

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH OF
HIGHLAND PARK



The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Highland Park met in a Regular Session in the Community Room of the S.J. Kronman Apartments located at 242 South Sixth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ at 6:30 PM on September 13, 2017, the hour and date duly established for the holding of said meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Chudnick.

Runi Sriwardena read the Notice of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act P.L. 1975, C.231 which provided that notice of this meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Highland Park was provided in the following manner:

On December 19, 2016, a copy of the notice of this meeting setting forth the date, time and location of this regular meeting was posted on the Housing Authority's official designated bulletin board located at 242 South Sixth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ, sent to Borough Hall for posting and was faxed to the Home News Tribune and Star Ledger and posted on the website.

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Upon roll call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT

Commissioners:

Steve Chudnick, Chairman
Raysa Martinez, Vice Chair
Regis Methven, Commissioner
Donald Monk, Commissioner (6:35 PM)
Diane Reh, Commissioner
Evelyn Sedehi, Commissioner

Administration:

Donna Brightman, Executive Director
Runi Sriwardena, Director of Housing
Mike Yannuzzi, Maintenance Manager (WHA)

ABSENT

Commissioners:

William Rainwater, Commissioner

Authority General Counsel:
Terrence Corriston, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

Council Liaison:
Matthew Hersh, Liaison

Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting held on August 23, 2017 was made by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh.

ROLL CALL: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Martinez Methven Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: Chudnick
Absent: Rainwater

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

Public Comment I - None

Communications - None

Executive Director's Report:

Executive Director Brightman gave a RAD update stating that this afternoon she found a document in the file that spoke about the lots in question, 44 and 50, and that they had been condemned. Hopefully, this will be enough to move on with the RAD closing. If not, the Authority will have to proceed to condemn the lots again to obtain a record of ownership.

She went on to say that Kronman cannot close before Park Terrace because Kronman needs to use the Authority's reserve funds and HUD will not allow reserve funds to be used if there is still public housing on the books.

Commissioner Martinez stated that all important documents should be scanned to preserve them to avoid this in the future.

Commissioner Monk expressed concern about not closing in November so that the PBV rents start January 1st. The budget will have to be redone.

Commissioner Sedehi asked what Bill Katchen's involvement in the RAD budget was.

Executive Director Brightman stated that Susan Lenz, our RAD consultant, is responsible for preparing the budgets. However, Bill Katchen does get a copy of them so that he can review them.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the only down side to not closing by November is that the authority would lose the voucher admin. fee. She stated that when she knows more about the timing, she will advise the BOC and that the budgets would be updated and distributed accordingly.

Chairman Chudnick spoke about changing the public comment sections of the BOC's agenda. He explained that he would like to have Public Comment Session I limited to discussion of

agenda items only and limited to 3 to 5 minutes person and Public Comment Session II would be an open agenda with 3 to 5 minutes allowed per person.

Commissioner Sedehi expressed concern that someone may not be able to stay for the entire meeting and may not have an opportunity to speak.

Commissioner Martinez asked if tenants receive an agenda prior to the meeting.

Housing Director Sriwardena stated that she posts the agenda on all bulletin boards (one on each floor.) She stated that agendas are available.

A discussion ensued among the member about whether or not the agenda should be published on our webpage prior with the resolutions because items can change. It was decided that residents could obtain a copy of agendas and resolutions from the office prior to the meeting.

Commissioner Martinez expressed concern about limiting people's speaking time.

Commissioner Monk stated the time limit could be extended at the discretion of the Chair.

It was decided that the BOC would have the two separate public sessions.

Commissioner Monk asked if a resolution was needed.

Executive Director Brightman stated that it is not required.

Chairman Chudnick noted that the Authority received a SEMAP score of 100% and also noted Ms. Sriwardena's letter to Ms. Vivanco.

Attorney Report - nothing to report

Accountant Report - nothing to report

Staff Reports:

Commissioner Reh inquired about the ice cream vending machine.

Housing Director Sriwardena stated that it fell through and that they were looking for a replacement that would also include food items. She stated although this may not be considered the ideal way to eat, it is offered as an option to people who cannot get out.

Commissioner Reh asked about the beehive.

Housing Director Sriwardena stated that it is a hornet's nest and it was decided to leave it be until winter.

Commissioner Methven stated that it's not bothering anyone and it would do more harm to try and remove it now, better to wait.

Commissioner Reh stated if it's not removed they will come back again.

Housing Director Sriwardena stated that the big issue was the squirrels. They scale the building. She asked that residents do not feed them.

Commissioner Monk asked about the public housing waiting list.

Housing Director Sriwardena expressed her desire to close it but wanted to wait until there was a greater number of Highland Park residents on it.

A discussion ensued about how to get more residents to apply.

Commissioner Monk asked Housing Director Sriwardena to send him the info so he could put it on the Highland Park Facebook page. He said that he could link the HPHA with other community groups.

Commissioner Sedehi stated that a brochure might be the best way.

Executive Director Brightman suggested having an open house when there is a vacancy so that people can see the building and the unit.

Commissioner Monk asked about the current number on the list.

Housing Director Sriwardena stated about 20 from Highland Park and 250 from outside Highland Park.

Executive Director Brightman stated that once we get tax credits, the income qualifications will be lowered from 80 to 60 percent of median income so that should be noted in any advertisement.

Resolutions

a) Reso #2017-44 – Reso to Accept the Audit for FYE 3/31/17

Motion moved by Commissioner Monk and seconded by Commissioner Martinez to adopt Resolution #2017-44.

Discussion

Commissioner Monk pointed out that the auditor's letter contained typos. He inquired as to where the surplus funds were held and what was the interest rate? He inquired about the authority's OPEB (retirement) obligation was and how it was funded. He further inquired about the agency's financial statements.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she would inform Mr. Katchen of his questions and set-up a time for them to talk.

ROLL CALL: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Rainwater

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2017-45 – Adopting Monthly Bill List for July and August 2017

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adopt Resolution #2017-45.

Discussion

Commissioner Sedehi commented about having the payment frequency added to the list.

Commissioner Monk commented on all the phone/cable service providers and that it should be looked into to see if cost and or providers can be reduced.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she would have Christin Smolder prepare a list of services and providers for the next meeting.

ROLL CALL: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Rainwater

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

c) Reso #2017-46 – Establishing the Payment Standards for the HCV program

Motion moved by Commissioner Reh and seconded by Commissioner Sedehi to adopt Resolution #2017-46.

Discussion

Commissioner Martinez asked if this just pertained to the voucher program.

Executive Director Brightman answered, yes.

Commissioner Reh asked why the three bedroom standard was not raised.

Executive Director Brightman explained that most of the vouchers are for one and two bedroom units so it was more important to raise these standards as the three bedroom did not need it.

ROLL CALL: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Rainwater

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

d) Reso #2017-47 – Annual Update of HCV Utility Allowance

Motion moved by Commissioner Reh and seconded by Commissioner Sedehi to adopt Resolution #2017-47.

ROLL CALL: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Rainwater

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

e) Reso #2017-48 – Reso Authorizing and Amount of Compensation for Leasing & Management Services in the Agreement between the HPHA and the HPAHC

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adopt Resolution #2017-48.

Discussion

Executive Director Brightman stated that HUD wanted an amount inserted and that she discussed it with the accountant and agreed on the amount of \$200.00 per month.

ROLL CALL: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Methven Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Rainwater

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

New Business

Executive Director Brightman informed the BOC that she would not be available for the November 8th meeting.

It was decided that the meeting would be rescheduled to November 15, 2017.

Commissioner Monk stated that he wanted to talk more about memorializing the documentation discussion earlier.

Chairman Chudnick formed an ad hoc committee to discuss this matter that would include Diane Reh, Don Monk and himself.

Executive Director Brightman said she would forward the committee a copy of HUD's record retention policy.

Second Public Comment

Juan Ratliff, 219 South Sixth Ave., stated that his porch light was out.

Executive Director Brightman asked if he placed a work order.

Mr. Ratliff responded that he did not.

Dee Donnelly, apt. # 1H, asked what we would do in case of a flood.

Executive Director Brightman said we would rely on the county emergency management department to give us direction. If it's something we can handle locally we would work with the Borough like we did prior. When we had a prior issue tenants were taken to the senior center temporarily.

Mr. Ratliff asked about what we are doing about the illegal parking.

Commissioner Methven responded that Mr. Ratliff should call the towing company when he sees an illegal car parked.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Monk and seconded by Commissioner Methven to adjourn at 7:45 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Donna Brightman, Exec. Director/Secretary