



# NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

---

## APPROVED FEBRUARY MINUTES

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met at “McDonald House” at 49 Old South St. Northampton, Ma. on Wednesday, February 12, 2020.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

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

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Deb Dunphy Smith, Sharon Kimble, Jack Redman, Keith Walsh, Tom O'Connor, Kaitlin Hanning, Lisa Donoghue, Jada Tarbutton, Joseph & Angela Santaniello, Diana Lawson, Rosa Figueroa, Sacred Elder, Mary Chapman, Roy Martin, Erika Krause, Ron Hebert and Mayra Pagan.

### EMPLOYEE ISSUES – NONE

### PUBLIC COMMENT –

Sacred Elder’s PCA spoke how the Board Meeting tonight was interfering with the residents Bingo night.

They have Bingo on Wednesday that starts at 6:15 p.m.

### TENANT ISSUES

Sacred Elder – McDonald – handed out a letter that he wrote to the Board and the Executive Director regarding the letter that was sent to the residents by Maitty Delhoyo, property manager for McDonald, regarding the emptying of their balconies. Residents feel that it is against their lease, and they are disregarding the letter sent to the tenants. He spoke to a tenant who used to be a Holyoke Building Commissioner and he said the balconies are connected to the building and they are safe. Sacred Elder asked how he would send notices to the Board members. The Executive Director read the memo that was sent to the residents, and also the lease, where it was pertinent. Chairperson Richards reminded Sacred Elder of the process – first meet with the ED and then go through the grievance committee.

Commissioner Silver asked if everything is to be removed – plants, etc.

Cara – No, the balconies need to be clean, no storage, and nothing that can be blown away.

Sacred Elder asked if the memo can be amended. Chairperson Richards said that she will look into it.

Myra – McDonald resident - the memo said the balcony has to be empty, hallways cleared of everything. Some people have a few things and others have a lot of stuff. It should be one to one regarding the balconies- don’t blame everyone. She has only been here two years, there are a lot

of Spanish residents – maybe the memo could also be in Spanish – she needs a translator.  
Perhaps residents don't understand everything, they should raise their voices on this issue.  
Cara – there are 4 people on the staff who speak Spanish. Any time a translator is needed, let us know.  
Jane Morrison – McDonald – she agrees with the hallways being clean, but amend the memo on the balconies. It also said to move the stuff from the balconies into the apartment? Maitty to clarify – meet with her to discuss.

Cara – REAC required to clean the stuff growing on the balconies.  
Erika Krause – McDonald – is a table ok for the balcony?  
Cara – we will get it straightened out. Mary Chapin – McDonald – other memos regarding the inspection – she woke up to someone trying to get into her apartment. Not good communication here. Do her plants need to be taken down on the balcony?  
Daniel Mihalak – McDonald – everyone here is sitting in dirty chairs with feces. He has gone to the Board of Health about this resident and he keeps asking to have this issue taken care of. Also the tenant next to him keeps knocking on his wall and keeps trying to say things about him.  
Jada Tarbutton – Salvo – tenants balcony – in the summer she puts a little dryer rack for laundry on her balcony.  
Cara – you have a different lease than McDonald which is Federal Housing.  
Roy Martin – Salvo – Patios at McDonald have a light screen, Salvo's is cement. Roy also asked about the advisory group – Cara is working on it. Roy – you have a good crew at Salvo. Jose saw some tenants doing something wrong, looked at the camera and called them into his office.  
Joe Santaniello – Salvo – it was windy the other day, should remove items from balconies that can blow away.  
Cara – There will be monthly meetings at all sites each month. McDonald's meeting is Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>.  
Diana Lawson – Salvo – thanks to the Salvo crew – they took care of her problem.  
Jada – her stove was fixed – good crew and well liked! The memo on snow removal needs clarification.  
Regarding the advisory board – Florence heights had a major grievance and they came to the board meeting.  
Erika Krause – have coffee for the meeting!

#### APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 2019 MINUTES

Cara stated that there were a few scrivener's errors.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Minutes.

## THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Went over rents collected and work orders, move in's and move out's.

Gerry Budgar had a lifetime commitment to Salvo- would like to put a picture of him in the Community Room.

She spoke that previously the minutes and the ED report be more detailed – do you want a copy of the ED report and the minutes summarized and pared down?

Commissioner Silver said she loves that idea. Also getting it in advance is good. However, if there is a big discussion have it written in depth more.

## NEW BUSINESS

Official recognition of Ronald Hebert who was a Board Member from 6/18/09 – 10/31/2018. Cara had presented Mr. Hebert with a clock.

Commissioner Silver – Ron used to sign her checks when she worked here.

Commissioner Jones stated that it was an honor and a pleasure working with you. Appreciated your feedback. Ran in his road race before he knew Ron. Thanks for everything!

Commissioner Brooks – I have known Ron a long time – and he cherishes the McDonald residents and his family. A great guy!

Chairperson Richards – Ron you are very much appreciated – thank you for your service.

## DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON THE PERMANENT CHANGE OF MEETING DATES AND TIMES

Third Monday of the Month? March will be the 16<sup>th</sup>.

## DISCUSSION AND VOTE – 2020 MEETING DATES

Chairperson Richards asked if the dates could be written down and put on next month's agenda.

## DISCUSSION – DATES FOR BOARD TRAINING 2<sup>ND</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> QUARTER AND TOPICS OF TRAINING

Chairperson Richards asked if they could submit topics to Cara.

Cara – yes, with dates and topic of trainings.

## DISCUSSION – BOARD EVALUATION FORM

Commissioner Silver said before going further, have a conversation on the tenants feedback.

Cara stated that she currently sends out to 10% of the residents a survey on Maintenance. It is helpful. Could include administrative questions also. What percentage of the review do you want?

On the ED performance evaluation form – doesn't like #6 and #7 – N/S and N/A for the ranking.

Chairperson Richards – agrees with Attorney Pender's comments and Attorney O'Connor's recommendation.

Commissioner Silver – not having the survey done at the same time as the ED Evaluation but is it part of the evaluation? Cara to provide to the Board – what do we do?

Cara – she does her survey monthly. She can provide the information monthly or quarterly.

Maybe consider more training for the Board – come up with topics you want to learn about.

Commissioner Silver – tenant input doesn't have to be the same time as the ED evaluation, but it should be looked at when the evaluation is done so we can answer questions. Was pleasantly surprised with the DHCD survey – did not know it existed. Cara – the DHCD survey does not go to most of the tenants – none to Federal Housing tenants.

Commissioner Silver – survey tenants monthly who have computers – there is no fee. Ask all of the tenants the same questions.

Chairperson Richards – make it an easy access for the tenants. Would include it in the evaluation. Call it not an evaluation as suggested by the Attorneys but something else.

Commissioner Jones – Cara if you send out to 10% of the tenants how many do you get back?

Cara – in January she sent out to 73 tenants and received 33 back. Jeff liked the evaluation form but send it out separately. DHCD form sent to 469 tenants and only got back 213 – is concerned about that.

Commissioner Silver – for a state survey that is amazing! Cara would you send out a separate evaluation from the Maintenance survey? How would you measure it?

Cara – how much of a percentage do you want used for the review?

Chairperson Richards stated that Commissioner Laufer is clear about speaking to the tenants.

Commissioner Silver – make changes to the form and bring it back – not mailing the forms.

Chairperson Richards likes the Survey Monkey.

Commissioner Silver – Board Evaluation form for the ED- feedback on the simplified form.

Cara – one question is really five questions.

Chairperson Richards – I think it boils down to how people think and interpret – she really appreciated the comments. Should send out both forms and see what everyone thinks.

Commissioner Brooks – simplification – I think you get wrapped up in an over-abundance of questions. Can do evaluation with a minimum of questions. When he sees people from other organizations here to meet with Cara – they seem to leave happy.

Commissioner Silver – but you are here and you get to see a lot that others don't – she would like to have more information to go on. Mr. Brooks is incredibly invaluable to the Board.

Commissioner Jones – the more we get into it, the more confusing it is. Trust in Attorney Pender's letter. Red flag on the Board delegating too much. How much will we use the surveys? We are a quasi-government, not City Government.

**Commissioner Silver put forth the motion to adjourn the February meeting at 8:10 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Jones.**