

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 July 9, 2014, the hour and date duly established for the holding of said meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Sedehi.

Kathy Blaha read a 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 17, 2013, 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 flag was saluted.

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

PRESENT

Commissioners:

Morgan Chen, Commissioner
Charlotte Quaintance, Commissioner
Diane Reh, Commissioner (6:40 PM)
Evelyn Sedehi, Chairwoman
Amanda Thomas, Commissioner
Burton Weltman, Commissioner (6:40 PM)

Council Liaison:

Susan Welkovits (6:45 PM)

Administration:

Donna Brightman, Executive Director
Mike Yannuzzi, Maintenance Manager-WHA
Kathy Blaha, Housing Director-WHA
Runi Sriwardena, Housing Director-HP

Authority General Counsel:

Terrence Corriston, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on June 11, 2014 was made by Commissioner Chen and seconded by Commissioner Thomas.

Discussion

The minutes need to reflect that Habitat went before the Zoning Board not a Planning Board.

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|------------|---|
| ROLL CALL: | Chen Quaintance Reh Sedehi Thomas Weltman |
| AYES: | Chen Quaintance Sedehi Thomas |
| NAYS: | None |
| Abstain: | None |
| Absent: | Reh Weltman |

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

Public Comment

Tom Nolan, 3H, has a hole in the sheet rock in his kitchen

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will address it.

William Giacalone, 5K, does not use the air or heat in the apartment and does not want to pay \$17.00 in excess utility fees.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will think about it.

Karin Jackson, 3P, stated that the building looks so nice and clean, especially the elevators.

Juan Ratliff, 219 South Sixth Ave., asked why the security cameras were not working at the family site.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she will look into the matter.

Mr. Ratliff then asked why people were in the parking lot late at night until 10 to 11 PM. He stated that they shouldn't be there.

Councilwoman Welkovits stated that she will ask the police to patrol the area.

Regis Methven, 3R, stated that was a good idea.

Tom Nolan, 3H, asked to be transferred to an efficiency apartment.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she would discuss this privately with him.

Communications:

PHAS inspection report: Chairman Sedehi stated that she never realized how intense the inspection was.

Commissioner Weltman asked what "inoperable electric" meant.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the GFI outlet did not reset.

Commissioner Weltman asked what blocked the emergency exit.

Executive Director Brightman answered that the air conditioners are in a room where there is only one window. She explained that it is a fire code for the first and fourth floors of the building not to block the egress when there is only one window in a room and that there was no exception for a medical problem such as asthma.

Commissioner Chen stated that these all look like minor deficiencies and asked what a major one would be.

Executive Director Brightman stated that any health and safety issue is a major violation.

Commissioner Weltman asked about the broken window.

Executive Director Brightman explained that there had been a domestic incident just hours before the inspection and someone had thrown a rock through the window and broke it as well as chipped the siding.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that we had even taken the window out to be repaired but it did not matter.

Ms. Welkovits thanked the staff for a job well done.

Executive Director Brightman said it's not over as there are three more areas yet to be rated.

Reports:

Attorney's report:

Council Corrison stated that we were waiting for the constable to lock out a tenant. He mentioned that the court put out a survey concerning the constables that he will forward. He also stated that a lockout should take about three weeks from the time of notice.

Staff reports:

Chairwoman Sedehi asked how many residents attended Ms. Sriwardena's tenant meeting.

Ms. Sriwardena responded that there were about 65 people.

Commissioner Weltman stated that he thought forming a think tank to resolve the garbage problem was a good idea as well as having an event planning committee.

Chairwoman Sedehi commented on Gus' report and that it was very helpful.

Commissioner Reh asked if he ever goes home at night.

RESOLUTIONS

a) Reso #2014-26 – Adopting Monthly Bill List

Motion moved by Commissioner Reh and seconded by Commissioner Chen to adopt Resolution #2014-26.

ROLL CALL: Chen Quaintance Reh Sedehi Thomas Weltman
AYES: Chen Quaintance Reh Sedehi Thomas Weltman
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2014-27 – Authorizing the Executive Director to Pay the July/August Invoices for 2014

Motion moved by Commissioner Morgan and seconded by Commissioner Thomas to adopt Resolution #2014-27.

ROLL CALL: Chen Quaintance Reh Sedehi Thomas Weltman
AYES: Chen Quaintance Reh Sedehi Thomas Weltman
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

c) Reso #2014-28 – Revision of Flat Rents

Motion moved by Commissioner Weltman and seconded by Commissioner Morgan to adopt Resolution #2014-28.

Discussion

Councilwoman Welkovits asked for an explanation.

Housing Manager Blaha explained that HUD recently changed the regulations to state that a flat rent had to be no less than 80% of the Fair Market Rent. The resolution reflects the change. It was approved prior but then HUD sent out an additional notice to say that the change required a public hearing; therefore, this resolution reflects that.

Executive Director Brightman explained that a PHA must give a tenant the choice to pay 30% of their income for rent or pay the flat rent. She stated that almost all tenants pay 30%.

ROLL CALL: Chen Quaintance Reh Sedehi Thomas Weltman
AYES: Chen Quaintance Reh Sedehi Thomas Weltman
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

New Business – none

Second Public Comment

Nancy Bernstein, 5R, stated that the fire alarms keep going off and asked what we can do about it?

A discussion ensued about fire safety.

Executive Director Brightman reminded the board that we had previously looked into this matter and that the fire alarms could not be repositioned within the apartments as they are very close to the kitchen area.

Counsel Corrison suggested that Ms. Sriwardena talk about this in her tenant meetings.

Ms. Bernstein stated that the emergency pull cords are also going off and that there is no way to tell who pulled them.

Executive Director Brightman explained that if a tenant mistakenly pulls the cords and then resets it the light goes off on the panel board. If it's not reset, it stays on showing the apartment number from where it was pulled from so that the emergency personnel know where to go.

Commissioner Reh asked where the pull cords were located.

Ms. Sriwardena answered in the bedroom and in the shower area. She said that the pull cord was close to the grab bar and she feels that is what is occurring.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we could institute a five second delay on the pull cord which would give a person time to reset it. She also stated that she is very hesitant to do so because of the liability issue.

Commissioner Weltman asked if instituting the delay would cost additional money.

Executive Director Brightman stated that it would not.

Commissioner Reh suggested that the pull cord plates be covered in day-glow.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we tried it and it had no effect on reducing the false alarms.

Commissioner Weltman stated that before we institute a delay we should collect data on the number of incidents.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she would do that.

Dolores Van Lieu, 4H, asked if we received incident reports from the police.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we did not. We can ask for them but depending on the nature of the incident we still may not receive them.

Ms. Van Lieu stated that there was an incident the night before.

Commissioner Weltman asked if she informed the staff.

Ms. Van Lieu replied no, but that she will speak to Runi Sriwardena.

Mr. Ratliff asked why there was nothing for the kids to do.

Chairwoman Sedehi and Councilwoman Welkovits responded that there were lots of Borough activities for kids but it was up to the parent(s) to bring them.

Mr. Ratliff stated the activities for kids should be in the senior center.

Ms. Jackson stated that children should not be out after 10 PM.

Councilwoman Welkovits stated that there is even summer camp which is paid for on a sliding scale depending on income.

Mr. Ratliff said he was not going to give the kids popsicles.

Councilwoman Welkovits asked if we would distribute the recreation flier to families.

Executive Director Brightman stated that of course we would.

Commissioner Reh stated that she was not here for the vote on the minutes and that they need to be changed to state that Habitat went before the zoning board not the planning board.

Executive Director Brightman stated that she would change them.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Weltman and seconded by Commissioner Morgan to adjourn at 7:20 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Donna Brightman, Exec. Director/Secretary