



NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Approved – MARCH 15, 2018
MINUTES

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met in Regular Session at “McDonald House” at 49 Old South St. Northampton, Ma. on Monday, February 12, 2018.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Upon Roll Call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT: Commissioner Brooks, Commissioner Hebert, Commissioner Budgar & Chairperson Jones.

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Cara Clifford; Deb Dunphy; Thomas O'Connor; Jack Redman; Keith Walsh; Jason Potts; John Wyda; Larry White; Wayne Milo; Edgardo Cancel; Peter Cushing; Toni Parizo & Ronald Terren.

EMPLOYEE AND TENANT ISSUES

Employee Issues: None.

TENANT ISSUES:

John Wyda – Salvo – Regarding the new wheelchair signs “Van Parking Only” – other people are parking their cars in these spaces. Police Dept. said the cars can be towed. Also, speed bumps are needed as well as more Handicap spaces. Ms. Clifford stated that she is working on the Handicap spaces. There is a car with New York plates that has been parked at Salvo for about three weeks with a rear passenger flat tire. Ms. Clifford told Mr. Wyda to leave a message with Jack Redman and he will handle it.

Jeff Jones asked what the cost would be for speedbumps. Ms. Clifford said there are temporary ones that can be put in and she will check into that pricing. Otherwise, if we cut them in, it will take a while because it has to go into the Budget. Ms. Clifford asked Mr. Wyda to submit a letter to her regarding the purchase of speed bumps.

Ronald Terren – Forsander – Spoke about a tan car that was trying to park in the space next to his and ended up parking mostly in his space. She shouldn't be driving. Ms. Clifford told Mr. Terren to call the Police Dept. and they can keep a look out.

Toni Parizo – McDonald – Her old Apartment had mold in it and NHA moved her here. There is tar and nicotine in her new apartment and this apartment also has mold. Soap dish in the tub is loose, and mold came out of it.

Ms. Clifford spoke about the report from EMSL Analytical – it shows no black mold. Does not use our sampling, but we are going to get it tested using air samples in and out. We will schedule ASAP. Results usually take about three days. Jack Redman stated that House Master is tentatively coming on Tuesday, March 20th.

Ms. Clifford also stated that by the end of the day on Friday, March 16, 2018, Toni needed to turn in a set of keys. She cannot have keys to two apartments at the same time; still has property at Forsander.

Chairperson Jones stated that we need to get this issue resolved one way or another. He is willing to sit in on a meeting.

Peter Cushing – Forsander – Can the air vents get cleaned or get filters for them? Mold is blowing out of them in his apartment. Jack Redman will check into this. Ms. Clifford will see about getting his apartment tested. Peter spoke about tenants receiving late payment letters and people are getting upset about the wording. Attorney O'Connor said that certain phrases have to be included in these notices and an established receipt of the notice has to be done. Mr. O'Connor can meet with Mr. Cushing to see if anything can be changed. Jack Redman to send a memo to the tenants with explanation of procedure.

Wayne Milo – McDonald – He appreciates Ms. Clifford and Mr. Redman getting him from Salvo to McDonald and getting his new apartment in order and that they were working hard and doing a good job.

Edgardo Cancel – Hampshire Heights – Spoke about a lot of procedures through NHA that are not right. He has been working for two years in getting a Tenants Association at Hampshire Heights, holding an election and getting the bylaws. On February 6th he reached out to Ms. Clifford but has not received a response yet. Since Ms. Clifford came to NHA a lot has been done, but there are things that still need to be done. There is no playground at Hampshire Heights and there are predators around offering toys and candy to the children. He notified NHA about this. The Police dept. came to Hamp Hts. to speak with the families but no one from NHA showed up. They would also like to put in a Community Garden. He would like NHA to collaborate with us, not ignore us. He came to NHA yesterday to get an appointment with Cara and has yet to get one.

Ms. Clifford replied that she has responded to many of your emails. Today she spoke with an agency who will help him with the Tenants Association as some of the things were not done correctly. Ms. Clifford said things just don't happen overnight with the State and Federal Agencies. It has taken two years to get a parking lot which was just approved today.

Chairperson Jones asked if we can set up an appointment for Friday. Edgardo can meet at 10:00 am. On Friday. Commissioner Budgar asked if there are other sites where there is no Tenant Association. Ms. Clifford responded there are - Salvo, Florence Heights and McDonald.

Chairperson Jones said that every location should have a Tenants Association. Ms. Clifford said that the new RSC will help with the Federal Projects.

Commissioner Budgar asked about Salvo moving toward getting their Association back. Ms. Clifford responded that the tenants at Salvo like it the way it is now without one, by having Lynn King helping and also having John Wyda keeping an eye on things. Cahill is also involved with Salvo.

Mr. Cancel also talked about the new re-certification process not being fair. Why doesn't NHA inform tenants about charges that they are being billed for on repairs to an apartment after they move in.

Chairperson Jones said let's get the organization up and running and then have another meeting.

Approval of the February 2018 Minutes

Commissioner Budgar put forth the motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Brooks.

VOTING AYE: Commissioner Brooks, Hebert, Budgar and Chairperson Jones.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Jones approved the February 2018 Minutes.

OLD BUSINESS:

Approve Executive Director to enter into an MOU with the City of Northampton for purchase of sand, salt & gas. Executive Director has not heard back from the Mayor.

NEW BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION & MOTION:

Discuss law on board position replacement, by-laws, add Vice Chairman to bank accounts as signatory in accordance with the by-laws, assign Treasurer duties until appointment made.

The Treasurer signs about 1,000 checks per month. A signatory stamp takes 6-8 weeks to purchase. We would like to allow Mr. Hebert to continue as Treasurer until the new Commissioner is appointed. The Mayor said it will be the second week of April when it goes to the City Council and that is just for one Commissioner. It doesn't include the Tenant Commissioner. We have two vacant seats. According to the by-law, the Chair & Vice Chair can fill in for the Treasurer. Mr. Hebert to serve until the successor is qualified.

Commissioner Brooks put forth the motion to approve Mr. Hebert staying on as Treasurer until new Commissioner is appointed, seconded by Chairperson Jones.

VOTING AYE: Commissioner Brooks and Chairperson Jones.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Budgar and Commissioner Hebert.

Whereupon Chairperson Jones approved the Motion.

Chairperson Jones spoke to the Board about Commissioner Wallace resigning at our last Board Meeting on February 12, 2018 and Mr. Hebert's term up for re-appointment. The following morning Mr. Jones sent a letter to the Mayor. The Mayor responded that he is going to go a different way regarding Mr. Hebert. Mr. Jones respects what Mr. Hebert has brought to the Board over the last 15 years and the fact that he would still like to stay on the Board. Mr. Jones will respond to the Mayor again.

MOTION:

Bad Debt write off in accordance with DHCD requirements.

Commissioner Budgar asked how much money we are writing off. Ms. Clifford responded \$16,914.00 - it hasn't been done in about a year. Chairperson Jones asked if the Board would get monthly figures on the Executive Director's report. Ms. Clifford responded yes.

Commissioner Brooks put forth the motion to approve the write-offs, Commissioner Hebert seconded the motion.

VOTING AYE: Commissioner Brooks, Commissioner Hebert and Chairperson Jones.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Budgar

Whereupon Chairperson Jones approved the Motion.

At this time, the Executive Director's Report was read.

Ms. Clifford went through the total rents collected, re-certifications for the month, and wait list numbers. Total work orders for the month was 284, uncompleted from previous month is 69, work orders completed for the month is 225, and work orders incomplete is 59.

For the first time the Guyder Hurley Audit of the Northampton Housing Authority for the year ending June 30, 2017 found no findings in our Federal, State and Finance Audits.

Range queen fire stops are currently being installed at Salvo and Forsander as well as the annual inspections being conducted at both projects. Two NHA vehicles were sold for \$201.00. We are in the bid process for floor stripping and waxing at Forsander, Salvo, McDonald and Tobin.

Regarding the NHA website and Landlord Portal - it will give some streamlining to Section 8 which will in turn save us money. Commissioner Budgar asked what the timeline was for having the website up and running. Ms. Clifford said there are 8 designers she is going through before proceeding. Also, he asked what we are including in our website. Ms. Clifford said she checked the Boston Housing Authority website and was impressed with it as well as the Springfield Housing Authority's website. Mr. Budgar asked if people can apply for housing and pay their rent online? Ms. Clifford said no, not at this point.

Commissioner Budgar brought up the last two snowstorms where tenants couldn't get through to the Housing Authority as our phone service was down. Ms. Clifford said that when the phone was rolled over to the service it didn't connect and was down for a while.

Ron Terren from Forsander said the day after the storm NHA plows at certain times. At 3:00 a.m. the storm was still going – do they have until midnight the next day to move their vehicles? Jack Redman said it depends on the timing of the storm - we didn't tow as many vehicles because the storm lingered.

Employee Update: We still have (1) Workman's Comp still pending and there was one new Temp Hire – Kaitlin Hanning for Section 8.

At this time, Chairperson Jones asked if there were any questions or any other Business.

Commissioner Budgar put forth the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. seconded by Commissioner Brooks.