Town of Montville
MONTVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
Freedom Village – 81 Liberty Road, Oakdale, CT 06370
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2026

1. Call to Order.
   Commissioner Doherty-Peck called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.
   All stood and pledged the flag.

3. Roll Call.
   Present were Chairperson Kathie Doherty-Peck, Vice-Chair/Tenant Commissioner Deborah Suarez, Treasurer John Szarzynski and Commissioner Angela Sherbanee. Secretary Karen Perkins was absent from the meeting. A quorum was present.

   Also in attendance were DeMarco Management Corporation President Maria DeMarco and Housing Manager Lisa Axson.

4. Remarks from the Public/Tenants (3-minute limit). -- None

5. Communications. -- None

6. To Consider and Act on a Motion to approve minutes:
   a. The Regular Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2025.

   Motion to Amend: by Commissioner Suarez; seconded by Commissioner Szarzynski for discussion of Regular Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2025. Discussion: Commissioner Suarez moved to strike Discussion with Attorney--Item 6, a, b, c, d, e, f and h as they were not discussed or spoken by Attorney Wrona. Further, that the Attorney stated that Management should run the meeting and having no concern regarding the Commissioner remarks. Commissioner Suarez also outlined that it is the duty of the Chair to preside over the order of the meeting, according to Attorney Wrona. The question was asked and confirmed that the current Recording Secretary for the Commission was not present at the December 9, 2025 meeting and that the notes for the meeting were taken by Commission Secretary Perkins. A proposal was made to table the Motion to Amend by Commissioner Sherbanee, but it was acknowledged by Commissioner Suarez that the minutes have been table for the last seven (7) months. **Motion to Table** the Regular Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2025 by Commissioner Sherbanee; seconded by Commissioner Doherty-Peck. Discussion: Motion is tabled for verification from Attorney Wrona on his comments and whether there is a recording of the meeting. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor*, Commissioners Doherty-Peck, Sherbanee, Suarez, Szarzynski. *In Opposition*, none. *Abstained:* none. **(4-0-0)**. **Motion approved.**

   b. The Regular Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2026.

Motion by Commissioner Sherbanee; seconded by Commissioner Szarzynski to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2026. Discussion: Commissioner Suarez moved to amend Item 7.b and abstained from the vote for possible meeting violations concerning the Special Meeting of May 5, 2026. **Motion to Table** by Commissioner Doherty-Peck; seconded by Commissioner Szarzynski to determine if there is recording of said meeting for verification of content. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor*, Commissioners Doherty-Peck, Sherbanee, Szarzynski. *In Opposition*, none. *Abstained*, Commissioner Suaez. **3-0-1. Motion approved.**

7. Management Report.
DeMarco Management Housing Manager Lisa Axson read the Management Report into the record as follows:
   - **Annual Recertifications**: In process at--Independence Village and Freedom Village
   - **Annual Inspections**: Complete at Independence Village and Freedom Village
   - **Work Orders**: New maintenance requests—10; Completed—10
   - **Showed Apartments to Potential Tenants**: 0
   - **Waiting List**: Active—18; New—3; Requested Applications—4
   - **Occupancy**: Freedom Village vacancies—3; Independence Village vacancies—4; Target Ready Date: offline for relocation

   Administrative:
   1. Total Income as of June 30, 2026--$36, 463.00
      Tenant Aged Receivables: Total AR--$42,581.16—1-30 days:---$4,489.00;--31-60 days: $4,406.00—61-90 days: $5,232.00—Over 90 days: $42,581.00
   2. Accounting: Financial Period June 1, 2026 – Jue 30, 2026
      - Operating Balance (Charter Oak)--$177,293.33
      - Savings (Charter Oak)--$0.01
      - SSHIP (Charter Oak)--$0.00
   3. Financials
      Routine Monthly Financial Reporting is forthcoming from our Accounting Department.

Correspondence:
Units 23, 33, and 34 have been thoroughly cleaned, and cleared out. Unit 28 is still awaiting a deep cleaning due to the smoking that occurred in the unit.

Waiting List Proposal:
In consideration of the upcoming renovation project and the anticipated need for available units to accommodate resident relocations, management is proposing the temporary closure of the waiting list until further notice. This measure will help ensure that adequate housing resources remain available throughout the duration of the renovation project.

Recertifications:
Management continues to work on resident recertifications. To ensure timely completion, management has set a cutoff date. Residents who have not submitted their required

recertification documentation will have their rent adjusted to the full contract amount until compliance is achieved.

Resident Concerns:
Residents have expressed concerns regarding the renovation project, particularly the temporary relocation process. Questions have focused on the relocation of timeline, accommodations during the construction, the moving process, and what to expect before, during and after renovations.

Grievances Received: No written grievances received

Requests: No requests

Maintenance:
- Safety and cleaning protocols remain daily
- Regular maintenance care for property continues

Activities: None

President DeMarco of DeMarco Management Corporation reported on the status of the renovation project. She and Commissioner Szarzynski continue to attend weekly meetings and are trying to get to a closing on the grant so money can flow. Relocation paperwork was submitted to the State for approval and upon approval notices will be sent to the residents of Independence by weeks end. The hope is to have a meeting setup with the residents on August 10, 2026 from to 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. The meeting will be with the Developer, the Architect, and with the Board present to respond to residents' questions concerning the renovation plans, process and relocation. Paperwork for CHFA needs to be signed which the Board has already authorized and will be taken this week to the CHFA headquarters. President DeMarco reported on another project that she has that will be delayed until next year due to the upcoming holiday season, Thanksgiving to New Years, so as not to impact residents. Those residents would have to stay in a hotel for eight (8) weeks. M. DeMarco shared this with the Board for information purposes noting that residents here would be moved to other units or they can chose to stay with relatives. Additionally, their household items would have to be stored and asking the residents how they feel about the process should be a consideration.

Discussion was had by M. DeMarco and the Board about the possibility of moving Independence residents to Freedom during renovation but a certain number of units at Freedom must be available. Additionally, the residents moved to Freedom may not be in the same building. M. DeMarco noted there is no notice to vacate and although the risk can be taken what is lost from rent would pay for 2-3 days in a hotel. This option will be discussed by M. DeMarco and L. Axson as well as handicap parking at a hotel.

a. Approval of bills.

Commission Szarzynski asked about Check #1059 written on June 10, 2026 in the amount of $431.08 was for. **Motion** by Commissioner Szarzynski; seconded by Commissioner Suarez to approve bills for June 2026. Discussion: none. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor*, Commissioners Doherty-Peck, Sherbanee, Suarez, Szarzynski. *In Opposition*, none. **(4-0-0)**. **Motion approved.**

8. Chairperson's Report.
Commissioner Doherty-Peck remarked that her report is not completed and will be moved to next month's meeting.

9. Vice-Chair/Tenant Commissioner Report.
Vice-Chair/Tenant Commissioner Suarez reported into the record the **Vice-Chair Annual Report, Regular Meeting July 21, 2026** as follows:

The Authority recesses during the month of August and reconvenes regular meetings on September 15. This report provides an opportunity to review the Commission's performance over the past governance cycle, evaluate progress toward regulatory compliance and operational effectiveness, and establish priorities for the upcoming year.

The report focuses on the Commission's responsibilities in the areas of regulatory compliance, fiduciary oversight, and property maintenance. Its purpose is not to assign blame, but to objectively identify some of the areas requiring continued attention and improvement.

Regulatory Compliance Challenge: Resolve outstanding regulatory reporting requirements
Status : As of this report, the Authority has not received updates regarding the status of outstanding Annual Financial Statements (AFS). Likewise, no status reports have been provided concerning submission of the Tenant Profile Submission and Waiting List Survey (TPS/WLS) for each MHA property, which was due on October 31, 2025, and will again be due within the next three months.

Challenge: Achieve compliance with DWS/DPH regulations and the MHA Lease Agreement regarding safe drinking water
Status: Bottled drinking water continues to be provided by management for residents at the Freedom Village (FV) complex. Procurement of a new water treatment provider remains unresolved. According to the June 24 HDT Report, the CHFA SSHP Asset Manager recommended that the long-term solution should be connecting Freedom Village to the Southeastern Water Authority system.

Challenge: Clarify lease provisions governing tenant recertification
Status: Under the SSHP Rent Calculation Guidelines, tenants receiving state rental assistance are recertified annually, while other elderly tenants are recertified at least every two years. Although the current lease agreement establishes biennial recertification consistent with longstanding practice, another section of the same document—revised by a former Housing Administrator without formal Commission review—contains conflicting language. Clarification is needed to ensure consistency.

Challenge: Ensure compliance with annual fire inspection requirements

Status: MHA is currently not in compliance with Connecticut General Statutes §29-305, which requires annual fire and life-safety inspections of multifamily residential buildings containing three or more dwelling units. Implementation of the Fire Marshal Scheduling and Update (FMS&U) policy could have prevented this deficiency.

Challenge: Ensure compliance with Authority bylaws and Commission actions
Status: Several approved Commission actions remain outstanding. These include implementation of the October 18, 2025 action authorizing the Treasurer to establish a Charter Oak Bank account with signature authority for both the CEO and Comptroller of DeMarco Management. At the time of approval, DeMarco Management had been engaged on a temporary month-to-month basis to stabilize operations and restore regulatory compliance.

In addition, the Commission's action approving the posting of the original November 2025 meeting minutes with the Town Clerk has not been implemented.

The Commission's May 19, 2026 action granting sole signatory authority to management also appears to require a formal amendment to Article IV of the MHA Bylaws. Article IV, Section B provides that only Commissioners are authorized to sign checks unless the Authority designates otherwise by resolution. While the Commission voted on the matter, there is a distinction between a vote approving an action and the formal adoption of a written resolution documenting that action.

Challenge: Adhere to bylaws governing Special Meetings
Status : Article V, Section 3 provides that Special Meetings are intended for urgent, time-sensitive business requiring action before the next regular meeting. During this reporting cycle, five Special Meetings were held, several of which appeared inconsistent with that purpose.
Examples include:

- September: A Special Meeting was held one day before the regularly scheduled meeting to introduce DeMarco Management, provide updates on the solar panel project, and discuss the radon mitigation project.
- October: A Special Meeting was held seven days before the scheduled regular meeting to appoint a Tenant Liaison. The subsequent regular meeting was canceled. Another Special Meeting was then held the following week and included a scheduled Executive Session that ultimately did not occur.
- February: A Special Meeting was held one week before the regular meeting to review the FY2026 budget.
- May: Following cancellation of the April regular meeting, a Special Meeting was held on May 5 to approve the FY2026 budget, approximately two weeks before the regular May meeting.
- June: The regular meeting was canceled.

A review of Special Meeting practices may help ensure closer alignment with the Authority's bylaws.

Challenge: Improve attendance and fulfillment of Commission responsibilities
Status: There is a challenge with chronic absenteeism which adversely impacts duties. Commissioner attendance continues to affect the Authority's ability to conduct business. Of the eleven regularly scheduled meetings during this reporting period, ten were available for attendance analysis. Three meetings were canceled due to lack of quorum, representing approximately 27% of scheduled meetings. Those cancellations occurred on October 14, 2025, April 21, 2026, and June 16, 2026.

Attendance ranged from perfect attendance by two Commissioners to significantly higher absenteeism by one Commissioner. Continued attention to attendance expectations is necessary to maintain consistent governance.

Challenge: Improve governance practices, parliamentary procedure, and recordkeeping
Status: During this reporting cycle, approval of meeting minutes was delayed for as long as seven months. Likewise, five months of accounts payable were tabled and approved in a single meeting.

Additional concerns included frequent cross-talk during meetings, unresolved Points of Order, and occasions in which personal exchanges disrupted proceedings. Questions were also raised regarding agenda preparation and draft meeting minutes, including whether those records consistently reflected Commission actions in an objective and impartial manner. Continued adherence to parliamentary procedure and clearly defined administrative responsibilities would strengthen governance.

Challenge: Promote equal opportunity in appointments
Status: Following the expiration of Commissioner Morton's term, the resulting vacancy was not publicly announced, limiting awareness of the opportunity among qualified applicants.

The Commission should also remain mindful of avoiding both actual and perceived conflicts of interest. Familial relationships among appointed officials may create perceptions of unequal treatment, selective enforcement of policies, or inequitable assignment of leadership responsibilities. Maintaining transparent appointment practices and consistent application of bylaws helps preserve public confidence in the Commission's governance.

Challenge: Ensure formal authorization of major contracts
Status: Following the departure of Elderly Housing Management, Attorney Wrona recommended DeMarco Management to the Chair. The initial September 2025 arrangement was described as a temporary month-to-month engagement intended to stabilize operations, secure property management support, and restore regulatory compliance.

On December 3, 2025, a longer-term contract was executed without the knowledge of four Commissioners. Future major contractual commitments should receive formal Commission approval and be authorized through an adopted resolution.

Fiduciary Oversight
Challenge: Improve vacant unit turnaround times
Status:
HUD generally identifies 15 to 20 days as an appropriate benchmark for average unit turnaround. Extended vacancies reduce housing availability for elderly applicants while resulting in substantial revenue loss.

For example, four vacant units with a base monthly rent of $425 represent approximately $1,700 in lost monthly revenue, or $20,400 annually. Two additional vacant units at another property represent an additional $850 monthly loss, or $10,200 annually. Combined, these vacancies represent an estimated annual revenue loss of approximately $30,600.

Establishing measurable turnaround goals would improve occupancy and strengthen financial performance.

Challenge: Strengthen oversight of expenditures
Status: Continued attention should be given to cost reduction, cost optimization, and fiscal accountability. Requests for supporting invoices and documentation relating to unusually high expenditures—including legal services, answering services, and snow removal—remain outstanding.

Operations, Maintenance, and Property
Challenge: Protect and maintain Authority property
Status: Snow removal damage to parking areas and ongoing mechanical failures affecting accessibility doors at the Freedom Village complex remain unresolved.

Challenge: Obtain specialized maintenance services
Status: Management addressed recurring concerns involving pests, snakes, mice, ants, HVAC systems, plumbing, and appliance failures. Continued use of qualified professional contractors, when appropriate, will help prevent deterioration into more significant financial or health and safety issues.

Challenge: Fill the maintenance technician vacancy
Status: Interest in the position has been expressed; however, there is no evidence that the vacancy has been publicly advertised. A public recruitment process would expand the applicant pool and promote transparency.

Challenge: Improve operational efficiency
Status: During portions of the reporting cycle, management experienced operational delays while awaiting access to essential administrative resources, including check processing capability, confirmation of standard rental rates, and full access to PHA-Web,

the Authority's property management software. Timely access to these resources is essential for efficient daily operations.

Challenge: Maintain professional conduct during Commission proceedings
Status: Instances of unprofessional conduct during meetings—including nonverbal expressions observed by members of the public—were not consistently addressed through parliamentary procedures or Executive Session when appropriate. Executive Sessions provide Commissioners with an appropriate forum to discuss sensitive personnel or governance matters while preserving confidentiality and independent oversight. Professional conduct, mutual respect, and adherence to parliamentary procedure remain essential to effective governance.

Challenge: Recognize the responsibilities of appointed office
Status: Commissioners serve voluntarily; however, once appointed and sworn into office, they assume the legal and fiduciary responsibilities of public officials. The role carries obligations of attendance, preparation, ethical conduct, and faithful execution of the Authority's mission. Continued commitment to those responsibilities is essential to effective governance and public trust.

During the reading of her report, Commissioner Suarez called a Point of Order regarding a member of the public engaging in discussion during the Annual Vice-Chair Report.

10. Treasurer's Report.
Commissioner Szarzynski remarked on questions concerning the STIPP account. He reported that the account has a balance of $102,801.47 but the financial report submitted by DeMarco Management Company indicates a balance of $81,000 and a dividend gain of $313.50. Commissioner Szarzynski asked for resolution on the same. He also noted that Freedom funding will be different as it will be EOH funded questioned whether a meeting was held on July 14th. M. DeMarco had no knowledge of it.

11. Old Business.
    a. To Consider and Act on a Motion to review and revise the MHA Regulations and Bylaws.

Motion by Commissioner Doherty-Peck; seconded by Commissioner Sherbanee to table discussion of the motion. Discussion: Chairperson Doherty-Peck remarked that a meeting can be had for discussion once everything is inline as there are so many changes needed that it would be time consuming at a regular meeting. Commissioner Szarzunski noted that the Chairperson can assign a meeting and a meeting can held at the convenience of the Commission; a special meeting does not need to had for everything. He also suggested having a Committee of the Board. Brainstorming in executive session without the presence of the public was proposed by the Chairperson. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor*, Commissioners Doherty-Peck, Sherbanee, Suarez, Szarzynski. *In Opposition*, none. **(4-0-0)**. **Motion approved.**

    b. To Consider and Act on a Motion to discuss and approve further cuts as needed to the existing Authority fiscal year budget.

Motion by Commissioner Doherty-Peck; seconded by Commissioner Szarzynski to table the motion for further budget cuts as discussed at the special meeting with Penny Fisher in May. Discussion: DeMarco Management President M. DeMarco reported the special meeting was held and CHFA recommended a number of changes. Those changes were made were made and submitted to CHFA. CHFA has received the changes proposed for the budget and that budget is approved and/or is being approved. All changes that were recommended were addressed i.e., cost for water at Freedom was eliminated as water was donated; advertising and background checks were reduced as we are not currently renting. Talked was also had about increasing the rent revenue through stratified rents that was not done. No action was taken on this agenda item.

12. New Business. – None

13. Remarks from the Public/Tenants (3-minute limit).
A resident remarked on an issue concerning rent recertifications. It was noted that all residents received the rent recertification notification at the same; all residents received the packets at the same time and information about the deadline at the same time. So the question was why all the residents were no paying rent at the same that was deemed unfair. Housing manager Laxson remarked that when the information is reviewed determines the timetable and that no one has an advantage in the process. The resident further commented that the 45-day notice is not fair nor is talking about the deadline timeline fair. The resident also reported having administered three (3) complaints with no results. She pays $30,000 in rent and the resident cannot get $100 blinds. In addition, the hot water tank has not been flushed and sink issue is not resolved.

14. Remarks from Commissioners.
    - Vice-Chair Commissioner Suarez remarked that there was no excuse for staggering rent recertification and that some tenants have resided there longer, but the process is not meant to be discriminatory. She also extended a belated Happy Father's Day to all of the MHA fathers and grandfathers, with well-wishes that all enjoyed celebrations with family and friends on Juneteenth National Freedom Day and the 250th Anniversary celebration of our nation on the Fourth of July. The Commissioner also announced that the annual tenant get-together is in the works with food, drinks, and entertainment; and she will follow up on the donated picnic tables and grills from Mohegan Tribal Council.
    - Commissioner Doherty-Peck reported that the bill are coming and the liaison position is to bridge the gap regarding the tenants.

16. Adjournment.
Motion by Commissioner Sherbanee; seconded by Commissioner Szarnzyski to adjourn the meeting at 5:26 p.m. **Roll Call vote:** *In favor*, Commissioners Doherty-Peck, Sherbanee, Suarez, Szarzynski. *In Opposition*, none. **(4-0-0)**. **Motion approved.**

Respectfully submitted by,

Gloria J. Gathers/Recording Secretary/Montville Housing Authority