
MONTVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 19, 2024 | 5:00 p.m.
Independence Village Community Center
41 Maple Avenue, CT 06382

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chair Doherty-Peck at 5:00 p.m., followed by The Pledge of Allegiance

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Doherty-Peck, Sherbanee, Suarez, Szarzynski, and Morton

Absent: None

3. REMARKS FROM TENANTS | *Three-minute limit*

Tenant of MHA residing at IV remarked that the four-way Stop junction intersecting Milefski Drive and Maple Avenue has been reported to the Commission for more than three years as being hazardous. Tenant stated that motorists are ignoring the Stop signs which can lead to an accident in the future.

4. REMARKS FROM PUBLIC | *Three-minute limit*

Leonard Bunnell, Sr., Mayor of the Town of Montville, stated his concern for the Commission to expedite a remedy to the perpetual conditions of unsafe drinking water at MHA. He offered any assistance that may be available through his office. He stated his concern for the Commission to expedite an effective grievance procedure; that grievances need to be addressed immediately; and that everyone has the right to present complaints and have their concerns addressed.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve October 2024 Minutes by Commissioner Sherbanee, seconded by Commissioner Morton. Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Suarez_Approve; Szarzynski_Approve; Morton_Approve.

Action: Vote 5-0, All in Favor_Motion Carried

6. APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS

Motion to approve payment of October bills by Commissioner Szarzynski, seconded by Commissioner Sherbanee. Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Suarez_Abstain; Szarzynski_Approve; Morton_Approve.

Action: Vote 4-0, One Abstention_Motion Carried

7. CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS

a. Correspondence for Information – None

b. Correspondence for Action – None

8. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

a. Fiscal Status – Copies received from Management

- **Cash Balance** | *recorded for public access*
- **Operating Account/Bank Statement** | *recorded for public access*
- **Income Statement October 2024** | *recorded for public access*
- **PILOT status** | *recorded for public access*

b. Physical/Property Status – Copies received from Management

- **Occupancy** | *recorded for public access*
- **Restoration project/BluSky** | *recorded for public access*

c. Regulatory Status – Copies received from Management

- **Audit status** | *recorded for public access*
- **Recertification status** | *recorded for public access*
- **Emergency alarm system** | *recorded for public access*

d. Additional/Oral Status Reports | Regarding Items 8(a)(b)(c)(d)

- **PILOT status/oral report**

Commissioner Morton stated that PILOT status needs to be continued

- **Money owed from Tenants oral reports Item 8(a)/oral report**

Commissioner Suarez reported Tenant complaints that November rent checks are not deposited at this time. EHM Staff Member (ESM) Goode requested extension on reporting money owed from Tenants until January 2025 at which time there will be a full report.

- **Money due to Tenants Item 8(b)/oral report**

Commissioner Suarez reported the need for a FV Tenant to receive reimbursement for overpayment of rent due to an autopay issue commencing May 1. ESM will ascertain the date when the corrected autopay commenced and reported that the Tenant will be reimbursed by the end of December 2024.

- **Emergency alarm system (Item b)/oral report**

ESM reported that a backup phone line is needed for the emergency alarm system and that she will take measures to ensure that it is restored to proper functioning.

- **Parking area availability and dimensions (Item b) /oral report**

ESM reported that there is no parking space for Apt. 30, no consistency in parking area sizes and shapes, and not enough clearance. Commissioner Szarzynski asked Management's expectation of the Commission regarding the issues. ESM stated her report was for information only. Commissioner Szarzynski stated the need to know the source for regulations, which were going to be applied, and required documentation. ESM said she would Google it for him. Chair Doherty-Peck suggested contacting the Montville Building Department official for zoning regulations.

- **Architectural Redesign Project (Item b)/oral report**

Kent Lewis, Contractor, reported anticipation that in a couple of weeks the sub draft plan and specs will be completed and out to bid; and if everything goes well, rehab work will begin as early as next Spring or early Summer, precluding any unforeseen obstacles.

- **Audit status (Item c) /oral report**

ESM reported a need of assistance from the Commission in responding to the Auditor's inquiries regarding Dime Bank: The reason for closing the account; the reason money was transferred; and bank statements. Commissioner Szarzynski will research information concerning Costello; Commissioner Sherbanee will research information concerning the bookkeeper; and Commissioner Morton will ascertain information from Dime Bank.

- **Safe drinking water status and public notices (Item c)/oral report**

ESM reported that above-ground research may include checking the pipes in the utility room heaters and tracing into the interior walls of the units.

- **Recertification (Item c)/oral report**

Commissioner Suarez reported that Tenants are concerned about not having received application forms, the rent calculation formula, and frequency of recertification. ESM reported that Tenant meetings will occur at both property sites this week to alleviate concerns. Commissioner Szarzynski requested recertification documents and formulas for Commission review. ESM reported that they are attached to a spreadsheet and will be made available at the Tenant meeting/informational.

- **Tenant Profile Submission and Waiting List Survey Item (c)/oral report**

Commissioner Suarez reported that the 2024 TPS report and the Waiting List Survey that are required annually and have a deadline of November 1 are late and have not been received by CHFA. ESM reported that the TPS/WLS report is not late, but has received a filing extension from CHFA. ESM reported a need for transparency in stating that the Commission has been behind in reports and not in compliance with CHFA for a long time.

9. STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

a. Unfinished Business

Management's request for amendment to Article II Section 3(D)

Chair Doherty-Peck called for any motions or discussions. Commissioner Morton reported a matter for discussion. Discussion: Commissioner Morton stated that she was in favor of authorizing one member from Management plus one Commissioner to sign MHA checks.

Summary: Management's request for amendment to the Bylaws is remedied by authorizing all Commissioners to have signatory authority for signing MHA checks. Chair Doherty-Peck confirmed with the Commission majority that all five Commissioners will have signatory authority for signing MHA checks. Vice Chair Sherbanee will handle the formalities at the bank.

b. New Business

Base Rent Increase

Motion by Commissioner Sherbanee to established base rent for existing Tenants at \$325 and \$375, seconded by Commissioner Morton. Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Suarez_Abstain; Szarzynski_Approve; Morton_Approve.

Action: Vote 4-0, One abstention_Motion Carried

Rent Stratification

Motion by Commissioner Sherbanee to Table rent stratification until post recertification in January 2025, seconded by Commissioner Morton. Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Suarez_Approve; Szarzynski_Approve; Morton_Approve.

Action: Vote 5-0, All in Favor_Motion Carried

Commission Office Space

Motion by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Szarzynski to approve Commissioner access to FV office for Commission duties. Discussion: Chair Doherty-Peck stated the need for Commissioner Suarez as Secretary to have access to Freedom Village office for Commission duties requiring access to a copy machine, Commission files, and computer;

and that these things were being accomplished at personal expense. She stated that the office contains no sensitive files. Commissioner Szarzynski stated that there was nothing in the office that would create a security problem. Commissioner Morton stated security concerns regarding keys and that only a printer was necessary, not a computer. Commissioner Sherbanee stated security concerns for a Tenant to have access to the office and suggested providing Commissioner Suarez with the Commissioner laptop and renting a third printer to work from home. Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Szarzynski_Approve; Suarez_Approve; Morton_Approve.

Action: Vote 5-0, All in Favor_Motion Carried

Commission Supplies

Discussion to establish procedure for ordering Commission supplies determined that Commission Secretary will submit supply list to ESM who stated that she would add it to her list of supplies.

Conn-Nahro Membership/Professional Development

Motion by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Sherbanee to update membership to Conn-Nahro for professional development opportunities. Discussion: Commission Secretary will accomplish the task. Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Suarez_Approve; Szarzynski_Approve; Morton_Approve.

Action: Vote 5-0, All in Favor_Motion Carried

Oversight Committees

Motion to Table by Commissioner Suarez, seconded by Commissioner Morton. Motion to be revisited January 2025. Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Suarez_Approve; Szarzynski_Approve; Morton_Approve;.

Action: Vote 5-0, All in Favor_Motion Tabled for January 2025

10. REMARKS FROM TENANTS | *Three-minute limit regarding agenda items*

- a. Tenant from FV remarked that the pipes leading from the utility room heater to the inside of the units were replaced by the previous Housing Administrator and did not know why it was being done again. She further remarked concerns that her income from Social Security would not be able to cover the \$25 per year base rent increase for existing Tenants. Several interrupting remarks to the Tenant by Commissioners and ESM received several calls on Point of Order by Chair.
- b. Tenant from IV, stated concern for the financial effect of a base rent increase on units with two people living in one apartment. Remarks to the Tenant by a Commissioner ignored calls for Point of Order by Chair.
- c. Tenant from IV stated that she did not appreciate finding out for the first time at the meeting about lead being in the drinking water at IV for 20 years, when she had been told for years that the water is the finest in the world. She stated her disapproval that there is no Public Notice alerting Tenants to the presence of lead in the water at IV. She stated the need for Tenants to know that they are paying for clean water. She stated her disapproval of being timed-out from speaking by Commissioners who were interrupting her. Chair Doherty-Peck reclaimed the Tenant's three-minute time limit after several calls for Point of Order regarding interruptions by Commissioners and ESM throughout the Tenant's attempt to speak.

- d. Tenant residing at IV stated that she would like to know who drinks the water at IV and who doesn't. She stated that she always gets hemming and hawing when she asks. She stated that she has been drinking the water ever since she's lived at IV and thinks it is the best water around and is as safe as you can tell.
- e. Tenant from IV stated that it would facilitate Tenant Remarks if Tenants could comment during the point when issues arise on the Agenda. She stated that it is difficult to take so many notes and remember so many ideas or concerns, and then speak on each Item toward the end of the meeting. She suggested using an apparatus such as ground penetrating radar to gain a more detailed picture of the pipes' conditions. She questioned the quality and substance of material used to make the pipes, whether they were metal or earthen type. She stated a possibility that the type of interior solder may be causation for the seasonal variance in lead measurements in the water.

11. REMARKS FROM PUBLIC | *Three-minute limit regarding agenda items*

None

12. REMARKS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Morton stated that it is the duty of the Commission to keep Tenants safe; and that only tenants, Commissioners, EHM, and workers should have key fobs for entering the community meeting room.

Commissioner Sherbanee wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Chair Doherty-Peck announced holiday baskets were to be delivered Saturday and hot dinners delivered on Wednesday. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

13. ADJOURN

Motion made to adjourn the meeting by Commissioner Sherbanee, seconded by Commissioner Szarzynski. Voice Vote: Doherty-Peck_Approve; Sherbanee_Approve; Suarez_Approve; Szarzynski_Approve; Morton_Approve;.

Action: Vote 5-0, All in Favor_Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Suarez Secretary of MHA Commission
Cc: Commission File