

**HIGHLAND PARK HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING**

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

6:30 PM

MINUTES

The Rescheduled 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 adequate notice. A copy of the rescheduled meeting notice was provided on March 18, 2024, 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: Vice Chair, Evelyn Sedehi, Commissioner David Copperman, Commissioner Raysa Martinez, Commissioner Padriac Millet, Commissioner William Rainwater, Deborah Hurley, Executive Director, Borough of Highland Park, Council Liaison, Matthew Hersh, and Denise Blake, Highland Park Housing Authority, Housing Director.

Absent: Chair Ruby Hope
Terrence Corriston, Esq.

Motion to approve the Minutes of February 8, 2024

Motion: Commissioner William Rainwater

Second: Commissioner Padriac Millet

Discussions: Commissioner Copperman expressed that correction should be made as he referenced the need for the content in the Section 8 section of the website needed to be edited, and that the links were functioning properly. There was no further discussion.

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

Public Comment

1D: Expressed interest in supporting the food pantry and wanted to know when it would restart, as well as, would there be funds available to support the plant program. Both were addressed by the board and executive director as programming will resume and be supported.

3B: Mentioned that heaters in the community room are not working properly and wanted to know when will they be replaced. Denise Blake, Housing Director assured everyone that the units are on back order and will be purchased once there is inventory. Also, the community tv is not working and a work order has been placed. The Maintenance team will address.

6E: Expressed concern about the garbage collection and made recommendations on how it can be managed. Commissioners assured efforts are being made to address the matter.

New Business:

Commissioner David Copperman made a recommendation for a schedule of professional service deadlines. Executive Director, Deborah Hurley and Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi mentioned it would be considered. In addition, Commissioner Copperman expressed that he would like for the board to consider improving the board orientation process.

Councilman Matthew Hersh mentioned that during his visit to the community center he had the pleasure of meeting Officer Brian Fitzgerald who expressed an interest in partnering with the housing authority to bring programming to the residents.

Communications:

There was no discussion.

Attorney's Report:

Denise Blake, Housing Director mentioned there is an appeal in place with a resident. In addition, there is concern that a resident may be a victim of fraud and Terrence Corriston, Esq. will be addressing.

Staff Reports:

Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi expressed appreciation for the support provided by the housing authority's team which is reflected in the reports that were submitted to the board.

Executive Director's Report:

- RFP was submitted to the public for an auditor. The deadline to receive audit submissions is April 9th.
- Routine Community meetings have returned and new programming that will bring additional health and wellness events to the families have been initiated. One of the programs include REPLINISH to ensure that our food pantry program is well coordinated and Mobile Family Success.
- Section 8 Program underutilization status is being addressed. There were (2) two briefings scheduled and a total of 20 applicants were invited. The process will continue until we reach our utilization numbers. Commissioner David Copperman mentioned that he would like to meet with the Section 8 team to learn more about the selection process and how a person can obtain a voucher. Executive Director Deborah Hurley agreed to schedule a meeting between the commissioner and her team in the month of April. Both Commissioner William Rainwater and Raysa Martinez expanded on their knowledge about the Section 8 program and how the

voucher concerns are a national issue and not just an isolated issue affecting the Highland Park Housing Authority.

- A training with HUD has been scheduled for our Section 8 team to assist them in learning the two-year tool.

Committee Reports:

Commissioner David Copperman suggested that committee members should meet to draft purpose statements and wanted know when and how the committees will function. Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi mentioned that the discussion should continue with the Chair upon her return.

Resolutions:

2024-7 Resolution to approve the monthly bill list for the month of February 2024 in the amount of \$22,512.53.

Motion: Commissioner William Rainwater

Seconded: Commissioner Raysa Martinez

Discussion: Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi opened the floor for discussion and questioned the Affordable Housing line item, which was listed twice. Executive Director, Deborah Hurley mentioned that recertifications are in progress and would inquire further to provide answer. In addition, the line items that have been provided for several months are routine expenses.

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

2024-8 Resolution by the Commissioners of the Borough of Highland Park Housing Authority to approve receipt of the Fiscal Year End, 2023 Audit.

Moved: Commissioner Raysa Martinez

Seconded: Commissioner Padriac Millet

Discussion: Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi asked if there were any questions. There was no discussion.

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

2024-9 Resolution by the Commissioners of the Highland Park Housing Authority authorizing the approval of Fair Market Rents for the Highland Park Housing Authority.

Motion: Commissioner Padriac Millet
Seconded: Commissioner William Rainwater

Discussion: Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi asked if there were any questions. Commissioner Rainwater wanted to know the present rates. Executive Director Deborah Hurley was able to provide an overview of the current rates compared to the current rates, which all reflect at 10% increase. There was no further discussion.

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

2024-10 Resolution by the Commissioners of the Highland Park Housing Authority Authorizing the purchase of (2) two 6 Yard rear load high top containers.

Motion: Commissioner Padriac Millet
Seconded: Commissioner Raysa Martinez

Discussion: Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi asked if there were any questions. Commissioner David Copperman wanted to know if the dimensions were coordinated with the town Department of Works. Executive Deborah Hurley and Housing Director assured the commissioner research was coordinated with the township. There was no further discussion.

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

Old Business:

Executive Director, Deborah Hurley and Denis Blake provided an update on the balcony repairs, as all 6 balcony repairs have been completed. The next step will involve painting.

Public Comment for Other Matters:

Several residents raised the following concerns:

- Recommendation to have free internet service for families.
- An open phone land line should be dedicated to residents and placed in an area where they can have access in case of an emergency, if their mobile phone doesn't work.

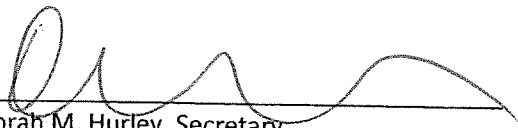
-Recommendation to look into adjusting units so that smoke or trash odor's do not recycle into the units.

All recommendations will be addressed and taken into consideration by the Executive Director, Housing Director and Board of Commissioners.

Vice Chair Evelyn Sedehi closed the Public Meeting at 7:41 pm

Motion to adjourn: Commissioner Padriac Millet
Seconded: Commissioner William Rainwater

All commissioners present voted to adjourn at 7:42 pm


Deborah M. Hurley, Secretary