

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 October 14, 2015, the hour and date duly established for the holding of said meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Reh.

Housing Director Blaha 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 14, 2015, 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:

Morgan Chen, Commissioner
Diane Reh, Chairwoman
Raysa Martinez, Commissioner
Donald Monk, Commissioner
Evelyn Sedehi, Commissioner

Administration:

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

Authority General Counsel:

Terrence Corriston, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

ABSENT

Commissioners:

Steve Chudnick, Commissioner

Council Liaison:
Joshua Fine

Administration:

Runi Sriwardena, Housing Director-HP

Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the meeting held on September 9, 2015 was made by Commissioner Chen and seconded by Commissioner Martinez.

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

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

Discussion

Commissioner Monk asked about the quote threshold.

Counsel Corrison responded that the Authority has a QPA and that she gets three quotes for any purchases under \$40,000.

Public Comment:

M.P. suggested that the washers be replaced because they shake when spinning because they are sitting on dowels. She called the company and they said they would exchange them. She also stated that one machine was damaged by the card slot and it took them too long to repair it.

Chairwoman Reh suggested that M.P. speak with the office prior to calling the company.

Juan Ratliff, 219 South Sixth Avenue, stated that the kids are jumping off the trailer and the DARE building and dancing on the picnic tables. They are out-of-control and something needs to be done.

Communications:

Chairwoman Reh noted that the authority is advertising for an electrician.

Commissioner Monk asked if \$40,000 is the average expenditure.

Executive Director Brightman stated that sounds like a large amount and we usually do not have that much work. She went on to say that the RAD calls for the changing of light fixtures. At this time, we are not sure how we will handle this activity with the contractor of record or a separate bid.

Executive Director Brightman said that we are also soliciting for a Phase I Environmental Study and a Tax Credit attorney, all of which are on the website.

Commissioner Martinez asked how these are advertised.

Counsel Corrison stated that it is through the website, newspaper and by paid subscription services.

❖ Fire violations:

Commissioner Sedehi stated that the community room doors were not cited in prior inspections.

Chairwoman Reh replied that there is a new fire marshal – fresh eyes.

❖ Chairwoman Reh noted the resignations of Board members Charlotte Quaintance and Amanda Thomas.

❖ JIF inspection report:

Executive Director Brightman explained that we are insured by the JIF and that they do periodic inspections.

Commissioner Monk asked about the roof rail.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we are putting on a new roof with the RAD and that will be addressed.

Commissioner Monk asked about what capital improvements will be on the RAD.

Executive Director Brightman responded that she would send the commissioners the Physical Needs Assessment which outlines the 20 year work item schedule.

Executive Director Brightman's report:

Executive Director Brightman stated that the RAD is coming along and that she is sending in the application and needs a \$2,500.00 check prior to the bill list approval. She further stated that the residents were polled and they selected the push button on-call system as opposed to the pendants.

Since Executive Director Brightman was discussing RAD, Commissioner Chen gave his Buildings Report. He reviewed the physical needs assessment report. It's a 20 year plan in which most of the work will be done in the first year. Most of the work has to do with energy savings (windows, doors, water saving toilets, faucets and lighting.) The Authority will save \$70,000 per year and the money spent will be paid back in seven years.

Attorney report:

Counsel Corrison reported a tenant lock-out occurred. He further stated that it is helpful to have knowledge of tenant issues as we need to keep track as it plays into the eviction process.

Juan Ratliff asked how many letters are need.

Counsel Corrison stated that it is a process, a series of notices.

Commissioner Martinez inquired as to how long it takes for apartment turnovers.

Executive Director Brightman replied that we have 30 days.

Maintenance Manager Yannuzzi stated that it is usually done in three.

Executive Director Brightman stated that it depends on the amount of work/damage as to the turnover time.

Accountant Report - none

Staff Reports – no comment

Runi Sriwardena's report: no comment

Maintenance report: no comment

Section 8 Report: none

Committee Reports: previously given

RESOLUTIONS

a) Reso #2015- 41 – Acknowledging the Authority's Conflict of Interest Policy

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Martinez to adopt Resolution #2015-41.

Discussion

Executive Director Brightman stated that this is on the agenda as the Auditor put it in his recommendations that staff and commissioners should be periodically reminded of this policy.

Commissioner Monk commented that he felt this policy was geared more to the staff as opposed to commissioners.

Counsel Corrison stated that he will email all the commissioners a copy of the Local Government Ethics Law and the ACC Conflict of Interest section as they are more directly related to officials.

Chairwoman Reh asked if this policy will apply under RAD.

Counsel Corrison stated that new policies would need to be adopted.

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

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2015-42 – Adopting Monthly Bill List for September 2015

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Chen to adopt Resolution #2015-42.

Discussion

Chairwoman Reh noted that Commissioners Chudnick and Martinez attended Rutgers classes.

Chairwoman Reh asked what Foremost does.

Executive Director Brightman stated that they take care of fire extinguishers.

Commissioner Monk asked if auditor RFP's are done on an annual basis.

Executive Director Brightman responded that they are.

Commissioner Sedehi asked if we could do more than a one year contract.

Counsel Corrison replied that he believes that we can.

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

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

c) Reso #2015- 43 – Reso to Mandate Use of Direct Deposit

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Chen to adopt Resolution #2015-43.

Discussion

Commissioner Chen asked if this is a requirement for all employees.

Counsel Corrison responded that it is as it saves money.

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

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

d) Reso #2015-44 – Annual Update of Housing Choice Voucher Utility Allowance

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Martinez to adopt Resolution #2015-44.

Motion to table the Reso #2015-44 was moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Chen.

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

Housing Manager Blaha then noted that the attachments to the resolution are incorrect.

e) Reso #2015- 45 – Amend Contract for Medical Alert System

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Chen to adopt Resolution #2015-45.

Discussion

Executive Director Brightman explained that this was to amend last month's award to increase the contract limit from 2 to 5 years and add additional buttons not previously counted for two bedroom units.

Commissioner Monk asked if it would not be more prudent to re-bid because of the 5 year duration.

Counsel Corrison stated that this is a change order to a previous award but if it is the Board's desire to re-bid then they would need to void the previous award.

Commissioner Martinez asked if they were going in the same location.

Executive Director Brightman responded that they are.

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

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

f) Reso #2015- 46 – Award Contract for Professional A/E Services for the Window Replacements at Kronman and Park Terrace Apts.

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Martinez to adopt Resolution #2015-46.

Discussion

Commissioner Chen asked how many RFP's were received.

Executive Director Brightman stated that there were about five and this was the best price.

Counsel Corrison noted that they do a lot of housing authority work.

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

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

At this time, Housing Director Blaha realized that the attachments were correct for Reso #2015-44.

- ❖ Reconsider Reso #2015-44 – Annual Update of Housing Choice Voucher Utility Allowance

Motion moved by Commissioner Monk and seconded by Commissioner Sedehi to adopt Resolution #2015-44.

Discussion

Housing Director Blaha stated that every year the Authority must review utility allowances to see if any adjustments are needed. These allowances are the same as the previously year. She noted that there are three allowance schedules, high-rise, single family and duplexes.

Executive Director Brightman explained that according to HUD, tenants must pay only 30% of their income for rent. Unlike most programs, HUD includes utilities in the calculation hence an allowance schedule must be established. Utilities are deducted from the gross rent amount to determine the tenant rent charge.

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

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

New Business

Chairwoman Reh stated that the commission need to elect a vice-chair and she needs to reassess committees. This will be done at the November meeting.

Second Public Comment

Karen Jackson, 3P, stated that the lights and TV are always left on in the community room. Why are they not on sensors?

Executive Director Brightman stated that sounds like a good idea; we can visit this with the RAD.

Ms. Jackson then asked about the walk-in showers.

Executive Director Brightman stated that we will discuss this on an individual basis.

M.P. asked if the lighting fixtures will be replaced.

Executive Director Brightman answered, most likely.

Counsel Corrison stated that he heard that it takes more energy to turn fluorescent lights on and off than to leave them on.

Juan Ratliff stated that the kids throw garbage around and they should pick it up and then be rewarded with a movie or a pizza party.

Executive Director Brightman stated that this was a good suggestion.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Chen and seconded by Commissioner Sedehi to adjourn at 7:30 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Donna Brightman, Exec. Director/Secretary