



NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

AUGUST 27, 2020
AUGUST MINUTES

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met via “Zoom” meeting on Thursday, August 27, 2020.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

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

PRESENT: Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Brooks, Commissioner Jones; Commissioner Silver joined the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

ABSENT: Commissioner Laufer

ALSO PRESENT: Cara Leiper; Deb Dunphy Smith; Keith Walsh; Sharon Kimble; Lisa Donoghue; Jose Cruz; Heather Maxwell; Tom O'Connor; Joseph & Angela Santaniello; Roy Martin; Jada Tarbutton; Lisa Sargent; Hildegard Freedman; Mary Chapman; Katherine Messina; Donyael Parrish and Jennifer Kirkpatrick.

Gary Depace, fee accountant was to present the FY20 financials. NHA was given an extension to file until the end of September. Since not all the Commissioners were present, Commissioner Brooks put forth the motion to table the financials presentation, seconded by Commissioner Jones.

VOTING AYE: Commissioners Brooks, Jones and Chairperson Richards.

VOTING NAY: None

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the tabling of the financials.

TENANT ISSUES:

Lisa Sargent – Salvo #627 –has issues with security and tenants smoking. She has health issues and tenants are smoking in their apartments. Her doctors have sent letters to NHA but nothing has been done. Isn't smoking banned?

Jada Tarbutton - Salvo – Thanks to Maintenance for their help the other day – Jorge, Mike and Pete. Yes, there are smoking issues at Salvo. There is a liquor store across the street and she has noticed a lot of people going to the package store. Thinks there is a lot of alcohol abuse. There is a man at Salvo who has women fearing him. 7 women have been accosted by him. He knocks on your door then hides, gets into apartments, is exposing himself.

Cara – we are aware of the issue and are working with the Police Dept.

Roy Martin – Salvo – there is a rash of people banging on doors asking for money. Spoke to the manager about smoking out front, peeing in the elevator. There are many people smoking at Salvo. Joe Santaniello has been sitting on the bench outside to watch. People not wearing masks. Lots of parties at night. When we had security this did not happen. Someone took a swing at me and the Police were called.

Mary Chapman – McDonald – are the property managers working remotely? Having issues getting in touch with the manager. Cara – someone will reach out to you Friday morning.

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Jennifer Kirkpatrick – Hampshire Heights – doing a lot in the gardens. Many tenants grow their food and also use it as medicine and as therapy. Can we have a discussion in January regarding the gardens next year, doesn't want the garden taken away.

Cara –did you talk to the project manager? Yes and the RSC, try to have conversations but they are tight lipped. Jennifer would like to see if they could get rain barrels and a hose. She has set up her own rain barrel near her apartment and she doesn't have basement leaks anymore.

Cara – if you are having an issue with the property manager, set up a meeting with Jack and the manager. Call me if you aren't satisfied with the conversation.

Joe Santinello – masks are still an issue – people aren't wearing them. Any suggestions? Cara – Jack will there be more masks getting to the residents? Jack – yes in September.

Angela Santinello – when they are doing their neighborhood watch she notices strong smoke smells on floors 2,3,5 and 6. It was also on the 4th floor but the tenant moved and issue is resolved. Lots of trespassing going on, Police are called but there is nothing they can do. People are threatening tenants and they have been threatened as well. Also, there are a lot of people hanging out at the Senior center, sitting on their benches. Is it possible to have a meeting with the neighborhood watch and Board?
Cara – no, it would have to be with the property manager, Jack Redman or myself.

Chairperson Richards – what are the rules for executive session?

Angela Santaniello – rain barrels might not be a good idea as it may attract mosquitoes.

Katherine – Salvo #505- concern with the heating season and the air quality with covid. Wondering if the air filters she sees on the news can be installed at Salvo.

Hildegard Freedman – Cahill – Marcus Gabriel from the health dept informed her he has resigned – there was an uneasiness with the relationship with Jack Redman. There was a letter sent in March about things that needed to be done in her apartment. Paperwork was faxed to NHA. Corona virus is a public health issue.

Attorney O'Connor – would discuss trespassers – not on the agenda.

The Executive Director informed Commissioner Silver of the extension of the financials to the end of September.

Chairperson Richards – thanks to the NHA staff for doing their best during this time. Are there any staff comments?

Donyael Parrish – thanks the Executive team – given huge support and the technology to work at home.

EMPLOYEE ISSUES: NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

Approval of the July 2020 Minutes

Commissioner Silver – need to change what she said on page 2 – from “ fraud” to “ flawed” regarding the survey.

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 July 2020 minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION TO APPROVE VALLEYBIKE STATION AT WALTER SALVO HOUSE – EASEMENT AND POWER USE AGREEMENT.

The City has approached us about doing an easement like we did at Hampshire Heights. It was well received at Hampshire Heights and there is an increased need around Salvo, so we are excited this opportunity has presented itself. There is no cost to the Housing Authority. They may also need to tie into our power.

Commissioner Silver – the letter from Wayne Feiden said there was an attached sketch – there was no sketch attached.

Cara – it is towards the front of Salvo, between the Gazette and Salvo.

Commissioner Silver – will it take up garden space? Cara – no, the gardens are towards the back. Jack was able to put up on the screen a copy of the sketch for everyone to see. Commissioner Silver would like a copy emailed to her.

Commissioner Brooks – how close is it to Conz Street? He is worried about people getting their bikes and shooting out into the street.

Chairperson Richards – it is worth it to get the bikes there.

Commissioner Brooks – Attorney O'Connor is this a liability for NHA?

Attorney O'Connor – when the last easement was done with Hampshire Heights this was covered. If this goes through, we should copy the Hamp Heights easement.

Chairperson Richards – will this be hard to approve?

Attorney O'Connor – I would like to see the easement before this is approved. Is the city on a time frame/

Cara- yes. Can this be approved so that we don't keep going back and forth on issues?

Commissioner Silver – I am ok with it as long as Attorney O'Connor is involved. Commissioner Brooks as well as Chairperson Richards both agree. Chairperson Richards says this is a wonderful thing!

Commissioner Silver put forth the motion to approve pending same/similar terms as Jackson Street and the fee is negligible, seconded by Commissioner Brooks.

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

VOTING NAY: None

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Easement.

MOTION TO APPROVE FY2021 HCV PAYMENT STANDARDS

There was a very small increase in the Fair Market Rents that were just released by HUD. We have opted to do 110% of the FMR's which is the maximum HUD will allow. This allows voucher participants access to additional housing because the max rent we can pay a landlord is slightly higher.

Commissioner Silver 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 HCV payment standards.

Commissioner Brooks asked when the rent evaluations at McDonald would occur?

Cara - they have been done at other properties - October 2021 will happen for Florence Heights and McDonald. On September 15, you will receive a notice from Maitty.

Commissioner Jones put forth the motion to adjourn the August meeting at 5:02 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Brooks.