

**SHA Membership Meeting**  
**October 07, 2020**  
**Zoom – COVID-19 Pandemic**

1. Meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM by Board of Trustee President and Declarations CEO Jim Marhold. Jim thanked everyone for registering. 62 people were electronically in attendance representing housing developers, supportive services providers, advocates, government representatives, corporate vendors and families. He informed the membership that the board had been working on a strategic plan and will likely share more on that in the first quarter 2021. Jim called for a motion to approve the minutes of August meeting.  
Minutes of the August 2020 meeting were approved. Motion: Asish Patel; Adriana Chizan second.
2. Diane introduced two representatives from NJ Housing Mortgage Finance Agency to give updates on different topics as follows.

Francis Thomas, Senior Director Asset Management [ftthomas@njhmfa.gov](mailto:ftthomas@njhmfa.gov) who talked about updates on the new HUD 811 vouchers that HMFA were awarded. NJHMFA was only one of 12 agencies who received these 100 vouchers across the US. NJ HMFA can add service providers to these vouchers. The agency is working hard to get more agreements in place for social service agencies. He would like to see developers increase interest in including supportive housing in developments. To help with that the agency was able to increase rental amount for these units – effective on October 1 new applicants will be eligible for \$1185 per unit. He is seeing 9% tax credit application interest and will hope to apply this increase to 4% applications also. A more difficult but desirable change will be to increase already established units to reflect the increase. As noted, NJHMFA is working hard to get more agreements in place for social service agencies. HUD 811 PRA institute training is coming up and will get that info to SHA. Questions were raised and Mr. Thomas clarified the unit rents will be based on fair market rents so \$1185 is not a hard and fast numbers. Mr. Thomas clarified that agencies must provide services not just search for housing as in MCO housing navigators.

Jonathan Sternesky, Manager Policy and Legislative Affairs

[isternesky@njhmfa.gov](mailto:isternesky@njhmfa.gov) who gave an update on Small Landlord Emergency Grant Program. Recently they opened another round. The SLEG Program is an emergency housing assistance program for small rental properties in the State of New Jersey, which is intended to support both small landlords and their tenants during the COVID-19 emergency. Landlords can be reimbursed for lost revenue from April – July. In exchange they agree to waive any outstanding back rent and late fees that their tenant may have accrued during the eligible period. Applicants must be registered with RIMS (Department of Community Affairs Housing Inspection Management System) and have no violations as of September 22, 2020. This is a new date this round. Landlords must also have no tax obligations outstanding. Condo or cooperative owner and Housing Authorities are not eligible. Size of buildings must be 3-30 units. This is a significant increase from round 1 when the upper limit was 10 units. Rents are based on LIHTC and size of units and it does differ in counties. Other changes: fire certificates are not requested, they will help people determine RIMS adherence, W9s will be collected early to help them move application along, a more friendly application portal. Applications must be submitted by October 13 at 4 pm. As long as people meet requirements they should apply (ex. boarding homes). See: [www.njhousing.gov/rentals/sleg2](http://www.njhousing.gov/rentals/sleg2) for more information.

Jonathan next spoke about Housing Resource Center changes. This is a free online searchable database and website on affordable housing that is operated by NJ HMFA <https://www.nj.gov/njhrc/>.

Jonathan gave a demo on the site and the search uses and updates. Among the recent changes is that the initial search view is now a map that can be enlarged to the street level. These and other changes coincided with the new legislation passed that goes into effect on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The legislation (S2527) changes affirmative marketing requirements and makes it mandatory for any unit that is subject to an affirmative housing requirement (any unit getting credit under a fair share settlement) to post their unit on the HRC. This is important. All affordable housing units must post to this site. Prior to the legislation, it was not mandatory. They did have to advertise in print, radio etc. and many ways but not digitally which is the way people look for housing and other needs today. Another change that the legislation covers is that development must post

when the wait lists open as well and within 60 days of the lottery opening. This will give perspective tenants more notice and time to apply. All lotteries must be posted. PL2020C51 is the regulation that was updated.

3. Diane introduced Harry Reyes [harry.reyes@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:harry.reyes@dhs.nj.gov) , Assistant Director of Mental Health and Addiction Service (DMHAS) to give an update.

- Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, those agencies put on advanced payment because of COVID (originally fee for service) went back to fee for service.
- The Division received \$25 million in COVID relief funds from the federal government. The funds and reimbursements were reviewed in several presentations to walk providers through the scope of the fund relief. DMHAS has all of the governance documents and information on their website, FAQs are forthcoming and will be posted. Basically contracted provider expenses that were incurred directly related to COVID (i.e. equipment and specific services) can be reimbursed. The website info:

[https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/information/stakeholder/cornoavirusrelieffund\\_crf.html](https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/dmhas/information/stakeholder/cornoavirusrelieffund_crf.html)

It may include staffing so look at the website at the presentation.

Harry offered to have Renee do additional presentation. Please let SHA know.

- Harry also announced that the Division put in for federal funding based on Opioid response. NJ is recipient of \$65.9 million grant for two years (this year and next) for a total of 131.8 million. The division is meeting with CMS to see if they can use any of the dollars for one-time costs such as security deposits etc.
- CSS subcommittee update, Division is reevaluating if this work can be moved forward.

4. Diane introduced Melissa Acree, Executive Director of NJ 211, [macree@nj211.org](mailto:macree@nj211.org) who was the featured presenter.

NJ 211 is a statewide nonprofit that has been answering the call for help since 2005. In 2019, the organization connected over 670,000 people to health and human service resources in local communities. On January 1, 2020, working in partnership with the NJ Division of Family Development and county agencies, they launched the state homeless hotline. Their role in this initiative is to provide live assistance, to help ensure that those experiencing homelessness have

a safe place to stay and to provide referrals to community resources. Their data on those connections tells a story of its own.

Melissa began by reviewing NJ 211 and where they are today.

Started by United Way, now serves 21 counties. 211 is a national dialing code providing service. The mission of 211 is to make a critical connection between individuals and families seeking health or human services and the community referrals best able to meet their needs.

- Resources food, utilities, health care, mental health needs, legal issues, child care, housing etc.

- 24 hours, 7 days week, any day of the year and the service is multilingual. 211 uses phone, live chat on home page, text etc., email. [www.211.org](http://www.211.org) has a searchable database.

- 2019 handled 667,000 contacts (230 live and the rest online). Comprehensive database is key, includes 10,000 services by 3,000 agencies. Provides offer free or low cost services.

- 2012 Home Energy Assistance hotline in partnership with Dept. 'Community Affairs.

- 2014 Coordinated Entry for Homeless in Middlesex, Morris, Passaic

- Jan 2020 New Statewide Homeless Hotline

- 2017 Addiction Helpline partnership with Division Mental Health and Addiction Services

- CyberCrimes Victims Assistance Hotline

- North Carolina 211 calls after hours

- Based on calls, the top Needs are housing, Utilities, food assistance

- Top Counties include: Essex, Camden, Bergen, Hudson, Passaic

- New Homeless Hotline – working with HMFA and database

Live assistance is critical, 24/7 365.

Caller response includes assessment, coordinate shelter and emergency placement, housing assistance and other referrals.

- Since inception earlier in the year they have helped 17,000 consumers with nearly 54,000 calls placed in every county.

- 76% are individuals that are single, 36% self identify as having at least one disability. Chronic Health and Mental Health are most prevalent disability. 53% 18-40, 14% over 60.

- 211 also has a considerable amount of resources on housing on website – users can use guided searches and then narrow the scope of searches.

Melissa took questions. Many centered around how to update from

a provider perspective and how often in general info in the database is kept up to date.

- New Code Blue Page – New protocol, place people in shelter or motel if they are experiencing code freezing weather. This is expanded from earlier services which listed shelters and were not in all counties. 7<sup>th</sup> and Madison agency offers Lyft transportation for any population, statewide in response to how clients can get to code blue shelters.

Presentations can be found:

<https://www.shanj.org/past-sha-membership-meetings/>

5. Diane Riley, SHA executive director highlights included:
  - a. Diane updated attendees on our Housing Navigation Course which began September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The course has been very successful. 35 students currently enrolled. The course has been adapted by SHA and is based on the successful Housing Navigation Course in NY State. 35 hours of training is planned. Lisa Roland from Horizon, a current student spoke about her positive experience in the class.
  - b. SHA will hold its annual conference virtually this year on Dec. 3 and 4<sup>th</sup>. The theme is Beyond the Looking Glass- Creating a New Community. 2 keynotes, 8 workshops, 2 ½ days, many outside speakers from across the United States because it is virtual. Registration will be affordable. Thank you to our current sponsors Valley, Enterprise, NJHMFA, Kitchen Associates, Withum, PNC Bank, M&T Bank, Meeker Sharkey, NewBridge, Fulton Bank. Still time to exhibit. Exhibits are going fast. We will be encouraging people to visit booths with prizes.
  - c. Diane identified a PPE opportunity she is coordinating for Tom Toronto at United Way. Reach out to Diane if interested.
  - d. Diane reminded everyone about our housing search which could accommodate shared living.
  - e. SHA is hosting a Leadership Workshop Lunch and Learn on Friday Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> presented by Arudia. The workshop will help attendees assess your leadership style with recommendations on how to make the

most of your strengths in that style and minimize the styles challenges.

The meeting concluded at 11:55 pm. Advocacy Committee meeting followed. Next meeting of the SHA membership is scheduled for Wed. February 3, 2021 our annual meeting. Conference December 3, 4 2020.

Submitted by Diane Riley, Executive Director