

**NEEDHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 25, 2020 06:00 PM
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM**

ROLL CALL BY VICE-CHAIR FOSTER TO CONVENE THE REGULAR MEETING

ROLL CALL TO CONVENE THE MEETINGS

COMMISSIONERS:

Chair Reginald C. Foster
Vice-Chair Karen Hughey
Treasurer Eleanor Evans
Commissioner Penny Kirk
Commissioner Ed Scheideler

NHA STAFF:

Gary Kuphal, Facilities and Maintenance Manager
Debra Tambeau, Resident Service Coordinator

Chair Foster declared that a quorum was present, and that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the Secretary of the Needham Housing Authority (NHA) by preparing a Public Notice dated August 25, 2020 setting forth the date, time, and place of this meeting. Said notice was filed with the Clerk of the Town of Needham and provided to persons

AGENDA – REGULAR NHA BOARD & HRH LLC MEETINGS

CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Chair Foster made all attendees aware that there will be an executive session at the end of the regular meeting and stated that the Board would adjourn thereafter. Except for the NHA Commissioners, staff and attorney, all will be asked to log out of the Zoom meeting.

RESIDENT/TENANT INPUT:

Resident Rachel Crimlisk recommended including when the meeting ends. Ms. Crimlisk understands that when she first moved in, the NHA wanted the yards to be uniform and look the same. She commented her grass does not grow, but other residents have beautiful grass. Mr. Kuphal responded that he brought a tree company out who said the tree is healthy, he does not want residents cutting down the trees. He will supply seeds and try to help grow the grass.

Resident Ilene Hoffman commented that inspections were done May-June 2019, there was no follow up. She questioned “Why the Maintenance staff is doing the landscaping when the inspections were never followed up on”? Ms. Hoffman would like the 2nd floor carpeted because there is too much noise. The Continued Occupancy packets were sent out with a due date of September 1, 2020 but DCHD stated that recertifications have been put off. One resident turned her packet in but received a letter that stated if she did not turn in specific documents, she would have a meeting beginning the eviction process. She believes there is not enough outreach from

the Resident Coordinator. She would like these issues that she brings up every meeting to be addressed. Mr. Kuphal responded that there are masks available at the office which has been announced to the residents. Chair Foster would like to table until Ms. Medeiros is back.

Sue Biasizzo has a comment for Ms. Medeiros about the Needham Times article about shredding old documents. She asked, “Do directors have to contact DCHD or HUD for permission to destruct files”? and stated that for years people have been told to bring their problems to the NHA. She does not believe anything ever gets resolved and that people are being bullied, they are becoming depressed. Chair Foster has been working close with Ms. Medeiros about the files, the Board is responsible for deciding if the files can be destructed. He addressed the grievance process to escalate issues that are not being resolved.

Ross Donald thanked Chair Foster for the documents he sent. The minutes were printed late, there should be a draft of them in the Board packet. The Garden Policy does not have regulations and rules. The new policies are wiping out the old regulations, he stated the residents are depressed. He would like to know if there is a resident handbook for Linden and Chambers St. The Wi-Fi is not working at 5 Chambers and has not been resolved. Mr. Donald is upset about the tractor and the gardening policy. Mr. Kuphal responded that residents were complaining about the vines and it is DCHD policy to remove them since they can ruin windows. He notified that everything must be 12 inches away from the building. His main concern is keeping everyone safe so if there is a tree that must be cut down, Mr. Kuphal will do so. Chair Foster suggested using the grievance procedure.

Jill Rutherford would like a notice in the future when the water is getting shut off. Mr. Kuphal apologized.

Mrs. Tambeau wanted to address the issue that Ms. Hoffman made about contacting the residents. She responded that if she is not speaking directly to the resident, she is working with their case managers, etc.

Mr. Scheideler has a recommendation that the residents will email their issue and a resolution to the problem to the Board members and Ms. Medeiros, so they do not have to wait a month to respond to the issue. Ms. Hughey agreed with Chair Foster because it will be hard to discuss via email with every Board member, it must be public when there are more than 2 commissioners. Mrs. Evans would be happy to work on a proposal with Mr. Scheideler and Ms. Medeiros. NAHRO put together a new Commissioner handbook, Chair Foster recommends buying them for the Board.

DISCUSSION/APPROVAL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Information: Covid 19 Status Update

Mr. Kuphal reported that things have stabilized, and that there is no material new news. Maintenance is continuing the enhances cleaning program.

2. Information & Discussion: Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Management- Consider taking in-house

Chair Foster informs the Board the contract with Dedham Housing is over in 2012. Ms. Medeiros would like to take back control on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Ms. Hughey commented that Ms. Medeiros has Section 8 experience and can take over the program, she believes it will be beneficial.

Mr. Scheideler has questions about Section 8 which will be tabled until next month. This gives the Board time to come up with all their questions. Mrs. Evans would like to know the administrative fee and would like to see the contract.

Chair Foster raises a scenario of what would happen if the person who was in charge with Section 8 was out of work. He questioned “Who is the backup”?

3. Information & Discussion: Restarting Modernization & Redevelopment Initiative

The current buildings average age is 60-70 years old. This discussion started in 2011 with a master plan. Chair Foster spoke with Ms. Medeiros to make sure everyone is ready to take this on. Ms. Medeiros believes the Housing Authority is ready. Chair Foster asked the Board “What do we need to get everyone on board with this”?

Ms. Hughey responded providing hard copies would be helpful to create questions for next months meeting. There has been a lot of work done within the years, 20 lots were redeveloped between 2005-2008. Further development has been put on hold multiple times. Mr. Scheideler would support a separate meeting for discussion on the master plan. Mrs. Evans and Ms. Hughey agreed.

4. Information & Discussion: Town Initiative to use CPA Funds for Emergency Rental Relief

Chair Foster recaps the application for the CPA fund of \$150,000. The Town Affordable Housing Trust voted to move forward with the application. There will be a public hearing on September 8, 2020. None of this money would need to be made available for residents because they can always change their income affecting their rent amount.

This would be for smaller, low income families. There have been 55 applications. \$25,000 would be spent on Administrative Fees. Mrs. Kirk emailed Ms. Medeiros some improvements that could be made but needs to talk to Peter Pingitore. If \$100,000 is taking out of the Housing Authority future pocket, there is much improvement needed to the properties. Chair Foster would like to support it but states it does not involve the Housing Authority directly. Mrs. Evans also supports it.

Chair Foster goes through the process. The meeting on September 8th will approve or not approve the CPA funds for emergency rental relief. If they vote on \$100,000 but only use \$50,000. The extra \$50,000 does back into the bank account.

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Ms. Hughey and seconded by Commissioner Kirk, it was *approved* by vote of 5 in favor.

5. Discussion & Approval: Discontinue 2002 NHA Satellite Dish Policy

Chair Foster believes this policy is obsolete. Mr. Kuphal commented there are about 4 satellites which residents are not using them. He has had requests to take the dishes down from residents. It is an eye sore and there are wires all throughout the properties.

RESOLUTION #2020-107

To approve the discontinuation of the NHA Satellite Dish Policy:

Upon a motion duly made by Chair Foster and seconded by Commissioner Kirk, it was *approved* by vote of 5 in favor.

RESOLUTION #2020-108

To approve Minutes of the following NHA Board Meetings:

- 7/16/2020 Regular Meeting

Mrs. Kirk and Mrs. Evans made some suggestions.

Upon a motion duly made by Chair Foster and seconded by Commissioner Evans, it was *approved* by vote of 5 in favor.

6. Information & Discussion: Executive Director’s Report, Financial Report, Vacancy Report

There were no comments or concerns.

7. Approval: NHA Bill/Check Warrant

RESOLUTION #2020-109

To approve payment of the bill roll/check roll listed on the Warrant dated August 20, 2020 in the amount of \$ 251,629.13 as follows:

Section 8: 118 vouchers	\$145,366.29
Payroll checks (7/22/2020) #501667-501680	\$ 19,335.47
Payroll checks (8/6/2020) #501681-501696	\$ 20,532.17
A/P Checks (8/18/2020) #32877-#32924	\$ 95,736.24

Mrs. Kirk questioned on pages 57 and 63, it is noted maintenance van for \$12,600 and \$22,400. Mr. Kuphal responded that the budget has not been approved, but if it is approved it will be spit by federal and state. Put in purchase request to DCHD to budget for a new van.

Upon a motion duly made by Chair Foster and seconded by Commissioner Hughey, it was *approved* by vote of 5 in favor.

RESOLUTION #HRH2020-27

Be it resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Needham Housing Authority that payment of the check roll listed on the HRH LLC, Operations Account Warrant dated August 20, 2020 in the amount is authorized as follows:

A/P Checks (#3044-3052) \$28,765.09

Upon a motion duly made by Chair Foster and seconded by Vice-Chair Hughey, it was *approved* by vote of 5 in favor.

RESOLUTION #2020-110

To enter executive session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation, the nature of which cannot be publicly disclosed because it would compromise the purpose of the executive session. Following the executive session, the Board will adjourn for the evening.

Upon a motion duly made by Chair Foster and seconded by Commissioner Hughey, it was approved by roll call vote of 5 in favor.

1:48:38

UPCOMING NEEDHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING DATES

Thursday Sept. 17, 2020 6:00pm Regular Meetings Zoom Virtual Meeting

Thursday Oct. 15, 2020 6:00pm Regular Meetings Zoom Virtual Meeting

Thursday Nov. 19, 2020 6:00pm Regular Meetings Zoom Virtual Meeting