

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CAMDEN
MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CAMDEN
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2020

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Camden met for a Virtual Regular Meeting on Wednesday, August 26, 2020, at 5:40 PM, E.S.T., Mr. Charles Valentine began the meeting with an invocation, and salute to the flag.

Commissioner Cunningham	Absent
Commissioner Keys Frazier	Absent
Commissioner Hudson	Absent

Those present were as follows:

Present: Commissioner Alan Miller
Commissioner Nohemi Soria-Perez
Commissioner Louis Quiñones
Commissioner Deborah Person-Polk

In Attendance: Mr. Victor D. Figueroa, Executive Director
Ms. Cristal Holmes-Bowie, Esq., Michael A. Armstrong & Associates, LLC
Ms. Sadyhe Bradley, General Counsel
Ms. Reba V. Hicks, Executive Assistant to ED
Ms. Nathayya Soto, Executive Secretary
Ms. Sadyhe Bradley, General Counsel
Mr. Charles Valentine, Director of Modernization
Ms. Wanda Riley, Asset Manager
Ms. Melody Johnson-Williams, HCV Director
Ms. Edith Pagan, Director of Resident Initiatives
Mr. John Kostyal, Human Resources Manager
Ms. Jasmine Kee, Purchasing Specialist

OLD BUSINESS

Victor D. Figueroa stated the Housing Authority of the City of Camden (HACC) is open to the public, but right now it's by appointment only, so if the public wants to come in, they have to make an appointment to their respective departments that they need to see or meet with individuals.

He also stated that the Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant was announced on August 24, 2020 and the deadline is December 16, 2020 or there about.
Commissioner Person-Polk asked if it was December or September?

Mr. Figueroa stated it was December, and they were given a little more time than the last time. Last time was two months, but now three months. So they have the old application that was submitted, and it's going to be the platform or baseline. They're going to be adding to that as they've been working with the Ablett Village Transformation team for the Choice Planning Grant at Ablett Village. The transformation plan is due in September, so they're on their way. Ducks are lining up and hopefully we will get awarded a grant of \$35 million for Ablett Village.

Also stated that any other comments can be made later in the Executive Session.

Commissioner Soria-Perez asked for a housekeeping item to indicate who makes the motion because people were listening as opposed to seeing.

Mr. Figueroa gives verbal voting results, as below and throughout the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Person-Polk asked for approval of the Minutes of the Regular meeting held on Wednesday, July 15, 2020.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Alan Miller
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 3) Vote

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Entertain a Motion to accept Executive Director's Report for July 2020.

- 1) Motion – Commissioners Soria- Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Quiñones
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

NEW BUSINESS

Victor D. Figueroa stated that there was no new business, only the resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution 20-36 – Resolution authorizing a Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners on Wednesday, August 26, 2020.

CLOSED SESSION

Resolution 20- 37 – Resolution approving the HACC payment register for the month of July 2020.

Resolution 20-38 – Resolution approving the transaction, to write off bad debts left by vacated tenants for Ablett Village, Chelton Terrace Phase I, Kennedy Tower, Westfield Tower and Mickle Tower for the period ended January 1, 2018 to December 2019 in the amount of \$215,719.39 and authorizing the Executive Director to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

Resolution 20-39 – Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute and deliver all closing documents pertaining to the acquisition of eight properties from Heart of Camden associated with the HUD NSP I & II homeownership program to the Housing Authority of Camden City and authorizing the Executive Director to take such other actions as the Executive Director deems necessary to effectuate this transaction.

Resolution 20-40 – Resolution authorizing a contract between the Housing Authority of the City of Camden (HACC) and Jones Masonry Restoration Corporation for the Scattered Sites (Senior Towers) Facade Repair and Painting, authorizing an expenditure of funds in an amount not to exceed \$888,000 and authorizing the Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction(s).

Resolution 20-41 – Resolution authorizing a contract between the Housing Authority of the City of Camden (HACC) and Levy Construction Co. for the completion of Baldwin's Run Community Center Renovation, authorizing an expenditure of funds in an amount not to exceed \$142,600 and authorizing the Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction(s).

Resolution 20-42 – Resolution authorizing a contract for Labor and Employment Counsel services, an expenditure of funds in an amount not to exceed \$40,000, and authorizing the Executive Director to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

Resolution 20-43 - Resolution approving and authorizing to reject bids received for **Project #2020-8 Boiler Improvements to Mickle and Westfield Towers** and

authorizing the Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

Resolution 20-36 – Resolution authorizing a Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners on Wednesday, August 26, 2020.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked for approval of Resolution 20-36.

Entertained a Motion to accept Resolution **20-36**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Miller
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

***Mr. Figueroa stated they are in Closed Session and mutes everyone.

Resolution 20- 37 – Resolution approving the HACC payment register for the month of July 2020.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there's any other questions.

Entertained a Motion to accept Resolution **20-37**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Quiñones
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

Resolution 20-38 – Dwayne Tucker, Finance Director, stated Resolution 20-38 is a resolution requesting the approval to write off bad debt by tenants that vacated the Housing Authority from January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2019. These are balances from Ablett Village, Chelton Terrace Phase I, Kennedy Tower, Westfield Tower, and Mickle Tower. The grand total is \$215,719.39.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the public.

- (a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, asked to repeat the amount of money being written off. *The total is \$215,719.39. That's from January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2019.*

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any other questions from the public or any questions from the Commissioners.

Entertained a Motion to accept Resolution **20-38**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Miller
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

Resolution 20-39 – William Spearman stated Resolution 20-39 authorizes the Executive Director to execute and deliver all closing documents pertaining to the acquisition of eight properties from Heart of Camden associated with the HUD NSP1 and HUD NSP2 homeownership program to the Housing Authority of the City of Camden and authorizing the Executive Director to take such other actions as the Executive Director deems necessary to effectuate this transaction.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the public.

- (a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, asked if HUD's taking these properties back or if Heart of Camden bought the properties. *There was a project done in 2015 to rehab 38 properties and these are 8 of the properties they were not able to sell. They're being rehabilitated, and then the Housing Authority is acquiring the properties and they will rip those properties out. Asked if Housing would keep the properties, rent the ones they have, and then Housing Authority would rent the properties out as homeowners or rentals? They will be rentals initially, and they could become home ownership in the future.*

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any other questions from the public.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the commissioners to Resolution 20-39.

- (b) Commissioner Miller asked what is the anticipated cost of this? *Chuck stated to renovate the eight properties that have been sitting vacant and some of them vandalized and/or squatted in is about \$220,000, and they have NSP2 program income to do that and then it may be upwards of \$30,000 from Watson Street for transfer fees, liens, and such to take them back.*

- (b) Mr. Figueroa asked Chuck to elaborate on the initial renovation cost for each property that was done a few years back. *Chuck stated that the NSP2 grant from eight, nine years ago was \$14 million, and it was a CDBG grant which was not public housing. It was outside of the public housing program. We did a rental phase was done in Morgan Village which was a new neighborhood and homeownership units in Liberty Park and homeownership units in Waterfront Center, between about \$185,000 to \$210,000. Each unit? Yes. Commissioner Quiñones stated it's too much money. Mr. Figueroa stated they're in good condition and just have to do some minor renovations.*

- (c) Commissioner Quiñones stated they need to look for somebody to buy those houses. He believes in homeownership more than rental. He had no questions but wanted to keep record of Mr. Spearman's word that now when you get those properties, it's going to be rental, but it could come back to home buyer. He wanted to keep that on record. Both Mr. Figueroa and Chuck said, *"Absolutely."*

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any other questions from the other commissioners.

Entertained a Motion to accept Resolution **20-39**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Miller
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

Resolution 20-40 – Jasmine Key, Purchasing Specialist for the Housing Authority of the City of Camden, stated Resolution 20-40 is a resolution authorizing a contract between the Housing Authority of the City of Camden and Jones Masonry Restoration Corporation for the Scattered Sites (Senior Towers) Facade Repair and Painting, authorizing an expenditure fund in an amount not to exceed \$888,000 and authorizing Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any comments from the public and stated that this may have been the one that Mr. Jones was talking about.

- (a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, asked to repeat the amount of money for Scattered Site. *Ms. Key stated the contract will be for \$888,000. Did this go out for bid? It did. How many people bid for it? Three responses. So only one person won the contract? Yes. Was this the lowest bidder? Yes. And I need the name of the company who got the job. Jones Masonry Restoration Corporation.*

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any other comments from the public.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any comments from the Commissioners.

(b) Derrick Jones had no comment.

(c) Commissioner Miller asked, just for the record, the scope of work. *Chuck stated it's for the three senior high-rise towers. There is a concrete spalling on 50 of the balconies in the three towers that will be repaired prior to all the concrete facing of all three buildings being repainted and then bird netting after that. So it's for the concrete spalling for 50 balconies and the painting of the concrete portions of the facades on all three 10-story towers.*

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any other questions from the Commissioners.

Entertained a Motion to accept Resolution **20-40**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Miller
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

Resolution 20-41 – Jasmine Key, Purchasing Specialist for the Housing Authority of the City of Camden stated Resolution 20-41 is a resolution authorizing a contract between the Housing Authority of the City of Camden and Levy Construction Company for the completion of Baldwin's Run Community Center Renovation, authorizing an expenditure of funds in an amount not to exceed \$142,600 and authorizing Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the public.

(a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, asked to repeat the amount of money and what the money was going to be done for in Baldwin's Run. *Ms. Key stated that it's for Baldwin's Run Community Center, so it's going to be renovated throughout the community center. The amount not to exceed is \$142,600. Asked if this was the first time doing that community center, and why does it have to be done over? Was it done before? What's wrong with the community center? Chuck? What's wrong to spend \$142,000 for a community center that was just build not too long ago. Chuck stated the community center was built for a million something 15 years ago, and there is a concrete patio that's beautiful where people can go out of the multipurpose room onto that patio which is deteriorating a little bit. It's allowing for water infiltration into the building causing some mold and mildew and damage. And so that patio is being replaced along with damages being repaired*

inside the building. And who got the contract? Jasmine Key stated that the awarded contract is going to Levy Construction Company.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the Commissioners.

Entertained a Motion to accept Resolution **20-41**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Quiñones
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

Resolution 20-42 – Jasmine Key, Purchasing Specialist for the Housing Authority of the City of Camden stated Resolution 20-42 is a resolution authorizing a contract for Labor and Employment Counsel services, an expenditure of funds in an amount not to exceed \$40,000 and authorizing Executive Director to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the public.

- (a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, asked how much the contract is? *It's an amount not to exceed \$40,000. And what's the purpose? It's for labor and employment counsel services.* Mr. Figueroa stated, "Legal counsel."

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the Commissioners.

- (b) Commissioner Miller stated he wanted to thank them for supplying a scope of work on this resolution and that for now on he will ask in resolutions moving forward that there's also a fee schedule associated with such contracts.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any other questions from the Commissioners.

Entertain a Motion to accept Resolution **20-42**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Miller
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

Resolution 20-43 – Jasmine Key, Purchasing Specialist for the Housing Authority of the City of Camden stated Resolution 20-43 is a resolution approving and authorizing to reject bids received for Project #2020-8 Boiler Improvements to Mickle and Westfield Towers and authorizing Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and to do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the public.

- (a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, complained about static while Ms. Key is talking. She can't understand what she said. Ms. Williams requested a copy of the minutes from the meeting.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any other questions from the Commissioners.

Entertained a Motion to accept Resolution **20-43**.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Miller
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

John Kostyal, Human Resources Manager for the Housing Authority. One personnel action this month. It was proposed that the selected candidate be appointed to the position of Property Manager for the Housing Authority's Asset Management Department on a full-time basis and an annual salary rate of \$53,000. This appointment is to fill a vacant position. The selected candidate has been promoted on June 29, 2020, subject to the ratification of the Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there were any questions from the Commissioners.

- (a) Commissioner Miller asked it be stated for the record why this action was not brought to the board on the July meeting. *John stated he had not received the signed approval that the position was accepted in time for the board meeting.*

Entertain a Motion to accept the Property Manager position.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Miller
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, asked at what site is the Property Manager job? *Victor D. Figueroa stated it was all three towers – Kennedy, Mickle, and Westfield.* Ms. Williams asked what happened to the last manager? *Mr. Figueroa stated she retired.* Ms. Williams asked the salary. *John Kostyal stated the salary is \$53,000.* Ms. Williams asked if they had experience. *John Kostyal stated extensive experience. Mr. Figueroa stated extensive experience, a lot of experience.*

Ms. Williams asked why are people coming back to Michael's Developer, under Michael's Corporation? Seems to be a lot of _____ in Branch Village for her and the people of the City of Camden. She wants to know why Michael's Developer wants six checks, checking account of her debit card, her money that she gets every month. She has a problem with the new developers that report people's business, keep this money in pocket. If you don't do that, you can't come back in Branch. She stated it's discriminatory and that's what you did. She stated when she got hurt in Branch Village, they knew her house was not secure. You knew she didn't have anything – no birth certificate, nothing. She lost everything and that she was given only a bed to sleep on. Commissioner Quiñones gave her one dresser, so you didn't do anything for her and stated she's having it hard when she came back. Stated, no, she's not coming back. **(BACKGROUND TALKING)** Asked what was going on here? Said that's her concern, sister, and she's doing a letter to what's going on in public housing, especially Michael's Developer. Stated it's a shame what's being done to poor people. **(BACKGROUND TALKING)** Asked who's talking?

_____ stated that she was sent a letter on email.

Ms. Williams stated she's confused. She has a concern with that, wanting people's social security money and six checks. What reason? Why is Michael's into people's personal business? Her money comes on her card every month. Why they have to know how much money she has in the bank, on her card? She stated it's her personal business.

Mr. Figueroa stated they're going to take her questions and will respond in writing.

Ms. Williams restated she's doing a letter and it's not over with. She also wants to know Mr. Spearman's title, what's his title, how he got the position he has. What is his title? She doesn't need in writing; she wants it on the record. Spearman.

Mr. Figueroa asked, "Madam Chair. Madam Chair."

Ms. Williams said, "He's there." She wanted to know "how he got the job and what his title is, when it's open to the public. And you all still playing politicking here."

Mr. Figueroa stated that her time was up.

Chuck stated for the record that there are four phases at Branch Village. The first phase is a low rise. Miss Williams did not want a unit in that phase. A unit was reserved for Ms. Williams in Phase 2. She saw the unit a number of times and decided not to take it.

Laverne Williams stated she doesn't want the unit and doesn't want anything from them right now. She stated they showed her a unit one time.

Chuck stated that Ms. Williams was then offered and designated a unit for her selection in Phase 3. She does not want to move in Phase 4 because it's a low rise, and so Michael's has to process Ms. Williams as they do every other applicant and get her income information. Her income information is a direct deposit check from Social Security into her bank, and so she needs to see the bank statements for that. He stated that that's the answer to her question and wants for the record that they've assisted Ms. Williams in every way along the selection process. It's totally her call to abide by the processes to go back to a beautiful unit. There's one designated for her, but she's chosen not to come back to it.

Daniella Cerullo asked Mr. Figueroa if she could speak and was granted permission. She stated she was Daniella Cerullo, the People Program Manager for the Choice Neighborhood Program at Branch Village for the Housing Authority City of Camden. She stated that for the record, Ms. Williams was also offered their services to be able to acquire birth certificate, social security card, and any other information that was needed by Michael's. Miss Williams had made a statement that she had lost it long ago. They offered to do it via offline and reimburse her for any fees that were incurred, and she, as well, refused their help with that which is documented and filed. So she wanted to state that for the record.

Commissioner Person-Polk asked if there was any other public participation.

ADJOURNMENT

Entertain a Motion to adjourn the Virtual Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Miller
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 3) Roll Call

Commissioner Miller	Yes
Commissioner Soria-Perez	Yes
Commissioner Quiñones	Yes
Commissioner Person-Polk	Yes

ADJOURNMENT: 7:07 PM

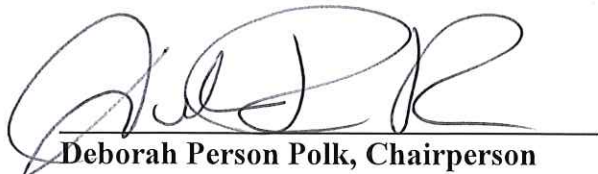
Attested to this 21st day of October 2020.

ATTEST:



**Victor D. Figueroa
Executive Director**

APPROVAL:



**Deborah Person Polk, Chairperson
Board of Commissioners**