



# NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

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## OCTOBER MINUTES - NOVEMBER 1, 2021 Approved November 15, 2021

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met via “Zoom” on Monday, November 1, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M.  
Upon Roll Call, those present and absent were as follows:

**PRESENT:** Chairperson Richards; Vice Chairperson Brooks; Commissioner Jones; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield; Commissioner Laufer & Commissioner Carney.  
**ALSO PRESENT:** Cara Leiper; Jack Redman; Sharon Kimble; Attorney Tom O'Connor; Lisa Donoghue; Jose Cruz; Keith Walsh; Angel Sadlowski; Gary DePace; Gwenevra Nabad; Angela & Joe Santaniello; Roy Martin; Jean Musacchio; John Wyda; Tom Most; Rick Paiva & Mary Chapman.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### PRESENTATION OF THE QUARTERLY FINANCIALS AND FY22 BUDGET

Gary – you are right on target for expenditures in the first quarter.

Fiscal 2022 Budget – There are changes – 1). Granting us additional funds for fire stoppers. Cara has done this at many facilities and they have a life expectancy of 5 years.

Cara – yes, they were installed in 2016 and they need to be replaced. This will fund the replacement and buy additional fire stoppers.

Gary – It's been a good idea for all Housing Authorities so the State put it as a priority to give the exemption to all Housing Authorities to put these in.

2). Exemptions – mixed population coordinator that we still are receiving grant funds and also health insurance for retirees which was an amount for prior years. Also, ANUEL has a 4% increase – last year it was \$1,936,073.00 and now it will be \$2,013,516. General increases to non -utility – i.e. wages and administration expenses. DHCD is working on the Executive Director Salary schedule to be released sometime in December. We will do the budget, then do a revision. We are budgeting \$25,000.00 for a new server and the cost is to be split between Federal and State funds. Operating Reserve actual for current fiscal year - \$1,209,000.00 – 2022 Budget funds reserves - \$1,104,711.00 – 71% of our maximum. We try to have our reserves anywhere around 70% and not below 35%. The budget is at a good healthy safe level. It is also true for 689 and MRVP program. Federal operating budget is also good.

Cara – salaries – we added a position as vouchers have been increased and leasing up as many as possible. We added an Occupancy Specialist for Section 8. We have been seeing a high turnover of Specialists as they are leaving for higher pay at other jobs. We need the pay to be closer to \$20.00 an hour.

Gary - these positions are funded by Section 8 and if we don't have the units occupied we don't receive the administrative fund. We have to spend the money ahead of time to keep the levels up. We still have a good cash reserve in this program. No red flags – everything looks good.

Chairperson Richards – for the budget we roll things over and amend during the year?

Cara – that is true for the Federal but these resolutions you are voting on today are for the State Operating Budget until we have to make a change. We will be held to this budget if there are no changes.

Chairperson Richards – I thank you for your clear presentation. Thank you for your good team work.

## MOTION

### RESOLUTION # 1192 – ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR STATE-AIDED PROGRAM 400-C FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

The proposed Operating Budget for State-Aided Family & Elderly Housing of the Northampton Housing Authority (Chapter 200, 667, 705) Program Number 400-C for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022, showing Total Revenue of \$3,046,056 and Total Operating Expenditures of \$3,116,056, thereby requesting a subsidy of \$1,239,857 be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development for its review and approval.

### RESOLUTION #1193 – ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR STATE-AIDED PROGRAM 689-C FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

The proposed Operating Budget for the State-Aided Family Housing of the Northampton Housing Authority, Program Number 689-C for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 showing Total Revenue of \$99,790 and Total Operating Expenditures of \$107,263, thereby requesting a subsidy of \$0 be submitted to the Department of Housing & Community Development for its review and approval.

### RESOLUTION #1194 – ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR STATE-AIDED MRVP PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022

The proposed Operating Budget for the State-Aided Family Housing of the Northampton Housing Authority, MRVP Program for fiscal year ending June 30, 2022 showing Total Revenue of \$89,015, and Total Operating Expenditures of \$89,753, thereby requesting a subsidy of \$0 be submitted to the Department of Housing & Community Development for its review and approval.

Chairperson Richards put forth the motion to accept the FY 22 budget Resolutions and Quarterly Financials. This was Seconded by Vice Chairperson Brooks. Rollcall Vote was then taken as follows:

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Richards, Vice Chairperson Brooks, Commissioner Jones, Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield, Commissioner Carney, Commissioner Laufer & Commissioner Cancel.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Therefore, the Board approved the resolutions.

## TENANT COMMENTS

Roy Martin – Salvo – security at Salvo is an issue-people don't understand that it costs money. Rent increase? – No. Maintenance is doing a great job. Jose is doing his best to get things done. Bike racks were never finished. Are bikes going to get plowed in this winter?

Mary Chapman – McDonald – Internet is a necessity. Can't get into zoom meetings have to go into them by my phone. What are the plans for the winter – people are falling ill. Props to the Board Member who got hot spots through the Library for a few of the residents. NHA is working on a 20 year problem similar to the Hampshire Heights basements. Will you reinstate the \$200 monthly voucher? Grow Food gave a stipend to the food deliverer.

Angela Santaniello - Salvo – Neighborhood Watch was able to have 6 residents come to a meeting. Security – during the meeting Jim Nash, Ward 3 City Councilor, is working on getting grants to get some security in the Salvo building which is an issue. Packages are being stolen – a few people have been caught and the cameras are helping. Lights are needed in the front and side of the building, it is very dark. When the City put in the electric bike rack it did something to the lights out front. Residents would like to resume the monthly meetings with Jose. Also there is a bug issue in the building. Can we have a pest control contract where they come and spray monthly?

Jean Musacchio – Salvo – there is a roach concern. Jose said someone will be coming to take care of it but nothing has happened. Roaches are on the TV and couches in the Community Room.

John Wyda – Salvo – lights in the front of the building are totally out, side of the building they are also out and it is very dark and tenants won't park there. We need preventative maintenance for the bugs – they are crawling in the hall, dining room and laundry room.

Tom Most – Salvo – no lights outside, could not see. Salvo was initially built for the elderly and handicapped. There is a big drug problem here and people are coming into the building when he is entering the building. Security is needed, cameras a very good move. Maybe you could put up signs saying there is a camera watching us.

Rick Paiva – Salvo – it is not safe here, I have lived here for 7 months now. Visitors are careful of their surroundings, no one should be a victim of a crime here. I have been assaulted in this building. Homeless come into the building – why can they gain access to this building? Need Police here. I also do wellness checks on residents and my floor is peaceful.

Joseph Santaniello – Salvo – Thank you for the meetings. Security needed, it is a long process but we will get there. Thank you for your time.

Chairperson Richards – we take note of the issues and we will get back to you. A few very strong issues, we understand their concerns.

#### STAFF COMMENT – NONE

#### PUBLIC COMMENT –NONE

#### APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 2021 MINUTES

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

Commissioner Tarbutton –Springfield – question – Angela mentioned meeting with mayoral candidates. I thought it was Mayoral and City Council candidates and Forbes Trustees.

Cara – it is transcribed by audio recording – Mayoral was said.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – can it be clarified?

Cara – it will be clarified in this months' minutes now that you have brought it to the table.

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

**VOTING NAY:** NONE

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the September minutes.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### Corticelli Street Update

Cara – I did hire an appraiser it came in at \$105,000.00 in “as is” condition. Now out to bid for a realtor with DHCD guidelines.

Cara – I also wanted to update you regarding the Board members concern about housing. With the help of key players in maintenance staff and administrative staff in 19 days, we housed more than 50 people, more than half were homeless. I am very proud of the staff for being able to do that. We housed 36 families in the physical housing, 18 were homeless and 11 were veterans. We issued 50 HCV vouchers – 14 are searching; issued 13 EHV vouchers – 4 were housed and we housed an additional 6 VASH veterans.

Chairperson Richards – thank you all, what an accomplishment! You must have 50 very happy folks who now have a house. Regarding Corticelli St – on the appraisal – what does that mean to us? Do we have to replace it with something of equal value?

Cara – now we get a realtor to put it on the market and hope to sell it for \$1.00 to someone who will keep it as affordable housing. DHCD requires an appraisal as the first step and then we hire a Realtor.

## NEW BUSINESS

### MOTION – ACCEPTANCE OF LOW BIDDER FOR MCDONALD ELEVATOR MODERNIZATION PROJECT

We received a bid for over \$800,000.00 which was \$170,000.00 over budget. We would need funds from Capital Replacement or other funds. We went out to re-bid and had one bidder in the amount of \$701,570.00. There were no other bidders. We are able to fund it at the \$701,570.00. Motion to accept the low bid from United Elevator Company for the comprehensive modernization of two 7 stop 2500 pound capacity passenger elevators at the Joseph McDonald House.

Cara – is it okay for Vice Chair Brooks to vote on this motion as he lives there?

Attorney O'Connor – yes, because he is not uniquely impacted by the elevators, they are used by everyone.

Chairperson Richards – what is the time table?

Jack – it will start in February – it will take 10 weeks to get the equipment. Both elevators will be back fully by June. One elevator at a time will be done.

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

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

**VOTING NAY:** NONE

**Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the motion.**

### MOTION ACCEPTANCE OF LOW BIDDER FOR SALVO HOUSE ACCESSIBLE BATHROOMS FUNDED BY CITY OF NORTHAMPTON CDBG FUNDS

Cara - low bidder to demo the bathtub, grab bars, faucets and fittings, tiled wall finish of tub surround, tiled tub seat, finish flooring, relocation of rough- ins for drainage and faucets for two apartments. General Contracting Solutions, Inc. was the low bidder at \$53,000.00.

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

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

**VOTING NAY:** NONE

**Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the motion.**

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – is this bathrooms for residents?

Cara – we will convert two bathrooms to handicap accessible – reasonable accommodations for roll in showers.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – every floor at Salvo – is their one designated apartment for disabled residents?

Cara – No there is not. This converts their whole bathroom to have a roll in shower for wheelchair accessibility.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I think it is great, I am sure other tenants who have wheelchairs will want this as well.

Chairperson Richards – I think you are probably right but that is what we have for right now and I will assume that we will move forward when we can. I agree.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – How long to complete the project?

Cara – I don't have the start and stop date. The Low bidder of \$53,000.00 was General Contracting Solutions, Inc. out of Southwick and Baskin Builders came in at \$64,465.00. We wanted to do four bathrooms but it doesn't allow four to be done, only able to secure funding for two bathrooms.

#### MOTION –

#### ACCEPTANCE OF LOW BIDDER FOR CAHILL ACCESSIBLE RAMPS FUNDED BY CITY OF NORTHAMPTON CDBG FUNDS

Cara – create (2) concrete ramps with steel railings and asphalt patching for ADA compliant ramps. Also repairing current ramps. There is a metal welder coming in for that. This is to make additional accessibility into the buildings. J.L. Construction Corp. came in as the low bidder at \$56,730.00 and Taylor Davis Landscape came in at \$58,986.00.

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

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

**VOTING NAY:** NONE

**Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the motion.**

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – where are the ramps going?

Cara – ramps are going into the resident buildings.

Chairperson Richards – we have some nice thank you's to the CDBG allocations this year. It is wonderful that we are getting money for necessary improvements.

#### UPDATE – HAMPSHIRE HEIGHTS PLAYGROUND

Thirty more days until completion. Drainage needs to be addressed. Looking for sponsors for benches and picnic tables. We want to fund (5) benches and (5) picnic tables, two of which will be ADA compliant picnic tables for a total of \$10,673.84. We are going to work on internal funding but we will be hosting a meeting in November with residents to get sponsors.

Cara – on the garden plots there was an emergency on Friday, September 24<sup>th</sup>. They came with the equipment and we got a call that the equipment would have to tear up garden beds. Jack and Lisa contacted the residents. Contractor took his crew and moved one of the beds and was able to salvage the garden. Cara then read an email that was sent to residents regarding the garden plots.

Chairperson Richards – it looks beautiful. The illustration was helpful to see how it will look and it is different, but good that the garden plots will still be there.

Commissioner Laufer – thank you, I think that was a great example of transparency and taking some of the gardeners feelings into consideration. I know it was a hot topic for a long time but I think the Housing Authority acknowledging the situation and letting people know what happened just really makes communication transparent and clear and it makes residents feel like you all care. I appreciate that and I appreciate the effort and the slide show and being very clear about it.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I was touched with the raised garden beds – very inclusive.

#### KEY POLICY UPDATE

Cara - The policy was delivered to residents. The fees that were increased went into effect on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Properties completed are Salvo, scattered sites, Tobin, Forsander, Florence Heights and Hampshire Heights. Cahill and McDonald are being scheduled. Salvo received (20) 504 reasonable accommodation requests for keys – (19) were granted and (1) was denied. Scattered sites had (3) requests; Tobin – (4) requests; Forsander (11) requests; Florence heights (3) requests and Hampshire Heights (11) requests all approved. All have been installed and seems to be working well. I handled parents with children. People were worried and stressed – I handled them as reasonable accommodations. Over the next month I hope to get the two remaining properties done.

Chairperson Richards – sounds like you have been able to handle situations effectively and you may get more as we move along with this. In the meantime safety is always brought up as a concern so it seems like it makes us a little healthier and safer.

Vice-Chairperson Brooks put forth the motion to adjourn for Executive Session at 6:40 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

Roll Call -

PRESENT: Chairperson Richards; Vice Chairperson Brooks; Commissioner Jones; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield; Commissioner Laufer & Commissioner Carney.

Reconvened regular meeting at 6:49 p.m. with no other attendees.

Roll Call -

PRESENT: Chairperson Richards; Vice Chairperson Brooks; Commissioner Jones; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield; Commissioner Laufer & Commissioner Carney.

Chairperson Richards put forth the motion to adjourn the October meeting seconded by Commissioner Jones at 6:51 p.m.

The next Board meeting will be held on Monday, November 15, 2021 at 5:30 P.M.