

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF STAMFORD
APRIL 24, 2024

A regular Board meeting of the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford was held at 40 Clinton Avenue, Stamford, Connecticut and on the Zoom remote connection meeting platform on Wednesday, April 24, 2024.

Commissioner Ostuw called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

A. Attendees

Present:	Rich Ostuw Lester McKoy John Coff Divya Malhotra Alexandro Morris	Absent:	
Advisory Board:	Ronice Latta	Absent:	Ari Goldstein Jacyn Williams Bianca Shinn-Desras
Present:	Vin Tufo Natalie Coard Jon Gottlieb Lisa Reynolds Sam Feda Jackie Figueroa Raul Gomez Beth Janney Ken Montanez Megan Shutes Peter Stothart Jan Tantimonico Michelle Tarulli Chris Warren Christine Young		

B. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of minutes of the COC Board Meeting of March 27, 2024

➤ Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner Malhotra seconded.

The minutes were approved.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw Lester McKoy Divya Malhotra John Coff Alexandro Morris	Nays:	None
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- Approval of minutes of the Agency Plan Meeting of April 10, 2024

➤ Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner McKoy seconded.

The minutes were approved.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw	Nays:	None
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Lester McKoy
Divya Malhotra
John Coff
Alexandro Morris

C. **Public Comments** – There was no public comment.

D. **Board Committee Reports**

Human Resources Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Coff, McKoy, Morris, Malhotra and Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Janney, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Fedá, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Warren, Ms. Caselli, Mr. Galasso, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Soares, Ms. Caselli and Ms. Young attended the Human Resources Committee meeting on 4/23/2024. Mr. Gomez provided a recruitment update. Ms. Tantimonico reviewed the four areas identified in the recent employee survey as areas of opportunity. Ms. Tantimonico provided a high-level summary of feedback obtained from one-on-one focus groups, employee meetings and action items completed. Mr. Gomez provided an update on upcoming employee engagement activities and events.

Operations Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Coff, McKoy, Morris, Malhotra and Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Janney, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Fedá, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Warren, Ms. Caselli, Mr. Galasso, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Soares, Ms. Caselli and Ms. Young attended the Operations Committee meeting on 4/23/2024. Ms. Janney and Ms. Figueroa presented an update on operational audits for Lawnhill Terrace and the Housing Choice Voucher program (HCV).

Mr. Fedá and Mr. Galasso provided a 03/2024 accounts receivable (A/R) update noting a 7% increase and rent relief funds received for two residents. Ms. Janney discussed the resolution to Approve 2024 Congregate Fee and Rent for Wormser Congregate.

Mr. Stothart reported on capital projects to include the Wormser Congregate AC project completion and the commencement of the Scofield Manor Roof Replacement project. Mr. Stothart presented two resolutions: Award Contract to Brian Capone Land Services for Landscaping Maintenance Services including Litter Patrol and Approve Change Order No. 1 to the Contract with Absolute Staffing, LLC for Recruitment Services.

Finance Committee – Commissioners Ostuw, Coff, McKoy, Morris, Malhotra and Advisory Board member Latta, Mr. Tufo, Ms. Coard, Mr. Gottlieb, Ms. Janney, Mr. Montanez, Mr. Fedá, Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Reynolds, Ms. Tantimonico, Mr. Stothart, Mr. Warren, Ms. Caselli, Mr. Galasso, Mr. Paulemon, Mr. Soares, Ms. Caselli and Ms. Young attended the Finance Committee meeting on 4/23/2024.

Mr. Paulemon provided an overview of the FY 2025 operating budgets for Wormser Congregate, Oak Park, and Stamford Manor. Wormser Congregate has a budgeted net operating income (NOI) of \$107K for FY 2025, which is a \$24K improvement from the prior year. A rent increase of \$100 is proposed on the income-based rent that is expected to have no impact on the residents. Mr. Fedá discussed the extraordinary progress Wormser has made over the years building up their reserves to an estimated \$460K for FY 2025. This was a collaborative effort with the Operations and HR teams on implementing operating efficiencies. Oak Park has a budgeted NOI of \$75K for FY 2025. The property is undergoing a multi-year redevelopment; the FY 2025 budget includes the reduction of 61 units in Phase 1. Through natural attrition, vacant units will not be leased up and will be held offline to accommodate future redevelopment phases. Stamford Manor has a FY 2025 budgeted loss of \$130K, which is relatively close to FY 2024 actuals. The Low-Income Public Housing financial structure is unsustainable in the long term. Once the RAD properties are converted, COC will begin the Streamlined Voluntary Conversion of Stamford Manor to tenant based vouchers. This will increase NOI substantially allowing for needed capital repairs and stabilize cashflow. Additionally, \$650K of the existing \$1.3M in reserves will be used as a funding source for the RAD properties first year capital repairs. The resolutions to approve these operating budgets will be presented at the 4/24/2024 Board meeting.

Mr. Montanez provided an update on the Yardi implementation project. The kickoff meeting with Yardi and the COC internal implementation team was held 4/10/2024. The team is underway with various meetings and tasks to begin the implementation of the system. COC's "go live" date is slated for 11/1/2024, which includes a seven-month project. Mr. Fedá described the Auditing Services contracts that have expired, and the RFP issued for COC and the entity audits. The selection will be discussed at the 06/2024 Board meeting.

- E. **Post SP24 Discussion** – The Board of Commissioners and staff discussed the recent Strategic Planning (SP24) retreat meeting that included recommendations for upcoming strategic goals and topics for further discussion. Commissioner Coff is interested in a future meeting on expanding the business model to provide third party services. Commissioner McKoy stated that the SP24 meeting was a good overall review of COCs’ core objectives and requested to know how COC would prepare for unexpected situations, such as an inoperable elevator. Mr. Tufo responded that our Asset Management department is focused on the capital need assessments of our buildings such as furnaces, elevators, roofs, etc. to mitigate unforeseen surprises. COC staff is committed to being proactive with an approach in place to apply the best use of resources and address any emergency, including those for which we may be unprepared. A capital needs assessment presentation will be held at a future date. Advisory Board member Latta suggested a senior staff succession plan meeting.
- F. **Report from the Executive Director** – Ms. Coard discussed the Stamford Parks Foundation Transition Committee, of which she has been appointed co-chair. Ms. Coard noted that the mayor’s office requested her participation on this committee. Ms. Coard discussed the importance of her being asked by the mayor’s office. COC’s collaboration with the city and others in the community to participate on these committees helps to strengthen our relationships, builds trust and confidence in our expertise which results in positive recognition for COC.
- G. **Strategic Overview from Chief Executive Officer** - Mr. Tufo continued the discussion on strengthening and building COCs’ relationships with peer organizations in our city and with our elected officials. Mr. Tufo stated that this can only improve our ability to overcome challenges that COC may encounter in the future. It is important for COC staff members to continue to give their expertise to others, and in return, COC can benefit from others’ leadership and learned experiences. Mr. Tufo noted that it would be insightful to have Stamford’s Social Service department educate us on homeless resources. The Mayor has been invited to join the 5/22/2024 Board meeting.

H. **Resolutions** –

24-12: Approve 2024 Congregate Fee and Rent Increases for Wormser

- Commissioner McKoy moved; Commissioner Malhotra seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the monthly rent increase of \$100 for Wormser Congregate is adopted effective July 1, 2024, and continuing thereafter, subject to final approval by the Connecticut Department of Housing.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw	Nays:	None
	Lester McKoy		
	John Coff		
	Divya Malhotra		
	Alexandro Morris		

24-13: Award Contract to Brian Capone Land Services for Landscaping Maintenance Services including Litter Patrol

- Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner McKoy seconded.

Be it resolved by the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Executive Director is authorized to enter into a five-year contract with Brian Capone Land Services of Stamford, CT for Landscaping Maintenance Services including Litter Patrol. The total annual cost of this procurement is \$388,275.00 and shall not exceed \$1,941,375.00 over a five-year period. Further board approval will be required if the contract price exceeds 110% of the authorized amount.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
Lester McKoy
John Coff
Divya Malhotra
Alexandro Morris

24-14: Approve for Change Order No. 1 to the Contract with Absolute Staffing, LLC for Recruitment Services.

- Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner McKoy seconded.

Be it resolved by the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Executive Director and CEO is authorized to approve Change Order No. 1 to the contract with Absolute Staffing, LLC for the amount of \$350,000.00 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$450,000.00. Further expenditure shall not be exceeded without Board authorization.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
Lester McKoy
John Coff
Divya Malhotra
Alexandro Morris

24-15: Approve FYE June 30, 2025, Budgets for the Wormser Congregate

- Commissioner McKoy moved; Commissioner Morris seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Budget for the Wormser Congregate facility is adopted for the Fiscal Year starting July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, subject to final approval by the DOH.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
Lester McKoy
John Coff
Divya Malhotra
Alexandro Morris

24-16: Approve FYE June 30, 2025, Budget for State Moderate Rent Program – Oak Park

- Commissioner McKoy moved; Commissioner Coff seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the Budget for the State Moderate Rent Program – Oak Park is adopted for the Fiscal Year starting July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, subject to final approval by the DOH and CHFA as applicable.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes: Rich Ostuw Nays: None
Lester McKoy
John Coff
Divya Malhotra
Alexandro Morris

24-17: Approve the Federal Low-Income Public Housing Program (LIPH) AMP 2 – Stamford Manor operating budget for the twelve-month period ending June 30, 2025.

➤ Commissioner Coff moved; Commissioner Morris seconded.

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Stamford d/b/a Charter Oak Communities that the operating budget for the Federal Low-Income Public Housing property Stamford Manor is adopted for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.

The resolution was passed.

Ayes:	Rich Ostuw	Nays:	None
	Lester McKoy		
	John Coff		
	Divya Malhotra		
	Alexandro Morris		

I. Executive Session – No Executive Session was held.

J. Adjournment - At 6:56 p.m., after a motion duly made by Commissioner Coff and seconded by Commissioner McKoy the Board meeting was adjourned.

Natalie Coard
Executive Director