

# MINUTES

## **Seymour Housing Authority**

### **➤ 855nd Meeting**

The 855nd Meeting, a regular meeting of the Seymour Housing Authority, was held at the Norman Ray House located at 133 Walnut Street, Seymour, Connecticut in the Community Room on Wednesday, October 8, 2008 and was called to order by Commissioner White at 6:15 p.m.

### **➤ Roll Call**

Answering the Roll Call were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, White, and Skurat.

Also present was Secretary and Executive Director David Keyser, and Attorney Gregory Stamos.

## **Public Comment**

Chairperson White recognized Ines Davino and Audrey Andrews from the Trinity Church (Seymour/Oxford) Food Bank. Ines began the conversation by addressing recent claims that food is given out from the Seymour/Oxford Food Bank that is beyond the expiration date and that packages are given out that are opened. Ines stated that in no way shape or form, food (especially meat or poultry) would be given out with open packaging. She explained the issue with expiration dates and that the Seymour/Oxford Food Bank personnel pay close attention to dates on products. She stated that sometimes food is donated with dates beyond what is acceptable, and these products are thrown out. She stated further that they get food from Connecticut Food Bank, and some products will be past the manufactures recommended dates but are perfectly acceptable to an extent set by State Regulation. Ines stated that the Seymour/Oxford Food Bank is regulated by the State of Connecticut, and they receive regular occasional State inspections.

Ines further explained that some residents treat the Food Bank like a Stop & Shop. She further stated that participants are welcome to take enough groceries for a two week supply; however they are not permitted to return for a period of one month. She stated that some participants are "double-dipping". She commented that the volume at the Seymour/Oxford food bank is approximately 250 participants per month.

In response to several questions by the Board of Commissioners, Ines reported specific details about the program and different events and activities that occur at the Seymour Oxford Food Bank and how they are staffed with volunteers. She discussed the quality control aspect of the operation. She explained the eligibility and verification process.

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She stated that at one time St. Vincent DePaul Food Bank in Waterbury will exchange names of participants with the area Food Banks. She explained the reference to double dipping as, if a participant gets food from Seymour/Oxford, they should not be going to the Derby Shelton Food Bank or the Waterbury Food Bank.

In responding to eligibility requirements, Ines commented that there are Federal/State income level requirements, similar to what the Seymour Housing Authority would require.

Commissioner Horelick commented that she would petition the Seymour/Oxford Rotary for a donation

Connie Shaboo, Resident of 133 Walnut Street, Apt. 21 asked if there was a formal document required of participants to prove size of family and income. Ines responded that there is a form that gets filled out and the applicant must be able to prove their residential status with either driver's license or a utility bill.

At 6:40 p.m. Commissioner Zullo joined the meeting already in progress.

Ines and Audrey explained further difficulties in operating the Food Pantry as well as the various times of the year that the Food Pantry has difficulties. Ines commented that particularly now they are finding it difficult. Because of the economy, donations are way down.

Connie Shaboo commented that she would recommend to Bonnie Cheverella and the Resident Association at the Norman Ray House could make a donation to the food bank.

Further brief discussion followed regarding the Seymour/Oxford Food Bank.

### ➤ **Previous Meeting Minutes**

Chairperson White introduced the minutes from the 854th Regular Meeting, August 6, 2008. Chairperson White commented that the previous minutes of the 853<sup>rd</sup> meeting minutes reflected that meeting occurred on August 6, 2008, when it actually occurred on July 2, 2008. The Executive Director/Secretary commented that this was a "cut and paste" clerical error and it should have read July 2, 2008. Commissioner Dota motioned to accept the minutes as amended to reflect the 853<sup>rd</sup> meeting having taken place on July 2, 2008. Commissioner Horelick seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all in favor of the motion to vote aye. Voting aye were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, Skurat and White. Commissioner Zullo abstained because she was not at the meeting. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

### ➤ **Bills & Communications**

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Commissioner White introduced the bills (See Exhibit I).

After thorough consideration, review and questions relative to the bills listing, Commissioner Dota motioned to approve the bills as presented and authorize payment of the bills. Commissioner Zullo seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, Skurat, White and Zullo. Chairperson White declared the motion carried and the Bills approved for payment as presented.

The Executive Director explained, discussed and commented on pertinent communications. The Executive Director discussed the memo to the Moderate Rental Residents relative to the State Department of Agriculture Animal Population Control Program. He explained that vouchers were offered to the residents to spay/neuter pets. The Executive Director explained the various notifications to Moderate Rental and Norman Ray House residents regarding the renovations, and changes to the Lease provisions relative to mediation provisions. Discussion followed about the notice for missing silverware and the daily inventory that was necessitated as a result of continuous missing pieces. The Executive Director also commented about the notices relative to bidding for ALSA Services and Dining Room Services. The Executive Director explained the Audit Findings in the letter from Pat Buel, CPA. He also explained about battery replacement in smoke detectors. He stated that yes residents may change their own batteries and that we do supply them. He stated that however some of the new smoke detectors on Seymour Ave. are quite high on the ceiling and not reachable without a ladder, therefore, some elderly cannot reach them to change them.

## ➤ **Executive Director's Report**

See Exhibit II. The Executive Director explained, discussed and commented on pertinent points in the report.

## ➤ **Old Business**

None

## ➤ **New Business**

Chairperson White introduced the Moderate Rental Conflict Resolution, addendum and policy.

The Executive Director and Attorney Stamos recommended that a conflict resolution provision for mediation added to the legal process may resolve some occupancy issues without the need to resort to the summary process. The Executive Director explained that some situations between resident families of a less serious matter, while yet still nuisance behavior, might be resolved through mediation. The Executive Director presented a

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Moderate Rental Lease addendum addressing conflict resolution as well as a Moderate Rental Lease revision for new residents to be housed. (See Exhibit III & IV). The Executive Director explained that through conflict resolution he is hopeful that residents will reach a settlement and the mediator will draft an agreement for both parties to abide by and if this agreement is breached by either party then the Seymour Housing Authority will commence Summary Process for eviction. The Executive Director informed the Commission that he distributed this proposed policy to the residents of the Moderate Rental Program for review and comment. He stated that he received one written response, (see Exhibit IV) which he distributed to the Commission. He stated that the Castle Heights Resident Council requested a meeting relative to the proposed policy changes. He summarized their concerns by stating their concerns. They reported that not everyone got the proposed addendum in the mail, the Vice President; Terrie Chase reported having to get a copy from the neighbors. The Executive Director responded that these were sent out by U.S. Mail and since none came back, the Seymour Housing Authority is safe to assume they were delivered. The Executive Director stated that the Council requested further explanation of the policy, once he provided the goals of the Addendum and explained the process, the Council seemed to understand. In fact the Vice President wished to sign the Addendum at the meeting once the process was discussed. The Executive Director explained that the Addendum was not yet passed by the Board of Commissioners and there was no reason to sign it at this point. He stated that the Council was under the impression that we were requiring the residents to sign the addendums before the Board of Commissioners approved the Policy. He reported that he made it clear to the residents that this was distributed for their review at this time only. He added that the Resident Council recommended that they represent residents we are evicting. He commented that what the Council was recommending was a change to the Grievance Procedure to utilize the Resident Council to represent the residents. The Executive Director explained to the Commission that we are not discussing or changing the Grievance Policy with this Lease provision, we are only providing an alternative to immediate Summary Process in cases of nuisance behavior. Attorney Stamos clarified that conflict resolution would be implemented at the discretion of the Seymour Housing Authority and that serious nuisance behavior would be acted upon through Summary Process. He added further comments from the Resident Council included a distrust of the Grievance Procedure. He stated that they disliked and had reason to distrust the use of employees from other Housing Authorities. The Executive Director explained that this practice is common in other Housing Authority Grievance Policies. He stated that it is reasonable to utilize someone from another Housing Authority as the Grievance Hearing Officer because this individual should have knowledge of the rules and regulations involved in public housing. Attorney Stamos commented that there would be privacy issues involved in having the Resident Council sit in on Grievance Hearings and Conflict Resolution.

After some further brief discussion Commissioner Zullo motioned to adopt the proposed Lease Addendum and Lease revision for conflict resolution as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to implement the changes. Commissioner Dota seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Dota,

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Horelick, Skurat, and Zullo. Chairperson White abstained from voting to avoid a conflict of interest. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

Chairperson White introduced the State Elderly Conflict Resolution, addendum and policy.

The Executive Director presented a State Elderly Lease addendum addressing conflict resolution as well as a State Elderly Lease revision for new residents to be housed. (See Exhibit V & VI).

The Executive Director commented that the proposed Lease Addendum is similar to the Moderate Rental in that it addresses conflict resolution as part of the resident obligations. He stated that the Lease revision was a major change. He stated that it updates the original Ray House Lease from 1975. He commented these documents were reviewed with the residents and that we received no written comments. He stated that they were discussed at a community room meeting, and the comments relative to conflict resolution were positive. He stated there were no comments about the Lease Revision. He requested the Commission to carefully consider the terms in the Lease relative to visitation. He commented that seven (7) days visitation would be sufficient due to the fact that the majority of the apartments are one room efficiencies with barely 400 sq.ft. of living space.

After some further brief discussion, Commissioner Zullo motioned to adopt the proposed Lease Addendum and Lease revision for conflict resolution as presented and to authorize the Executive Director to implement the changes including the seven (7) days visitation. Commissioner Dota seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, Skurat, and Zullo. Chairperson White abstained from voting to avoid a conflict of interest. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

Chairperson White introduced Resolution 337 concerning Board Certification of the 2009 Annual Agency Plan. (See Exhibit VII).

The Executive Director explained the HUD form 50057 the 2009 Annual Agency Plan (See Exhibit VIII) and the policy changes involved in this years Agency Plan. He discussed the changes in the Callahan House Tenant Selection and Occupancy Policy (CHTSOP) and the Lease for the Violence Against Women Act, the Fire Safety Policy, Conflict Resolution addendum and Lease Revision and the Capital Fund – 5 year plan. (See Exhibit IX) He stated that he held the regulatory public hearing which was legally noticed and advertised 45 days prior to the hearing. He presented comments from the hearing.

After some further brief discussion Commissioner Skurat motioned to adopt Resolution 337 concerning Board Certification of the 2009 Annual Agency Plan. Commissioner

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Horelick seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked for a Roll Call Vote which was recorded as follows:

Commissioner	Vote		
	Aye	No	Abstain
Dota			X
Horelick	X		
Skurat	X		
White	X		
Zullo	X		

Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

Chairperson White introduced the Norman Ray House Housing Sustainability Funds Change Order # 2 for George Ellis Co., Inc.

The Executive Director explained the first change order in the amount of \$2,988 was to improve the HVAC equipment ordered for the Common Hallways to include air conditioning rather than just ventilation. This change order in the amount of \$7,623 was necessitated as a result of field conditions. The Executive Director explained that a previously abandoned heat sensor originally located over the stove was in the way of the new range hood vent in 19 apartments. He stated that since this abandoned junction box was still in use for the call for aid system, the boxes in these 19 units must be moved. He concluded that the change order is required to complete the work. He then explained the budget revision (see Exhibit X).

After some further brief discussion, Commissioner Zullo motioned to adopt the budget revision for the two change orders and to move \$10,611 from Hard Cost Contingency to Main Building Repairs and to authorize the change order to George Ellis & Company increasing their contract to \$491,511 and to authorize the Executive Director to execute the change order. Commissioner Skurat seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, Skurat, White and Zullo. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

Chairperson White introduced the 2009 Callahan House (CT035) Budget (See Exhibit XI.)

The Executive Director discussed the budget and various line items. After some further brief discussion and clarification, Commissioner Zullo motioned to adopt the 2009 Callahan House Budget as presented. Commissioner Skurat seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Horelick, Skurat, White and Zullo. Commissioner Dota abstained from voting to avoid a conflict of interest. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

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Chairperson White introduced the 2009 State Moderate Rental management plan. (See exhibit XII)

The Executive Director discussed the State Moderate Rental budget and the various line items. He indicated that with no rent increase the provision for Repairs Maintenance and Replacements would be approximately \$31 per unit per month or a total of \$29,859 for the year. He stated with a \$20 base rent increase the provision would improve to \$44 per unit per month of a total of \$42,986. He added that a review of the total Moderate Rental reserves for RM&R as of June 30, 2008 indicates an amount of approximately \$74,000 or under \$1,000 per unit. He stated that CHFA standard for reserves is \$1,500 per unit. The old DECD standard was \$3,500 per unit. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Horelick, Skurat, White and Zullo. Commissioner Dota abstained from voting to avoid a conflict of interest. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

After some further brief discussion, Commissioner Zullo motioned to accept the preliminary 2009 Management Plan for the Moderate Rental Program inclusive of a \$20 base rent increase and to authorize the Executive Director to begin the 90 day approval process inclusive of the 30 day public comment requirement. Commissioner Skurat seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, Skurat, and Zullo. Chairperson White abstained from voting to avoid a conflict of interest. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

Chairperson White introduced the State Elderly Management Plan for 2009. (See Exhibit XIII)

The Executive Director discussed the State Elderly Program budget and the various line items. He indicated that with no rent increase the provision for Repairs Maintenance and Replacements would be approximately \$1 per unit per month or a total of \$672 for the year. He stated with a \$20 base rent increase the provision would improve to \$14 per unit per month of a total of \$6,901. He commented that either budget does not adequately fund the Maintenance Labor line item which is stated at \$2,049.

After some further brief discussion, Commissioner Zullo motioned to accept the preliminary 2009 Management Plan for the State Elderly Program inclusive of a \$20 base rent increase and to authorize the Executive Director to begin the 90 day approval process inclusive of the 30 day public comment requirement. Commissioner Skurat seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, Skurat, White and Zullo. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

Chairperson White introduced the 2009 Smithfield Gardens Assisted Living Management Plan. (See Exhibit XIV).

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The Executive Director discussed and explained the 2009 SGAL Management Plan. He stated that this plan does not balance and if implemented results in a \$255,411 loss. He stated the reason for this is insufficient reimbursement from the State for Core Services. He stated that currently and since opening 12/2006 the reimbursement for Core Services has been based on a reimbursement rate is \$8.57 per resident per day. This rate was established in July 2007. (The rate from 12/01/06 to 06/30/07 was \$8.32 per resident per day). If Smithfield Gardens has all residents in attendance throughout a month, the core services would generate \$14,598 per month in income. However, Smithfield Gardens may not request core services reimbursements for any resident who is hospitalized; therefore the \$14,598 is a "highest and best" estimate only. At any given time, between 3 – 7 residents may not be in attendance. Due to these absences, the last six month's core services reimbursement has averaged \$12,596 per month. We are still required to provide services for the remaining residents. We cannot temporarily lay off staff or furlough staff to reduce costs to match the reduced reimbursement.

The Department of Social Services requires that Smithfield Gardens provide the following core services: regularly scheduled meal services for 3 meals per day, 24-hour staffing for security purposes, completion of residents' linen laundry and personal laundry, weekly housekeeping for residents' apartments, in-house social and recreation programs, arrangement of transportation for residents, and maintenance personnel. In addition, Smithfield Gardens is also required to provide a Resident Services Coordinator. The costs of staffing for sufficient personnel to complete the core services, of supplies to perform the core services, and of employing a part-time RSC far exceed \$12,596 per month.

The current food services vendor does not provide staffing for the dining room meal service. Smithfield Gardens' staff people serve as wait staff during all 21 weekly meals. This is a fact that has not changed since we opened the doors. To correct this shortfall, we have created four (4) Operational Assistant Positions to cover the meal service. These are \$10.00/hour positions. Our prior request that received favorable approval for the two year subsidy was predicated that our Leasing, Management, Marketing and Recreation staff were required to serve the meals. We argued that we were having trouble leasing up as a result of this misuse of these positions. Nothing has changed at Smithfield relative to meal service. In fact our need for the Operational Assistants is greater because we are at full occupancy. Prior to the creation of the Operational Assistants positions, there was only one staff available to serve the meals. This worked then, because we only had 15 to 20 meals to serve. Now, at full occupancy, one person serving would never work.

The proposed budget as presented assumes the costs and staffing to fulfill the requirements of the State to operate.

After further discussion relative to reluctance to approve an unbalanced budget, Commissioner Dota motioned to table action on this budget until such time as the Executive Director can work out the under funding issues with CHFA and the Interagency Team. Commissioner Zullo seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor of the motion to



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signify by voting aye. Voting Aye were Commissioners Dota, Horelick, Skurat, White and Zullo. Chairperson White declared the motion carried.

## ➤ **Any Other Business**

Discussion regarding the Leasing of Bank Street, and the Executive Director explained that Joe Migani has begun to clear the parking lot and pave it with gravel. He stated that occupancy had continued and we have now rented five units.

The Executive Director stated that we have begun working on the Final Closing of Smithfield Gardens Assisted Living and that Attorney Scaramozza had begun working the file.

The Executive Director reported submitting the application for Next Steps to CHFA for the Randal Field Property.

Discussion followed relative to the Resident Council and diplomacy relative to using the Seymour Housing Authority's Tax ID as well as responses to current requests.

## ➤ **Adjournment**

Chairperson White asked for a motion to adjourn the 855<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Seymour Housing Authority. At 8:50 P.M. Commissioner Skurat motioned to adjourn the 855<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Seymour Housing Authority. Commissioner Zullo seconded the motion. Chairperson White acknowledged the motion and its second and asked all those in favor by voting aye. Voting aye were Commissioners White, Dota, Zullo and Horelick. Chairperson White declared the motion carried and the 855<sup>th</sup> Meeting, a Regular Meeting, adjourned.

Submitted by:

David J. Keyser, Secretary and  
Executive Director