



## NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

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### MARCH 2021 MINUTES APPROVED BY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APRIL 26, 2021

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met via “Zoom” on Monday, March 15, 2021 at 6:45 P.M.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:45 P.M.  
Upon Roll Call, those present and absent were as follows:

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Richards; Vice Chairperson Brooks; Commissioner Jones; Commissioner Silver; Commissioner Laufer; Commissioner Cancel & Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.  
**ALSO PRESENT:** Cara Leiper; Jack Redman; Keith Walsh; Sharon Kimble; Deb Dunphy Smith; Attorney Tom O'Connor; Donyaël Parrish; Heather Maxwell; Lisa Donoghue; Kaitlin Hanning; Jose Cruz; David Arce; Attorney James Pender; Roy Martin and Mary Chapman.

#### TENANT COMMENTS

Roy Martin, Salvo resident – how come we don't have an outside secretary instead of Cara? Also there is a problem with people at Salvo; I talked to Jose today and he is working on it. Dogs are pooping in the elevators, etc. The cameras should be checked at least once a day and then you can see outside who is not picking up their dog poop, and then should receive a letter from Housing.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT – NONE

#### STAFF COMMENT -NONE

#### APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 2021 MINUTES

Vice Chairperson Brooks put forth the motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

**VOTING YAY:** Chairperson Richards, Vice Chairperson Brooks, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Silver, Commissioner Laufer, Commissioner Cancel and Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

**VOTING NAY:** NONE

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the February minutes.

#### APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 2021 MINUTES

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

**VOTING YAY:** Chairperson Richards, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Silver and Commissioner Cancel.

**VOTING NAY:** NONE

**ABSTAIN:** Vice Chairperson Brooks, Commissioner Laufer and Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.  
Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the January minutes.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### **DISCUSSION AND VOTE OF THE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FORM**

Chairperson Richards did a recap of what has transpired in coming up with a new form. It started in November of 2019 where the NAHRO form was discussed and it was thought to be too general and if it could be online if possible and the 360 evaluation was questioned. In December the Board liked the form Commissioner Silver did with some changes. Chairperson Richards went over the email of Attorney Pender from February 2020 regarding the evaluation forms and the 360 review form more commonly being used in the private sector. At the last Board meeting the simplified version of the new form was liked. Attorney Pender was in the zoom meeting and Chairperson Richards asked him if she gave an accurate summary of his email.

Attorney Pender – yes, it was an accurate summary of my email. If this was an open meeting then my advice is that it shouldn't be shared publicly.

Commissioner Silver – we had abandoned the 360 evaluation and the tenant information and the city groups could come from DHCD evaluation and the Maintenance surveys. Also, regarding the Annual Plan on page 70 – it states 2018 tenant survey - have not seen a tenant survey for the last year and we are told they are done annually – this needs to go to the Board. We aren't looking at the latest version of the ED evaluation form that was revised and sent this afternoon. So as not to risk any open meeting law, I sent it to Jack, Cara and Marilyn and asked to post the latest version that Cara reminds me to be brought up in March that reflects Board comments. Cara emailed back refusing saying the only things on the table is what was sent out in the packet, despite the fact the Board had weighed in and I had tried to respond to that. Effectively we aren't looking at the latest version and we are being told we can't. I would like to continue to April so everyone can see the latest version rather than being told after all the work that we aren't going to look at it.

Cara – at 4:45 today you sent me a form to be included in tonight's meeting, saying we didn't send out the proper form. Yet the form you sent has never gone out to the Board. My staff and I have checked all emails coming in and the Board packages, and this form has never been seen by anyone on the Board, unless you handed it to them directly, or I have missed it. Do you have another email where you sent it out? My response was that I wasn't introducing a new form, what I've been instructed to do by the Chair, which is what I am supposed to do, is to send out the current approved form and your form which was modified and sent last month. So that the Board could decide on whether they were going to stay with the current form or to change to a new form. I further asked you to stop reaching out to staff as it is inappropriate. Not that I wouldn't send the proper form.

Commissioner Silver – what I was sending to Jack was postings of low income programs and information that would be helpful to tenants. Apologies, Cara, I won't do that anymore, I'll go to you and you can post them yourself. With respect to the Board Evaluation this is the latest version and I took into account the complaints of length, no longer to get the 360 and to City entities, go to organizations, to go the media, go to a number of places. This is what is left and to do service to the Board they should see this version which is what we came up with. That's all I am asking and to move to continue the discussion to next month.

Cara – who is we?

Commissioner Silver – the Board in its many conversations over many months.

Commissioner Silver – there is a motion on the table to move the conversation to next month when Commissioner Laufer can be present and the Board can get a chance to look at the latest iteration that we had had, rather than what the Chair has unilaterally taken upon herself to redo and present as a fait accompli to this Board

Commissioner Laufer – I thought Commissioner Silver brought this revised form at last month's meeting?

Commissioner Jones – my main concern is that I thought we were running out of time for Commissioner Laufer to contribute, I wanted to make sure we got her voice in and now we are taking up a Motion to continue the discussion to next month and I assume she will be present.

Chairperson Richards stated that she would like to present a friendly ammendment – I don't see anywhere that the Board had to approve the form that is used only that we are responsible to evaluate our ED. So I guess my solution to this as we've spent much too much time on this already. Commissioner Silver has put hours on this version, she did do as the Board asked and shortened it but I would like to get the evaluation done on time, we are already late because of Covid and I will send out all forms and people can look at them, mull over and decide what ones to fill out. Would you go with that Commissioner Silver as a friendly amendment?

Commissioner Silver – essentially you are continuing the conversation to the next meeting right?

Chairperson Richards – no, I am starting the evaluation by sending the forms. People can fill out the form they are most comfortable with, the form they like the best.

Commissioner Silver – No, that wasn't the motion. The motion is to continue discussion to next month and I do think the Board needs to approve the evaluation form. I don't think you can choose which form to use and that's it.

Chairperson Richards – I don't know if that is correct, that the Board does not approve the form itself.

Commissioner Silver – we have a Motion on the floor let's vote on it.

Chairperson Richards – you aren't accepting the friendly amendment?

Commissioner Silver – I don't think it is an ammendment, you are not making an amendment to a Motion, you are asking to dismiss this entire conversation and give each member an opportunity to fill out whatever form they want to fill out. I don't think that is a reasonable way for the Board to have a uniform evaluation system. No, I don't consider that an amendment to the Motion.

Chairperson Richards – I just think we have spent way too much time on this and in the meantime Cara hasn't been evaluated. I think the form is incidental and it doesn't need to be approved by the Board. No need to carry it over if you don't want to accept the amendment.

Commissioner Laufer – I vote yes to putting it on next month's agenda.

#### MOTON – TO CONTINUE THE DISCUSSION TO THE APRIL BOARD MEETING ON THE FORM USED FOR EVALUATION

Commissioner Brooks – YAY

Commissioner Jones – YAY

CommisSioner Silver – YAY

Commissioner Cancel – YAY

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – NAY

Chairperson Richards – NAY

The motion carries and the discussion will be continued to next month's meeting.

Commissioner Silver – you will send out the form I sent out today? Chairperson Richards – yes.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Discussion and vote of the Northampton By-Laws

Chairperson Richards – can you give us an overview?

Cara – there is one major change and the elimination of some committees.

On page 1 – changed the Board from 5 to 7 members and the Board quorum from 3 to 4. Page 2 – 5 to 7 Board Members and quorum 3 to 4. Page 4 & 5 removed the Executive committee, Governance and Policy Committee, and Finance committee and changed the numbers on the remaining committees. Page 6 – removed when the Board meetings occur and added #10 New Business under Order of Business. Page 7 – changed the By-Laws vote from 3 to 4 Board Members under Amendments.

Chairperson Richards – the Executive Committee, Grievance and Finance committees have not met, we tend to do things as a Board, so if we are not doing what our bylaws say, even though most of them do say “as needed” it feels like that has been our practice and that is an option to include that in the bylaws. The only other one is CPA and that is in the bylaws. In the NAHRO training they did suggest that we do not have committees that we do the work as a Board. That doesn’t mean that one person couldn’t say I agree to go and work on this, that or the other and then come back, but we tend to work as a Board, that has been our practice.

Chairperson Richards – can we discuss any of the changes?

Cara – yes

Attorney O’Connor – the Board can vote on an amendment if you choose. The bylaws read that only if it is a special meeting do you need to have the new bylaws in hand for 7 days. If the Board wants to get this issue off the table tonight they could.

Vice Chairperson Brooks put forth the motion to continue the discussion of the By-Laws until next month, seconded by Commissioner Cancel.

ALL IN FAVOR

ABSENT – COMMISSIONER LAUFER

Chairperson Richards – Motion carries.

Commissioner Jones – there was a personnel sub-committee when I first started on the Board. If you have a tenant disagreement it goes to the committee, if there are any Administrative personnel problems – how is it dealt with?

Cara – The committee is listed in the current employee handbook- two Commissioners hear the grievance and then resolved by the full Board if necessary. I don’t think that has ever been in the bylaws as a Committee, correct me if I am wrong, we would still hold true to that because it is part of the personnel handbook. Commissioner Jones and Brooks are on this sub-committee. I can add it to the By-Laws if you want.

Commissioner Jones – food for thought, push the discussion to next month.

## MOTION

### APPROVAL OF THE STATE ANNUAL PLAN 2022

Chairperson Richards – overview?

Cara stated it was for State properties and documents were compiled by staff, projects included. On January 28, 2021 it was posted on our website and in offices. Capital Plan is shown for 2022-2026. Anyone can ask the Property Managers for a copy of the plan.

Chairperson Richards – congratulations to you and your staff for putting this booklet together.

Commissioner Cancel – when is the Hampshire Heights paving going to be done that was to be done in 2019?

Cara – We had some Boilers that needed repair at some of the properties which pushed out the paving of Hampshire Heights. It is a big project – 623,565.00 with money coming from FY21 and FY22 budget.

Commissioner Cancel – will it be done in 2022? Cara – yes. Commissioner Cancel – this project started in 2017 and has been going on for many years – will something else push this out? It is not fair to the Hampshire Heights community. I took a ride through there recently and the roads are really bad – can the project be expedited?

Cara – the state provides the funding, this is a huge project and there were two other projects that needed to be done first.

Commissioner Silver – thank you Commissioner Cancel for bringing this issue up. On Page 70 of the plan-tenant surveys – what is in place is outdated as well as Maintenance surveys. Cara – this is what we have for surveys, we have not received any newer ones. We can summarize the Maintenance survey if you want.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – can Salvo connect with local schools and colleges to maybe do some landscaping at Salvo?

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

**VOTING YAY:** Chairperson Richards, Vice Chairperson Brooks, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Silver and Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

**VOTING NAY:** Commissioner Cancel

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Laufer.

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the State Annual Plan.

### MOTION

Approval of Certificate of Substantial and Final Completion of FISH # 214105 for Salvo security cameras.

Payment # 1 - \$111,409.00, change order - \$16,239.42, payment # 2 - 127,648.42, payment # 3 - \$52,388.43.

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

**VOTING YAY:** Chairperson Richards, Vice Chairperson Brooks, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Silver and Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Laufer.

**ABSTAIN:** Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the motion.

Commissioner Laufer asked if the meeting time can be changed to 5:30 in the future. Everyone agreed that time would be fine. Cara – change all future meetings to 5:30?

Commissioner Silver asked that the next agenda include discussion of the timing of the delivery of the Board package.

Chairperson Richards – people get the information out to the Board as soon as they can. Cara did get the Board Package out on Thursday afternoon.

Commissioner Silver – can be put on the agenda and put into the By-laws, let's discuss and vote.

Chairperson Richards – I am happy to put it on the agenda but we had this discussion during the January 2020 Meeting.

Cara – I would like to get information to you early as well, I don't sit on items, I try to get them to you ASAP.

Attorney O'Connor – this has been an issue for many years. Cara is a conduit for information and gets it out as quickly as she can.

Vice Chairperson Brooks put forth the motion to adjourn the March meeting at 7:50 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.