

# Trumbull Housing Authority – March 22, 2022

Trumbull Housing Authority Virtual Meeting  
March 22, 2022  
6:00 pm

Commissioners Present: Chairman Kathleen McGannon, Maureen Bova, Laurel Anderson, Charlene Pederson and Sara Pflueger

Also Present: Interim Executive Director Paulette Mack; Accountant Jason Geel; Dawn Cantafio, Community Development Director; Kent Lewis, Frank Stellato and Steve Jayne from Millennium

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. McGannon at 6:06 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

## Resident Comments

No resident comments.

## Reading and Approval of Minutes for Jan

1. Approval of the minutes from February 17, 2022 was deferred until the April meeting.
2. **Motion was made by Mrs. Anderson to approve the minutes of February 22, 2022 as written. Seconded by Mrs. Pederson and approved by unanimous consent.**
3. **Motion was made by Mrs. Anderson to approve the minutes of February 9, 2022 as written. Seconded by Mrs. Bova. Roll Call vote was taken – Mrs. McGannon – yes; Mrs. Anderson – yes; Mrs. Bova – yes; Mrs. Pflueger – yes; Ms. Pederson abstained. Motion passed with four in favor with one abstention.**

## Report of Community Development Director

Mrs. Cantafio introduced Frank Stellato and Steve Jayne from Millennium Reality Group who gave an overview of where the project stands and where they are going. The project is coming to an end and they hope to close out by the second quarter of this year.

Mr. Stellato introduced himself and Steve Jayne, who is the construction manager on the site. This is the first time he has met with the new composition of the Board. He noted they have covered a lot of ground over the last six to seven years with the Housing Authority in terms of funding and work on site. He was hoping to have an opportunity to talk more strategically relative to the plan that was set forth in 2017 relative to the initial SSHP funding. As the project progressed, they were successful in obtaining awards that supplemented that original large investment from the State. He wanted to make sure there is an alignment of understanding because they are looking at a possible completion of the HTCC by the end of the summer.

Mr. Stellato noted he works primarily on development, asset management and property management. This position looks at the operations and capital needs and from an asset management perspective, looks at available resources to bridge the gap between what sources the organization has available and what funding might be available in the market place. He takes the clients goals and expectations and tries to match them with resources that are available. Mr. Stellato gave a brief overview of his background and how he came to work with Millennium. Mr. Jayne's background is in construction, managing the resources as well as the contractors. Millennium acts as a turnkey to non-profits to help them get resources. They show where they sourced everything, what they pay for and take the

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construction management approach of an open book so there is transparency. This makes for more open and effective communication.

Mr. Stellato noted he had shared with Mrs. Cantafio some of the key documents from the original 2017 application which he felt might help orient the Board to the vision at the time. Specific details can be reviewed at any time because he feels it is important for capital planning and the understanding of how to maintain the trajectory the team has worked on to get Stern to this point.

Mr. Jayne noted they are currently under construction on four units. These units, based on information from Mr. Geel, will close out the HTCC grant from the 2020 funding. There was an input of surplus cash which allowed them to work on additional units. For the second quarter close out, there should not be any issue of expending those funds in totality for the HTCC. They anticipate the completion of the four units in May. There were issues in ordering materials after the initial orders were placed in 2020 and 2021. Everything is in place at this time.

Mrs. Cantafio noted she was on a tour with CHFA and Mr. Jayne of the units. CHFA was very impressed with the work and the progress that has been made at Stern Village. Thank you to Millennium for stepping up and helping.

Mr. Stellato discussed the 2018 and 2019 HTCC funding. A Scope Change Letter will need to be done which reconciles the unit count that had been anticipated for production in 2018/2019/2020. It allows CHFA to reconcile what had been originally anticipated in the application and the actual count three years later on completion. They are trying to close out three different grant awards and consolidate it with all the other activities that have happened. He and Mr. Geel met with CHFA and they have an approach to closing out the funding. Instead of closing out individual years with totality of the information, they are allowing them to isolate 2018 and report on it, isolate 2019 and report on it and in the aggregate, when they close on 2020, it will be for the entire project.

Mrs. Pflueger questioned if they have all the supplies, if the units could be finished in April so they could be rented in May. Mr. Jayne noted cabinets, although ordered, will not be delivered until mid-April which will push completion to May.

Mrs. Anderson questioned the reimbursement of the \$60,000 expenditure for the radon abatement. Mr. Geel noted it will be determined with the closeout of the grant. Mr. Stellato understood there were several change orders and call backs that were done relative to the radon but they do have money remaining in the grant that was set in contingency that they need to document and set into motion in order to have that released as well as some retention that is left. This retention is released to the Housing Authority to go back into reserves. It was noted by Mr. Stellato they will work with HTCC and Mr. Geel on the closeout with CHFA at the end of the second quarter or early third quarter. Mr. Geel is confident the \$60,000 will be reimbursed, as well as some additional funds that remain. Actual number is unknown at this time.

Mrs. Anderson questioned if the permit issue with the Building Department had been resolved and, if we are in the middle of renovations, can the Board be assured that they are properly permitted. Mr. Stellato noted the administrative and communication problems have been resolved. The 2018 and 2019 HTCC's are completely closed out and they have received Certificates of Occupancy for those units. Mr. Jayne noted he worked with Mr. Dunn on the 2020 permits which have been rectified for both plumbing and building. He is working proactively with Mr. Dunn on the close out process so they have the time to

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work on the paperwork that is required. Mrs. Anderson noted the Board was very concerned about the permit issue with the Building Department and not getting the Certificates of Occupancy. Mrs. McGannon asked if there is anything required from the Board to finish the project. Mr. Stellato noted they have everything they need. All money will be spent.

Mrs. Cantafio noted they are still moving forward with the FEMA grant for reimbursement.

Mr. Lewis gave a report on his findings. He noted they are at a complicated point in the development activity. They are in the middle of their final scenario which means they need to make final budget adjustments. In order to get the final draw from CHFA, they need to have this budget adjustment completed through a cost certification done by the accountant. Once that is done, they take the budget for the HTCC applications, as well as CHFA application, and consolidate them, line item everything and as it nets out, the remaining funds can be used to reinvest in another unit. This has been a complex, long term deal with many moving parts. The question is what is the next step – completing remaining units through grants or reserves.

Mr. Geel discussed a challenge that the draws and some of the sources do not match from the beginning to the end of the project. Completion of additional units was discussed and the fact that all money has to be spent from the funding. Could funds be diverted to other projects that are in some way attached to the units? Mr. Geel explained the costs need to line up from what was earmarked to what was actually done. The costs need to be certified to come up with what is available. Handicap parking spaces were discussed. If they need to be redone because of health and safety issues, CHFA most likely will approve it. Mr. Geel noted 84 units have been done and delivered – SSHP did 19 ADA units, 65 were the three HTCC grants which were add-on to the total construction. Mr. Whittaker is working to reconcile his budget so it is more in line with what was actually done but the total number is correct. The issue is that the Housing Authority financed the project in the beginning from reserves and they have been using some of those funds but many changes have been made which has complicated the project budget.

Question was raised regarding excess cash that would need to be spent. Mr. Geel estimated \$140,000 of grant funds were not drawn yet. If the Housing Authority were to get this amount back, it might cause an issue. He is more concerned about what the agency put into the deal and making sure they are reimbursed accordingly and use the resources to complete additional units, if necessary. Mr. Lewis noted they will come up with a strategy to say this much was put into the project and this is the plan for the post closeout. The CHFA will be advised of the plan and will most likely approve it but will not fund new grants until they have that strategy.

The THC is not required to have an audit with regard to the close out.

### **Treasurer's Report and Discussion of Financials**

Mrs. Bova presented the financials from July 1, 2021 to February 28, 2022. The overall gain of the Housing Authority was \$70,509. Further, the Operating Gain, before capital grants and depreciation, was \$61,911, of which \$46,707 is attributable to Stern Village and \$15,204 to Congregate.

For Stern Village, the current month's Operating Gain was \$9,658 compared to the budgeted gain of \$7,501. The slight gain is primarily due to receipt of FEMA money to reimburse for COVID related costs during the year totaling \$5,200. Current month activity also includes \$2,565 in costs related to the HASIP grant (used for emergency kits). For the year, Stern Village is within approximately \$15,000 of its

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budgeted surplus despite maintenance costs coming in \$35,283 over budget due primarily to better than expected rental income and cost savings experienced in health insurance.

For Congregate, the current month's Operating Gain was \$18,300 compared to a budgeted gain of \$601. The month's gain was due to \$16,171 in FEMA money to help fund COVID related costs during the year. Otherwise, current month's operations are in line with budgeted amounts. Congregate otherwise continues to operate at breakeven. However, it is expected that the remainder of the year will result in operating losses due to cost increases and tenant turnover.

The overall cash position of the Authority, including reserves, is \$671,140. Payables include construction payables totaling \$30,202.

A snapshot of program balances are as follows:

<b>Stern Village</b>	<u><b>6/30/2021</b></u>	<u><b>1/31/21</b></u>	<u><b>2/28/22</b></u>	<u><b>YTD Change</b></u>
Cash	\$104,160	\$ 9,687	\$ 96,107	\$(8,053)
Accounts Payable	\$ 75,128	\$ 71,730	\$ 76,666	\$(1,538)
Interprogram Loan	\$378,049	\$344,056	\$341,425	\$(36,624)
Reserves	\$506,831	\$507,068	\$507,142	\$ 311
Excess Cash	\$(46,759)	\$(68,900)	\$(61,064)	
 <b>Congregate</b>				
Cash	\$ 90,274	\$ 84,105	\$ 58,414	\$(31,860)
Accounts Payable	\$ 26,174	\$ 25,883	\$ 25,883	\$ 291
Interprogram Loan	\$378,049	\$344,056	\$341,425	\$ 36,624
Reserves	\$ 9,471	\$ 9,476	\$ 9,477	\$ 6

Congregate cash reduction includes payment of additional food service billings in February due to contract turnover during the month. Such activity would expect to normalize on a month to month basis.

Tenant Accounts Receivable balances as follows:

<b>Stern Village</b>	<u><b>6/30/2021</b></u>	<u><b># of Tenants</b></u>	<u><b>2/28/22</b></u>	<u><b># of Tenants</b></u>
One Month or Less	\$ (3,314)	50	\$ (2,241)	54
Over One Month Rent	\$ 3,051	4	\$ 1,779	3
Inactive AR	<u>\$ 13,307</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>\$ 758</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	\$ 13,044	98	\$ 296	62
 <b>Congregate</b>				
One Month or Less	\$ 606	5	\$ 729	5
Over One Month Rent	\$ -	0	\$ -	0
Inactive AR	<u>\$ 15,515</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>\$ 2,184</u>	<u>4</u>
Total	\$ 16,121	16	\$ 2,913	9

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Mrs. McGannon questioned the purchase of the flashlights and radios from the HASIP grant. It was her understanding they were short of radios. Ms. Mack noted the supplier ran out of the radios with only one hundred radios received. Kits were distributed on March 17 at the resident meeting with additional kits being distributed to those who did not attend. They are working on purchasing the balance of the radios. We only paid for what was received.

**Mrs. Anderson made a motion amend the agenda to move the Review and Vote on the Rent Increase right after the Treasurer's Report. Seconded by Ms. Pederson and approved by unanimous consent.**

### **Review and Vote on Rent Increase**

Mrs. Anderson requested Mr. Geel to make it clear who this increase will impact and who it will not impact. Mrs. McGannon noted a meeting with the Congregate residents was held to explain what was proposed. They were upset and emotional. She explained to them when the rent goes up, the subsidy goes up and should not impact most of the residents in the Congregate. Mr. Geel clarified the calculation of everyone's rent is controlled by State statute. The THA cannot determine the method of how the resident is charged rent, it can only determine how much in total it needs to collect from every unit. It is dependent on tenant incomes. If you look at the tenant population, a rent increase will only affect the highest tier of tenants with the most income which is about five. Eighty-five percent of the population would not get a rent increase. He clarified their rent could increase because their income increased and it has nothing to do with a vote taken at this meeting. He also noted the best benefit to the residents is to keep track of all medical expenses as they receive credit for them. While you cannot control how it is calculated, you can make sure you're getting the most accurate amount for you, as an individual. If you do not provide the medical information, you will not get the benefit. The Housing Authority is prohibited from estimating and needs to comply with the State statutes in the calculating of the rents. It is paramount to all the collective residents that the Housing Authority is not allowing the subsidy, which they could be entitled to, to go away and not benefit all the tenants because the top few will need to pay more. The rules states that you have to pay rent evenly from every single unit regardless of who is living in that unit and that resident, per the calculation, is required to pay more. The State will not pay for one resident if another resident is not paying the same amount. Mr. Geel noted he is still waiting answers from DOH with the change in methodology because they are updating this to appropriately factor in all the cost increases into the way they factor the rent. Hopefully, they will be increasing allowances and that would apply to every single resident regardless if a rent increase is approved. If you are not paying full now, you will not pay in full with the rent increase. Some that are paying full may not pay in full after the increase because of the subsidy.

Mrs. Anderson verified that if you are currently being subsidized on the rent, any rent increase passed will not affect you. Mr. Geel confirmed this comment. With the changes from DOH, other residents may benefit and not see a raise either. Mrs. Anderson requested Ms. Mack to make sure to reach out to those individuals in the top tier who may be faced with additional costs. If there are any other State or Federal programs that can assist them and offset the rent increase, we should attempt to help them with these programs. We need to be proactive in reaching out to residents to help them. Mr. Geel reiterated medical expenses should be documented. Mrs. Anderson also noted they are going after the State for funding to fix the Congregate. The CNA reported some major repairs that need to be addressed but the State is not happy we are coming back for more money for repairs because we do not charge enough to pay our own bills. We are barely breaking even and with vacancies will be losing money. Mr. Geel noted the Congregate has the lowest rent in the State and Fairfield County. A tour was taken of the Congregate building earlier in the day and they will be working on some changes to

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services to improve the quality of life in the building. They will be working on the food service, in particular. Ms. Mack is working proactively to look at ways to improve.

**Ms. Pederson motioned to increase the rent by \$110.00. Seconded by Mrs. Pflueger.** Discussion. Mrs. McGannon made it clear that they have talked with Mr. Geel, reviewed the numbers, looked at other housing authorities and looked at facilities that charge \$1,100 for an efficiency apartment. The State is putting pressure on Stern Village to bring the rents up to at least close to what the next lowest rentals are. She believes they can get more funding for repairs if they are cooperating with the State and trying to get the rent in line. The rent didn't go up for a long time, repairs were not being done and there was a lot of money put into the building but more repairs need to be done based on the Needs Assessment completed. This is not anything they like to do or do cavalierly. A lot of time has been spent looking at the data. \$110 sounds like a big jump but we will still be lowest in the State. The residents need to understand that the majority will not be affected depending on what the State does in calculating rents. Mrs. Bova noted she doesn't like having to increase the rent but understands we are held accountable by the State and need our budget approved.

**Ms. Pederson amended her motion to state - increase rent and services by \$110 effective July 1, 2022. Roll Call vote was taken – Mrs. McGannon – yes; Mrs. Bova – abstained; Mrs. Anderson – yes; Ms. Pflueger – yes; and Ms. Pederson – yes. Motion passed with four in favor and one abstention.**

### Executive Director's Report and Maintenance Activity

Mrs. Mack reported the following:

1. There are no issues in the Village with the residents. They are scheduling appointments with the Department of Social Services, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Many residents are asking for assistance with DMV to schedule appointments on line for various reasons.
2. SWCAA (Southwest CT Agency on Aging) has a program where residents can apply for a loan to assist with their rent, security deposits and for home owners for repairs. You must receive assistance from the State, SSI or SSDI, and your income must be 200% poverty level. Residents receiving this loan are not obligated to pay the money back, but if you can afford \$5.00 a month, it will help the next person who needs a loan. The Senior Center is another resource tool. Residents have used it for help with their rent.
3. Thank you to Mrs. Bova and Joyce and Gus Aquino for packing the flashlights and radios for the residents. They were distributed on March 17 and will continue to be distributed to residents who did not attend the resident meeting.
4. Regarding the Critical Needs Assessment at the Congregate, she called Hannibal Construction regarding the roof shingles because they were the initial vendor but has not heard back yet. Ms. Torres is contacting Stanley Door to see if they need to get a new door and what the price would be to replace.
5. Maintenance has been very busy in the Congregate apartments as well as the Village. Work orders come in at a steady pace. Mrs. Cantafio and Ms. Torres are entering the data into the system. The productivity of the work orders has not been correct. The amount of work orders reported from January 1 through March 11 is incorrect. Jeff found a form which Maintenance used in the past to log in the working time on apartments. This will be updated. It indicates when they work in a unit, the maintenance worker, what unit and how many hours. It was noted the hours they work in the apartments is beyond five hours. If they are not working on work orders, they are working on apartments to get them rented. Starting next month, the work orders will show the correct productivity from Maintenance.

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6. They are working on trips through Greater Bridgeport Transit and the Senior Center. Mrs. Bova is very active in this planning.

## Congregate Updates

Mrs. McGannon noted she, Ms. Mack and Jeff, the head of Maintenance, walked through the Congregate to look at some of the things noted in the CNA.

1. A price will be determined on a replacement door.
2. The hole in the dumpster pad was made by groundhogs and has been filled with expandable foam.
3. The handicapped spaces were discussed previously with Millennium and Mr. Lewis.
4. They will be prioritizing a repair list from the CNA as to what needs to be done.

Ms. Torres has been requested to take a walk through the building each day specifically looking for things that are broken and to look in the common areas for cleanliness.

5. There are six empty units with two to be filled April 1.

Discussion was held regarding the Accounts Receivable increase.

## Unfinished Business

Bylaws for the THA and THC will be discussed at the next meeting.

## New Business

No New Business.

## Resident Comments

The following residents spoke:

1. Debbie VanScoy –
  - a. Very upset; pays the top dollar for rent; \$110 is ridiculous
  - b. Asking Ms. Torres for a form and she will be vacating her apartment as of April 30
  - c. Feels the other four people will not want to pay this increase; it comes from our pockets but the other don't have to pay
  - d. Village received radios and flashlights, they only got lights in their rooms.
2. Jim Hastings –
  - a. Asked if there is a government agency that can audit the figures that the lawyer gave them.
  - b. Wanted to know why, when Ms. Polansky left there was a surplus, and why would you hire a director that has a list of complaints and then re-elect her? He noted he suspected skimming and is contacting a law firm to audit and look into the dealings of the facility and boards that take advantage of seniors.
  - c. Is the cook going to be replaced?

The following was addressed:

1. Mrs. McGannon - There is a meeting with the food service this week regarding the concerns brought up at the meeting yesterday. The residents will be advised of the outcome of the meeting.
2. Ms. Mack - In reference to the flashlights and the radios, Ms. Polansky only requested a grant for Stern Village. It is unknown why she didn't include the Congregate.
3. Mrs. Anderson - In reference to the comment made besmirching the board, she noted, in the time she has been on the Board, there has not been a profit at the Congregate. The Congregate cannot pay its own bills.

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4. Mrs. McGannon – The re-hiring of the Executive Director is in reference to 2019. She noted there is no one on the current Board who voted for a five-year term. There is only one person that was on the Board at that time who is on the current Board, and that individual voted no.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, motion was made by Mrs. Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 pm. Seconded by Mrs. Bova and approved by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall  
Clerk