

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 6:37 PM on April 13, 2016, the hour and date duly established for the holding of said meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chairman Chudnick.

Housing Director 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 January 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

ABSENT

Commissioners:

Commissioners:

Morgan Chen, Commissioner (6:37 – 7:20 PM)
Steve Chudnick, Commissioner
Raysa Martinez, Commissioner
Donald Monk, Commissioner (6:40 PM)
Diane Reh, Chairwoman (6:50 PM)
Evelyn Sedehi, Commissioner

Matthew Hersh, Commissioner

Council Liaison:

Joshua Fine (7:00 PM)

Authority General Counsel:

Terrence Corriston, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

Administration:

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

Accountant:

Bill Katchen

Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on March 9, 2016 was made by Commissioner Chen and seconded by Commissioner Martinez.

Discussion

Commissioner Martinez commented that the minutes were clear and well done.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chen Chudnick Martinez Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Hersh Monk Reh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

Public Comment:

M.P. spoke about finding a distressed neighbor who had trouble breathing and calling the Police to do a well-check and informing her of his well-being. She asked that neighbors look out for each other.

Karen Jackson, 3P, stated that she is happy that Bonnie is doing programming for the tenants and they like it and do different activities.

Commissioner Sedehi asked if the same group that attended the Parker House program did this program.

Ms. Jackson stated that she did not know.

Commissioner Martinez complimented the paintings that the group did.

M.P. stated that she appreciates it that Executive Director Brightman and Housing Manager Sriwardena have an open door policy and complimented Ms. Gilles, Ms. Adams and Housing Manager Sriwardena on how they handled the distressed neighbor.

Communications:

Wage Rate Determination – Executive Director Brightman stated that HUD requires this report and we are in compliance with the wage rates.

Executive Director Brightman's report:

Commissioners Martinez and Sedehi thanked Executive Director Brightman for the very thorough and informative information regarding her follow-up report on lead paint from the last BOC meeting.

Commissioner Monk asked what our liability/exposure is if the landlord disclosure is not accurate.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the responsibility would be the landlords not the Authority's. She stated that the concern is for children under the age of six and we would only get involved further if a child in an assisted apartment had an elevated lead blood level. Also, that new legislation was being considered and the protocols may change.

Executive Director Brightman commented that she did follow-up on Councilman Fine's request regarding the Highland Park Planet and that there is a charge to advertise. The consensus was to use the two official newspapers.

Executive Director Brightman spoke of her monthly report and noted that 161 boxes of expired documents were shredded.

Commissioner Monk commented that he was not aware that the Authority was going out to bid for a lawyer and accountant.

Executive Director Brightman stated that the Board does not approve RFP's as the process is handled by the Purchasing Agent. However, if the Board wants a schedule of when professional or service contracts expire, she would provide one.

Commissioner Chudnick stated that a calendar of RFP's would be helpful.

Commissioner Monk stated that he thought the RFP's should have been advertised for a longer period, 30 days and Commissioner Chen agreed.

Commissioner Monk stated that the relevant committees will discuss these parameters.

Executive Director Brightman spoke about the RAD update stating that the Board needs to decide whether or not they want to submit a separate tax credit application for Park Terrace or pursue a bank loan. However, the Committee needs to meet first to review the information and make a recommendation. She will schedule a conference call with the Committee and Susan Lenz to discuss.

Attorney Report – none

Accountant Report – Mr. Katchen stated that the budget will be addressed in the resolution section of the meeting.

Staff Reports:

Commissioner Sedehi commented that Ms. Gilles' report is more informative and she is servicing a lot of tenants.

Commissioner Martinez had a series of questions for Mr. Katchen on how to read the budget – to-actual reports.

Mr. Katchen explained both the operating and Section 8 voucher reports and stated that a loss was budgeted but we actually have a surplus at the present point in time.

Commissioner Monk asked that the budget-to-actual report be sent in an excel version.

Mr. Katchen stated that he would do that.

Committee Reports:

- Building and Grounds – Commissioner Chen reported that he is still working with the Borough on the bulk trash pick-up. He asked Councilman Fine to set-up a meeting with the Mayor to discuss the issue. He further reported that the Borough damaged one of the recycling dumpsters.

Executive Director Brightman asked that he hold-off on this until she can obtain written reports on what exactly occurred.

- Tenant Relations – Commissioner Sedehi reported that she attended the tenant meeting this afternoon. There was a good showing and full participation.

Housing Manager Sriwardena had an agenda and discussed several items. She also reported that a tenant meeting with the Park Terrace tenants would be held on Thursday at 5 PM. Furthermore, Commissioner Martinez, Bonnie, Ms. Gilles and she are meeting on April 22, 2016 to discuss tenant matters.

- Policy – Commissioner Sedehi reported that she and Commissioner Martinez reviewed the Personnel Policy changes.

RESOLUTIONS

a) Reso #2016-18 – Ratify the Renewal of the Flooring Contract to 3/31/17

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adopt Resolution #2016-18.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2016-19 – Adopting Monthly Bill List for March 2016

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adopt Resolution #2016-19.

Discussion

Commissioner Chudnick asked about the door chime.

Executive Director Brightman explained that Park Terrace does not have door bells.

Commissioner Monk asked about the temporary help with the snow.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we hire residents to assist us and this counts towards our Section 3 requirement.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

c) Reso #2016-20 – Designate General Counsel – 4/1/16-3/31/17

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Martinez to adopt Resolution #2016-20.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

d) Reso #2016-21 – Designate Fee Accountant – 4/1/16-3/31/17

Motion moved by Commissioner Reh and seconded by Commissioner Sedehi to adopt Resolution #2016-21.

Discussion

Mr. Katchen thanked the Board members

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

e) Reso #2016-22 – HPHA Budget Reso for FY 4/1/14-3/31/15 – Adopt

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Martinez to adopt Resolution #2016-22.

Commissioner Monk stated that he felt uncomfortable with the resolution as he did not have access to the budget data.

Executive Director Brightman explained that this year has been audited and that the resolution was previously approved by the Board; however, the State is requiring that we redo the resolution to include the budget numbers. Previous resolutions for both resolution 2016-22 and 2016-23 did not contain the numbers.

Commissioner Monk asked about the accuracy of the budget numbers.

Mr. Katchen replied that the onus is on the State of NJ to compare the introduced budget with the approved budget.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

f) Reso #2016-23 – HPHA Budget Reso for FY 4/1/15-3/31/16 – Adopt

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Martinez to adopt Resolution #2016-23.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

g) Reso #2016-24 – HPHA Budget Reso for FY 4/1/16-3/31/17 – Adopt

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adopt Resolution #2016-24.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

h) Reso #2016-25 - Renew Landscaping Contractor for an Additional 12 Month Period during the Landscaping Season at an Annual Cost of \$9,525

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adopt Resolution #2016-25.

Discussion

Commissioner Sedehi asked if this is our previous vendor.

Executive Director Brightman responded that it is.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None

Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

- i) Reso #2016-26 - Reso #2016-26 – Reso Adopting Changes to the Personnel Policy and Employee Handbook Effective April 13, 2016

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adopt Resolution #2016-26.

Discussion

Commissioner Chudnick noticed a typo on page 45 – “advice” notice should be “advanced” notice.

ROLL CALL: Chen Chudnick Hersh Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
AYES: Chudnick Martinez Monk Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Chen Hersh

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

New Business

Councilman Fine stated that Highland Park became the first Heart Safe community on April 5. He added that they are still seeking donations for defibrillators and that CPR classes will be held in the summer.

Chairwoman Reh stated that she went to an Affordable Housing event in NY that was a walking tour of public housing which was very interesting.

Commissioner Monk reported that the Strategic Planning meeting will be on Sunday, June 26.

Executive Director Brightman disseminated the Auditor RFP rating review to Commissioners Reh, Monk and Sedehi.

Housing Manager Sriwardena announced that she will be on vacation from May 4 to May 23.

Second Public Comment - none

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Reh to adjourn at 8:00 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Donna Brightman, Exec. Director/Secretary