

# HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CAMDEN

## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CAMDEN WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2020

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Camden met for a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, February 19, 2020, at 5:29 PM, E.S.T., at the McGuire Gardens Community Center. Ms. Reba V. Hicks began the meeting with an invocation, and a Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Those present were as follows:

Present:

Commissioner Deborah Person-Polk  
Commissioner Patricia Cunningham  
Commissioner Alan Miller  
Commissioner Nohemi Soria-Perez  
Commissioner Luis Quiñones

In Attendance:

Mr. Victor D. Figueroa, Executive Director  
Ms. Cristal Holmes-Bowie, Esq., of Michael A. Armstrong  
& Associates, LLC  
Ms. Reba V. Hicks, Executive Asst. to the Executive Director  
Michelle Washington, Chelton Terrace & New Hope  
Mr. Ronald Spence, Assistant Manager at Mickle, Kennedy,  
& Westfield Tower  
Ms. Linda Medina, Assistant Manager, Baldwin's Run  
& Roosevelt Manor  
Ms. Tina League, Manager of Branch Village  
& Morgan Village  
Ms. Wanda Riley, Asset Manager  
Ms. Jasmine Kee, Purchasing Specialist  
Ms. Melody Johnson-Williams, Director of Section 8  
Ms. Edith Pagan, Director of Resident Initiatives  
Mr. Melvin Gibson, General Accounts Manager  
Mr. John Kostyal, Human Resources Manager  
Ms. Nathayya Soto, Executive Secretary  
Ms. Geraldine Taylor, Property Manager  
Mr. Wynfield Anderson, Construction Manager  
Ms. Antoinette Daliaduby, The Michaels Organization  
Ms. Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Blvd, Camden, NJ

### I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Cristal Holmes-Bowie, Esq., of Michael A. Armstrong & Associates, LLC., stated that the Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the City of Camden Board of Commissioners for Wednesday, February 19, 2020, at 5:29 PM, has been duly advertised in accordance to Section 5 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231 of Public Law 1975. It's been published also and notice in the appropriate places and to the appropriate personnel as required by law and is, therefore, called to order:

Commissioner Person-Polk:	Roll Call.	
Victor D. Figueroa:	Commissioner Cunningham	Here
	Commissioner Keys Frazier	Absent
	Commissioner Hudson	Absent
	Commissioner Miller	Here
	Commissioner Soria-Perez	Here
	Commissioner Quiñones	Here
	Commissioner Person-Polk	Here

Victor D. Figueroa: We have a Quorum.

**PRESENTATION OF THE MANAGERS**

Michelle Washington, Property Manager, Chelton Terrace, Phase 1 & the New Hope Properties.  
 Ronald Spence, Assistant Manager at Mickle, Kennedy, & Westfield Tower.  
 Linda Medina, Assistant Manager for Baldwin’s Run and Roosevelt Manor.  
 Tina League, Manager of Branch Village and Morgan Village.  
 \*The Property Manager for Ingerman Management was not present\*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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

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

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

No Old Business.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Entertained a Motion to accept Executive Director's report for January 15, 2020.

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

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

### NEW BUSINESS

Victor D. Figueroa announced that the groundbreaking last week was for Phase 4 for Branch Village for the Choice Implementation Grant as well as a joint RAD site. They received the Proclamation Resolution from the joint legislator, which is Senator Nilsa Cruz-Perez, Assemblyman Bill Moen, and Assemblyman Bill Spearman.

Mr. Figueroa read the last WHEREAS, presented on February 12 where it states, "It is altogether proper and fitting for this legislature to recognize the groundbreaking ceremony for Clement T. Branch Village, Phase 4, and affirm its future essential role to the citizens of Camden. Now therefore be resolved by the Senate and the General Assembly of the State of New Jersey that this legislative hereby notes the groundbreaking ceremony for Clement T. Branch Village, Phase 4, pays tributes to all those whose efforts have contributed to this praiseworthy endeavor and extend sincere best wishes for its success and vigor in the years ahead."

The Proclamation was presented to Victor D. Figueroa, Chairwoman Polk, and Commissioner Soria-Perez who was there and was accepted gladly. It was a standing room only event, very well represented by all folks of the city, county, and the state. New Jersey HMFA was there as they provided a substantial amount of money, tax credit awards for the project. The Mayor was happy and satisfied. Lynne Patton attended, who is the Region II Administrator. Mr. Figueroa thanked the staff for their efforts in making that a worthwhile project and a success. Stated it was almost finished.

Commissioner Person-Polk stated they usually hear complaints, which they don't mind because that's why we're here. But, for this phase and this project, it took a village for it to happen. Residents, politicians, funders, and everyone were there. Stated that some areas of Branch Village weren't the nicest. Residents can now be proud. They have units, it's not substandard housing, and beautiful, nice streets. It's a welcome improvement into that neighborhood.

She stated that some people believe that if you don't make a lot of money that you should get less. She's not one of them. She volunteers because even though you don't have all the money, you don't have to live in substandard housing. She was happy to see this other phase, as all the other phases, and it's changed that Centerville neighborhood. Suggested people go see it. Stated it couldn't be done without the commissioners. Stated it's a village and everyone worked hard, and

she was glad to be part of something so positive. Stated that Camden is one of the poorest cities in the country, one of them. To get these awards and improve these neighborhoods is spectacular because it's very competitive. She commended the staff, has their back because she knows what they have to do to get the money, get the projects up and going. She stated we should applaud the staff for their work. Stated we can always find something wrong, but when it's something good, you can hear a pin drop. Stated things have to change by seeing what good is being done especially at the Housing Authority. Stated she's thankful because she can't remember getting awards for other phases. Stated people are acknowledging that money is spent where it's supposed to be. Stated it wasn't years ago, it's been changed. Stated you can touch, see, and feel the money. Stated she's thankful to the staff and gave them a round of applause.

Commissioner Cunningham stated when people visit her, get off Walt Whitman Bridge and come down Master Street, they don't believe that's public housing; she's impressed with Branch. She rides down 9<sup>th</sup> Street and up 10<sup>th</sup> to see what's going on. Stated it's amazing and she's proud to say she lives in Camden. Stated they have the best public housing going. It's better than most of the private homes.

Commissioner Person-Polk stated because of the way public housing was structured, everything was encased like a super block. All crime was all in that block, and people felt they weren't a part of the community. Stated now the streets go through homeowner streets, and it's easy access for the police, fire department, and everyone.

Commissioner Miller stated he had questions on the Executive Director Report.

Commissioner Person-Polk stated it was already approved and on to New Business. Stated we'll just go in order and then deal with that.

### **RESOLUTIONS 20-04**

**Resolution 20-04** – Wanda Riley, Asset Manager, Resolution 20-04 is the resolution requesting the approval of the amendment of the Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy to reflect and establish the new utility allowances for FY2019 for certain asset management properties and the Executive Director's or his designee's authorization 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, wanted to know how they arrived at the new utility amount? Mr. Miller stated it costs \$3,000, Operation budget, and that rents would decrease when children leave. She said that's not always true, and it depends on how much your rent is. It depends on your bedroom size.
- (b) Commissioner Miller asked to state on the record how much did this study cost? The study cost for all 13 properties analyzed, it was \$3,000. Please repeat what budget the funds came from.

Wanda Riley explained that the funds came from the Operations budget. The company was McGrann Associates, yes. How were they chosen and when? I don't know when they were chosen or how they were chosen. They did announce this last year, so I used them again this year. Jasmine Kee, Purchasing Specialist for HACC stated that as Wanda Riley stated, McGrann Associates were used last year. For this year, it cost \$3,000 for a total of 13 properties, divided by

that each call center subject to that amount. By the State of NJ Rules & Regs, this one quote was sufficient. Commissioner Miller asked if based on their experience, that's why we used them? Ms. Kee confirmed.

A Motion was entertained to accept Resolution 20-04.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Miller
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Quiñones
- 3) Roll Call Vote

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

### RESOLUTION 20-05

**Resolution 20-05** – Melody Williams, Director of Housing Choice Voucher Program. Resolution 20-05 approving the electronic submission of the Public Housing Agency Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) certification for FY2019 authorizing the Executive Director to execute documents and 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, stated she doesn't understand SEMAP, under Section 8?
- (b) Melody Williams explained that it's an annual certification that is required by HUD, and it involves 14 indicators that HUD evaluates the Section 8 program for each public housing authority and it's a required certification that we do for the waiting list when reasonable, HQS, which is Housing Quality Standard inspections; these inspections are done every year.

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

- (c) Commissioner Miller asked when was the submission due and how close are we to getting it done?

Ms. Melody Williams stated it's due February 29, 2020; she's working on the certification, which will be submitted prior to the 29<sup>th</sup>.

- (d) Victor Figueroa stated that this has been submitted on time every year, and that's the intent to do the same this year.

A Motion was entertained to accept Resolution 20-05.

- 1) Motion – Commissioner Luis Quiñones
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Cunningham
- 3) Roll Call Vote

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

Commissioner Person-Polk changed the order of the agenda and asked for any questions from the public.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, stated:

- She was disappointed about the groundbreaking. The residents weren't notified of the first or second time. This wasn't appreciated as she's part of Branch Village.

\*Mr. Figueroa informed Ms. Laverne Williams that the Resident Board was notified.

- Crestbury residents are having problems. Does HACC have anyone from Public Housing in Crestbury or under the Section 8 programs? And if so, how many?
- Rent went up with cost of living raise (COLA) for seniors and got a small discount on utility costs. Something is wrong. Her utilities are very, very high. HUD gave a utility discount. She's paying more utility than her rent. Something is wrong with HUD, not enough for utilities.

**RESOLUTION 20-06**

**Resolution 20-06** – Resolution authorizing a Closed Session of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners for Wednesday, February 19, 2020.

A Motion was entertained to go into Closed Session.

1. Motion – Commissioner Quinones
2. Seconded – Commissioner Soria-Perez
3. Roll Call Vote

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

**CLOSED SESSION**

A Motion was entertained to come out of Closed Session.

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

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

**Resolution 20-07** – Jasmine Kee, Purchasing Specialist for HACC stated Resolution 20-07 is a resolution approving and authorizing a contracts to US Unique Services for Replacement of Balcony Bird Netting for the Senior Towers, authorizing an expenditure of funds in an amount not to exceed \$171,000.00, and authorizing the Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

- (a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ. Did this contract go out for bid, was Unique Services the lowest Bidder? And how many units for replacing of balcony bird netting?

Jasmine Kee stated there was a Bid and Unique was the only responsive bidder; they will be doing the units of the Senior Towers, which are 3 buildings totaling 295 units.

- (b) Commissioner Miller asked the age of the Towers, and where is Unique Services located?

Jasmine Kee explained that the towers are 19 years old, and Unique Services are based out of Pennsauken, NJ.

A Motion was entertained to accept Resolution 20-07.

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

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

**Resolution 20-08** – Jasmine Kee, Purchasing Specialist for HACC stated Resolution 20-08 is a resolution approving and authorizing to reject all bids received for Project 2020-2, Interior Painting and authorizing the Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

- (a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, asked where is the painting going to be done? who's doing the painting and how much is the contract?

Jasmine Kee explained that the painting will be through-out all the sites, however we're not awarding the contract tonight because this Resolution is rejecting the current painting Bid and we will be putting the Bid out again.

(b) Commissioner Miller asked how many bids were received? Why were they rejected?

Jasmine Kee informed Commissioner Miller that six (6) bid responses were received; and the bids were rejected because the Asset Management Department is requesting to modify the bid specification, but we'll be going back out again for the painting Bid.

A Motion was entertained to accept Resolution 20-08.

- 4) Motion – Commissioner Cunningham
- 5) Seconded – Commissioner Soria-Perez
- 6) Roll Call Vote

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

**Resolution 20-09** – Jasmine Kee, Purchasing Specialist for HACC stated Resolution 20-09 is a resolution approving and authorizing to reject all bids received for Project 2020-3, Cleaning Services and authorizing the Executive Director or his designee to execute documents and do all things necessary to effectuate the transaction.

(a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, stated that this is rejecting all bids, is the cleaning process this going to be done?

Jasmine Kee informed Ms. Williams that we were rejecting the Cleaning Bid and we're going to advertise it and go out for the bid again.

(b) Commissioner Miller asked how many bids were received and why were they rejected?

Jasmine Kee responded that there were three (3) Bid responses; and that the Bids are being rejected because the Asset Management Department is requesting to modify the bid specification and we'll be advertising again.

A Motion was entertained to accept Resolution 20-09.

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

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



**Resolution 20-10** – Dwayne Tucker, BDO, Interim Finance Director for the Housing Authority. Resolution 20-10 is a resolution approving the Housing Authority’s payment registers for the month of January 2020.

(a) Laverne Williams, 1655 Park Boulevard, Camden, NJ, stated that she noticed that when she comes to the meetings that one month is always done.

Commissioner Person-Polk stated that the reason why it’s one month behind is you can’t record the expenditures until they occur, hence the one month. Ms. Williams requested a copy of it.

A Motion was entertained to accept Resolution 20-10.

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

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

Commissioner Miller stated that in the Executive Director’s Report, page 6 and 7, under Accomplishments and Ongoing Tasks, there’s ten bullet items. Items 2 through 10 are all open-ended items that he’d like to get from John timeframes on as to when these tasks are expected to be completed. Some are under review, some are submitted for approval, some are still ongoing data collection. The Board needs to know what kind of timeframes we should be looking at for all of these different tasks to be accomplished.

Also in that report is current Job Announcements; and there are eight items, of which the first four he is asking why is it taking so long? There are some explanations, but some of these positions go back five, six, seven months; and some are fairly substantial positions. He asked what’s holding up these? He’d like an update on that. On number six of that list, he’d like to know what the responsibility of that position is going to be and to have that information at the next meeting.

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Antoinette Daliaduby, who works for the Michaels organization, stated that she was happy to hear that you guys received the proclamation and she’s looking forward to finishing that project with all of you. She stated that she’s here to say positive things, not negative. She’s worked in the housing industry for the last 18 years and has had the pleasure of working with 39 different agencies, state and local. Stated that this is one of the better establishments to work with, an open relationship by email or phone, even provided translated documents in Spanish for her. Thank you.

Ms. Daliaduby mentioned that on February 26, 2020 there was going to be a job fair at McGuire exclusively for the residents of McGuire Gardens and to please encourage local residents to come out and apply for a job. There are some that are for painting, some for laborers, and some for the moving company that moves people in and out. An earlier job fair in August was for the McGuire residents and the rest of Camden was successful. Michaels want to give back to the locals, to boost the economy. Ms. Daliaduby also said she was also looking for two administrative assistants looking for work in Camden.

Commissioner Miller asked her, on behalf of her organization, to look at the trash cans that were overflowing and have somebody address the issue. Commissioner Miller said it should have been done before the Commissioners arrived for the Board Meeting.

Ms. Daliaduby informed Commissioner Miller that an email had already been sent regarding the trash.

- Commissioner Person-Polk stated that the condition of the blinds disturbs her, and joked about "What gets monitored gets done."
- Victor Figueroa informed Commissioner Person-Polk that the room is going to be painted.
- Ms. Daliaduby said that two new maintenance positions were posted for the project; and we're looking for a bilingual maintenance person.
- Commissioner Miller stated that a meeting was being held tomorrow for the residents of Mickle Tower to discuss the RAD at 3:30.

Entertained a Motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners.


- 1) Motion – Commissioner Cunningham
- 2) Seconded – Commissioner Quiñones
- 3) Roll Call Vote

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

**ADJOURNMENT: 7:27 PM**

**Attested to this 19<sup>th</sup> day of February 2020.**

**ATTEST:**

  
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**Victor D. Figueroa**  
**Executive Director**

**APPROVAL:**

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