

**Newark Housing Authority  
Board of Commissioners  
May 13, 2020**

**Summary of Meeting (Virtual Zoom) Minutes**

**Opening:**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at approximately 5:20 PM by the Board Vice-Chairperson, Marguerite Ashely. The Call to Order was delayed due to technical difficulties experienced by the Executive Director.

**I. Roll Call:**

Board of Commissioners present: Marguerite Ashley, Donna Shand, Paul Tillman, Nikki Lane, Emile Brown and Dr. Lewis. Marene Jordan (Executive Director) and Donald Gouge Jr. (NHA's attorney) were also present.

Absent: Lloyd Harris

**II. Visitors: CSG Advisors Tanya Dempsey, William Dreisbach and Madeleine Singer – PowerPoint Presentation of Best and Final Offer (BAFO) and Recommendation of Co-Developer Partner:**

William Dreisbach was the primary presenter from CSG Advisors. The Power Point Presentation was a final conclusion of the Developer Proposal Evaluations and Financial Feasibility. Key points were discussed which allowed for questions and answers:

**Leon N. Weiner & Associates, Inc.**

- LNWA proposal included 64 total units as well as 3,330 sq. ft. of retail space and 1,100 sq. ft. of office space. LNWA limited their unit count due to an increase in parking spaces required by the request for 4 bedroom units.
- LNWA proposal offered a higher return to NHA, DE specific experience and a fully thought through proposal. However, most of their sources are from competitive funding.
- LNWA Total Sources & Uses for the project - \$19,913,516.
- LNWA initial proposal offered two phases and would apply for two rounds of LIHTC. In the BAFO assessment, LNWA agreed not to submit multiple 9% LIHTC applications in DE during the years in which an application for George Reed village is also being considered.
- LNWA proposed a lower hard cost per unit (\$210,103) over two phases of construction.

**The Michael's Organization**

- Michael's proposal included 80 units (exclusive of 4 bedroom units) as well as retail and office space but details were unspecified in the BAFO.
- Michael's has an extensive nationwide portfolio.
- Eighty (80) units were offered for the George Reed village redevelopment of which 73 are affordable.

- There is a potential funding gap due to eligible basis limits.
- Michael's proposal notes their management company will manage development.
- Michael's Total Sources & Uses for the project is \$26,043,159 - Funding Gap for \$1,822,508
- Michael's proposal did not answer concerns regarding their financial statements as noted during the initial interview as well as BAFO.
- Michael's is open to two phases for the project.
- Michael's proposal offered \$223,323 in cost per unit over two phases of construction.

In conclusion of the Power Point Presentation, CSG Advisors used a BAFO Scoring Assessment using a range of 1 to 5. CSG scored LNWA at 3.6 vs. Michael's at 2.3.

There was no vote recorded. The Commissioners requested the following additional feedback:

1. A reference for LNWA's group that provides details on evidence of supportive training for efficient property mgt.; specifically tax credit preparedness.
2. The name of the Management Company for Michael's and the performance rating of their management with Camden Housing Authority.

### **III. Approval of Minutes:**

#### **(a). Meeting Minutes from March 11, 2020**

The Vice-Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the March 11, 2020 meeting. Before the minutes were approved, there were a few typos and corrections noted. With the noted corrections, Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Shand.

Aye 5 (Ms. Shand, Mrs. Lane, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)  
Nay 0  
Motion passed, Vote: 5 to 0

### **IV. Report of the Executive Director:**

#### **(a). Staff Reports from March and April 2020**

The Vice-Chairperson noted the Executive Director is still having technical difficulties. Although on the call, the Commissioners were not able to hear or see her. The Vice-Chairperson acknowledged that Mrs. Jordan provided the staff reports over a week ago and suggested that the board make a motion to approve and adopt them as presented.

#### **March Staff Report:**

PHA's in Delaware participated in a conference call held on March 3, 2020 to discuss the "Statewide" Pilot Family Re-entry Program. Due to COVID-19, the implementation of the program is delayed. However, Wilmington Housing Authority's participation in a public comment period is open. Their hearing was scheduled for April 20th. NHA's plans for a public hearing are on hold. NHA and New Castle County plan

to host a joint landlord outreach workshop sometime in May to provide landlords with information about the program.

The Statewide Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice status is pending. NHA is awaiting further guidance/instructions on how and when the process will continue.

The Rental Workgroup's next meeting was cancelled as a result of COVID-19. NHA is awaiting further information as to the next date and time for the group to reconvene.

The Food Bank of Delaware - Mobile Pantry Drive planned for April 16, 2020 at Alder Creek was cancelled due to low registration. Although NHA was able to register 23 families for this event, there must be at least 50 pre-registered families before the Mobile Pantry truck is dispatched. Polly Sierer, the former Mayor, reached out to NHA after learning of the event being cancelled. As President of the Newark Welfare Committee and with her board's approval, Polly was able to provide each pre-registered family an ACME gift card of \$100.00. The gift cards were mailed directly to the families.

Polly Sierer also notified NHA of rental assistance payments that may be available from the Newark Area Welfare Committee (NWAC) to assist NHA's participating families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. This assistance may be available to NHA's participating families with financial hardships related to shutdowns, closures, layoffs, reduced work hours or unpaid leave due to childcare and other issues arising as a result of the health crisis. Payments will be made only with approval by NHA.

The Commissioner Workshop planned for March 25, 2020 was cancelled due to COVID-19. A new date and time is to be determined at a later date.

In the midst of COVID-19 and its uncertainty, NHA has submitted several waiver requests for HUD approval. These are necessary due to Governor Carney's Stay at Home Order as well as the Travel Restriction Order instituted due to the impact of COVID-19. The requests include waivers for inspections, remote phone interviews, interaction with participants, SEMAP submissions, PHAS submissions and Unaudited and Audited Financials. The requests were submitted on March 20th and 23rd. NHA did receive confirmation of HUD receiving these waivers with a response on March 31, 2020 stating that the waivers were being held for processing pending Congressional Guidance. Subsequent to this notification, HUD will be issuing a nationwide "Blanket Waiver Request" for all PHA's to select as waivers are applicable to each PHA specifically. Also, HUD will be making additional Disaster Relief Funds available to each PHA that can be used for expenses related to COVID-19.

As a result of COVID-19, NHA's daily operations have changed to comply with travel restrictions and social distancing. We will need to discuss, policy and necessary By-Law changes to allow for virtual monthly meetings, public hearings, direct deposits (landlords and staff), etc.

NHA received communication from the Philadelphia HUD office that the 2020 Annual Plan is approved. The plan will go into effect on April 1, 2020.

NHA received notification from the HUD Headquarters that the Capital Fund Program allocation of \$297,310 was disbursed. NHA is waiting on HUD to allow access to the funds.

NHA received payment from Pike Creek Mortgage Services for the two families that were selected to receive financial support (for a year) for rent. A date and time to discuss media coverage with the owner of the Mortgage Company has not been determined yet.

As part of the RFQ to procure a co-developer partner, a Best and Final Offer process was implemented and completed. NHA's Agency Representative has completed their process (including feedback from the evaluation review committee) and has a recommendation for the commissioners. A power-point presentation including a recommendation will be presented at the May Meeting.

The Vice-Chairperson is an official check signer for NHA. In the event the Chair-person is not available to sign checks, these duties will be passed on to the Vice-Chairperson.

As of March 31, 2020 Meghan George, NHA's Housing Manager and Inspector, submitted her letter of resignation. Mrs. George will be relocating. NHA is currently advertising for a Housing Manager and will pursue the Inspector's position at a later date.

**April Staff Report:**

The Delaware "Statewide" Pilot Family Re-entry Program status is pending. NHA is waiting further input from New Castle County for a joint Landlord Community Out-Reach Workshop to introduce the pilot program.

The Statewide Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice status is pending. NHA is awaiting further guidance/instructions on how and when the process will continue.

The Rental Workgroup status is pending. NHA is awaiting further information as to the next date and time for the group to reconvene.

NHA is pleased to report that the Newark Area Welfare Committee provided rental payments for two of NHA's families affected by COVID-19. The referrals for payments will continue as additional families report hardships that are verified as a result of COVID-19.

NHA has submitted several operational waiver requests to HUD requesting administrative relief to allow for alternative approaches to various aspects of programs offered. NHA's waiver requests include waivers for inspections, allowance for remote phone interviews for lease-ups and re-certifications, re-issuance of SEMAP score for FYE 3/31/2020, PHAS submissions and alternative dates for submission of Unaudited and Audited Financials. A decision is pending.

Although, NHA's policies and daily operations have changed, NHA will be submitting a Board Resolution seeking board approval as alternative policies and procedures are implemented as a result of COVID-19. The Board will also need to discuss updates/changes to the By-Laws to allow for virtual monthly meetings, public hearings, voting process remotely, etc.

The CARES Act Funding will offer 2 additional months of Operating Funds and Admin Fees (supplemental funds) to PHA's as HUD recognizes that housing authorities have incurred significant operating expenses related to COVID-19. HUD has defined the time period for which the programs impacted by COVID-19 as running until December 31, 2020. However, HUD will determine at a later date if extending the December 31st date is needed.

NHA's 2020 Capital Fund allocation of \$297,310 was disbursed. These funds are available to NHA.

As part of the RFQ to procure a co-developer partner, the results of the Best and Final Offer assessed by CSG Advisors (our agency representatives) will be presented with a recommendation at the May Meeting.

The posting of and response time to the vacant position of Housing Manager was open from April 1st – May 1st. The vetting process will begin mid-May.

Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the reports. The motion was 2nd by Ms. Shand.

Aye 5 (Ms. Shand, Mrs. Lane, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)  
Nay 0  
Motion passed, Vote: 5 to 0

## **V. Committee Reports:**

### **A. Report of Policies, Procedures, Compliance & Personnel Committee – Chairperson (Mr. Brown):**

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Mr. Brown was present and acknowledged there was no report from this committee.

### **B. Report from Development Committee – Chairperson (Vacant):**

#### **(a). Committee Update: CSG Advisors' PowerPoint Presentation**

The Chairperson of the Board acknowledged the report from this committee was the Power Point Presentation. No further action is needed from this committee.

### **C. Report of Finance Committee – Chairperson (Ms. Shand):**

#### **(a) Monthly Financials:**

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Ms. Shand, was present. She noted no financial reports are available due to COVID-19.

### **D. Strategic Planning Committee – Chairperson (Ms. Shand):**

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Ms. Shand was present. There was no activity to report from this committee.

Note: Ms. Shand was experiencing technical difficulties at this point in the meeting and was no longer a participant of the meeting.

**V. Attorney Issues:**

N/A

**VI. Old Business:**

- A. From the other Commissioners: N/A
- B. From the Executive Director: MTW Designation - Tabled
- C. From Legal Counsel: N/A

**VII. New Business:**

- A. From Commissioners: N/A
- B. From the Executive Director:

The Vice-Chairperson of the board called everyone's attention to Board Resolution #404 (State of Emergency for the State of Delaware Technical Amendment to NHA's policies as a result of COVID-19) prepared by the Executive Director. She acknowledged that the resolution was a technical amendment to the Newark Housing Authority's Admin and Admission plans as a result of COVID-19. It appears that the resolution offers administrative relief in programs offered by NHA. The Vice-Chairperson asked if any board member had any questions or concerns regarding the resolution or the COVID-19 Planned Operation Changes proposed with an effective date of March 17, 2020. There were none. Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the reports. The motion was 2nd by Mrs. Lane.

Aye 4 (Mrs. Lane, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)  
Nay 0  
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

- b). By-Laws revisions - Tabled

- C. From Legal Counsel: N/A

**VIII. Visitors and/or Petition: N/A**

**X. Adjournment:**

The Vice-Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 PM. Mr. Brown made a motion for the board to adjourn. The motion was 2nd by Dr. Lewis.

Aye 4 (Mrs. Lane, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)  
Nay 0  
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:55 PM  
Minutes Submitted by: Marene M. Jordan, Executive Director

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