, as the community rooms approach completion, we are finalizing the last details of the revised policy related to the use of these rooms and the associated process.

During the meeting, Vice-Chair Leppy raised a concern voiced by residents regarding the inclusion of an office within the community rooms. Residents expressed discomfort, feeling that this space is meant for them and not for housing purposes. John addressed this concern by explaining that the office has been added to address issues or facilitate meetings with housing while ensuring privacy when needed. The office will not be in use daily but will be available as needed by residents and the Resident Services Department.

Cheryl Thibeault, Director of Finance, delivered a comprehensive budget summary during the presentation. The \$1 million budget encompasses 40% of salary and benefits. Additionally, plans include the addition of new positions in the upcoming year, with additional funds allocated for additional training. There has been an increase in rent rolls collected, and the most significant risk in the budget is associated with utilities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion on RAD :

During the board meeting focused on the RAD topic, John provided an update on our ongoing engagement with residents. We are actively scheduling meetings to keep residents informed about the progress in the RAD project. HUD mandates a series of meetings to discuss plans, building specifics, finishes, and unit styles. It is crucial to involve residents in these discussions.

Recently, residents have taken the initiative to establish a resident council as required. Last month, a meeting was scheduled to introduce residents interested in becoming officers for the council. Elections will be conducted later this month to establish the resident council, which will serve as a liaison between NBHA and residents.

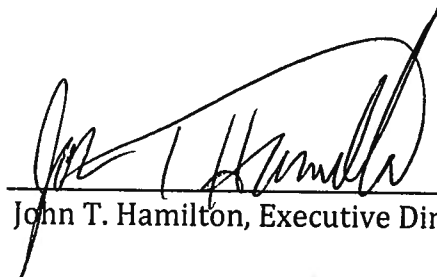
- Approval of Resolution #23-019; to authorize the Executive Director to establish a Housing Choice Voucher Program Payment Standard at 110%-120% of HUD's 2024 small area fair market rents to be effective January 1, 2024. Moved by Vice-Chair Lebby, Seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion carried.
- Approval of Resolution #23-020; Authorize the submission of the 2024 Project Based Federal Low Rent Operating Budget. Moved by Vice-Chair Lebby, Seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion carried.

Chairman Bianca called a motion to go into executive session at 6:42 p.m. Moved by Vice-Chair Lebby and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion carried.

Chairman Bianca called a motion to close executive session at 7:13 p.m. Moved by Vice-Chair Lebby and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion carried.

There being no other business for discussion, Chairman Bianca called for a motion to adjourn meeting at 7:14 p.m. Moved by Vice-Chair Lebby and seconded by Commissioner Rivera. Motion carried.

Date: 1/12/2024



John T. Hamilton, Executive Director