

MINUTES
Housing Authority of the Town of Darien
April 21, 2009

A Special Meeting of the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Town of Darien was called to order at 7:05 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, 2009 at 719 Post Road, Darien, CT.

Present were: Commissioners Jennifer Schwartz, Cynthia Ashburne, Joe Warren, Jan Raymond and Kass Bruno; Executive Director Kathryn Molgano; AONBC members Tom Bell, Mark Thorne, Jeff Marston; Attorney Bruce Hill. Audience included residents from AON and OTHH.

Kathryn Molgano and Commissioners discussed the following rent increase proposal for Old Town Hall Houses for the Fiscal Year 2009/2010, citing the need to meet operating expenses and provide for RMR reserves:

- 1) Base Rent Increase of \$35 per unit (efficiency units from \$175 to \$210 and one-bedroom units from \$185 to \$220)
- 2) Tiered Rent Structure: Base rents for new incoming tenants (beginning July 1, 2009) proposed at \$300 for efficiencies and \$325 for one-bedroom units. The higher base rents will not apply to existing residents.

Comments were taken from E187 residents Jane MacDonald, Arden Broecking and Terry Proscia opposing the proposed increase with emphasis on the high cost of electricity bills paid by residents.

On a motion by Joe Warren, DHA Commissioners unanimously approved the base rent increase of \$35 per unit for existing tenants. On a motion by Jan Raymond, the commissioners unanimously approved the tiered base rent structure for new incoming tenants. (Resident Commissioner Kass Bruno abstained)

Kathryn Molgano and Commissioners discussed the rent increase proposals for Allen-O'Neill Homes for the Fiscal Year 2009/2010:

- 1) Base Rent Increase of \$20 (\$330 to \$350) for single-family homes
- 2) Increase in % to income from 30% to 31%

Discussion included impact of losing of high-income earning tenants over the past year who in part served to subsidize tenants who pay lower or base rents. Discussion also included the impact of DHA maintaining vacancies for relocation possibilities. Income deficiencies from not renting these units is offset by the reduction of RMR Reserves (for capital improvements); however, RMR Reserves are maintained at a level sufficient for renovations to these units if DHA decides to rent them at a future date as part of the existing Moderate Rental Program. Commissioners pointed out that if these units are renovated for the purpose of temporary relocation for existing tenants, those renovation costs would come from Redevelopment Funding – not from rental income. Letters from Gail DeFreitas and Debbie Jaeger in opposition to the proposed increases were read and recorded.

On a motion by Jan Raymond, DHA Commissioners unanimously approved the above proposed rent increases for MR36. (Resident Commissioner Kass Bruno abstained)

The rent increases as approved by the Commissioners will be incorporated into the proposed 2009/2010 Management Plans for MR36 and E187 and are subject to CHFA approval.

Commissioners discussed modifying the charge of the AON Building Committee. Jennifer Schwartz stated that while the duties of the committee (as per the original charge and RTM requirements) had been completed, DHA Commissioners felt that Tom Bell (neighborhood representative) and Mark Thorne and Jeff Marston (representing the RTM and PZ&H) have made significant contributions and it would serve the redevelopment project well to continue to keep these members involved. Commissioners decided to draft modifications to the AONBC charge and discuss at the April monthly meeting.

The meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 9:00 p.m. on a motion by Joe Warren. Bruce Hill, Tom Bell, Mark Thorne and Jeff Marston were invited into Executive Session.

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The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn Y. Molgano
Executive Director