

East Windsor Housing Authority
Special Meeting - September 24, 2012
MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

The Special Meeting of the East Windsor Housing Authority was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Legassie for the purposes of a Public Hearing to explain the proposed base rent increase. Commissioner Percoski was in attendance as well as Jennifer DiMauro, Executive Director and Darlene Kelly, Executive Assistant, East Windsor Housing Authority. Chairman Slate and Commissioner Burns were unable to attend the meeting due to other obligations.

Each Park Hill tenant received a notice of the hearing by mail and were encouraged and invited to attend. Only three tenants were in attendance.

PUBLIC HEARING

The Executive Director, Jennifer DiMauro made a presentation to those residents present regarding the base rent increase. The base rent increase is an annual incremental and minimal increase, which is necessary due to ever increasing operational costs to keep the Park Hill property sustained. Costs to the Authority are on the increase including Utilities, Employee Health Insurance, property maintenance for landscaping, snow removal and other repairs and replacement. CHFA has recommended that it lessens the financial burden on both authorities in general and the tenants, to have a pattern of small annual increases, rather than the practice of not increasing base rent amounts for many years, and then imposing a substantial increase all at once. The goal of the Housing Authority is not to impoverish our lowest income tenants, but to keep up with rising costs in a reasonable, responsible and fair manner.

Jennifer also compared community rental pricing for one bedroom units in the Broad Brook area with the pricing at Park Hill. Where the lowest income residents will be paying only \$170 - \$185/month, others in the community are paying in the range of \$800 to \$900 for the same size units. With the recent improvements to the heating/cooling system and other efficiency improvements designed to help the tenants cut their electrical bills, the proposed monthly rental amounts are a huge bargain, Jennifer stated.

It was also mentioned that the Housing Authority assists their residents with the energy assistance process, ensuring they receive Elderly and Disabled Renters Rebate, SNAP (Foodstamps) and other programs designed to help lower their electric costs. Many authorities around the state do not provide these services, or help their residents to access those services.

The floor was then opened to any questions and/or comments.

There were a few general comments, one of the main ones being where could the lower income people go for help with their rent and the answer was other than Renters Rebate there is not much available on the town or State level. It was also noted that many of the residents who pay base rents already qualify, and in most cases, receive programs like Title 19, free cell phones, Food shelf, foodstamps and more.

Generally, the discussion was overall favorable to the proposed increase.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further questions or comments, the Special Meeting/Public Hearing of the East Windsor Housing Authority was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Darlene Kelly
Recording Secretary
East Windsor Housing Authority