

**MONTVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 21, 2025 | 5:00 p.m.**  
**Freedom Village Community Center**  
**81 Liberty Road, CT 06370**

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**MINUTES**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Chair Doherty-Peck at 5:01 p.m., followed by The Pledge of Allegiance

**2. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioners Doherty-Peck, Sherbanee, Suarez, Szarzynski (late), and Morton (late)

**Absent:** None

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

None.

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

None.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion** for approval of December 2024 Minutes by Commissioner Sherbanee, seconded by Commissioner Suarez. Vote: Doherty-Peck\_Approve; Sherbanee\_Approve; Suarez\_Approve; Szarzynski\_(absent); Morton (absent)

**Action:** Vote 3-0\_Motion Carried

**6. APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS**

**Motion** for approval of November 2024 and December 2024 bills by Vice Chair Sherbanee, seconded by Commissioner Suarez. Vote: Doherty-Peck\_Approve; Sherbanee\_Approve; Suarez\_Approve; Szarzynski (absent); Morton (absent)

**Action:** Vote 3-0\_Motion Carried

**7. CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS**

**a. Correspondence for Information**

Recent changes in Department of Public Health policies require the posting of Public Notice within 24 hours. The Commission was in receipt of documents for public notice on January 16 and met with compliance January 17. Each resident at Freedom Village (FV) received hand-delivered copies, the same of which were posted to the community bulletin board at FV and published via municipal media.

**b. Correspondence for Action**

**Correspondence:** Tenant written complaint alleging no reimbursement for rent overpayment from May to September, no return calls, and failure to notify of meeting cancellation by property manager. **Action:** MHA check for reimbursement was signed by Commission at the meeting.

**Correspondence:** Tenant written complaint alleging property manager's refusal to take an injury report and defamation of character to law enforcement officials. **Action:** Complaint is a matter of liability and, accordingly, presented to Management for execution of appropriate action toward informal resolution.

Correspondence: Tenant written complaint of late bank depositing of their check for November's rent payment, two undeposited checks for October's rent payment, one undeposited check for December's rent payment, one undeposited check for January's rent payment, no-show/no-call response to a scheduled appointment; and request for reimbursement for damage to personal property incurred during a flooding incident caused by corroded pipes in their housing unit, resulting in overflow into two other units in the quadruplex. Action: Complaint is a matter of operations and, accordingly, presented to Management for execution of appropriate actions toward informal resolution.

## 8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

### a. Cash Flow

Cash Balance \$173,778.14 – *Received and published*

Citizens Bank (operating account) December 2024 Bank Statement – *Received and published*

December 2024 Income Statement – *Received and published*

PILOT status – *Received and published*

Recovery of \$5K deductible from liable party is approved – *Received and published*

### b. Physical Status

Architectural Redesign Project (Capital Needs) – *Received and published*

Occupancy – Waiting List 75 applicants; one vacancy U43 – *Received and published*

### c. Regulatory

Safe drinking water status – *Received and published*

Housing Inspections – *Commentary received and published*

Grievance Procedure – *Commentary received and published*

Policy & Procedure Review – *Commentary received and published*

Nuisance Violations (high police visits to Independence Village) – *Commentary received and published*

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

#### Housing Inspection – Item 8c

Housekeeping Inspections were postponed by agreement between the Commission and Management due to a “48-hour” notice on Friday afternoon December 13, 2024, for inspections to occur Monday, December 16; effecting less than 24 business hours of official notice to tenants and a lack of consideration for tenants’ Christmas holiday/vacation plans. Review of MHA Inspection policy and procedure by the Commission is Tabled for discussion in February.

#### Occupancy Item 8b

Commissioner Morton (not recognized by Chair) opened discussion on whether tenants would be temporarily rehoused once remodeling began; and was reminded that she had raised that question to the contractor at November’s meeting at which time Mr. Lewis rendered a reply.

#### High Policy Activity Independence Village Item 8c

Commissioner Sherbanee inquired about the “high police presence” at Independence Village. The Commission agreed with Housing Director Seguro’s proposed remedy to provide a police blotter report when management reports to the Commission involve police activity on MHA property.

#### Grievance Policy/Policy & Procedure Commentary – Item 8c

Commissioner Suarez’ response to Management’s commentary was that it is the Commission’s responsibility for the governance/policymaking aspect in the relationship between Management and the Commission. The GP, according to procedure, is subject to review and input by Tenants and Management. It is then reviewed by the Commission and sent to MHA legal counsel prior to approval. It is tabled for the Commission’s approval during February’s Commission meeting.

#### Procedural Errors: a) Deviation from Agenda and b) Personal Attack

**Action:** The Chair’s call for any additional reports or discussions pertaining to Items 8a-c was

responded to by Commissioner Morton's failure to follow the established agenda without a motion to deviate or suspend the rules. Commissioner Morton addressed Item 7b, responding to an informal complaint, being a matter for operations/management; broached the subject of the MHA missing banking card, a topic slated on the Agenda as Item 12 Executive Session; directed a personal attack against an official present as a member of the public; then addressed an Item not on the Agenda regarding an outstanding Commission's supply order list from October. Seven Points of Order were called by Commissioner Suarez before Commissioner Morton would cease speaking; respect parliamentary rules, procedure, and decorum; and allow a ruling by the Chair.

**Points of Order:** Seven Points of Order were called by Commissioner Suarez (six calls for a single violation of Deviation from Agenda and one call for Personal Attack directed at an official and member of the public).

**Ruling:** Well taken\_Sustained

Procedural Error: Breach of decorum and civility

**Action:** The Chair was informing that four complaints were brought to her attention regarding tenants with banking issues. Ms. Goode, property manager, interrupted to denounce the information as false. As the Chair continued speaking, Ms. Goode menaced that the Chair would "have to prove it". The Chair admonished Ms. Goode's behavior and resumed speaking. However, Ms. Goode continued interrupting, arguing, and challenging the Chair despite a Point of Order called by Commissioner Suarez. After her supervisor spoke with her, Ms. Goode continued to mutter in the background within audible distance of tenants.

**Point of Order:** Breach of decorum and civility, personal attack, speaker not recognized by Chair.

**Ruling:** Well taken\_Sustained

## 9. STANDARD ORDER OF BUSINESS

### a. Unfinished Business

Rent Stratification

Commissioner Morton gave a definition of rent stratification; and announced that she had invited Ms. Fisher, portfolio manager at CHFA, to the meeting and had anticipated her to be present.

**Motion** to Table by Commissioner Suarez, 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

Oversight Committees

Tabled until next session for Chair to assign respective duties.

Office space and supplies for Commission duties Tabled for exact cost, including office space available for it.

Increase property manager's hours to 40

**Point of Order called by Chair:** Deviation from Agenda and Breach of Decorum/Civility

**Action:** Commissioner Morton requested to return to a previous Item after Chair called for discussion regarding the matter of increasing property manager's hours, then engaged in cross-talk with property manager.

Commissioner Suarez stated that Ms. Goode is an employee of Management's private agency EHM and, accordingly, is subject to hire, pay, supervision, and discharge solely by the authority vested in EHM under the Terms of Agreement Item 13. Chair Doherty-Peck will share minutes of her meeting with CEO McDermott at which time the CEO was unaware of the fact that extra hours were being posed for their property manager, and a resident coordinator and part-time maintenance officer were being proposed. It was made very clear that MHA cannot afford the proposals by Commissioner Morton and Ms. Goode.

## **b. New Business**

Website and professional email addresses: Commissioner Suarez is appointed to obtain three bids for a professional web designer from which to acquire a professional presentation to the public, including a dot-org domain for the site and Commissioner email addresses; for vote at February's meeting. Also, update MHA data on the municipal website page.

Consequences for breach of the Rules of Decorum and Civility proposed by Commissioner Suarez is agreed by all members that the Chair has authority to mete out consequences to any Commissioner, member of Management or their staff, or the public for sustained disruptive conduct.

Plant Policy Revision: Commissioner Sherbanee is appointed to examine and update the MHA Plant Policy, a major contention among Tenants at Independence and Freedom villages.

Conn-Nahro: Commissioner Morton stated that credentials should be made available to everyone (including nonmembers of the Commission) for training and to ensure that members are in compliance with training requirements. Chair Doherty-Peck presented her credentials as inquired by Commissioner Morton at a prior public meeting. Commissioner Suarez stated that it is not the responsibility of the Commission to train Management's staff who should onboard with the skillset and knowledge base from which to do the job. Housing Director Seguro advised that the Management team has their own separate Conn-Nahro membership. .

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

Points of Order were called by Chair for two Personal Attacks by Tenant toward one Commissioner and one property manager.

Tenant remarked that at the previous meeting a Commissioner advised Tenants that during the summer months levels of lead go down; and during winter months, levels of lead are higher; but their research revealed that lead doesn't go away. The same Tenant remarked her dissatisfaction that her complaint to Management is unresolved.

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

None

## **12. REMARKS FROM COMMISSIONER**

Commissioner Morton remarked that tenant complaints should be shared via email communication to all Commissioners; outside entities should not give directives to the Commission, nor to Management because this is a housing authority where commissioners should be in direct contact with each other and on the same page there should not be any outside person getting involved in any operations and commissioners being involved in daily operations. She remarked that it would probably lessen some of the confusion the extra questioning during meetings so all are on the same page.

Commissioner Suarez remarked that evaluations of MHA maintenance officers is near completion and she will keep the Commission apprised for their review on or before the next session.

Commissioner Doherty-Peck remarked that she would send out email correspondences to all Commissioners stemming from two weeks prior to the holidays. She requests a courtesy receipt response as there are often times that there is no acknowledgment of receipt.

Commissioner Morton proposed adding Management remarks to the Commission Agenda. Housing Director Seguro explained to Commissioner Morton that Management reports are written and submitted. Commissioner Morton remarked that she didn't know where to ask Management questions.

Commissioner Szarzynski extended an unrequited invitation to Ms. Goode (declined by supervising Housing Director Seguro) to speak during Agenda Item 12 Commissioner Remarks.

**13. ADJOURN**

**Motion** made to adjourn the meeting by Commissioner Sherbanee, seconded by Commissioner Suarez.

Vote: Doherty-Peck\_Approve; Sherbanee\_Approve; Suarez\_Approve; Szarzynski\_Approve;  
Morton\_Approve.

**Action:** Vote 5-0, All in Favor\_Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted by Deb Suarez, Secretary of MHA Commission  
Attachment: Housing Inspection Flyer  
Cc: Commission File