



NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Approved – OCTOBER MINUTES

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met at “McDonald House” at 49 Old South St. Northampton, Ma. on Monday, October 21, 2019.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 6:31 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: Maria Walton, Deb Dunphy Smith; Sharon Kimble; Keith Walsh; Lynn King; Gary Depace; Donyaël Parrish; Tom O'Connor; David Arce; Cody Gessing-Ames; Richard Donohoe; Brenda Thompson and Erika Krause.

Approve the FY20 Budget Resolutions #1182-400C; #1183-689C and #1184 MRVP. There was a scrivener's error on the Agenda where these were listed as Motions but they are resolutions.

Gary Depace, NHA Fee Accountant, presented the FY20 Budget and quarterly financials and stated that the budget is due to DHCD by November 15th. Commissioner Silver asked what happens if we don't meet that deadline. Gary replied there is a deadline, Sharon can you explain. Sharon Kimble, CAO explained that it will affect our PMR (Performance Management Review) certification deadline. Commissioner Silver said well DHCD is always late, so what will they do? Sharon again replied that it affects our score; Ms. Leiper said which can also affect our funding. Commissioner Silver replied that she will not be voting on a budget that she doesn't understand. She needs more time and information before approval. Commissioner Silver would also like a copy of the Maintenance Contract that went into effect July 1, 2019. There was a discussion on changing the date of the next Board Meeting to have time for review of the Budget.

Mr. Depace also spoke regarding the transfer of funds to Section 8 to offset the administration fees which are only 94.8% funded. There was also a discussion of the new Organizational Chart for NHA to meet the HUD directives from the HUD review. Gary went over the 400, 689 and MRVP Quarterly Operating Statements.

APPROVAL TO CHANGE THE DATE OF THE NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING

Commissioner Silver put forth the Motion to change the date of the November Board Meeting from November 25, 2019 to November 4, 2019 so that it can be submitted to DHCD on time. Commissioner Laufer seconded the motion.

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved November 4, 2019 as the new date.

TABLED

The transfer of \$100,000.00 to Section 8.

APPROVAL OF THE QUARTERLY FINANCIALS

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 Quarterly Financials

EMPLOYEE ISSUES – NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT - NONE

TENANT ISSUES

Richard Donohoe, Salvo resident for 4 years, asked why the Board Meetings are announced so soon before they are held? Also believes the postings should be bilingual. It doesn't give residents enough time to be able to attend. Regarding the Tenants Association – there is little to no effort to encourage residents to have an Association. The attitude of residents taking care of the property, etc. is gone. He also likes the reorganization of the Bulletin Boards. In summary his concerns are: Outreach, Input of Residents, Meeting Notices.

APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 2019 MINUTES

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 Minutes.

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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

Forsander Tenants Association became defunct for one year.

NHA collected \$4,317.90 in delinquent rents due to the help of staff and outside agencies.

Jack Redman went to the CPA meeting to speak on behalf of our application for playground funding.

Forsander entry system – NHA has been faced with many road blocks and are currently looking at other viable options.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Table the Hampshire Heights Playground and Website Update as Jack Redman has that information and he was unable to attend the Board Meeting due to illness.

Chairperson Richards asked if the website would be up and running before the next Board Meeting.

Commissioner Jones spoke about the Community Preservation Act and that he is a current board member. During the last CPA meeting, Jack Redman was in attendance along with Netanya Ortiz, and he spoke about the Hampshire Heights Playground. Commissioner Jones wondered why Jack did not address the Corticelli St. house. He also said the funds for the playground will come out of the recreation budget, not the affordable housing budget. Commissioner Jones said the next CPA meeting is November 6th and NHA needs to get support for the playground and speak during the public comment. CPA members had questions about the Hampshire Heights playground as they said Jackson St. School is very near Hampshire Heights.

DISCUSSION

Board Member and Staff Training – Chairperson Richards said the two trainings were very helpful and 5 or 6 Housing Authority Board Members attended as well as NHA staff. Chairperson Richards said the first seminar was regarding Budget and Financials which was very helpful. The second seminar was about the responsibilities of the Board Members and their role as a Board as a whole, Professional Relationships and the Executive Director Evaluation. Chairperson Richards thanked Commissioners Brooks and Laufer for attending the seminars and asked them to speak about what they derived from their training. She stated that the training was very helpful and all Commissioners should attend and asked Ms. Leiper if she could see about arranging it.

Commissioner Laufer – She attended the Financial and Personnel seminar. She learned what to ask about the Budget, funding, policies, and monthly financial statements. Mr. Driscoll did the personnel part of the training and spoke about the responsibility of the commissioners and their role as an individual member versus the Board as a whole. Also the role of HUD and DHCD and the responsibility of the board in hiring an Executive Director.

Commissioner Brooks - Attended the Professional Relationships Seminar.

He learned about the role of the Executive Director and the Commissioners and an overview of resident issues. He found Mr. Driscoll to be a bit over zealous. He said he is a good guy but he has been to better seminars.

Chairperson Richards – The Seminar was very valuable. Mr. Driscoll has valuable experience, and we also have a ways to go as a collective Board.

DISCUSSION

Evaluation Update – Chairperson Richards stated the sub-committee met and talked about forms and process and Executive Director evaluation. She stated that the NAHRO forms and process was different and all versions will be presented at the next Board meeting. Commissioner Silver spoke about the process for next year. New forms will be presented at the next Board meeting. NAHRO form from the training is not like the forms she has worked on.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION – APPROVE THE 3 YEAR AUDIT CONTRACT BASED ON RFP

The NHA put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Audit Services for a (3) single year Contract for each fiscal year. Proposals were to be emailed to Sharon Kimble by Monday September 30, 2019 by noon. The three accounting firms were: Jason Geel, CPA ; Roy & Associates and Marcum Accounting Services. Jason Geel was not able to submit a bid, Roy and Associates did not respond and Guyder/Hurley has merged with Marcum who gave us a bid for the three year contract to conduct our annual Audit.

Commissioner Silver put forth the motion to approve the three year contract, seconded by Commissioner Jones.

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION TO ADOPT SECTION 8 PAYMENT STANDARDS BASED ON HUD'S NEW FMR'S.

Per our Section 8 Administrative Plan, the Board of Commissioners establishes Payment Standards used by tenants in seeking rental units. The payment standard is mostly used to calculate the amount of housing assistance a family will receive from the NHA. The existing Payment Standard is approximately 110% above the new FY20 FMR. The motion before you recognizes the dual goal of providing residents

with the ability to find and keep an apartment in a tight rental market, while at the same time holding the line on costs of HAP payments at current levels.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE LOW BID ON FALL CLEAN-UP.

Springvalley Landscape in Hatfield is the low bidder for fall cleanup. Properties are: Florence Heights, Hampshire Heights, McDonald House, Forsander, Tobin, Cahill, Salvo, Bridge St., State Street and McColgan. Total cost is \$10,145.00.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE RSC GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION

DHCD has announced that 1.5 million in funding has been made available in FY20 to support hiring RSC's to work with residents. It is anticipated that the funding will be available for a minimum of three years with the potential to extend. Housing Authority awards are limited to \$40,000.00 (\$30,000.00 for staffing and \$10,000.00 for programs).

The NHA has been able to meet the needs of our elderly and disabled residents at our state 667 housing due to ongoing grant funding. We have attempted to meet the needs of our families in our state 200 housing, but our need to allocate the funding to address CHAMP, re-certifications and other administrative responsibilities forces us to have very limited RSC staff capacity. Our top three areas of concerns to help residents are: Non Payment of Rent, Non Smoking Compliance and Non-compliance with lease such as hoarding and housekeeping.

Commissioner Silver asked if this grant would change salaries. Cara responded no, it will offset the salaries.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM RESERVES FOR THE EMERGENCY REPLACEMENT OF THE BRAKE SYSTEM IN THE MCDONALD HOUSE ELEVATOR

Chairperson Richards asked how long it will take for the repair. Cara said she is not sure, we are still waiting for the part.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

RESOLUTION #1185 - APPROVE THE REVISED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The NHA wishes to revise the Organizational Chart based upon the Federal HUD review on the salary allocations to be distributed according to actual program specific duties. The revised chart also reflects the opening of on-site offices and budget allocations of FY20 Budget.

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

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

VOTING NAY: NONE

Whereupon Chairperson Richards approved the Resolution.

Commissioner Laufer asked that when notices are going out on inspections at apartments, etc., that the notices get mailed, not put on the door.

Cara stated that residents can ask for mailing only.

Commissioner Silver asked if there were any 811 vouchers and Cara responded No.

Also asked about having Art put on the outside of buildings put on the Agenda. Cara feels that it is not a good fit for Housing buildings.

Commissioner Silver put forth the motion to adjourn the October meeting at 8:30 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Laufer.