

**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COOK COUNTY
(PUBLIC SESSION)
October 14, 2021 2:00 p.m.**

ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Wendy Walker Williams, Chair
Polly Kuehl, Vice Chair
Saul Klibanow, Commissioner
Normah Salleh-Barone, Commissioner
Nilda Soler, Commissioner
Elaine Kroll, Commissioner

HACC STAFF PRESENT

Richard Monocchio, Executive Director
Alesia Hushaw, Chief of Staff
Karl Becker, Chief Financial Officer
Sheryl Seiling, Director of Rent Assistance
Deborah O'Donnell, Manager of Procurement
Jon Duncan, General Counsel (present at regular meeting location)
Monica Slavin, Director of Compliance and Occupancy
Darrick Shafer, North Region Manager
Lekisha Bannister, South Region Manager
Nancy Guzman, Director of Development
Emily Orenstein, Director of External Affairs
Jesse Silva, Development Associate
Debbie Kyker, Executive Assistant

OTHER ATTENDEES PRESENT VIA ZOOM.US:

Hope Bullock

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wendy Walker Williams called the October 14, 2021 meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Cook County to order at approximately 2:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Wendy Walker Williams opened the floor for public comments.

No public comments were submitted.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Nilda Soler and seconded by Commissioner Saul Klibanow for Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 9, 2021. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-HACC-24

A Resolution Authorizing the Chief Financial Officer, in his capacity as Executive Vice President of CH Veterans, LLC., to enter into a contract with Burling Builders, Inc., as General Contractor in Connection with the Construction of Otto Veterans Square.

General Counsel Jon Duncan stated that this resolution had been scheduled prematurely and that it was not yet ready for the Board’s consideration, and he requested that the resolution be withdrawn. The resolution was withdrawn, without objection.

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 – HACC – 25

A Resolution Setting the Regular Housing Authority Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule for the Calendar Year 2022.

General Counsel Jon Duncan presented Resolution No. 2021 – HACC – 25. Mr. Duncan explained that Section 2.02(a) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act [5 ILCS 120/2.02(a)] requires government agencies to publish a schedule of its regular meeting dates at the beginning of each calendar or fiscal year, stating the dates, times and places of such meetings. Each fall the Board sets a schedule of its meetings for the coming year.

The By-Laws of the Housing Authority provide that regular Board meetings shall be held at the Authority’s Central Office on the second Thursday of each month or at other places within Cook County or at other times as the Authority may designate with public notice.

The proposed regular public meeting schedule for 2022 contemplates that the Board of Commissioners meetings for the months of April and December only to be held on the second Thursdays of those months, with the remaining meetings (February, June, August, October) to be held on the third Thursday rather than on the second Thursdays of those months. The scheduling

shifts for those months were suggested in consideration of scheduled holidays and in order to accommodate HACC staff preparation needs in advance of the Board of Commissioners meetings for those months. The HACC By-Laws authorize the Board of Commissioners to adopt a change in the schedule with proper public notice.

Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Polly Kuehl and seconded by Commissioner Normah Salleh-Barone for approval of Resolution No. 2021–HACC–25. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 – HACC – 26

A Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to pay for Design Services for The Emerson Project at 1900 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, Illinois.

Executive Director Richard Monocchio presented Resolution No. 2021 – HACC –26.

On October 17, 2019, the HACC Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution 2019-HACC-19, which Authorized the Executive Director to enter into negotiations with McHugh for a design-build contract for The Emerson project at 1900 Sherman Avenue in Evanston.

The City of Evanston’s approval of zoning changes was needed in order for The Emerson Project to proceed. This required the Executive Director to submit detailed design plans to the City of Evanston in support of the zoning changes. McHugh performed the necessary design work in support of the application to the City of Evanston. The Evanston City Council approved the necessary zoning changes at its meeting of November 23, 2020 [Evanston Ordinance 109-O-20].

Since February 2021, McHugh BOWA Evanston Tower Joint Venture LLC has been engaged in redesign efforts to ensure that the Emerson Project aligns with current market demands that have changed during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In addition, engineering details required a reduction in below-grade parking spaces.

The HACC accordingly submitted a major adjustment to the planned development at 1900 Sherman Ave., to construct a 16-story residential building in the C1a Commercial Mixed-Use Zoning District. The HACC proposed a decrease in the number of dwelling units from 168 to 152, a decrease in the number of below-grade parking spaces from 37 to 25, and a decrease in height from 172 ft 8 in. to 168 ft. 4 in.

These changes required additional design work to be performed by McHugh, for which McHugh should be paid, in the amount of \$81,094.39. This resolution is for approval of the payment for this additional design work.

Following a discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Saul Klibanow and seconded by Commissioner Normah Salleh-Barone for approval of Resolution No. 2021– HACC–26. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 – HACC – 27

A Resolution to Ratify the Execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement with the County of Cook for additional Emergency Rental Assistance.

Executive Director Richard Monocchio presented Resolution No. 2021 – HACC – 27. On March of 2021, the federal American Rescue Plan Act authorized a second round of Emergency Rental Assistance, aimed at providing financial assistance and housing stability services to eligible households.

The ARPA authorized the United States Department of the Treasury to grant ERA2 funds to eligible local governments to provide rental and utility assistance to eligible households experiencing financial hardship during or due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

At this Board’s meeting on February 25, 2021, a resolution was approved to ratify the execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement between the HACC and the County of Cook to administer the original round of emergency housing assistance programs with \$65 million of funds that the County had received as a result of the ARPA.

As a result of the HACC’s successful administration of the first round of the emergency housing programs, the County of Cook has now asked the HACC to administer its second round ERA2 Program for 2021.

Mr. Monocchio mentioned that the second round of emergency rental assistance for suburban Cook County was publicly announced by him and Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle in a joint press conference that was held on October 1, 2021, and a new Intergovernmental Agreement for ERA2 was executed as required by law, with each party’s responsibilities outlined. The IGA with Cook County covers both rental assistance and utility assistance payments.

Director of Rental Assistance Sheryl Seiling also spoke regarding the second round of emergency rental assistance. After accounting for administrative costs, the County will distribute up to approximately \$64 million additionally for emergency rental and utility assistance relief for eligible households who were negatively impacted financially due to economic conditions resulting from the Coronavirus public health emergency.

Illinois law requires the Intergovernmental Agreement with Cook County for the administration of the second round of emergency rental assistance to be ratified by the Board of Commissioners.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Nilda Soler and seconded by Commissioner Saul Klibanow for approval of Resolution No. 2021– HACC–27. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

RESOLUTION NO. 2021 – HACC – 28

A Resolution Authorizing the Ratification of a Contract with Yardi Systems, Inc., to provide software and maintenance to administer the County of Cook’s Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA1 and ERA2).

Director of Rental Assistance Sheryl Seiling presented Resolution No. 2021 – HACC – 28. She explained that this resolution was related to the Resolution No. 2021 – HACC – 27 that was just approved by the Board. As part of the administration of the Emergency Rental Assistance programs, the Housing Authority required additional software that is used in the management of ERA1 and ERA2. The original contract was below Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000). The contract has been amended to include the second round of ERA funding where Yardi systems will provide the software, maintenance, and, most importantly, a call center to handle the large volume of incoming telephone calls regarding the ERA programs.

The amended contract, when complete through 2023, is expected not to exceed Two Million, Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,300,000.00). The Executive Director and the County of Cook will execute an addendum to the original Yardi contract to include the additional program, period and services to be required to administer the new Intergovernmental Agreement as required by law, with each party’s responsibilities outlined.

Following a discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Nilda Soler and seconded by Commissioner Saul Klibanow for approval of Resolution No. 2021– HACC–28. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Richard Monocchio presented the Executive Director’s report. He reported the status of the zoning and design changes that are underway for the Emerson project in Evanston.

Mr. Monocchio began discussing the status of contract negotiations with Service Employees International Union, Local 73, regarding the two Collective Bargaining Agreements with our union workforce. General Counsel Jon Duncan recommended that any discussion of ongoing labor negotiations for the new Collective Bargaining Agreements should be conducted in Executive Session rather than in a public session.

Following that recommendation, a motion was made a seconded for the board to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of labor negotiations, as provided by Section 2(c)(2) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act [5 ILCS 120/2(c)2]. The motion to move into Executive Session was agreed to with all “ayes,” whereupon the Board convened in Executive Session for purpose of discussion of collective bargaining negotiations, for which minutes are kept separately.

Following the Executive Session, the Board reconvened in public session. General Counsel Jon Duncan stated in public session for the record that the Board had moved into Executive Session,

at which the sole topic of discussion was the status of labor negotiations over the two Collective Bargaining Agreements with SEIU Local 73. Mr. Duncan stated further in the public session that no votes were taken during the Executive Session.

HUMAN SERVICES REPORT

Mr. Monocchio then introduced Director of External Affairs Emily Orenstein to give a report on Human Services, which is summarized below.

Higher Education Updates

Opportunity Fund Launch

The HACC has begun accepting applications for the Opportunity Fund. As part of a limited pilot run, students will be able to apply for up to \$500 in assistance for costs associated with going to college. So far, we have received over 120 applications from students at every single community college district in suburban Cook County. Transportation assistance is the most common request, followed by childcare and devices for remote learning. We have reached out to all applicants and have had a response rate of roughly 40%, enhanced by our use of Zendesk for outreach. We have already served 13 participants and look forward to serving more in the coming weeks.

One Million Degrees

Enrollment is underway for the 2021 One Million Degrees cohort. Participants receive cash stipends, professional development, and academic and personal advising supports. Our informational sessions with Prairie State and South Suburban students were well received, and interest in the program is high. Final enrollment numbers will be available at the next board meeting.

After-School: Fun at Flowers

After-school programming has begun at Richard Flowers Community Housing with a “Spirit Week” kickoff. Children who live at Flowers and are in 1st-8th grades are invited to participate in a free, high-quality afterschool program on weekdays from 3-6pm. Staff will assist students with homework for the first hour, and will provide a variety of enriching activities afterward, from crafts projects to science experiments. Enrollment capacity is currently 20 students.

We are particularly excited to share that one of our two Youth Enrichment Coordinators was previously a crew leader for this summer’s Forest Preserves Experience.

Country Club Hills Wellness Center: Earn, Learn, and Lunch

Our team received a large batch of intake surveys from residents of the Country Club Hills Wellness Center PBV. With Turnstone’s support, we organized a resource fair and invited vendors based on the service areas most frequently requested. Attendees included Employment and Employer Services, South Suburban College, CEDA, Cook County Health, and PCs for People.

Turnstone and South Suburban each generously donated gift cards to raffle off, and South Suburban provided one \$1,000 scholarship for an attendee. Over 50 residents attended the fair, and one resident who received the scholarship has since enrolled at South Suburban College.

Tablet Giveaway

HACC coordinated with McCright and Associates, our inspection company, to help residents and HCV households sign up for free Internet access as part of the Emergency Broadband Program courtesy of TerraCom, one of the few ISPs to add device giveaways to its EBBP program. McCright staff members assisted households who were not currently receiving subsidized Internet to sign up for a free plan and a free Samsung tablet. We served 450 families over 5 days, and hope to serve more at subsequent dates. The tablets will be equipped with free unlimited data until funding from the Federal Communications Commission runs out (expected to be in a year or so), at which point residents can choose to opt into a paid plan or disconnect service and use the devices on Wi-Fi.

Vaccination Efforts

The property managers are currently coordinating with Cook County Health to schedule vaccination clinics at all senior buildings to provide COVID booster shots for residents. Residents who received vaccines at our initial clinics in the first few months of 2021 will now be eligible for booster shots, as more than 6 months have passed since the initial clinic dates. We are also working on identifying events at the family sites that can be supported by a vaccine clinic.

Mental and Behavioral Health

The mental and behavioral health needs of low-income and marginalized populations have historically been neglected, and we are committed to expanding access to that critical healthcare, both in our agency operations and in our advocacy to the County as stakeholders identify American Rescue Plan Act funding priorities.

Coordination with Managed Care Organizations

Many residents across our properties live with untreated behavioral health issues that risk compromising their ability to live independently. Addressing these issues is vital to preserving residents' independent living situations, improving their quality of life, and ensuring safe and clean housing for all residents.

Most residents have Medicaid managed care plans, which provide coordinated care to members with chronic and complex health needs. We are collaborating with the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services to communicate confidentially with Managed Care Organizations serving our resident population to help them provide proactive services to at-risk residents to help them access care.

Impact Behavioral Health Partners

Impact Behavioral Health Partners provides housing, clinical, and employment services to low-income adults living with mental illness in northern Cook County. We have engaged them to help

support our residents in Evanston and Skokie. We are distributing information and signup forms to residents, which can be placed in confidential drop boxes and delivered to Impact's office in Evanston.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

Chief Financial Officer Karl Becker summarized the Financial Report that was included in the Board's meeting book.

OTHER BUSINESS


There was no other business.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wendy Walker Williams requested a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Board, which was made by Commissioner Saul Klibanow and seconded by Commissioner Nilda Soler. The motion to adjourn carried with all "ayes."

The Meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



Richard J. Monocchio
Executive Director



DATE