

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 for a Regular Session [GoToMeeting.com/join/911520181](https://www.gotomeeting.com/join/911520181) or by calling 1-312-757-3121 at 6:30 PM on October 8, 2020, the hour and date duly established for the holding of said meeting.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Raysa Martinez.

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 on September 3, 2020 and again on October 5, 2020 with a revised agenda.

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

PRESENT

Commissioners:

Ruby Hope, Commissioner
Raysa Martinez, Chair
Regis Methven, Commissioner
Jason Postelnik, Commissioner
William Rainwater, Commissioner
Diane Reh, Commissioner
Evelyn Sedehi, Commissioner

Council Liaison:

Stephany Kim-Chohan

Counsel:

Terrence Corrison, Esq., Breslin & Breslin

Administration:

Donna Brightman, Executive Director
Runi Sriwardena, Housing Director

Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held on September 10, 2020 was made by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Postelnik.

Discussion

Commissioner Sedehi asked if a notice was sent to the tenants about how to participate in the goto meetings.

Housing Director Sriwardena stated that she sent everyone an individual notice with instructions on how to log on or call in.

ROLL CALL: Hope Martinez Methven Postelnik Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Hope Martinez Methven Postelnik Rainwater Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

Public Comment I: none

New Business:

Housing Director Sriwardena informed the BOC that the new veteran preference is now in place. She stated that there are currently 23 veterans on the list, none of which reside in Highland Park.

Counsel Corriston stated that the veteran's preference is a fairly new State of NJ law and its purpose is to ensure they get placed in housing first.

Commissioner Hope asked how many people are on the waiting list.

Housing Director Sriwardena replied about 400.

Commissioner Methven stated that the exterminators inspected Kronman and stated that his unit had bedbugs. He stated that he has no bites and does not have bed bugs, only a frayed mattress. He is suspicious of their findings.

Commissioner Martinez and Sedehi commented about the number of suspected bedbug units and thought it was alarming.

Commissioner Rainwater inquired as to who was saying a tenant had bedbugs, the pest company or the tenant.

Housing Director Sriwardena responded both.

Commissioner Reh asked if the bedbug cases were adjoining units.

Housing Director Sriwardena responded, no random.

Commissioner Rainwater asked how we verify the units.

Housing Director Sriwardena responded that we do not; it's solely the pest control company.

Commissioner Sedehi inquired as to whether or not Woodbridge had the same problem.

Executive Director Brightman responded there are issues around scheduling but not about potentially falsifying data by inflating numbers.

Commissioner Hope suggested that we have the company provide proof that an issue exists by taking photos. It would most likely require a tenant photo release form.

Commissioner Martinez stated she was in favor of Commissioner Hope's suggestion and asked if we should ask the identified tenants if they have bites from the bedbugs.

Executive Director Brightman stated that not all people get bit.

Commissioner Reh stated that waiting two weeks between treatments is a long time.

Executive Director Brightman stated that some treatment requires that the tenant do certain preparations.

Commissioner Rainwater expressed concern about the tenants that are refusing to have the pest company enter into their units.

Housing Director Sriwardena stated that with the COVID situation we really cannot force tenants to let people into their units. We do require that they put their refusal in writing.

Commissioner Methven stated that they should get tested for COVID before they come to the building.

Counsel Corrison stated that contractors should self-certify that they are not experiencing signs of COVID.

Commissioner Rainwater asked about apt. 1E (suspected termites.)

Housing Director Sriwardena stated that she doubted there were termites as Joe Thurston said the building is on a concrete slab. However, there were holes in the floor which Mr. Thurston covered.

After the discussion, it was agreed that the exterminators would need to present proof of the findings to the Authority before payment is made. They also need to provide an explanation as to why there is a two week lapse in treatment.

Commissioner Rainwater asked how they were hired.

Executive Director Brightman responded the service was a bid and they were the lowest responsible bidder.

Communications: none

Attorney's Report:

Counsel Corrison stated that Resolution #2020-19 was a revision of language based on HUD's review.

Accountant's Report: None

Executive Director's Report:

Executive Director Brightman stated that she paid the Borough the PILOT payment based on the unaudited amount due to the late timing of the audit.

Staff Reports:

Commissioner Martinez commented that Housing Director Sriwardena's report was very thorough.

Commissioner Sedehi inquired about the CERT program. She also asked about a statement in Ms. Gilles report concerning tenants not wearing face coverings.

Resident Services: none

Committee reports: none

Resolutions:

a) Reso #2020-32 – Establishing the Payment Standards for the HCV Program

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Hope to adopt Resolution #2020-32.

ROLL CALL: Hope Martinez Methven Postelnik Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Hope Martinez Methven Postelnik Rainwater Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2020-33 – Adopting Monthly Bill List for September 2020

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Hope to adopt Resolution #2020-33.

ROLL CALL: Hope Martinez Methven Postelnik Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Hope Martinez Methven Postelnik Rainwater Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

b) Reso #2020-19 – Revised Reso for Terminating the ACC & Confirming that all Closeout Requirements of the RAD Program Have Been Met

Motion moved by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Methven to adopt Resolution #2020-19.

ROLL CALL: Hope Martinez Methven Postelnik Rainwater Reh Sedehi
AYES: Hope Martinez Methven Rainwater Reh Sedehi
NAYS: None
Abstain: Postelnik
Absent: None

The Chair thereupon declared said motion approved.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Sedehi asked Commissioner Postelnik if he read the RAD summary and stated that it's on the Highland Park web page.

Commissioner Sedehi asked Councilwoman Chohan about the COVID cases. The Councilwoman's microphone was not working; therefore, she could not comment.

Old Business: none

Public Comment II: None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Sedehi and seconded by Commissioner Methven to adjourn at 7:19 PM.

All commissioners present voted in favor.

Exec. Director/Secretary