



NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Approved – APRIL 18, 2018
MINUTES

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met in Regular Session at “McDonald House” at 49 Old South St. Northampton, Ma. on Wednesday, April 18, 2018.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

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

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

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Cara Clifford; Deb Dunphy; Thomas O'Connor; Jack Redman; Maria Walton; Sharon Kimble; Jason Potts; John Wyda; Larry White; Ronald Terren; Jada Tarbutton & Walter Mozgala.

Chairperson Jones formally welcomed our new Board Member Marilyn Richards.

EMPLOYEE AND TENANT ISSUES

Employee Issues: None.

TENANT ISSUES:

Jada Tarbutton – Salvo – Spoke about there being confusion at Salvo regarding the no smoking rule. New tenants were asking about being 25 feet from the building when the signs say no smoking inside the building. People are also smoking on their balconies. She had a picture on her phone of a sign that she thought would be helpful. Jada also spoke about people moving in and getting accosted by other tenants about smoking – some of the new tenants did not know it was a nonsmoking facility.

Ms. Clifford asked her to send her a copy of the picture she had and she will also look into getting some better signage. NHA is looking into a smoke machine that is used in hotels that can clear smoke from apartments.

Larry White – Salvo – received a folder from Lynn, the RSC, on events that are going on. There was a reminder letter in the packet about no smoking in the building and also smoking 25 feet away from the building. Can a sign about smoking be posted in the bulletin board? Ms. Clifford said one of the newsletters will be posted in the bulletin board. Also, if tenants are confused have them contact the Housing and we can bring them in to go over the procedures. Mr. White said people are smoking in their apartments and in the common rooms. Ms. Clifford said that the security cameras will help this problem.

Ron Terren – Forsander – A few years back there was a survey done in building “N” on whether or not you wanted it to be a nonsmoking building. The next morning signs were up saying “No Smoking”. He asked the Board how much tax does the government get from each pack of cigarettes – tell them to take away the tax so people can smoke in their own homes. Ms. Clifford responded that the government subsidizes our apartments therefore we have to go by their guidelines. Mr. Terren wants names and addresses of people to contact regarding the nonsmoking issue. Ms. Clifford asked Jack Redman to go online and get the information letter that was sent to us regarding no smoking in Housing.

Jada Tarbutton spoke for Debra, a tenant at Salvo, about tenants throwing bread for the birds. Also, Roy Martin asked about a bulletin board. Ms. Clifford responded that Salvo has two bulletin boards.

Ron Terren brought up that he is smelling marijuana in the buildings at Forsander. There are also other smells in the building, a real chemical smell that some tenants are complaining about. Ms. Clifford asked if the person who is reporting this can speak to her about it. Mr. Terren replied that some of the older tenants don't want to cause trouble by speaking up and reporting things. Mr. Terren will meet with Jack Redman, Public Housing Manager on Thursday regarding this.

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Approval of the March 2018 Minutes

Chairperson Jones asked the Board if there is any discussion. Commissioner Budgar said he did not receive a copy of the minutes. Chairperson Jones said that it was emailed to the Board Members.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Budgar

Whereupon Chairperson Jones approved the March 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. Ms. Clifford once again asked if we should table this or take it off the agenda. Ms. Clifford recently asked the Mayor again about our contract that does not expire and it won't have any changes. This contract was done in 1946. Our Attorney contacted Mr. Hite and we found the contract. Commissioner Budgar asked if the Mayor has the paperwork, which he does. Ms. Clifford has not heard back from the Mayor. Chairperson Jones asked if this won't change any of our normal operating procedures, and he would like to get a confirmation from the Mayor on this issue.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION:

Approve Change Order #3 Fish # 214101 for M & W Heating relative to the DHW tank replacement at Hampshire Heights.

M & W is issuing NHA a credit of \$3,556.28. They did not have to replace all the insulation and were able to repair the insulation installed under the original contract. Hesnor Engineering has reviewed the proposed change order and find the credit to be reasonable and fair.

Commissioner Budgar asked if this was his favorite contract, and yes it is.

Commissioner Hebert put forth the motion to approve the credit, Commissioner Brooks seconded the motion.

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Budgar.

Whereupon Chairperson Jones approved the Motion.

MOTION:

Approve the State Capital Improvement Plan for 2019-2023.

Commissioner Budgar asked about the letter the Tenants Association signed, how there were only two listed. Ms. Clifford said Hampshire Heights and Salvo don't have Tenants Association at this time. The Tenants Association presents the Plan to the tenants but the residents don't have the knowledge to know what needs to be done, but they can share their input. Commissioner Budgar asked when we hear about the settlement money can we ask the residents what they want us to do with the money. Ms. Clifford said the tenants can fill out a survey when funding comes in but the Federal Government has control. She said some of the settlement money will go for the installation of cameras at all the properties. Commissioner Budgar said he wants the tenants to have a chance to say what is needed at their properties.

Chairperson Jones asked if we are on schedule with the Plan. Ms. Clifford responded that DHCD conducts "District Hours" which looks at the overall Capital Plan with NHA and makes modifications where needed. This process has been done.

Chairperson Jones spoke about the Tenants Association Letter of March 21st – can we reflect in the letter that we don't have four Associations. Ms. Clifford said that DHCD already has the letter and the plan and is awaiting Board approval and the plan probably can't be changed at this point.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

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 378, uncompleted from previous month is 59, work orders completed for the month is 251, and work orders incomplete is 68.

Northampton Housing received the highest ranking this year for PHA scoring. We were also awarded \$138,183 for 25 new VASH vouchers and we will be working with the VA on those.

We purchased five new speed bumps for Salvo. In May we will have the VMS audit, June will be the HUD audit and July will be the SRO audit.

Employee Update: We still have (1) Workman's Comp still pending, one employee out on medical leave and one new temp. hire – Maria Borrás.

Commissioner Brooks asked if there was any way the Board could be notified of the number of evictions monthly. Jack Redman stated that we have (4) on notice for April 30th. Commissioner Richards asked if we have any history on evictions.

Commissioner Budgar asked about the status of the cameras for Salvo and the NHA website. Cara said the cameras have not yet been approved on the 2018 Budget. She has an estimate of \$120,000.00. When approved, it will have a Fish number and we will be able to move forward. Regarding the website, she had three proposals with a variety of pricing. She still needs to make a choice but when she does it will happen quickly. Chairperson Jones asked if there is some kind of movement to address the Budget and why it takes so long for Housing Authorities to get Budget approval. Ms. Clifford said budget guidelines were not given to us until February and we submitted it on March first. In April they bounced it back to us. We only have 2 ½ months in which to spend the money on projects once the Budget is approved as the new Budget year starts July 1, 2018.

Commissioner Richards asked if there is a statewide Housing Authority Group to deal with these issues. Ms. Clifford responded that there is NAHRO and NEMA. These groups go to the Legislature and brings forth issues.

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 8:21 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Hebert.