

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF MORRIS  
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
June 13, 2024

**TIME:** 6:00 P.M.

**PLACE:** Zoom Meeting, Meeting ID: 863 8786 1313, Passcode: 805751

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Poli called the meeting to order at 6:00PM

**ROLL CALL:** Executive Director Stephens called roll.

**PRESENT**

Commissioner Bevacqua  
Commissioner Rubino  
Commissioner Ullah  
Commissioner Zaccone  
Vice Chairman Meringolo  
Chairman Poli

**ABSENT**

**Also attending meeting via conference call:**

Erin Hodgson, Day Pitney  
Kelly A. Stephens, Executive Director  
Gina Bozzi, Finance Director  
Barbara Anderson, IBV Tenant  
Deborah Barron Garcia, IBV Tenant

**Gina Bozzi read adequate notice to the public.**

I hereby announce and state that adequate notice of this remote meeting being held on this the thirteenth day of June 2024 provided by the Executive Director of the Housing Authority County of Morris by preparing a notice specifying the time, date, and place of this meeting. The electronic notice has been posted on the Authority's website and mailing the notice to the Daily Record for inclusion in the minutes of this meeting, all the above in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et.Seq. "Open Public Meetings Act."

**Meeting open to public:** Opened at 6:03PM. No one from the public wanted to comment.

**Correspondence:** Executive Director Stephens reviewed the anonymous letter (was in board package) that was sent to the County Commissioners complaining there was not a maintenance staff person at the senior buildings unless for repairs. Executive Director Stephens explained that until this past year, she only had three maintenance staff for 424 units at six different locations, so they did not have the ability to stay all day at the senior complexes. Even with four maintenance staff, they are unable to remain at the buildings all day until something breaks. The anonymous letter also stated it was difficult to get through to the office. Executive Director Stephens reached out to a tenant if she had any work orders that were not addressed or if she had any issues. The tenant emailed back how kind the new maintenance staff was and 'as long as I

have lived here all the employees have been considerate, caring for us which makes us feel safe to live here.’ Executive Director Stephens asked Ms. Anderson and Ms. Barron Garcia for their feedback since they live at the complex. Both stated they have had their issues addressed promptly. Ms. Barron-Garcia said her refrigerator died over the holiday weekend and when maintenance came, they were so polite. When her refrigerator was replaced, they even put her food back perfectly. Executive Director Stephens did meet with the maintenance staff and reminded them to be more present at the senior sites when time permits. She is still actively looking to hire a qualified maintenance staff person. The Commissioners requested Executive Director Stephens provide a response back to the County Commissioners.

**Committee Report:** The Personnel Committee met on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 to discuss the Commissioner’s List increases in accordance with the county. They recommend the resolution put forth as a vote tonight.

**Chairman Report:** None

**Executive Director Report:** Executive Director Stephens reviewed the exit meeting notes from the audit that was conducted today. The programs tested for HUD compliance were Housing Choice Voucher, Mainstream Vouchers and TBRA. Fifty tenant files were reviewed, and they were all in agreement with HUD compliance. There were no noted deficiencies that would need to be reported under these programs. In addition, the ACOP and Administrative Plan are in the process of being updated to include the new HOTMA regulations. A question regarding ‘junk fees’ arose (i.e., late fees, maintenance fees, pet fees, etc.). However, after further review of the letter, Executive Director Stephens noted it was just hidden fees and those the Housing Authority charges are clearly defined upfront in the lease.

The auditor suggested body cameras for the Housing Inspector and Maintenance Staff since they perform inspections and repairs by themselves. This would protect them from liability as well as document the apartment was inspected/repaired. Discussion ensued amongst the board. Day Pitney will explore the legalities of this practice and Executive Director Stephens will look at HUD guidance, if other Housing Authorities in NJ have instilled the use of body cameras and reach out to Sheriff Gannon.

Executive Director Stephens attended a mayor’s roundtable moderated by Bill Spadea earlier in the week. While it did not specifically affect the Housing Authority, she wanted to hear about how the participating mayors were addressing affordable housing, flood remediation and PILOT programs. The Housing Authority hosted a ‘Working Harmoniously’ workshop for all the staff at the end of May. It was a positive team building workshop to help staff communicate more professionally and effectively with each other, clients, landlords and the public. Activities for June are quiet as the staff person is on FMLA, but the ice cream trucks will restart for July.

**Regular Minutes** – A motion was made by Commissioner Rubino and seconded by Commissioner Zaccone Approving the Regular Minutes for May 9, 2024. The following votes were cast:

**AYES**

Commissioner Bevacqua  
Commissioner Rubino  
Commissioner Ullah  
Commissioner Zaccone

**ABSTAIN**

Vice Chairman Meringolo  
Chairman Poli

**NAYS**

Chairman Poli declared said motion carried.

**Schedule of Payments** – A motion was made by Commissioner Zaccone and seconded by Commissioner Bevacqua Approving the Schedule of Payments for June 13, 2024. The Commissioners discussed the cost of the JIF. Executive Director Stephens explained to the board she reached out to the Risk Manager and Fund Commissioner and discovered the Housing Authority did not have the ability to become a member of any other JIF. The NJ PHAJIF was created specifically for Housing Authorities. Once the membership in the fund expires on 12/31/25, the Housing Authority can market outside of the fund in a private market. The following votes were cast:

**AYES**

Commissioner Bevacqua  
Commissioner Rubino  
Commissioner Ullah  
Commissioner Zaccone  
Vice Chairman Meringolo  
Chairman Poli

**ABSTAIN**

**NAYS**

Chairman Poli declared said motion carried.

**Resolution 2024-7** –A motion was made by Commissioner Zaccone and seconded by Commissioner Rubino Authorizing the Agreement with the Department of Human Services. The following votes were cast:

**AYES**

Commissioner Bevacqua  
Commissioner Rubino  
Commissioner Ullah  
Commissioner Zaccone  
Vice Chairman Meringolo  
Chairman Poli

**ABSTAIN**

**NAYS**

Chairman Poli declared said motion carried.

**Resolution 2024-8** –A motion was made by Commissioner Rubino and seconded by Commissioner Zaccone Approving the Non-Union Management Employee Salary Adjustments. The following votes were cast:

**AYES**

**ABSTAIN**

**NAYS**

Commissioner Bevacqua  
Commissioner Rubino  
Commissioner Ullah  
Commissioner Zaccone  
Vice Chairman Meringolo  
Chairman Poli

Chairman Poli declared said motion carried.

**Resolution 2024-9** –A motion was made by Chairman Poli and seconded by Commissioner Zaccone Awarding the Contract for Dryer Vent Cleaning for all Housing Authority Sites. The following votes were cast:

**AYES**

**ABSTAIN**

**NAYS**

Commissioner Bevacqua  
Commissioner Rubino  
Commissioner Ullah  
Commissioner Zaccone  
Vice Chairman Meringolo  
Chairman Poli

Chairman Poli declared said motion carried.

**Legal Update** – Attorney Erin Hodgson reported Day Pitney aided on an issue with a Peer Place tenant who had unreported income. The tenant was contacting all housing organizations although she had a Legal Aid attorney. Executive Director Stephens sent an email out to all the Housing Authority Commissioners several weeks ago at Day Pitney’s suggestion in case the tenant tried to contact them. All Commissioners were reminded that they should never answer any tenant complaint. The complaint should be directed to management or Day Pitney.

Day Pitney also participated in a bid opening and provided assistance on the June 5<sup>th</sup> issue. The lowest two bidders did not provide the proper bid documents and the next lowest was not within the architects cost proposal. Executive Director Stephens stated the bids would be rejected at the July meeting and rebid.

**New Business** – Vice Chairman Meringolo had forwarded an RFP to Executive Director Stephens for the HOME-ARP money through the County. She did follow-up with Community Development and read the notice. The Housing Authority does not qualify as a developer (which was why the Affordable Housing Corporation was created). In addition, HUD wants the developer to work with the local PHA to provide vouchers and we cannot own the property and subsidize to ourselves. Lastly, it is for rental specifically for the homeless, at risk, those fleeing domestic violence and human trafficking.

**Old Business** – The follow-up regarding the JIF was discussed under the Schedule of Payments.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:39PM.

July 11, 2024

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Date Adopted

*Kelly A. Stephens (Original on File)*

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Kelly A. Stephens, Board Secretary