

REVISED

7/12/2011

Town of Fairfield Housing Authority

The Housing Authority of Fairfield held a meeting on July 12, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at 15 Pine Tree Lane.

PRESENT: Carol Landsman, Chair
Rita Waterman, Vice-chair
Dorothy Anderson, Commissioner
Norine Zalenski, Resident Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT: Elizabeth Gutierrez, Executive; Michael Gurge, Deputy Director

DISTRIBUTIONS: Draft minutes of June 14, 2011; Account Balances, 7/12/11

CALL TO ORDER: Ms. Landsman called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

MINUTES: The minutes of June 14, 2011 were approved as amended.

GUEST: CAROL MARTIN, Executive Director, Westport Housing Authority

Ms. Martin sited the similarities between the two Authorities. She suggested that since they are both small in size in relation to urban organizations, there might be ways in which collaboration would strengthen their positions. For instance, her group is looking for a grant to build some new units. It would enhance its case if Fairfield would commit a number of its section 8 project based vouchers to Westport in exchange for similar help to Fairfield from Westport in the future. This type of action might attract private lenders to a project. Another area of collaboration that could produce fiscal savings is the use of the same vendors for some services to residents.

REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Ms. Landsman congratulated Ms. Gutierrez and Mr. Gurge on the recent report from CHFA and JEFCA. Ms. Gutierrez said that by the end of the year JEFCA would be replaced with CHFA. This will be beneficial to the Authority. Ms. Landsman asked about progress on the hiring of new employees. Ms. Gutierrez said Peggy Ford would start August 1 as Resident Services Coordinator and Juan Reyes is already in place as the Maintenance Supervisor. Office space is being developed for them. She sited the renovations that have taken place including painting the community room at Pine Tree and rearranging the space to make it more appealing. A new floor has replaced the carpeting and pictures will be hung and light fixture covers upgraded. There has been positive feedback from the residents.

Ms. Landsman said she had been invited to the regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen to discuss the funds owed to the town by the FHA. Going forward, she would like to develop a paper defining the relationship between the FHA and the town.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ms. Gutierrez said a budget would be in place by October.

The contract for installing heat pumps has been awarded to ABCD. They will be installed starting in a month or more. An explanation of their operation and cost saving benefits will be in the newsletter.

After meeting with the CPA and the auditor, a proposal was developed to immediately repay 2/3 of the balance due and a plan will be worked out for the reimbursement of the balance. The agreement will be put in writing.

The annual Firemen's picnic will be on August 12:00 at 4:00.

Ms. Gutierrez said that she could report a notable improvement in collaboration between the staff and the residents.

There has been good reception of the new newsletter format.

Ms. Gutierrez is working with a vendor to redesign and improve the laundry room.

HUD has approved a smoke-free policy for public housing and this would allow the Authority to proceed to implement a policy on these sites.

Ms. Gutierrez said the Executive Director of Parish Court has retired. She is exploring the possibility of the FHA offering administrative services to that property to the benefit of both groups.

REPORT OF THE HCV PROGRAM

Mr. Gurge submitted his written report. Among the items mentioned was that PT/TF newsletters would be mailed to senior/disabled HCV participants. The FHA plans to appeal a denial of their application for CY 2011 HAP set-aside funding.

APPROVAL OF THE TENANT SELECTION PLAN

The plan was accepted as amended.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Landsman led a discussion of the proposals made by Ms. Martin. The board agreed that there were many questions to be explored regarding the transfer of Section 8 Project Based Vouchers to Westport. Mr. Gurge said that compliance with HUD's regulations would need to be considered. Other ways of collaborating in the near future will be examined.

Ms. Landsman suggested inviting the First Selectman to the next meeting to review our proposal..

The public portion of the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on August 16, 2011.

A motion was made to go into executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Goethner