

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF SIMSBURY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS – REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 10, 2015
SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**

The regular monthly meeting of the Housing Authority of the Town of Simsbury, Connecticut was held on September 10, 2015 at the Virginia Connolly Residence at 1600 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury, CT. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ron Zapille at 6:05 P.M. Also in attendance were Commissioners Cheryl Cook, Oliver Dickins, Woody Eddins, Kay Coffey, and Executive Director Ed LaMontagne. Housing Administrator Christine Winters was excused.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

There was one person in attendance at the public audience. Joanne Cohen of 1600 Hopmeadow Street, Apartment 69, submitted a request for reimbursement of funds for excessive electric use during the repair of the heating pump in her apartment during the period covering from November 2014 through March of 2015.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Regular minutes of August 13, 2015.

Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve of the regular meeting minutes of August 13, 2015. Commissioner Dickins seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN LIAISON REPORT

Board of Selectman Liaison Cheryl Cook had nothing to report as there has not been a Board of Selectmen meeting since the last Housing Authority Commission meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Program Updates

Executive Director LaMontagne reported that a meeting was held with our consultant Larry Wagner, along with the architect for the new VCR Roof, and the engineer for the site improvements. The purpose of this meeting was to prepare the bid documents for these improvements. Request for bids to complete the roof project will be advertised next week. A pre-bid meeting will be held on September 28th at VCR. Bids for the site work will not go out until February 2016. There will be additional up-front costs for both the contractor and the engineer. The cost for the services of the architect will be \$2,217. An invoice from the engineer has not yet been received.

Our new Morning Program started on Sunday, September 6 from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. in the VCR Lounge and was well-received. Coffee, juice, fruit and newspaper were made available to the residents. The Program will continue every Sunday morning. Funding for this program came from a grant from CHFA.

Executive Director LaMontagne stated that he signed a Community Supplemental Food Program Agreement for the purpose of providing free monthly food boxes for qualified residents of the Simsbury Housing Authority. Twelve residents have requested to participate in this free food program, which will begin in October. Applicants will need to complete an eligibility form and be recertified every six months.

Due to the resignation of our part-time wait staff/cook recently, the restructuring of the food service department is being investigated. Ads have been placed in the *Yankee Flyer* and, although numerous applications were received, none seemed appropriate for the position. A consideration is to hire a part-time cook for the

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weekends, holidays and vacations, as well as part-time wait staff positions. There would be salary adjustments, but they would still be within the current budget salary line item.

He stated that our audit for the year 2014-2015 will begin shortly. He met with a representative from Mahoney Sable on Tuesday, September 8th to begin the preliminary audit, and it he is hopeful that it will be completed by the end of the year.

Executive Director LaMontagne reported on CHFA's schedule for competitive funding rounds for fiscal year 2016. Of interest to us would be the State Sponsored Housing Portfolio funds which are monies for the redevelopment of housing authorities. Because we do not have sufficient reserves to fund the necessary redevelopment work, we are considered "at risk". Monies are available for pre-development costs and he has requested Technical Assistance from CHFA to determine how we should go about requesting funds for redevelopment.

He reported to the Board that the Hustler machine – the all-purpose piece of equipment used for property maintenance - was in poor condition due to age, and in need of replacement, as repair parts are difficult to obtain. The cost of replacement would be approximately \$28,000. He stated that he had researched other possibilities for replacement such as purchasing second-hand equipment, but without success. He was asked to check on the cost of outsourcing these jobs and he agreed that he will proceed with this suggestion.

He reported that to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Virginia Connolly Residence, a gala affair is in the planning stages. Plans for a lunch or evening event for residents, families and members of the community are being considered. More information will be forthcoming.

He reported that both he and Housing Administrator, Christine Winters, attended the Annual CONN NAHRO Conference which was held at the Mohegan Sun on August 31-September 2. They attended sessions on redevelopment, energy efficient improvements, preparing for the 2016 funding rounds, procurement training, winter weather preparation, budget and interim reporting, housing authority roundtable discussion, and a Federal legislative update.

He advised the Board that he would be on vacation from September 18th through September 25th.

Financial Update

Copies of the monthly financial report for the month of July were distributed. Executive Director LaMontagne discussed the figures with the Board and answered questions from the members. He indicated that overall income was lower than budget, the reason being lower than expected rental income. However, expenses were under budget, which resulted in a positive net. This is the first month of the fiscal year.

Correspondence

Executive Director LaMontagne stated that there was no correspondence to report at this time.

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MARKETING

In the absence of Housing Administrator Christine Winters, Executive Director LaMontagne reported that ads continue to be placed in the *Yankee Flyer*. An ad was placed in the 2015-16 Simsbury Chamber of Commerce Membership Directory. An ad also appeared in the CONN NAHRO Annual Convention Brochure. Press releases will be sent to all the local media covering the 25th Anniversary Celebration in October. Brochures are replenished at the Simsbury Social Services, Town Hall and to the Simsbury Library. Mr. LaMontagne represents the SHA at the Simsbury/Granby Rotary, Public Safety Sub-Committee, Various Boards/Commissions, and serves on the CONN-NAHRO Legislative Committee. Mr. LaMontagne will work a booth at *Septemberfest* on September 11th, 12th & 13th. Ms. Winters will represent the Housing Authority at the Annual Senior Showcase and Wellness Fair at the Eno Hall on September 24th.

RENTAL UPDATE

It was reported that as of the end of August there were two vacancies at the Dr. Owen L. Murphy Apartments and no vacancies at VCR.

OWEN MURPHY APARTMENTS

Updates

Discussion took place regarding a resident who is in a rehabilitation facility and about the appropriateness of his returning to his apartment.

A resident meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 30th.

VIRGINIA CONNOLLY RESIDENCE

Updates

Executive Director LaMontagne reported that some of the hot water pipes need to be replaced and he is checking on the cost for this repair.

Minutes of the resident meeting held on August 20th were distributed.

Assisted Living Services

Utopia currently provides Assisted Living Services to twenty four residents.

Programs

Copies of the monthly programs and activities were provided.

The Westminster students will be here on October 10th to fulfill their “Community Service Day” program.

OLD BUSINESS

A review of the Action Items was made and it was determined that the Transportation Review, Contractor Review of DOLMA Upgrade, and the Landscaping Enhancements would be on-going. CRT Home Energy Solutions, Scout projects, 25th Anniversary Plans, VCR Roof bids, Site Improvement Bids, Chamber of Commerce After Hours Event, Investigation of SSHP funding were given new dates.

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NEW BUSINESS

Executive Director LaMontagne stated that an investigation into the feasibility of converting some of the apartments at Owen Murphy to accommodate persons with disabilities is in progress. He will apply for technical assistance to determine needed improvements so that grants for this proposal may be applied for in 2017. He stated that we would look further into this expansion and renovation project at our December meeting.

He stated also that the Board would discuss a proposed rent increase.

A motion to adjourn to Executive Session was made by Commissioner Dickins and was seconded by Commissioner Eddins. Motion carried.

A motion to return to Regular Session was made by Commissioner Cook and seconded by Commissioner Coffey. Motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Dickins and seconded by Commissioner Cook. Motion carried. Chairman Zappile adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Submitted by,

EJ LaMontagne

Edward J. LaMontagne
Executive Director