



Board Approved – July Minutes

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met at “McDonald House” at 49 Old South St. Northampton, Ma. on Tuesday, July 23, 2019.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

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

PRESENT: Vice Chairperson Brooks, Commissioner Laufer , Commissioner Silver, Commissioner Jones and Chairperson Richards.

ALSO PRESENT: Jack Redman; Deb Dunphy Smith; Sharon Kimble; Tom O’Connor; Lynn King; Netanya Ortiz; Keith Walsh; Peter Cushing ; Toni Parizo; Brenda Thompson; Cindy Tobin; Erika Krause; Carolyn Choinard and Joseph and Angela Santaniello;

Approval of the June 2019 Minutes

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

VOTING AYE: Commissioners Laufer, Silver, Jones, Brooks and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Minutes.

NO PUBLIC COMMENTS

EMPLOYEE ISSUES: NONE

TENANT ISSUES

Sacred Elder –McDonald. He brought forth a dozen issues in May and June and has had no response. Dan Mihalak and Jude Sidney have also had no success in having a dialog. They will not participate in the grievance procedure. The grapes on the fence that were taken down have been there since 2013. They were planted by HELP yourself. Grapes were tested by Sacred Elder and found the fumes from the buses were on the grapes, pulled out the grapes and planted roses. He received a notice from NHA, feels he is getting blowback and wants a conversation with the Board.

Cindy Tobin – Forsander – Isn’t getting satisfaction from the noisy tenant. Also, needs audio system update. Two years ago she planted flowers and vines, they are perennials, don’t take them down! Thanked NHA for putting in her air conditioner.

Peter Cushing – Forsander – The Buildings have not been cleaned since May. It is has been a year since the intercom system was talked about – when will it be done? Some buildings do not have working doorbells. Thanks for cleaning up the bedbugs. Now we can’t use our exercise equipment in the community room.

Brenda Thompson –McDonald – The grape vines were healthy and growing. She said she was told verbatim – “Cara doesn’t like roses so I’m planting roses and she can’t take them out. “

Commissioner Laufer asked the question if the grapes were Public Housing property or City property.



Cara –We gave permission to HELP yourself. Modifying the grounds is a lease violation. We are having Attorney O’Connor researching to see who owns the land.

Commissioner Laufer also asked if the Forsander doors were on the Agenda.

Chairperson Richards asked for a Motion for a discussion on the Open Meeting Law which is not on the agenda.

Commissioner Brooks put forth the motion, seconded by Commissioner Laufer.

VOTING AYE: Commissioner Jones, Brooks, Silver, Laufer and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

The Attorney General has new clarification on the Open Meeting Law and Committees. The meetings now have to be posted with the agenda, minutes taken and open to the public. We have had some subcommittee meetings with two or three Board Members in the past and this was not done.

Cara said she spoke with Attorney Pender and he spoke with our Attorney, Thomas O’Connor regarding this. Attorney Pender stated that moving forward we should re-create the minutes on meetings that have already taken place.

Attorney O’Connor said we need to correct the past and come up with a summary of the minutes.

Commissioner Silver stated that it will be easy to revise, just keep it brief.

Commissioner Brooks stated the sub-committee meetings were By-Laws, Governance and the Air Conditioner Policy. Do we need the AG to tell them we have had meetings?

Chairperson Richards recapped and said Attorney Pender says going forward we must do this, and subcommittees of two have to comply.

Cara – what do the minutes need to include?

Attorney O’Connor – date, time, subject matter and place.

Commissioners Jones and Brooks were involved in a personnel sub-committee two years ago.

Attorney O’Connor – just do the three sub-committees.

Commissioner Jones – what did Great Barrington do?

Cara – the Committee terminated the Executive Director and then hired an interim Director. Went into Executive Session several times.

Commissioner Jones –When there is a grievance – it is a two person committee – the notice needs to get posted, agenda done and minutes?

Commissioner Silver – how about work done outside committee meetings?

Commissioner Brooks – decision by AG?



Chairperson Richards – will have questions answered for next meeting.

Questions – Commissioner Jones – grievance hearings.

Cara –Members that have questions, give them to her and she will get with Attorney Pender and Attorney O’Connor.

OTHER BUSINESS

Spoke with Attorney Pender and O’Connor – needs to put out a motion for discussion on the Tobin Roof Project. Agenda was already posted.

MOTION TO APPROVE FOR DISCUSSION

Commissioner Jones put forth the motion, seconded by Commissioner Brooks.

VOTING AYE: Commissioners Brooks, Jones, Silver, Laufer and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the motion to discuss the Tobin Roof Project.

MOTION TO APPROVE FISH # 214108 CERTIFICATE OF FINAL COMPLETION

Submitted by MDM Engineering Company for the Tobin Roof Project of \$9,835.22. MDM has submitted a Certificate of Final Completion to be approved less the credit of \$3,519.78.

Commissioner Silver – roof looks beautiful – who inspected it?

Cara – the Architect, DHCD pays for the project.

Commissioner Silver asked what the word “FISH” stands for? Cara will check and get her the information.

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

VOTING AYE: Commissioners Brooks, Jones, Silver, Laufer and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the motion.

OLD BUSINESS

Air Conditioner Charges. Cara received responses from 7 Housing Authorities. No One charges for electricity for air conditioners.

Commissioner Brooks – has lived atMcDonald for 19 years and was never sure why he has been charged.

Commissioner Silver –the current lease states residents pay. Needs to have an addendum to the lease. If the Air Conditioner Policy has it, then that also needs an addendum. Both need to be revised.



MOTION – TO REVISE POLICY FOR ELECTRICITY CHARGES

Revise the policy that tenants do not pay for electricity for air conditioners, but the installation charges remain.

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

BULLETIN BOARD POLICY

Commissioner Silver – needs OML revision in the minutes.

Cara – tabled so the draft can get to the tenants – did not happen yet, wants to give them 30 days to respond.

Commissioner Brooks put forth the motion to table, seconded by Commissioner Silver.

VOTING AYE: Commissioners Brooks, Jones, Silver, Laufer and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the motion.

WEBSITE UPDATE

The Board page is being finalized, Main page is done. Now adding office hours and who is at specific properties. We also have several pages in Spanish and a translation option. We will be live in September.

Commissioner Laufer asked if rent can be paid on website.

Jack Redman – we are in the process of checking into that option.

Commissioner Laufer – is it mobile accessible?

Jack – Yes.

Chairperson Richards – what are the provisions to make updates?

Jack – they will add 5 updates for free each month.

Chairperson Richards – Congratulations! Great Job!

NEWBUSINESS

APPROVE CHANGE ORDER #1 – TOBIN ROOF FISH # 214108.

Gutter Cleaning/resealing as opposed to replacement scope. Change order Fish #214108 submitted by M.D.M. Engineering Company is giving NHA a credit of \$3519.78.

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

VOTING AYE: Commissioners Laufer, Silver, Jones, Brooks and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION – APPROVE CERTIFICATE FOR PAYMENT #1 TOBIN ROOF FISH #214108



MDM Engineering has submitted a Certificate of Payment in the amount of \$92,245.00 – payment #1. Commissioner Jones put forth the motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Brooks.

VOTING AYE: Commissioners Laufer, Silver, Jones, Brooks and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION – APPROVE CERTIFICATE OF SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION TOBIN ROOF FISH#214108

MDM Engineering has submitted a Certificate of Substantial Completion to be approved and signed by the NHA Contract Officer. They have attached a punch list which includes manufacturer’s warranty, special warranty and Unit Prices –MDM has said that they needed to replace 4 ½ sheets of plywood. They will revise the record drawings to reflect this and to show their locations, and they will provide photographic documentation of the replaced plywood.

Commissioner Brooks put for the motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Jones.

VOTING AYE; Commissioners Laufer, Silver, Jones, Brooks and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION – APPROVE DHCDWORK ORDER SALVO SECURITY CAMERAS FISH # 214105.

This motion is to approve the Executive Director to sign the approved DHCD Work Order/Scope Number 5802.4734.201906061954, DHCD FISH # 214105 for the Security Cameras at Salvo House. Commissioner Silver stated that the minutes suggested prior conversations. Has there been a vote on this or did it happen before now.

Cara – this is ongoing and has been in the budget for a long time. DHCD is now on board.

Sharon Kimble – it has been approved in our budget and now we are getting to the next step.

Commissioner Silver –What has been approved?

Sharon - \$105,000.00. The Architect DHCD picked was \$11,000.00 over budget so we re-bid. We have specs now for 25-30 cameras. The Capital Plan is DHCD money.

Commissioner Silver – has there been a meeting a Salvo with the tenants and when was the notice sent out? Who is the resident advisory board?

Commissioner Laufer – who is going to have access to these cameras?

Cara – it requires a user name and password – to be voted on later.

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

VOTING AYE; Commissioners Laufer, Jones, Brooks and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Silver.

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.



MOTION – APPROVE INSTALLATION OF FOB ENTRY SYSTEMS TO COMMON ENTRY DOORS AT SALVO

Commissioner Silver – has there been a meeting at Salvo on this?

Cara – No.

Chairperson Richards stated that the tenants at Salvo have begged for tighter security.

Commissioner Laufer – Can they get replacement Fobs?

Cara – yes and they will be no more than \$5.00 and we can turn the Fobs off when they are lost.

Commissioner Laufer – do you have staff that can manage this system?

Cara – we have two senior service techs that have experience.

Commissioner Silver – Can we give the tenants back their \$5.00 if they find their Fob? Do we need a policy on this?

Chairperson Richards – we will take a look at the security policy.

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

VOTING AYE; Commissioners Laufer, Jones, Brooks and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Silver.

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MAY FINANCIALS

The Executive Director’s Report

The Executive Director asked the Board if they would like her to read it or not. Chairperson Richards asked to give a summary. Went over rents collected and work orders, move in’s and move out’s.

Tobin Manor roof replacement completed in July.

Hampshire and Florence Heights – public housing staff has successfully networked with the Northampton public Schools and Healthy to build meal program from 2 to 4 kids to an average of 14 children each day at the properties!

Forsander – NHA had a grand re-opening of the community room with a Barbeque with staff and residents.

All properties – New offices have opened at all of our properties at least 3 days per week. Positive feedback has been received from both residents and staff on the changes.

Section 8 – HUD has allowed us to enter into a revised MOU for our VASH ineligibles providing Servicenet in collaboration with the CoC and VA for chronically homeless Veterans. We have had 12 with Soldier On that we issued previously and 13 now with ServiceNet. We are one of only a handful of



Housing Authorities with this program and we hope to grow it further.

Commissioner Laufer – can people go in to the offices at do leases?

Jack – not yet.

Commissioner Laufer – is this upstairs at Florence heights? Jack – yes. Is Netanya in the office or doing leases? We will have a schedule as to when the offices are open?

Jack – there is a daily rotation.

Cara – is thinking about getting photo ID's for the staff.

Commissioner Silver – How many people are showing up and what are their reactions?

Jack – Salvo is full, Maria Walton is there two days and Lynn is there on Wednesdays. The first day open they had 16 work orders. Florence and Hampshire Heights are busy due to the meal program. Forsander/Tobin/Cahill people have gone in to greet the staff. Maybe when it is rent time, they will see more people. The Staff was nervous at the beginning but are more positive after the first week of operation.

Chairperson Richards asked what the VASH Voucher is.

Cara – this is a voucher only for Veterans.

Commissioner Laufer – is it Mass or Federal?

Cara – can be anywhere. We work with the VA to see what the needs are.

Chairperson Richards – is there more with ServiceNet or the VA?

Cara – This will allow other Veterans to get housing.

Commissioner Silver – Section 811 – Pam Schwartz – there is 150 million in mainstream housing voucher funding for non- elder or disabled vouchers.

Cara – she met with Gerry McCafferty and Peg Keller – the item Commissioner Silver is speaking about, we will bring to our August meeting.

Commissioner Silver asked if it is regionalized.

Chairperson Richards said we do not receive money, just the vouchers.

Cara – eventually the program will provide money to the Housing Authority.

Commissioner Silver – application simple?

Cara – there are two meetings scheduled next week - Section 8 program is very complex.

Chairperson Richards thanked Cara and staff for doing their due diligence on this program.



NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Cara – Grow Food is going to all our properties and the residents are very happy about this, but we have one resident at McDonald who does not want them to come here. They are at all the other sites but at McDonald. Most residents want this type of thing – i.e. podiatry, medical, blood pressure, etc.

Cara stated that Gary Depace our Fee Accountant will be here August 12th at 1:00 p.m.
NAHRO is also coming to NHA.

Commissioner Silver asked if there could be more advance notice for the change of Board Meetings.

Decision was made for the next two meetings to be on August 26, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. and September 9, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Commissioner Laufer put forth the motion to adjourn the July meeting at 8:15 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Brooks.