

**MINUTES**  
**WEST HARTFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**Regularly Scheduled Monthly Meeting via Teams and Dial-In**  
**March 11, 2025**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Milagros Acosta, Mark D’Addabbo, Clare Dowd, Lee Reynolds

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Abdul Rahman

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Beatrice Acevedo, FSS Coordinator; Forest Berwick, Director of Operations; Jill Corrado, Executive Director; Tim Mable, Director of Property Management; Yadira Mora, Voucher Programs Director; Adam Teneyck, Director of Finance

Ms. Dowd called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the regularly scheduled meeting of January 14, 2025 were approved on a motion from Ms. Reynolds and seconded by Mr. D’Addabbo.

**Financial Report**

Staff are currently in the midst of year-end accounting activities. Audits of 540 New are complete and drafts have been submitted to the investor. The AEP audit has been completed and a draft to CHFA is expected to be submitted imminently. TBRA is next, and WHHA will follow this summer.

Trend data was presented on average HAP, Number of HCV units and Per-Unit-Cost through December.

Trailing twelve-month voucher segmentation data by program (West Hartford, J. D’Amelia) and voucher type was presented.

Occupancy and collections trend data were presented for managed properties for the trailing twelve months. Rent collection portfolio wide averages 96% and average occupancy is tracking at 93% portfolio wide for the same period.

Federal budgets remain uncertain, and at the moment we do not know how this will play out or how we may be affected. Our HCV consultant tells us that full funding of the HCV plan may not be part of the bill currently being discussed. While we do not fully yet know the proration amount, we expect to be in shortfall and HUD has asked what we are doing to avoid shortfall; thus far we have:

- ceased absorbing port-ins,
- ceased issuing vouchers from our waiting list, and
- limiting rent increase amounts from landlords.

We are expecting 95-96% but this has yet to be confirmed. If the proration is at 95% we would be looking for a shortfall approximately equating to a month and a half of HAP. This excludes both the 15 PBV we have yet to issue for the Camelot project, which will be wrapping up construction this year, as well as the Elle will follow later this year and also has vouchers we have yet to issue.

If we are found to be in shortfall, we will be working with a HUD team who will be providing additional specific guidance as to how we make it through the year. We have been through this once in the past and HUD worked with us to avoid elimination of program participants due to lack of funding.

Ms. Reynolds asked if we have noticed or felt any impact of HUD staffing reductions. Ms. Corrado replied not as yet.

Ms. Dowd asked if we have heard anything about changes to the FSS program, and Ms. Corrado replied that seems to be set for the year so far.

Ms. Dowd asked if there were any communication we should be doing, Ms. Corrado replied that we have been communicating with state legislators, and once we know more about the Federal Budget and continuing resolution we will have more information to communicate.

On the JDA side we spoke with John D'Amelia this week. As you know, the state has awarded the contract to JDA, however the contract is still under negotiations with JDA attempting to secure funding increases from the State. We receive a significant amount of complaints from the public on the JDA program, comparatively nothing from the federal program.

## **HCV Report**

Ms. Mora reported we have 567 HCV participants including port-outs. We had 11 port-outs, we have ceased to absorb port-ins, of which there are now 4, and this is expected to increase. Average HAP is \$1,216.

The DOH program is at 2,139 accounts comprised of 731 RAP certificates and 1,408 State voucher holders. There has been an influx of HCV's under the DOH program.

Wallingford is at 12 units, they have not leased up the 13<sup>th</sup> unit as yet. It is uncertain if they will lease to full capacity.

## **FSS Report**

Ms. Acevedo reported we currently have 18 active program participants, 1 new enrollment for March.

We have continued to market the program heavily with social media postings and continued outreach with various entities, including Advancing CT Together (ACT), CT Money School, CMS, and The Financial Coaching Program. Collaboration with caseworkers as a source of referrals continues. We intend on looking forming a committee from former participants and some of these partnering entities to provide continued program guidance and support.

A monthly newsletter continues to be mailed to all program participants.

We have received a number of potential program participants which we are following up on.

## **Operations Report**

Occupancy is at 95% or more for all the properties, except for 616 New Park, 540 New Park, Elm Grove and the Faxon. Staff has been focused on addressing this and has recently completed a waiting list purge and is looking at closing some waiting lists.

The Goodwin refinancing absorbed a lot of staff bandwidth this quarter. A “first impressions” project is now underway (refresh lobby, community room and new carpet throughout building). This is being funded from the re-financing.

Our maintenance team is to be commended for fulfilling HUD’s numerous requirements on time, but also performing many of these tasks in-house for considerable savings. This included:

- Re-configuration of kitchen cabinetry at three units at the Goodwin in accordance with HUD refinancing requirements. Work was performed in-house for a cost avoidance of just under \$30,000.
- Lowering thermostats in every unit at the Goodwin to meet HUD requirements.

While we were in resident units for the thermostats, we took the opportunity to replace all battery backup Co2 and smoke detectors with sealed 10 year batteries. This will result in fewer work orders for battery changes over the next few years (usually we get one every other week or so)....

The swings in temperatures have brought leaks to be addressed. At the Goodwin alone, we had to address water damage necessitating reflooring of an entire unit and major flooring repairs in two units at the Goodwin. Work was performed in house for a cost avoidance of \$6,000.

In addition to these special projects, snow and salting for all properties and addressing hundreds of work orders and PM’s, our Maintenance team completed the following minor R&A projects:

- Shower re-build at AEP (end-of-life plumbing)
- Multiple window replacements at Elm Grove, AEP, and 540 New Park. (tenant damage, force majeure and end-of-life).

Transition of cellular devices (phones, jetpacks and ipads) to a new vendor has been completed for a projected cost avoidance of \$281.60 per month.

**Development Committee Report** – The Elle reached financial closing; groundbreaking is scheduled for Thursday.

**Finance Committee Report** - none

**Resident Services Committee Report** - none

**Executive Directors Report** –

**Housing Choice Voucher Program:**

- a. Annual and Five-Year Plans approved by HUD.
- b. MTW Supplement has been approved by HUD.
- c. FSS reach out is being made on a targeted basis.
- d. FSS grant amount of \$95,279 was approved by HUD, we are awaiting actual grant documents to execute.
- e. Camelot wait list opened for several days resulting in 2000 applications, 400 names were selected for the waiting list, so we are expecting to execute a HAP contract for these units and to start receiving applicants soon.
- f. Pulling names from PBV wait lists to fill vacancies at our managed properties.
- g. Reviewing HUD's two-year tool and forecasting for upcoming leasing and identification of projected shortfall for CY2025.

**Property Management/LIHTC Compliance:**

- a. Emphasis on filling vacancies and rent collections at all 6 properties
- b. Wait list purge for building lists
- c. Continual reporting to investors, CHFA, Spectrum, and NHT; along with reporting and site visits.
- d. One Park compliance review to be conducted in April. Ms Dowd if we were being compensated for this, Ms. Corrado acknowledged yes, however it is a negligible amount.
- e. Facilities best practices being refined, especially for planned maintenance activities.
- f. Capital planning for all buildings being refined for 2025.
- g. Redesign of Goodwin logo complete. Signage replacement is forthcoming.
- h. Goodwin loan being refinanced, closing date has been postponed again, from March 12 to March 18 due to DOH not signing documents. Mr. D'Addabbo asked if an interest rate has been finalized, Ms. Corrado replied that rate was locked in under 6%. Ms. Corrado expressed deep appreciation for Ms. McGrath's instrumental assistance what has been a lengthy closing process.
- i. Goodwin lobby refresh and hallway carpeting project is now underway.

**Other:**

- a. Groundbreaking ceremony for The Elle was a success. Construction is underway and weekly job meetings are now being held on site (previously these were virtual while no power on site).
- b. Elle logo creation complete.
- c. Social media postings for WHHA continue on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.
- d. Monthly All Employee Meetings and monthly challenges to engage staff.
- e. Employee handbook update is in process.
- f. Technology upgrades, including telephone switchover to new provider.
- g. Staffing changes and look to the future.

Speaking engagements have been scheduled for ULI regarding the Elle, and another with DoT regarding New Park Avenue corridor development.

The public has been getting more aggressive in general, which presents a continuing challenge to staff and management, particularly when program rules are being abided and staff is working hard...

**Executive Session – none**

**Chairperson's Comments** – Ms. Dowd thanked Ms. Corrado and WHHA staff for their activities and asked if there would be more budgetary information available for the next meeting in May, in order to discuss how the Board may be of assistance. Ms. Corrado responded affirmatively. Ms. Dowd congratulated Mr. Teneyck on his new position.

**Old Business - none****New Business – none**

**Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.** on a motion by Mr. D'Addabbo and seconded by Ms. Reynolds.