Happy New Year CONN NAHRO members and future members. Thank you for your continued support in 2019, we look forward to serving you again in 2020! Membership renewals have been sent out, as well as our website sponsorships. If you have any questions, or haven’t received a renewal notice, please reach out.

Thank you to our committees and chairs, it has been very busy as we prepare for the legislative session, and continue to promote the mission and message of CONN NAHRO. Over the past few months our members have met with staff of DOH, HUD, CHFA, Coalition to End Homelessness and other entities and we will continue to serve as their resource. Check out our committee chatter for full updates.

I am looking forward to our continued work in 2020 and beyond to build upon our past successes and look to the future of affordable housing here in Connecticut. My door and email are always open. Reach out with any questions or concerns. I look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at a future CONN NAHRO event.

Sincerely,

Jessica Olander
Executive Director
A recent Federal Register notice provides details of a HUD-proposed electronic collection of PBV data.

The notice illustrates the increased number of PBVs nationwide:

In 2016 **110,000**

In mid-2019 **215,000**

Future increases due to Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) **455,000**

Currently, HUD has limited info regarding RAD-PBV properties after their conversion from low income public housing and thus cannot monitor long-term viability.

Here is the info HUD proposes to collect; see Federal Register 12/26/2019 for more detail:

- HAP (Housing Assistance Payment) contract #, name & address of property
- Number of units by bedroom size
- Structure type
- Effective date of HAP contract
- Name of owner, management entity
- Other programs related to the property (tax credit, RAD, HUD-insured, VASH)
- Population served (general, homeless, vets, supportive services, elderly, disabled)
- Exception to income mixing requirement? (supportive services, elderly, disabled, low-poverty census tract, RAD, VASH)
- Vacancy payments permitted?
- End date of HUD-imposed “use restriction” on the property
Housing & Community Development
Article by Suzanne Piacentini
HUD Field Office Director

Over the years, those of us active in or actively paying attention to the housing and community development world, have witnessed the changing roles our public housing agencies (PHAs) are taking in our communities. PHAs are operating new and different programs for residents and utilizing a wider array of funding sources to both support and expand their existing business models. This is true not only in CT but across the country. Driven by the needs of those we collectively serve, as well as operating in an era of dwindling and often uncertain resources, agencies have become more creative, more responsive to local mandates and increasingly less dependent on traditional funding sources. This evolution is not necessarily a bad thing. We are aware that it has presented challenges, but are equally aware of the world of opportunities that have emerged when new partners and new funders were brought to the table, resulting in the creation of broader housing choices and programming opportunities for the residents and communities we serve. With this broader view in mind, we thought that we would look inside of HUD at programs and opportunities that some PHAs are utilizing but others may be unaware even exist but may find helpful as they consider where their PHA is headed in 2020 and beyond. Whether you are associated with a PHA that operates federal, state or a combination of programs, I urge you to consider the future with an open mind and the knowledge that your HUD Office, as corny and trite as it sounds, is really here to help – please give us a call.

First, a look at the HUD Office today. Located in Hartford, we are a staff of 43. Led by the Office of Field Policy and Management which is the first contact for elected officials, partners and anyone seeking information and services on HUD and its programs. They are the HUD Office charged with coordinating the Secretary’s priorities in the field and take on many special initiatives. Currently they are responsible for ConnectHome, EnVision Centers, Opportunity Zones, Promise Zones, and are backing up the program areas in the Secretarial highest priority areas including ending homelessness, Section 3 new rule, long term disaster recovery; removing lead based paint and other health hazards from home and enhancing housing affordability.

Although a smaller office by most standards, CT has on-site staff in all major program areas – Community Planning and Development; Fair Housing; Housing (Multifamily Asset Management as well as Single Family); Legal and of course, Public Housing. The CT Office also has Administrative staff and staff from both the Offices of Inspector General for Audit and Investigation. Additionally, there are staff in our Boston Regional Office handling environmental issues; fair housing; lead and healthy homes; legal; and multifamily asset management and development.

We also invite you to contact us if you are having difficulty working or reaching other Federal Agencies on specific issues. Some of the resources and programs that may be useful to you moving forward include:

1. **The HUD Exchange**: The HUD Exchange is an online platform for providing program information, guidance, services, and tools to HUD’s community partners, including state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, Continuums of Care (CoCs), Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), tribes, and partners of these organizations. Here you can find information on HUD programs and sign up to receive email alerts about certain HUD programs you select when you sign up https://www.hudexchange.info/mailinglist/

   - This is a great source for information on new niche grant programs that support our residents, these have included grants of interest from other federal agencies as well.

   - Recent grant announcements here have included Family Unification Program, Fostering Youth Initiative, Family Self Sufficiency

2. **Community Planning & Development**

   - Community Development Block Grants: HUD awards grants to entitlement community grantees to carry out a wide range of community development activities directed toward revitalizing neighborhoods, economic development, and providing improved community facilities and services. Entitlement communities develop their own programs and funding priorities. However, grantees must give maximum feasible priority to activities which benefit low- and moderate-income persons. A grantee may also carry out activities which aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight. In CT, the State and 22 cities and towns receive funds directly from HUD, their contacts can be found here https://www.hud.gov/states/connecticut/community/cdbg and you should reach out to these contacts, familiarize yourself with your locality (or the State if your community does not receive funds directly) and what they have planned to fund contained in their Five Year Consolidated Plan as well as their current Annual Action Plans and understand the timing for applications.

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COMMITTEE CHATTER

Program Committee – Chair, Hazelann Cook, Hamden Housing Authority
Monthly Meeting – February 27 – noon – Traditions Golf Course | 37 Harrison Road | Wallingford
PHA Cyber Security Awareness, presented by Mike Brillas of ZCS Housing Strategies
$35 for members / $50 for future members – includes buffet lunch

Monthly Meeting – March 26 – noon - Traditions Golf Course | 37 Harrison Road | Wallingford
The Value of Affordable Housing Accreditation, presented by Diana McWilliams of Affordable Housing Accreditation Board
$35 for members / $50 for future members – includes buffet lunch

Membership – Chair – Betsy Soto, Vernon Housing Authority
Membership renewals and website sponsorship opportunities have been sent via email.
Also, watch your email for a member survey so we can better serve you!
Thank you for your continued support!

Convention Committee – Chair – Bob Williams, CSC Serviceworks
Thanks for a great convention in 2019! We are looking forward to 2020!
Save the Date – August 23-26, 2020

Finance Committee - Chair - William A. Vasiliou, Middletown Housing Authority
FISCAL YEAR ENDING 9/30/2019

It is a pleasure for the Finance Committee to report that the financial health of our organization remains in a strong position at the end of the fiscal year. We maintained a healthy cash position of $478,048.00 at years end with all major obligations taken into account. Receivables were at past years comparable given the annual timing of our convention, our most significant revenue generator. Convention activity showed an overall increase in registrations and vendors in both numbers and revenues generated. However, venue expenses increased as well generating a slight decrease in net revenues from convention activities. Our second most significant activity, our golf outing, had sizeable increases in registrations, sponsors and raffle receipts generating an additional net income of some $5,000.00 over previous years. Receipts from membership and Baseball night in America also demonstrated positive growth. We also note we experienced significant expenses associated with exploring the feasibility of expanding into the area of insurance. The Finance Committee also submitted the Annual Audit for the fiscal year ending 9/30/2018 with no compliance issues or findings.
Housing and Leg/Liaison/Community Development
Over the past few months, members of these committees have met with representatives from DOH, HUD, CHFA, the CT Coalition to End Homelessness, among others. The goal is to for CONN NAHRO to continue to be the go-to resource when housing strategies are discussed within these groups. Commissioner Seila Mosquera-Bruno (DOH) and Executive Director Nandini Natarajan (CHFA) and staff sat down with CONN NAHRO membership to discuss issues of concern, upcoming legislative agenda, and moving forward together. The Legislative Session starts February 5, please stay tuned and watch your email for upcoming Legislative Action Alerts!

National NAHRO President Sunny Shaw has appointed the following three persons to the NAHRO Emerging Leaders Subcommittee.. Two of whom are from Connecticut!

1. Caileen Foley, Executive Director, Lexington PHA, Lexington, MA
2. Betsy Soto, Executive Director, Vernon PHA, Vernon, CT
3. John Hamilton, Executive Director, New Britain PHA, New Britain, CT

Also, congratulations to Liz Sulik of Stratford Housing Authority. Ms. Sulik was appointed to the National Legislative Network Leadership Team. This prestigious select group of persons provides guidance to staff on actions the larger LegNet Advisory group will act on in the next two years.

Got news to share? Email us at admin@conn-nahro.org and spread the word!

Like us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/CTHousingAuthorities/

Get all the updates at www.conn-nahro.org
This year, the state and most of the entitlement communities are updating their Consolidated Plans, it is the perfect opportunity for PHAs to educate their community on their needs and Agency plans and insure that any activities the PHA is contemplating are included in the Consolidated Plan.

- HOME: The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use - often in partnership with local nonprofit groups - to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to states and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households. In CT there are seven Participating Jurisdictions – the State of CT along with the Cities of Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, Stamford, and Waterbury. Again, the State or these Cities should be contacted to insure they are aware of the PHAs plans to expand their affordable housing stock and so the PHA understand the local program’s parameters.

- Homeless Programs: Through two Continuums of Care (CoCs) covering the State of CT, HUD funds our collective efforts to prevent and end homelessness statewide. PHAs have long been involved in housing some of our most vulnerable citizens but Notice 2013-15 Guidance on Housing Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness Through the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Programs, laid the groundwork for partnering with CoCs in new and innovative ways, in response to local needs to respond to the homelessness crisis. CT PHAs responded but more assistance is needed in certain areas. In addition, much has been learned since this Notice was first issued. Local collaboration, with locally driven strategies to meet local needs are strongly encouraged with HUD ready and willingly to facilitate conversations and help where needed.

3. Multifamily Housing

- Mortgage Insurance: Broadly, HUD’s multifamily mortgage insurance programs insure approved lenders against loss on mortgage defaults.

Loans can be for the new construction or substantial rehabilitation of multifamily housing; the purchase or refinance with limited repairs of existing multifamily rental housing. [https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/mfh/progdesc](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/housing/mfh/progdesc). These loans are underwritten by approved lenders [https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/aprvlend.pdf](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/aprvlend.pdf) and are long term (35-40 years) fixed rate, non-recourse loans, assumable with no pre-payment penalty.

- A question we often receive – Yes, project-based vouchers can be placed in a property that is insured with a HUD multifamily mortgage

- Do you work with private landlords looking for funds to rehabilitate their properties? These programs could be used to refinance with limited repairs and address physical condition issues that prohibit them from accepting vouchers or to bring new units to the market

- Multifamily Project Based Section 8: Some PHAs also own and/or operate MF properties that have a long-term MF project-based Section 8 contract. While these contracts are generally no longer available, they do still exist and are renewable.

- Multifamily Housing is also the Division which oversees the Section 202 (Housing for the Elderly) and Section 811 (Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities) programs both of which have changed dramatically over the years since their introductions. Currently there is an outstanding Notice of Fund Availability (NOFA) for the Section 811 Program which is open to non-profit sponsors, complete eligibility information is contained in the NOFA. Due on March 20, 2019, information can be found [https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=321435](https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=321435)

This is a snapshot of HUD's larger programs – in future articles - look for information on using other HUD programs – interested in a specific topic- please let us know.
Hopefully everyone is enjoying a happy and healthy start to 2020. I was lucky enough to spend a few days towards the end of 2019 in one of my favorite destinations: New Orleans, Louisiana. I was attending the annual seminar held by an organization called the Housing Authority Defense Attorneys (HADA) while I did my very best to put a dent in the local oyster population. I am sure that some would prefer dry heaves to spending part of the holiday season with a hundred defense attorneys but I always enjoy these meetings.

These HADA seminars remind me of CONN NAHRO’s seminars/meetings. Just like CONN NAHRO seminars and events there is always an invaluable exchange of practical and useful information from industry leaders. There are interesting and inspirational speakers, deeper dives into topics with experts during break-out sessions, helpful handouts and guides, usually at least three kinds of pens and a stress ball. Meeting other people from different backgrounds that share common values and a commitment to solving similar problems fosters a sense of fellowship.

There were a couple of legal issues that were identified as emerging issues for public housing authorities across the country: Fair Housing; HUD Litigation Reporting Requirements; Cyber Security.

**FAIR HOUSING**

Fair Housing compliance remains a top concern for public housing authorities across the country. Properly responding to reasonable accommodation requests appears to be the top concern of efforts to train and update staff. Over half the housing discrimination claims in Connecticut and nationwide are linked to a disability.

Another specific common concern was trying to formulate specific approaches and responses to HUD’s guidance on the application of Fair Housing Act Standards to Criminal Background Records used in real estate transactions. I think a lot of PHAs struggle developing meaningful approaches to accurately predicting HUD’s position on specific types of backgrounds. I maintain my position that HUD and CHRO are really only in a position to evaluate the process rather than any specific individual decision.

Reasonable accommodation requests and criminal background exclusionary policies should be considered events triggering the need to contact Fair Housing counsel.

**HUD LITIGATION REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Entities that receive HUD Assistance have a responsibility to initiate and/or defend all litigation involving said program/project to insure the proper use of federal funds.

Individual PHAs must provide Regional counsel with copies of the Complaint if it involves either: 1) Construction or application of a Federal, or State constitution, statute or regulation, HUD assistance contract or cooperation agreement; 2) If an adverse judgment would be satisfied from funds obtained at any time from HUD.

Further, HUD assistance recipients who are threatened with such litigation shall promptly notify the Regional Counsel of basic contact and Complaint information. The reporting requirements also include obligations to contact Regional Counsel before initiating litigation as well as before filing an appeal from an adverse judgment.

The reporting also covers settlements specifically—no settlement arising out of litigation shall be accepted by a PHA without the prior written concurrence of HUD. The terms of an offer must be communicated in writing to Regional Counsel together with the recommendations of the PHA. If an opportunity for settlement arises in the course of a trial, counsel for the PHA shall inform the Court and move for a continuance to give HUD an opportunity to concur.

**CYBER SECURITY**

Entities that have personal information have a duty to protect that data. Connecticut law requires entities in possession of personal information to investigate and notify in the event of a data breach. The odds of an event that qualifies as a data breach is over 25%. Connecticut law provides that a business that experiences a data breach is required to investigate and notify residents when protected information is compromised.

Connecticut law provides that protected information is defined as a combination of (1) name or other identifying info plus (2) or more of the following data elements: Social Security Number; driver’s license number; account number; credit card number; debit card number if accompanied by PIN, password or access codes. The costs of a data breach can be staggering: estimated real cost of $141 times the number of records compromised and potential fines of up to $150,000 per breach.

PHAs have a burden to: adopt a security framework and develop a cybersecurity plan and policy. PHAs should explore insurance coverage for ransomware including specific allowance for payment in cryptocurrency.
2020 CONN NAHRO’S ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY PICTURES
Public Housing Manager (PHM) Certification

Don't miss this opportunity to attend NAHRO Professional Development's Public Housing Manager Seminar!

In today's world of complex regulation, NAHRO's Certified Public Housing Manager (C-PHM) remains a sought-after credential demonstrating an individual's mastery of the basic principles of public housing management in the asset management environment. This four-day version of the PHM seminar (with the C-PHM certification examination administered on the fifth day) focuses on the administration of public housing management, key principles of public housing management, the roles and responsibilities of the public housing manager, the functions of occupancy, effective communication skills, safety and security, and market viability. The seminar also includes instruction around the history of public housing, ethics and maintenance.

The PHM Seminar will be presented by a NAHRO Faculty Member. Don't miss this opportunity to earn NAHRO's flagship Certification!

March 23 - 27
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM
(Monday - Thursday)
8:00 AM - 10:30 AM
(Friday exam administered)

Holy Trinity Greek Church | 937 Chase Parkway | Waterbury, CT

Member Registration Fee: $999
Non-Member Registration Fee: $1399

(includes continental breakfast, materials lunch each day, as well as administered exam)

Visit www.nercnahro.org today to register!

Professional Development – Chair John D'Amelia, J. D'Amelia & Associates

Rescheduled Harassment Training – February 7
AM Session – 9:00 am - 11:30 am
Lunch served 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
PM Session – 1:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Presented by Attorney Donn Swift
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church | 937 Chase Parkway | Waterbury, CT | $60 for members

LIHTC Training – February 19, 20, 21 – 3 day training

Presented by Samantha Sowards of Nan McKay
Option 1 – no exam - $500 per person
Option 2 – exam included - $600 per person

Each session includes continental breakfast and lunch each day.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church | 937 Chase Parkway | Waterbury, CT

Save the Date – Employee Training & Networking Day – May 8th at Holiday Hill!

Register Today: Opportunity Zones 101 for Public Housing Authorities
February 4, 2020 at 2:00 PM EST

The Opportunity Zones 101 for Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) webinar provides PHAs with an introduction to Opportunity Zones (OZ), including how they work, and how they can be used as a tool for community and economic development, specifically for affordable housing. The 60-minute webinar will discuss potential roles of PHAs and provide examples of ways that several PHAs across the country have engaged with OZ.

Register