



NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

DRAFT –NOVEMBER 21, 2022 NOVEMBER MINUTES

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met via “Zoom” on Monday, November 21, 2022 at 5:30 P.M.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.
Upon Roll Call, those present and absent were as follows:

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

ABSENT: Vice Chairperson Brooks.

ALSO PRESENT: Cara Leiper; Jack Redman; Sharon Kimble; Attorney Tom O'Connor; Keith Walsh; Kaitlin Hanning; Amanda Huertas; Danielle McColgan; Mia Weibel; Jose Cruz; Heather Maxwell; Angel Sadlowski; Angela Santaniello; Rick Paiva & Doug Kierdorf.

TENANT COMMENT

Angela Santaniello Salvo #425 – issues with neighborhood watch. One tenant is refusing to allow his brother to visit him and the brother is becoming a nuisance in our building. We called the police on him last night. We are going to be working closely with Jose on getting that squared away in trying to get the gentleman to stay away from the building. Everything is still going fairly well. The power washing has been needed for a long time and we are thankful we are finally getting that done. I know it is a hardship on most of the tenants. Danielle is working with Northampton neighbors to help individuals who need to move things off of their balcony that are having trouble doing that. Northampton neighbors is going to try to help those individuals so that is a great connection there. It is always good when we can all work together to accomplish goals. Hope you all have a good holiday.

Rick Paiva – Salvo #710 – I have been living at Salvo for almost 2 years. On Sunday nights we hold AA meetings. There is a Board member that comes to our meetings and is making judgement calls on a resident that comes to our meetings. The Board member is harassing this person and has no right to. As a group member I would like to have it in writing to have this person stop this immediately and to leave this person alone when she attends our meetings. She is not dangerous. We want to welcome them here and not to turn anyone away. I have talked to Cara and Jose and Jack about this.

Doug Kierdorf – Forsander K95 – I am the Vice President of the tenant association and I want to speak about the motion to hire Spring Valley for the fall cleanup. Several tenants object to giving this contract again to Spring Valley. They have whacked down a mulberry tree, weed wacked flowers belonging to a resident, they were supposed to trim a rose bush and they tore it out of the ground. Someone had a water tube to have water run away from the building so it wouldn't soak into the garden next to his apartment and they smashed the tubing and generally they have shown themselves to be a bunch of cowboys. There is probably a reason you are getting what you are paying for.

STAFF COMMENT - NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joanne Kuzmeski Jackson - my brother is a resident at 35 Fruit Street. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you. My brother had been disconnected from family and Cara, God bless her, reached out to me as he was in a position of great difficulty and struggle. This happened on approximately November 14th. Within the short period of time from November 14th to today the 21st his world has completely turned around with the help of Danielle and Kaitlin. The Housing Authority acted quickly and swiftly to come up with proactive solutions that are going to help him in the long run and we now are emergency contacts. My brother and myself, we are working to ascertain services for him. It was a very tenuous situation and it compelled me to write a letter including the Chair of the Board. In this very short time, Danielle, Kaitlin and Cara have worked tirelessly to do a great job. Thank you very much, look forward to a donation from me to the NHA before year end and I appreciate their good work. Cara for particularly reaching out to family, went above and beyond the call of duty.

Chairperson Richards - thank you so much, it is always good to hear about the good work we do. Thank you so very much.

Cara - thank you very much for those kind words, I didn't expect that.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Cara read the report and gave updates. NHA was able to help 10 local homeless individuals and families gain housing in the past two weeks. We worked closely with local agencies and shelter to pull qualified individuals from our waiting list. Navigating the CHAMP software and coordinating with our maintenance team was a huge undertaking and I am grateful for the staff's continued effort. I also received special gratitude from State Rep. Sabadosa for this effort.

Our Section 8 Manager and team received acknowledgement from VA Central Office specifically for our efforts this year with the Section 8 VASH program. They are one of the few medical centers nationwide on track to meet the 38,000 Veterans Housed challenge and they've told us they could not have done it without our team and the great collaboration! Jack, Angel and the Section 8 team all deserve huge credit for this accomplishment. They are now at 98.99 %, with only two Vets left to be housed by the end of December to hit 100%, and we are confident we can help them reach this goal.

For Halloween we purchased 100 pumpkins and supplies needed to decorate them. Events were held at all 7 properties; snacks were provided and residents were encouraged to wear Halloween costumes.

At Florence Heights we combined the pumpkin carving event with planting garlic in the garden. Hope, from the Ryan Road Elementary School brought the carving supplies and planted garlic in the garden with the children. About 10 families and 15 youth residents came out to carve pumpkins and plant garlic with us. At Hampshire Heights, we had several families come out to decorate pumpkins. They used paint, stickers and lots of glitter!

At our elderly/disabled sites we had over 40 residents participate in the pumpkin decorating events. Residents expressed their gratitude and joy for being able to get together with neighbors and do a fun activity. We enjoyed seeing the residents at all sites in their costumes and are thankful for all who participated!

The podiatrist, Dr. Michael Coby held foot clinics at three of our properties this month. We had 24 residents visit the doctor for foot care services.

We hosted an instructor to teach a painting event at the McDonald House this month with Paper City Arts. Residents who attended received a canvas and all supplies to paint a fall themed painting. Snacks were provided and those who attended are looking forward to doing this again. We will be testing this out at other properties based on the positive feedback.

The on-site Winter Market began at all properties this month. The Winter Market is put on by Grow Food Northampton. Making it possible for residents to receive fresh and local groceries year-round for free without leaving their property.

For Thanksgiving, holiday meal kits are being offered to all residents from Grow Food and are available for pick up at the winter markets. The MANNA kitchen is hosting a community meal at Edwards Church for the first time since COVID and anyone who does not want to attend in person can order a hot meal to be delivered to their door on Thanksgiving. Our staff has helped to advertise these resources and assist residents with signing up to ensure no resident goes without a Thanksgiving meal.

NHA applied to become an approved organization with the Toys for Tots toy drive to assist our family based residents in providing gifts for their children this holiday season. We are also participating in a program sponsored by the Hadley Police Department and Hadley Family and Probate Court called the Angel Tree. This initiative is for children 18 and under. Families can sign up to receive gifts for their children in a personalized way. Our staff delivered flyers to each household this week in regards to this program with instructions on how to apply. If a resident needs help with this application they should reach out to the office or their RSC right away and we are happy to help.

Resident Comment Follow-up:

There was one question from a resident at Hamp Hts. regarding the slope near Building 19. I had a dialog with this resident via e-mail. I offered to submit her ideas to the design group that is doing the Capital project. I am awaiting her submission.

There was a resident from McDonald that presented her concerns about residents being consulted, stated the resident appreciation was demeaning, requested Wi-Fi for all residents, stated her dissatisfaction regarding the key policy. I have met with this resident several times regarding her concerns. With respect to her difficulty with the lock box for her extra key, we replaced the existing box with a push button type box to allow her ease of access.

Chairperson Richards – thank you, Cara. I failed to ask for staff comment and I just want to say we are grateful for you every day. Again, we appreciate you. I hope you have a Happy Thanksgiving.

APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 2022 MINUTES

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

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Richards; Vice Chairperson Brooks & Commissioner Carney

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

ABSENT: Commissioner Cancel & Commissioner Jones.

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the September minutes.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – The way it was written was not how I heard it. Email to Cara, I asked for an electronic record so I can be sure of it. I am almost certain what I heard when we talked about the meeting and me requesting about the NAHRO convention – what I heard was that if I went they would have to pay for all Board members to go and that she had only been one time, that is what I heard. Then in the minutes from what I could read it seems a little bit I don't know if the word is sanitized, but like ok and we hope to go sometime or we had known about it we didn't put it in the budget. I think that was a little different so that's why I am saying no because I am worried about just a slight thing here and there can change the whole subject and change the whole letter of what is being said and it makes me a little nervous.

Chairperson Richards – Jada, can I ask you to go ahead with the minutes for October 2022?

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield - I just said that. I just think there were some things that were inaccurate or stated a different way and for that I am voting no. I am concerned in the future with that.

Chairperson Richards – would you like to ask for a correction to those minutes and what would that be?

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I am away and I went over the recordings and by the time I get back I am just worried about the 30 day limit on the recordings that it will expire so I can go through it thoroughly.

Commissioner Carney – can we suspend the approval of the meeting minutes until the next meeting?

Chairperson Richards – yes we can. Can you please work with Cara to submit your corrections and we will propose a new amendment to suspend approval and we will ask for a continuance until the next meeting so you feel comfortable.

MOTION

Suspend the approval of the October 17, 2022 minutes until the next meeting.

Commissioner Carney put forth the motion, seconded by Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Carney; Commissioner Cancel and Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Jones.

ABSENT: Vice Chairperson Brooks.

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Discussion – Basements at Hampshire and Florence Heights.

Cara – on Friday November 18th at 5:06 p.m. the Waterfield Design Group submitted to DHCD the scope of work and estimated cost fees. I just got an email and it has been sitting with DHCD and they have clicked the proverbial green check button for it to proceed to the next steps. This project is moving forward now that they have started it and we have been the squeaky wheel and Waterfield Design Group is working out the details of the scope.

Discussion – Public Television Update.

Cara – a while back one of the Commissioners had brought it up to me stating that it was a City ordinance that all of our meetings be sent to Northampton Open Media for broadcast to the public. I explained that we don't usually record the meetings because we are zoom because we are required to keep track of public records requests. We send them out via public records request. The Chair was contacted on October 19th by Northampton Open Media stating that it was in fact an order of the Northampton City Council and it was mandated. The Chair referred Mr. Williams to me. I to date have not heard from Mr. Williams but to be proactive I did reach out to the City and asked for a copy of the City Ordinance. DHCD happened to be there as well on the same day this was occurring. The City responded back that it is not a City Ordinance, it is not a mandate, it was simply a verbal request because Mr. Williams had requested it of the Mayor and they forwarded that email to me as well. I asked DHCD what we do with the minutes because my worry is that when we are no longer able to do meetings we are not recording the meetings. He stated they are required to be self-recorded by Boards and to be submitted for archiving and airing. We will most certainly unequivocally do whatever the Board wants us to do but the Board needs to think about the fact that we would need video equipment and to pay personnel to record or to pay a videographer to record when we go back to in person meetings. I sent you an email – that would we meet at City Hall? That is not allowed. I researched and we according to the bylaws, have to meet at one of the properties owned by the Housing Authority and so we wouldn't be able to do that either. If you agree that you want to do that we will need to plan for it very shortly when we come out of zoom meetings.

Chairperson Richards – so we are not mandated by the City or DHCD. Of course we want to make our meetings available whether written or by video. If it is after the time when we record it on zoom it will cost us money to do so. Is that correct Commissioner Leiper?

Cara – that is correct although DHCD stated because it is not a Northampton City Council order nor is it a mandate from the City of Northampton that is must be presented to the Board and the Board collectively must vote on whether or not they want to do this.

Commissioner Cancel – you could essentially have someone do the recording on a volunteer basis and use the equipment from the local TV access. It needs to be done in an organized manner but it is possible. I suggest we seriously consider recording our meetings once we meet in person because it does increase access to the public and to our residents in the City that can't always attend the meetings.

Commissioner Jones – Cara, in the memo you sent out to the Board about this meeting you made three basic points at the end of the memo on this subject and the first one was the misinformation being spread – it was like a one line statement. Is the notion that it is a mandate – is that the entirety of the misinformation or are there other things going on that I don't know about?

Cara – it was presented quite a few times to me by a Commissioner that it was essentially that we weren't doing what we are supposed to do because we weren't following orders of the Northampton City Council. Mr. Williams of Northampton Open Media also put it in his email to the Chair that it is per order of the Northampton City Council and that it is a mandate. I think the misinformation is saying that we are required to do this. I think there are some people having a hard time differentiating the fact that although we are a quasi-municipality we are not a City body and we don't have to follow all the little nuances in every little detail like a City body does.

Commissioner Jones – one of the points I would make and I have made it before – we are a quasi-public entity, we are not a ward of the Mayor's office or any other part of the City Government. I sit on the CPA – Pre-COVID we had our meetings in City Council chambers, they are all videotaped because we have a staff administrative assistant that assists the CPC in research and tech and anything else we might need. So that's good right now we are in zoom. I assume that those zoom meetings are still being transmitted to Northampton Media for a re-broadcast to the public. I have no idea how much of the public is interested in CPC deliberations, but it is there if somebody is interested. It is there and I will leave it at that.

Commissioner Cancel – I would suggest and I would volunteer to kind of oversee that or just organize that so that would happen every time we meet. It is a matter of finding a consistent volunteer to do that. I would strongly suggest that we would do that for many reasons, some of which I have stated already but also for transparency issues and concerns so that we can be proud of what we do and that there is a record there that someone can access through the local media.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I would like to say nowhere did I say it was a requirement. I would be happy for someone to show me that. I inquired saying it because I was at the Northampton Center for the Arts on a number of occasions and I saw them going through there and I asked him what that was. I asked because this was on the agenda several months ago. I think I got an inquiry on August 16th that said something like well aren't you this- the question was from Mr. Williams – I was like I have no idea. I knew it was going to be on the agenda so I thought we would take care of that. I did ask this whole thing about the City agency if they were required so I asked and if that the City Chambers were

available and the City hearing office that are available and they have all the equipment. Mr. Williams said that if people would like that they could train them. There were some speakers when they had the Sheriff they had some students who came in and they had been trained by there and it was quite nice to have that. I think what I am trying to say and this is where I get a little nervous about understanding or not, I have been going through NAHRO certification all those trainings and that was a question brought up by one of the people instructing the meetings who said that many times people use the quasi agency municipality, in one way I didn't get all the specifics he said, that is one way of getting out of it, basically it was. I don't know how true that was I thought people who were going to investigate would look into it. Cara, I think the investigation you did almost to the T of what I received to by my inquiry and an email was like – they are going to look through this, they are going to talk to the Mayor, they are going to discuss. I was intrigued by it like whether or not because I know definitively at all the classes I have been going through including at the convention, they said it was the best practice. They didn't say it was law but they said this is the thing that would be part of the community. I don't know about the other thing that has been going on but I do think the residents would be interested to see what is going on because many of them can't make the meeting and many of them don't know much about how to zoom it and I think it would be ideal, we have nothing to hide. What is that saying people who have nothing to hide, hide nothing. The part that it will cost money to do videography that is not it – it is there we can use it they just want us to be trained on how to use it. I think that is the thing we need to take into consideration. I get nervous when someone is saying I said that as fact, I am doing that as fact, that's wrong, erroneous, hurtful and deceptive, in my opinion.

Chairperson Richards – thank you Commissioner Tarbutton that is why we are in discussion tonight, we are gathering facts and we will have it on the agenda for a vote next month.

Commissioner Carney – I don't think it is really so much of a consideration of about whether it is required or not. I am actually glad that the topic came up because at some point we were going to come out of zoom which is I think the bigger consideration, is going to go back to in person. Regardless, sounds like that will happen and when we do go into a physical space it sounds like also what I heard is it won't be in the Council Chambers where all of the video equipment is into really part of the system in the room. However there still is the old school technology just before they upgraded all of Council Chambers where just a tripod and a video camera that is just turned on at the beginning of each meeting and then delivered to Northampton Open Media, sounds like it will suffice. It doesn't sound like it is a really big deal one way or the other and actually can't hurt. All they did was clarify whether it is a requirement. It is in terms of whatever the City Council subcommittees and certainly other City committees but I think the fact that it is a repository that is there for us makes it something we should use especially since Commissioner Cancel said he has some expertise there. If we have a camera I think we are all set once we move into that physical space.

Chairperson Richards – thank you Commissioner Carney we will take all those comments into consideration and we will bring it up again next month. Thank you for allowing some discussion on this and again we will entertain this next month.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION – Quarterly Financials as presented by Fee accountant

Cara presented the financials. We are right on target with our numbers and where we are supposed to be. Nothing that really stands out that need attention or needs to be brought forth to you. Are there any questions that some of you may have that I can answer?

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

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Carney; Commissioner Cancel and Commissioner Jones.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

ABSENT: Vice Chairperson Brooks.

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

MOTION – Accept Low Bidder Power JetVac for FISH # 214114 Salvo Power Washing of building and balconies.

Cara – the building has 7 floors and it requires a lift for that type of building. It took additional time for bidding because the project needs a special operator's license. We contacted 50 contractors and our budget was \$49,999.00. Power JetVac came in at \$27,875.00.

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

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Carney; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield and Commissioner Jones.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSENT: Vice Chairperson Brooks.

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

Chairperson Richards – does this improve the appearance?

Cara – yes, it improves the appearance. Right now it has got a kind of grayish hue to it. The balconies have a lot of pigeon poop on them and that stuff can almost become like cement when it dries. When I first came to NHA 8 years ago that was something that I said absolutely needed to be done. It will spruce it up, it will look better, it will be cleaner. There are some areas on the building where residents think that it is mold but it is not, it is discoloration from dirt because it is a concrete building.

Commissioner Carney – I am just a little confused because in the resident comment section we heard someone objecting and I am not sure if this is the particular contractor we heard the comments about – oh that was the fall cleanup.

Cara – correct, that was fall cleanup.

Commissioner Carney – ok that was just my confusion.

Commissioner Tarbutton- Springfield – I think it is wonderful to have this power wash. Sometimes I have been in Ward 3 meetings and they say why is that there it is such an eyesore and I am like you have to go and ask them and they say why, we approved this a while back did we not? I don't know, so it is like finally. We had some trees taken down in front and we didn't have notice of that and now it is more

prominent of the hue. To have it cleaned is a wonderful thing. I know I can't vote on this personally because I benefit from it but it was a massive area to get all the stuff off of the balconies to get it done. If anyone has ever seen where I live I have a whole thing full of plants and I had to take them into storage. I think this is a really wonderful idea, people are excited about it, I just hope it doesn't snow on the day it happens. I think people are just grateful that it is happening and I think members of the community will be ecstatic about it. I am away and I can't wait to come back and see it.

Chairperson Richards – thank you Commissioner Tarbutton I agree with you. I drive by it and I can't wait, so I am excited.

Attorney O'Connor – I just want to point out Commissioner Tarbutton indicated that she would not be able to vote on this. She would be able to vote on this because it is a benefit for the building as a whole and not just her specifically. It is certainly her decision one way or the other but if she so chooses there would not be any sort of issue if she voted on this.

Chairperson Richards – thank you for that clarification Tom.

MOTION – Accept Low Bidder Performance Plumbing & Heating for FISH # 214123 Cahill Boiler Replacement.

Cara – this is the project where we had residents who had no heat or hot water. We were staving off the start of the Hampshire Heights project. I am glad that we are finally at this point because we have been band-aiding left, right and upside down to make sure residents have hot water and heat. The bid was placed with Bid Docs on line through DHCD, this is a DHCD project. Bowman Engineering did the reference checks for the contractors and came back with the recommendation of Performance Plumbing and Heating of Medway, MA. They came in as the low bidder of \$742,880.00.

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

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Carney; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Jones & Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSENT: Vice Chairperson Brooks.

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I was in line at the food pantry and some people were talking about it and one woman said she was cold and freezing. I don't know anything about Cahill so I put it on a note to remind myself to ask and inquire about it. I didn't do it personally but there were some people concerned about it. I didn't know much about it so from what I understand from what you are saying that is all being cleared up is that what you mean with the heat is that being addressed, is it one thing or several things – I just didn't know about it.

Cara – this is replacement of the boilers and water heaters for the whole entire property.

Chairperson Richards – which will solve the problem?

Cara – which will solve the problem of heat and hot water of Cahill.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – for all of Cahill.

Cara – right, all 8 buildings.

MOTION – Accept Low Bidder Spring Valley for 2022 Fall Cleanup.

Commissioner Jones – I can voice my opinion based on the comment that we heard in the tenant comments which was more than a passing comment and had several instances. Given that in the past as Chair when we would approve things like this, one of the inevitable questions would be what do we know about this contractor and Cara used the phrase responsible, talking about an earlier approval we did tonight that based on that I am not inclined to approve this request, so I am voting no.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I have to say I didn't really know much about this myself. I would like to know more about it.

Commissioner Cancel – I wanted to echo what was brought up earlier by a resident. My experience with this Company has not been good when I was a resident at Hampshire heights. Many, many different things they did that I did not like, how we were treated as residents by this company. I will just keep it short and say I am definitely not voting for this.

Chairperson Richards – I would say that I am concerned also about the comments from a resident but before we vote I would ask for any other comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Carney – I forget what the bid amount was is it subject to prevailing wage and all of those things for this job? It is. This is a contractor we have used in the past obviously because those incidents were raised. Has it gone out to bid, are there other contractors? To what extent would be required to take this as a low bid or would the factor of previous performance be able to enter into our decision? So some of that I think would help clarify things for me.

Cara – we reached out to almost 20 local vendors. Spring Valley has done business with NHA for many years. Other than tonight I have heard complaints from Forsander in the past but that is the only property and they have done all the properties every year. I thought if the Board wanted to consider it we could have the property manager work closely with the contractor and the residents. Spring Valley came in at \$15,500.00 saving \$1,000.00 if they do the whole agency. The next lowest bidder was \$34,850.00. Saladino Property Maintenance Inc. so you are talking about a considerable difference of all of the 15 other vendors who weren't interested in even providing us with a number. I have not heard other than Forsander an issue with Spring Valley. They have really assisted us a lot with some snow removal, the agency has had a really good relationship with them, they have been here since before my tenure but the difference is over \$15,000.00 in the bids.

Commissioner Carney – what would be the process if this bid is then rejected by the Board, what would be the next step?

Cara – if you are rejecting the lowest bidder the next lowest is Saladino Property Maintenance Inc. who bid the next lowest at \$34,850.00.

Commissioner Carney – my question is would that then go to the next meeting. Would it automatically right here at this meeting if we reject this lowest bid, does it per se happen that if this motion fails that it automatically goes to the next lowest bidder as you suggested or don't we have to go through another accepted motion with that particular contractor's name on it?

Cara – Attorney O'Connor if you could weigh in on it I would appreciate it.

Attorney O'Connor – Commissioner Carney is hitting the nail on the head. I think if this vendor is denied and the motion with respect to this vendor doesn't carry that is what the agenda item is so I don't think we can then automatically move or accept the second lowest bid. It would have to get moved to another meeting and be properly placed on the agenda.

Cara – so that would mean another month out and fall cleanup would not get done. I think maybe can managers voice if they have had a positive experience can senior service techs accompany them to the property? I guess the biggest concern for fall clean-up is having fallen leaves mix with debris especially with the elderly and we certainly don't have time to try to find another low bidder. Is this something the Board is willing to have us provide extra oversight on and that way we could at least get all the leaves sucked up?

Chairperson Richards – could we have a special meeting just to deal with this issue after conversation with Spring Valley letting them know some of our issues?

Cara – the property managers have worked with them too. The senior service techs aren't on right now but for having specific issues that were brought up at Forsander, Spring Valley was following the instructions they were given by the property manager in the removal of the items that the person brought to the attention of the Board today. That wasn't the vendors fault the vendor was following the instructions of the property manager and myself to remove certain items that were problematic. I would hate to see a long time vendor be penalized over something we could oversee better and make sure that property managers are on site while it is happening.

Commissioner Cancel – I have many examples in how this company was very disrespectful of the community I lived in before so I have many different reservations about this company. I am really surprised that we are still hiring this company to deal with cleaning the properties we have. If we want to think about our residents and tenants we would hire a company that would respect the properties they work at. I am not sure if this issue has ever been brought up before but it should have been brought up a long time ago. I am glad that somebody spoke up about it. My experiences were actually so long ago this was 2016, 2017 when I had a real problem with how they were doing our yard and how early they would start sometimes abruptly waking people up unnecessarily early. A lot of different ways in which they did not keep tenants in consideration. I understand the predicament we find ourselves in, in terms of the next highest bidder and the fact that we need to get the leaves out. I definitely understand that about this season but I like the idea of having a special meeting about it just so we can figure it out but I would really not like to see this go through.

Commissioner Carney – sounds like it is a really unfortunate timing thing because the fall clean-up has to happen. I am surprised it is so late, we are almost to December, the third week in November. If we had received this in June or July as we anticipate the things we are budgeting, I don't know when these bids go out. Maybe there might have been a way for these objections and concerns to have been communicated sooner, so that part of the timing is really unfortunate and it doesn't sound as though we can just walk right into a contract with the next to the lowest bidder by almost twice the amount, it sounds like. Anyway unless we were to all meet in the next couple of days with them if this motion were to fail and we have no contractor we wouldn't have to put it out to bid again I can't imagine. I think then there would need to be a time line to try to get them on board immediately. What was the time line for

when the work was going to ensue anyway, was it going to begin right after Thanksgiving or beginning of December? Is this a December project?

Cara – they are slated because the Board has gone with them every single year for I don't know how long, they are slated to start tomorrow, if the Board votes for them to start. We start reaching out to vendors in August but it is hard to find anybody to do the work. Our original budget was \$20,000.00 so \$15,550.00 was within the cost too. I certainly can say that if the Board does vote with Spring Valley just so we can get the leaves up and what not, that I will ensure that staff, both maintenance and administrative, are out there while they are doing it and that they not come before normal operating hours and that there aren't any issues with the property. Other than that, I don't know what else to do.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I am not sure exactly what fall clean-up is. I know we had a very exciting active spring clean-up so I don't know if it is in the same neighborhood or not. I don't know these people from Adam. I know it is not the same thing, but it is along the same line someone was talking about the Affordable Tree Service that came in and said have you seen their reviews? So I don't know what is going on. I do want things to be clean and safe for our residents more than you can imagine. I was thinking us in Ward 3, we went out and cleaned stuff for folks not that it is the same thing because I don't know exactly what it entails. I think if we can just think about this for a second because I get nervous, it is like a car dealer, you have to do this now. I get nervous about it especially because we just brought it up because I am with Commissioner Carney – I wish we had talked about this earlier because some of this stuff would have been brought up and I applaud the person who is talking about their experience and the Commissioner who also had experiences with them because I feel like this is a good time to talk about these things. I just get nervous because it is like well we are going to do it this time. I just wish we could put our heads together maybe this week. I am away but I will come to that in some way to see if we can think on something. Right now maybe it is not conducive for us to decide tonight with so many concerns.

Commissioner Carney – I am coming to the conclusion that this is something that I would hate to see the holiday season go with the property not having the leaves removed which is going to be the outcome because I don't see us being able to do it even in the next few weeks. Removing leaves has to start tomorrow even in the best case scenario even if this was a smooth process and there was no problem at all with the contractor. Given that I would not as a sign or a vote of confidence at all in the quality of work by this contractor but in the basic like get the leaves done and a definite re-thinking and research of how to find another contractor for which there wouldn't be so many concerns for the next one. It is unfortunate but I think if we don't wait to do it for the next one now then we are just going to have 3 or 4 weeks I guess and it could be an experiment. I have heard a lot of things on the news environmentally that in some cases it is good to just leave all the leaves down and have them just crumble and compost into the ground. I don't know that our residents would appreciate that come 3 or 4 weeks from now then we have to explain that we did not do the fall clean-up because we objected to the quality of the work of the contractor from the previous time. So if we say that is our reason that we are not doing it because we objected to their work and they say that is not good enough, how are we going to do it starting tomorrow? I guess that is one reason that I would move forward, I understand the objections and I would not want to have them again, but I would even ask anyone else to consider whether just moving forward with this one with strong objections voiced and really do the research and consider looking at another contractor and paying the extra money for the quality and responsible work. It is just a suggestion.

Commissioner Jones – I am wondering if we still have the tenant with us for this part of the meeting so far. I am wondering if it is possible to have a tenant supervisor sub-committee or something that could be

there if this work were to be done by this company. The comments about it is not the company's fault they did what they were told so that would have meant that our property managers or what not would have told this company to weed whack flowers and to pull a tree out of the ground and to smash up a pipe or whatever it was at the time and now all of a sudden we are supposed to think we will straighten all that out and it won't happen again. It is really not clear that this is the case. In regard to what

Commissioner Cancel brought up about past experience I am wondering if it would be possible to have like a management tenant group to watch these folks if we still let them come in, otherwise, I am still a no.

Chairperson Richards – I am willing to withdraw my motion and entertain a motion by Commissioner Jones.

Commissioner Jones – I first want to know from the tenant at Forsander – is what I laid out possible?

Cara – Commissioner Jones are you just talking about Forsander or are you talking about every single property?

Commissioner Jones – I didn't get a complaint from every single property, I got a complaint from Forsander that is what I am speaking to, Forsander.

Cara – Mr. Kierdorf, do you think you would be interested in working with Mia your property manager if the Board would approve Spring Valley while they are on Forsander property?

Mr. Kierdorf – I think it certainly would be possible to have tenants while Spring Valley are here and to work with Mia assuming that somebody could say don't cut that down and Spring Valley would go along with it, would agree to that. Last autumn it really seemed like they really just bulldozed the place and were uninterested in how the tenants felt about it. If they start tomorrow morning I personally can't be here tomorrow morning because I am teaching.

Cara – we would schedule and if they had to be with the property manager and Mr. Kierdorf it is that they are starting with the agency if they are voted in so that is one of 13 properties. Thank you Mr. Kierdorf, I appreciate your willingness to work with us and the contractor.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I really do appreciate everyone's comments, it is very insightful but I have a question – what if we just ask the residents and see if they can get a meeting here and see what they think too? I know it feels like we are under the time thing. The reason why I said that is because first of all there is one person here and he seems to be part of the LTO so I think that is maybe the voice of folks but I think one person said something that we don't want to feel like infants and we want to know. Even what happened at Salvo with the trees? I had to run out of here when they took the trees down because I have allergies and I didn't have notice of it. I am glad that it happened but I think in that way it seems we are addressing what tenants are saying and hearing and I think that is wonderful. Maybe we should hear what they have to say. I think if we took a day to say can we meet together we can eat some pizza and talk about it and then make the decision because we are under the time deadline in a sense to get something done and I think that would make everybody feel better because I think they would feel like they were heard and we got to get it done.

Commissioner Jones put forth the motion to approve the low bid with the proviso that any work at Forsander will be under the joint supervision of the Northampton Housing Authority property managers and the tenants association at Forsander.

Commissioner Carney seconded the Motion.

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Carney & Commissioner Jones.

VOTING NAY: Commissioner Cancel and Commissioner Tarbuton-Springfield.

ABSENT: Vice Chairperson Brooks.

Therefore, Chairperson Richards approved the Motion.

Chairperson Richards – this has been spectacular to hear from residents and to be able to support some of their concerns. I think we can do that so the motion carries. Thank you so much.

Chairperson Richards put forth the motion to adjourn the November meeting at 6:49 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Carney.

Chairperson Richards – Happy Thanksgiving everyone and thank you, thank you for all your input it feels like we are working together.