

HIGHLAND PARK HOUSING AUTHORITY  
BOARD MEETING  
Thursday, January 11, 2024  
6:00 PM  
**MINUTES**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Highland Park Housing Authority was held in the conference room at the Highland Park Housing Authority. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Please note that adequate notice of this meeting, as required by the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975, has been provided by adequate notice. A copy of the meeting notice was provided on April 18, 2023, and posted on the Highland Park Housing Authority website and Housing Authority's official designated bulletin board located at 242 South Sixth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ and sent to the Borough Hall of Highland Park for posting and submitted to the Homes News Tribune and Star-Ledger.

**Roll Call**

**In attendance:** Chairwoman Ruby Hope, Commissioner David Copperman, Commissioner William Rainwater, Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi, Deborah Hurley, Executive Director, Terrence Corrison, Esq., Counsel, Borough of Highland Park, Council Liaison, Matthew Hersh, and Denise Blake, Highland Park Housing Authority, Housing Director.

**Absent:** Commissioner Raysa Martinez

Motion to approve the minutes of December 14, 2023 and minutes for Special Meeting, December 27 2023

**Motion:** Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi

**Second:** Commissioner William Rainwater

**Discussions:** Commissioner Copperman mentioned the rent payment online feature. Chairwoman Hope indicated that the housing authority does not have that feature and residents have never made a request to utilize the feature. Commissioner Sedehi referenced the "stamp" caller ID feature and needed clarification. Chairwoman Hope assured the commissioner that if you see a number on the caller ID, you can call them back. Chairwoman Hope mentioned that during the special meeting Resolution 39 was presented; however, it should be edited to reflect Resolution(1 or b), since Resolution 39 was presented at a previous board meeting citing approval for balcony expense. There was no further discussion.

Chairwoman Hope requested a vote to approve the minutes as amended.

	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Chairwoman Ruby Hope	X			
Commissioner David Copperman	X			
Commissioner Raysa Martinez			X	
Commissioner William Rainwater	X			
Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi	X			

**Public Comment**

**Unit 5C** - expressed her frustration and concerns with the timeline of the balcony repairs. She has concerns for her safety. Both Denise Blake, Property Director and Chairwoman Ruby Hope mentioned that repairs will be executed, and notices will be sent to residents. Chairwoman Hope also mentioned that a special meeting by the board took place in December to approve the expenses for the repairs.

**New Business:**

There was no discussion.

**Communications:**

There was no discussion.

**Attorney’s Report:**

Terrence Corrison, Esq., Board Counsel reported the following:  
Court hearing on February 27, 2024 regarding (2) Residents for non-payment of rent.

**Accountant’s Report:** Tony Polcari and Ralph Polcari representing the accounting firm, Polcari and Polcari introduced the 2024-2025 FY Budget for the Highland Park Housing Authority via-zoom. Tony Polcari first presented an overview of the firm’s 45 years of experience working with housing authorities. Tony Polcari then went into detail regarding the housing authority operating budget, and voucher program. Also, Kroman and Affordable Housing budgets were detailed. Overall, the Housing Authority is in rather good financial condition. However, the voucher program is presently underutilized. Tony Polcari will collaborate with the Executive Director, Deborah Hurley, to increase the issuing of vouchers.

Commissioners of the board asked several questions regarding the submission timeline, as the goal is to have the board approve the introduced budget to ensure that the commissioners will be able to adopt the budget at the next board meeting. Other commissioners brought attention to several edits that were necessary to ensure the budget was submitted accurately. Tony Polcari assured the board that the edits will be made before it is submitted.

Chairwoman Ruby Hope requested a motion to approve the introduced FY 2024 – 2025 Budget as amended in order to send to DCA for approval on time. This will allow the board to adopt the budget on time at the next board meeting in February.

**2024-2 Resolution:**

**Motion:** Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi  
**Seconded:** Commissioner William Rainwater

	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Chairwoman Ruby Hope	X			
Commissioner David Copperman	X			
Commissioner Raysa Martinez			X	
Commissioner William Rainwater	X			
Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi	X			

**Executive Report:**

Executive Director, Deborah Hurley reiterated the need to increase the issuing of vouchers and expressed that once the budget is submitted, that would be the next project to address. In addition, connection was made with the HUD representative for the Highland Park Housing Authority and efforts are underway to be set up in the HUD system for the Highland Park Housing Authority.

**Staff Reports:**

All the commissioners in attendance expressed their appreciation for the reports. There was no further discussion.

**Committee Reports:**

There was no discussion.

**Resolutions:**

**2024-1 Resolution** to approve the monthly bill list for the month of December 2023 in the amount of \$13,588.55.

**Discussion:** Chairwoman Hope open the floor for from the board. Commissioner David Copperman inquired about line item regarding retiree reimbursement. Chairwoman Hope explained the process, as retired employee's dental are still paid by the borough. Therefore, we are required to pay for their plan. There was no further discussion.

**Motion:** Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi

**Seconded:** Commissioner David Cooperman

	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Chairwoman Ruby Hope	X			
Commissioner David Copperman	X			
Commissioner Raysa Martinez			X	
Commissioner William Rainwater	X			
Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi	X			

**2024-3 Resolution** by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Highland Park to appoint Highland Park Housing Authority Employee, Deborah Hurley as Commissioner to the Public Housing Joint Insurance Fund.

**Moved:** Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi

**Seconded:** Commissioner William Rainwater

**Discussion:** Chairwoman Ruby Hope expressed the importance of having a commissioner represent the housing authority for the Joint Insurance Fund, as JIF is the housing authority's insurer. There was no further discussion.

	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Chairwoman Ruby Hope	X			
Commissioner David Copperman	X			
Commissioner Raysa Martinez			X	
Commissioner William Rainwater	X			
Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi	X			

**Old Business:**

Chairwoman Hope revisited the website concerns that were expressed by Commissioner Copperman, as it was suggested a committee be formed to identify areas that need improvement. Commissioner Copperman said that he did not believe a committee needed to be formed, as he has highlighted the areas that need to be addressed. Executive Director Deborah Hurley mentioned that she is aware of the edits and will address with the staff.

**Public Comment for Other Matters:**

**Unit 1E:** expressed concern about the spill in the hallway and maintenance was not thorough when cleaning the floors. Denise Blake, Property Director expressed that maintenance has been thorough and would address once again with the resident.

**Unit 1J:** wanted to know the status of the ac units. Denise Blake, Property Director mentioned that the units have been ordered. However, presently they are on back order.

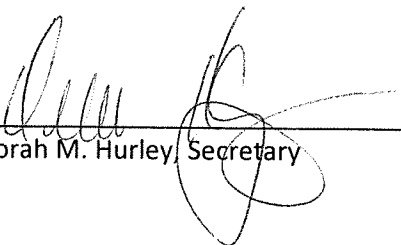
**Unit 5F:** expressed concerns about the balcony. Denise Blake, Property Director assured resident that repairs are in the process of being executed. Chairwoman Hope mentioned that there was special meeting to approve repairs in the month of December.

**Unit 5C:** expressed that she continues to have ant problems. Denise Blake, Property Director mentioned that the exterminator and maintenance will continue to address the issue.

Chairwoman Ruby Hope closed the Public Meeting at 7:59pm

**Motion to adjourn:** Commissioner Evelyn Sedehi  
**Seconded:** Commissioner David Copperman

All commissioners present voted to adjourn at 8:00 pm

  
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Deborah M. Hurley, Secretary