



The Housing Authority of Gloucester County

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

September 28, 2022

A Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of Gloucester County was held in the Joseph A. Reed Board Room, Nancy J. Elkins Building, on Wednesday, September 28, 2022 beginning at 4:30 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

The Secretary (Kimberly Gober) called the roll and the following answered "aye":

- ✓ Chairman William W. Bain, Jr.
- ✓ 1st Vice Chairman John Giovannitti
- ✓ 2nd Vice Chairman Frank Smith
- ✓ Commissioner Dan Reed
- ✓ Treasurer Scott Kintzing
- ✓ Commissioner Brenden Garozzo

And the following were absent:

The Secretary notified the Solicitor that a quorum is present.

Also in attendance were:

- ✓ James Pierson, Esq., Solicitor
- ✓ Kimberly Gober, Executive Director
- ✓ Paul Letizia, AHO Director
- ✓ Nelly Rojas, Executive Assistant
- ✓ Grace Seeney, Finance Director
- ✓ Michael Jezierski, Accountant
- ✓ John Rasmus, Modernization Coordinator
- ✓ Nina Sorelle, Bowman & Co. (virtual)
- ✓ Carol McAllister, Bowman & Co.
- ✓ Michael Thilker, Bowman & Co.

SOLICITOR:

The Solicitor stated, "In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975, this meeting is called to order pursuant to notice of Regular Meeting, a copy of which has been made available to newspapers of general local public circulation, a copy of which has been made available to the Clerk of Gloucester County, and a copy of which has been posted publicly in accordance with the law."

AUDIT REPORT:

- Scott Kintzing reported that the audit was completed by Bowman & Co. and there were no findings. Commissioner Kintzing praised the audit firm and recommended approving the audit, in his experience Bowman & Co. is very professional and thorough.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AUDIT REPORT:

MOTION: Treasurer Scott Kintzing

SECOND: 2nd Vice-Chairman, Frank Smith

ALL IN FAVOR

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

- E. D. Gober informs the Board that HAGC is looking to increase the subsidy standard to 110%. Current average rental cost is \$1420 for 1-bedroom unit and \$1760 for 2-bedroom unit. HUD is considering increasing this to 120% across the board. HAGC is a driving force in the rental market, and we may re-evaluate if we want to pursue this increase in rent. According to an article included in the September packets, to afford a 2-bedroom apartment without assistance, someone would have to work over 100 hours a week.
- HUD is proposing INSPIRE HQS protocol that will require the housing authority to incur in new expenses such as smoke detectors in every bedroom in every unit. HUD is not offering to cover any of those costs. It may also be difficult to comply with Build America by America given our funding limits.
- We have 21 project-based vouchers with WinnCorporation in West Deptford Twp. Currently waiting for West Deptford to approve the Fair Share Housing Plan. The proposal is for 80 units; the housing authority has committed 21 veteran-based vouchers to this project.
- E.D. Gober indicates that HAGC and its non-profits spend about \$125,000 on contract guards coverage during off hours for each of 4 out of 5 HAGC's high-rise building, for a total of \$500,000 per year. The 5th building, Colonial Park, employs HAGC's staff. Management has been looking for ways to provide better services to the residents and has come up with a plan to present to the Board. Before the presentation E.D. Gober would like to mention that during the summer, RAB members expressed their disappointment with the contract guards services and voiced their support for the implementation of a new service. E.D. Gober stressed that the plan is centered on bringing better services to the residents with respect to security and nurse calls.

SECURITY PLAN PRESENTATION

- AHO Director Paul Letizia starts the presentation by mentioning that historically, HAGC has had many issues with the performance of services by contract guards, such as attendance and behavior problems while on the property, and the service has become quite expensive. For the last 2 or 3 years HAGC has upgraded all security camera systems at all properties that can be accessed remotely, as well as the Entry Guard systems at all access doors, which can also be accessed remotely. The recommendation from the AHO Department to management for the last year has been to eliminate the contract guard service and hire an additional supervisory guard to oversee the security guards that are permanent employees of HAGC, posted at Colonial Park.
- The plan proposes to outfit the board room at Colonial Park as a Command Center. The Command Center would be staffed 24/7 with guards employed by HAGC and outfitted with large screen monitors with real-time feed from the security cameras systems of all buildings we own or manage. The staff would have the ability to lock/unlock doors remotely, as needed. In addition to the stationary presence, the supervisory guard would be assigned a vehicle, primarily work evening hours (with the ability to adjust their schedule) and patrol each building on foot to show their presence. The vehicle would be clearly marked to show is an HAGC owned vehicle. These measures would provide more security to the residents that our current system.
- Additionally, the plan proposes to replace the pull cord system. Each apartment has two pull cords to signal the guard the resident need help (one in the bathroom and one in the bedroom). The pull cords are original to the building, they have served their purpose but in a limited capacity, sometimes people have an emergency when they are not in the bathroom or the bedroom and cannot call for help. To address this gap in service, HAGC contacted LIFE Station for a quote. LIFE Station will install their equipment at each building and provide each resident with a pendant for

assistance calls that can be activated anywhere in the property, including the parking lot. The calls will be connected to their answering services, who would call 911 for a quicker response for a significant cost savings. Commissioner Kintzing asks if the calls will be directed to our staff, AHO Director Letizia replies no, the calls will be answered 24/7 by LIFE Station, he goes on to explain the system we have now, when a resident pulls the cord, a light signal is activated in the guard room, however, if the guard is in the bathroom, doing rounds or otherwise engaged the call would be answered upon their return, creating an unnecessary delay in response, especially if 911 had to be called.

- Commissioner Kintzing asks how many guards would be necessary to put in place the plan, AHO Director Letizia indicates the plan calls for only one additional person to act as the supervisory guard, we currently have five individuals serving as guards on staff. However, AHO would reserve the right to hire additional personnel, if necessary, down the road.
- Commissioner Kintzing asks if the elderly residents have the capacity of using the fob system comfortably, or if the change would provoke an increase in service calls. AHO Director Letizia indicates the Entry Guard system with fobs has been in place for a while with no issues. Commissioner Kintzing asks if the contract guards are not there, who will open the door for visitors? E.D. Gober indicates our buildings are “secure”, meaning the guards do not open the door for visitors, only the resident could open the door for their guests using the Entry Guards, this is done in the event the visitor is an unwelcome guest, that the resident does not want in the building.
- E.D. Gober goes on to say that the pull cords are located in the bathroom and the bedroom only, creating a gap in service. The pull cord system was the best service we could provide when the buildings were constructed, and has performed well, but technology has allowed us to improve upon it, and this is at the heart of the new plan. Adding that if she was a resident and didn’t feel well and needed to call 911 but was in the living room, she would not be able to contact help, the same goes if she was in the kitchen, the pull cord service only works if she is in the bathroom or bedroom. The new system would work everywhere, including the hallway and the common areas, like the laundry. This system provides a much better service to residents in need of emergency assistance.
- Chairman Bain Jr. adds that the technology we are proposing is state-of-the-art, that would allow our residents in need to contact 911 without delays.
- Commissioner Kintzing asks if the call would go directly to 911. E.D. Gober answers yes, HAGC does not have insurance or licensing to allow the guards, or any employee, to touch a resident or provide medical care. Right now, the pull cord system alerts the guard, the guard goes to the unit, cutting the security chain at the door if engaged, assess the situation, and then call 911 if needed, losing valuable time.
- Commissioner Kintzing asks if it would be better to have a staff member go to the unit and provide assistance, then call 911. E.D. Gober indicates we are not medical personnel. Chairman Bain Jr. indicates that due to his extensive emergency response experience, he knows that each minute counts, having the resident activate the fob first would mean medical personnel will be able to respond faster. Chairman Bain Jr. goes on to say he has reviewed the plan developed by AHO Director Letizia and Modernization Coordinator John Ramus and he believes it represents the best response we can provide our residents right now, paired with the security patrols.
- E.D. Gober adds that emergency responders are outfitted with their own code to enter the buildings.
- Commissioner Garozzo expresses support for the changes proposed to the security, the challenges are similar to the ones he encounters in the private sector, and he believes the changes will provide a better service to the residents.
- Chairman Bain Jr. adds that the main reason for the change is to provide a better, more reliable service for the residents in the event of an emergency, no delays, just access to help. Chairman Bain Jr. adds that he believes this response will become standard in Housing Authorities. E.D. Gober comments that Housing Authorities in North Jersey and properties owned by the Diocese of Camden

already have this system in place, using the same response company as in our proposal and vetting them for us.

- Chairman Bain Jr. adds that the plan will be monitored closely and tweaked if necessary.
- AHO Director Paul Letizia wants to stress the difficulties HAGC has experienced with the various contract guard services utilized in the past. HAGC has numerous documented cases where the on-duty contract guards have left the properties unattended without notice, by either walking away buy something to eat during their shift or leaving their post early without a relief. With the current system, in the event of an emergency during these times, there would be no one to investigate and assist a resident in need. All these gaps in service have been discovered the following day, and a requests would be quickly made to remove the guard from the rotation, but the issue is recurring, systemic and difficult to monitor in real time. Adding that just as Chairman Bain Jr. previously indicated, the plan will be closely monitored, tweaked, and adjusted to be as effective as possible. There is a cost saving aspect to the changes proposed, due to the technology we are proposing to use, but the service will be better, and this is the main reason why the changes were proposed.
- James Pierson, Esq. indicates that if there is consensus to move forward with these changes, there are 4 resolutions in the agenda to approve an amendment to the security contracts, effectively cancelling their services on 1/31/2023. Additionally, James Pierson suggests a voice motion to authorize the Executive Director to move forward with necessary actions to implement the new security plan, including, but not limited to:
 - Execution of a contract with LIFE Station;
 - Execution of a contract with an internet provider;
 - Purchase a security vehicle;
 - Outfitting the Colonial Park Security Operation Center;
 - Creation of a security supervisor position;
 - Other actions as necessary.

MOTION TO PROCEED WITH SECURITY CHANGES:

MOTION: 1st Vice Chairman John Giovannitti

SECOND: Commissioner Brenden Garozzo

ALL IN FAVOR

NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR CONCERNS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA:

- A. Review and Action of Minutes – AUGUST, 2022
- B. Consider Interim Bill List, 22-09 Sections A, B, C, D
- C. Consider Bill List 22-09 Sections E, F, G, H
- D. Consider Ratification of GCHDC, Seniors, Shepherd’s Farm, eMurphyg, Inc., PMURC, Inc. Sections A, B, C, D, E, F
- E. Consider Acknowledgment of Pop Moylan, Colonial Park LP Sections G, H, I, J

RESOLUTIONS

22-87	CONSIDER RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND APPROVING HAGC AUDIT FY2021 AS PREPARED BY BOWMAN & CO, LLP
	ROLL CALL VOTE

<u>22-88</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND APPROVING GCHDC AUDIT FY2021 AS PREPARED BY BOWMAN & CO, LLP
<u>22-89</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND APPROVING SHDC AUDIT FY2021 AS PREPARED BY BOWMAN & CO, LLP
<u>22-90</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE EXECUTION OF THE RENEWAL OF THE SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN HAGC & THE COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER REGARDING THE MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION OF THE TENANT BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE (TBRA) PROGRAM
<u>22-91</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING DISPOSITION AND WRITE OFF OF EXPENDED PROPERTY
<u>22-92</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING UPDATED PAYMENT STANDARDS FY2022-2023
<u>22-93</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATION FOR FUNDS ADVERTISED IN HUD NOFA – FSS PROGRAM
<u>22-94</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION APPROVING A CHANGE ORDER AND AUTHORIZE ADDENDUM FOR CONTRACT FOR SECURITY SERVICES – DEPTFORD PARK
<u>22-95</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION APPROVING A CHANGE ORDER AND AUTHORIZE ADDENDUM FOR CONTRACT FOR SECURITY SERVICES – CARINO PARK
<u>22-96</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION APPROVING A CHANGE ORDER AND AUTHORIZE ADDENDUM FOR CONTRACT FOR SECURITY SERVICES – NESH
<u>22-97</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION APPROVING A CHANGE ORDER AND AUTHORIZE ADDENDUM FOR CONTRACT FOR SECURITY SERVICES – SHEPHERD’S FARM
<u>22-98</u>	RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN EMERGENCY DESIGN AND REPLACEMENT OF SEPTIC SYSTEM AT A NJ204-1 SCATTERED SITE UNIT PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:11 EMERGENCY CONTRACTS
<u>22-99</u>	RESOLUTION RATIFYING THE PURCHASE OF ONE (1) MOTOR VEHICLE FOR THE USE OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF GLOUCESTER COUNTY
<u>22-100</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION COMMENDING AND HONORING FRANK SMITH
<u>22-101</u>	CONSIDER RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION - TABLED

MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA ITEMS

MOTION: 1st Vice Chairman John Giovannitti

SECOND: Treasurer, Scott Kintzing

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 PUBLIC PORTION:

Agenda items only.

MOTION TO OPEN PUBLIC PORTION:

MOTION: Treasurer, Scott Kintzing

SECOND: 1st Vice Chairman John Giovannitti

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Seeing no members of the Public.

MOTION TO CLOSE PUBLIC PORTION:

MOTION: Treasurer, Scott Kintzing

SECOND: Commissioner, Brenden Garozzo

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 ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

MOTION: 1st Vice Chairman John Giovannitti

SECOND: Commissioner, Brenden Garozzo

ALL IN FAVOR

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly Gober, Secretary

Dated: September 28, 2022