

**2025 STATE ANNUAL PLAN & PUBLIC HEARING
REGULAR NHA BOARD & HRH LLC MEETINGS
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday, October 17, 2024, 5:00 PM

COMMISSIONERS:

Reginald C Foster, Chair
Jim Flanagan, Vice-Chair – arrived
remotely at 5:10 pm and left at 6:15 pm.
Ed Scheideler, Treasurer-(remote)
Penny Kirk, Commissioner-(remote)
Janice Bennett, Commissioner –(Absent)

NHA STAFF:

Cheryl Gosmon, Exec. Director & Secretary

Chairman Foster called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM. He called the roll of Commissioner's with Commissioners Foster, Scheideler, and Kirk reporting present on Thursday, October 17, 2024, for the Needham Housing Authority (NHA) Regular monthly Board meeting. He stated that the Secretary of the NHA provided adequate notice of this meeting by preparing a Public Notice dated October 11, 2024, 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 people requesting it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

(Including matters that could not be reasonably anticipated in advance of the meeting):

Chair Foster announced that although Commissioner Flanagan is away on business, he plans to join the meeting. Chair Foster also announced that Commissioner Bennett is not in attendance due to an illness.

Chair Foster acknowledged guests from Cambridge Housing Authority and Marcum, who will be presenting this evening.

RESIDENT/COMMUNITY INPUT

Jim Burke asked about the online payment system and his observance of mice.

Sue Biasizzo asked about the draft policies noted on the agenda and an inspection notice that residents received. Ms. Gosmon reminded Sue that the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) continues its work on policies and added that policies are not up for discussion but are on the agenda as a placeholder pending the work of the RAB. Ms. Gosmon explained the nature of inspection notices and that only 24% of the 76 units were inspected.

Ross Donald reported on the importance of providing literature to residents and receiving updates on NHA policies.

Ross Donald provided an update on the activities of the Linden Chambers Resident Association.

DISCUSSION/APPROVAL ITEMS – NHA & HIGH ROCK HOMES LLC

A. Seabeds/Cook Preservation & Modernization Project

Chair Foster welcomed Matthew Zajac, Deputy Director of Planning and Development for Cambridge Housing Authority, and invited him to present the recommendation to revert the repositioning strategy for Seabeds Way (SBW) and Captain Robert Cook Drive (CRCD) to a blended RAD/Section 18 application and to authorize submission of the application to HUD.

Mr. Zajac summarized the Board's decisions on repositioning strategies for SBW and CRCD. He referred to the detailed memorandum in the Board Packet on the recommendation to revert the repositioning strategy for SBW and CRCD. He stated that the NHA had held one resident meeting to inform residents of the recommendation to revert to a RAD/Section 18 application. He added that a second resident meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 21, 2024, at SBW, after which the Board will be asked to approve submitting the RAD/Section 18 application. A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Zajac referred to the NHA Application for Community Preservation Committee (CPA) funding to support the preservation of SBW and CRCD. He stated that to move SBW and CRCD from the public housing program to the RAD/Section 18 program, the NHA would need to renovate the property, which would position it to be viable for 20 years. Mr. Zajac summarized current work with Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, Inc. and the NHA for SBW and CRCD. He noted that the cost to renovate SBW and CRCD is approximately \$31,295,000. He stated that the capital financing for the SBW and CRCD project will be composed of funds from local, state, and federal sources. He pointed out that it is essential to seek robust town support to meet the 20-year capital needs at SBW and CRCD. He noted that the CPA funding request is \$5,600,000. A brief discussion followed.

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Flanagan to approve the CPA funding application and to authorize the Executive Director and Board Chair to submit the application by the deadline of November 1, 2024.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:

Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan votes aye;
Commissioner Scheideler votes aye; Commissioner Kirk votes aye; and
Commissioner Bennett is absent.

The motion carried. The vote was (4 ayes, 1 absent) 4-1.

B. Discuss 2023 NHA and High Rock Homes LLC Audits with Marcum

Chair Foster welcomed Timothy Marciante, Supervisor, and Andrew Remus, Senior Manager, and invited them to present their findings for the NHA and HRH LLC Audits. Mr. Remus presented a PowerPoint presentation on the NHA Financial Statements for the year ending December 31, 2023. He stated that the audit is a two-part audit. The first is an audit of NHA's financial statements, which includes High Rock Homes as a

component unit. The second part is a compliance audit based on uniform guidance covering federal award programs. For 2023, Marcum looked at the Housing Choice Voucher Program. In the audit results of the Financial Statements, Marcum had an unmodified or clean opinion, meaning the numbers and activity were presented fairly in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Marcum did not identify any noncompliance with rules or regulations but identified a deficiency in internal controls. Mr. Remus stated that Marcum noted two areas of improvement, the first related to user access in the authority's accounting software. He noted that the second area is with year-end adjustments, and no formal review process exists. He added that, as a result, there was an error related to one of the post-employment health insurance accruals where the number was recorded incorrectly. He noted that both items have been corrected in speaking with the Executive Director and should not be an issue in the future. Mr. Remus also stated that for the Housing Choice Voucher Program, sample invoices and payments made from the Section 8 program, along with tenant files, were looked at and that Marcum did not find any deficiencies in internal control over compliance. He added that from a compliance aspect, it was a clean audit. Mr. Remus summarized the financial highlights. He noted that NHA has no concerns with liquidity and can meet its current obligations. A brief discussion followed.

C. Review & Approve:

1. NHA Bill Schedule/Check Warrant

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Scheideler and seconded by Commissioner Bennett to approve the NHA Bill Schedule/Check Warrant in the amount of \$762,907.98

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:

Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Scheideler votes aye; Commissioner Kirk votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan absent; and Commissioner Bennett absent.

The motion carried. The vote was (3 ayes, 2 absent) 3-2.

2. HRH LLC Bill Schedule/Check Warrant

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler to approve the HRH LLC Bill Schedule/Check Warrant in the amount of \$37,096.65.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:

Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Scheideler votes aye; Commissioner Kirk votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan absent; and Commissioner Bennett absent.

The motion carried. The vote was (3 ayes, 2 absent) 3-2.

D. Review & Approve -- Board Meeting Minutes

1. 9/19/2024 NHA Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler to approve September 19, 2024, NHA Regular Board Meeting Minutes as submitted.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:

Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Scheideler votes aye; Commissioner Kirk votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan absent; and Commissioner Bennett absent.

The motion carried. The vote was (3 ayes, 2 absent) 3-2.

E. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Gosmon delivered and updated the following items.

1. Monthly Financial Report

Ms. Gosmon referred to Commissioner Scheideler's question regarding the Linden and Chambers profit and loss statement. Ms. Gosmon noted that she has called the accountant and will clarify the concern for Commissioner Scheideler. Ms. Gosmon noted that the NHA's budget revisions are due to EOHLC by November 1st. Ms. Gosmon summarized the categories and salary line items for maintenance staff. The conversation veered towards a discussion on funds donated to NHA based on the individual volunteer efforts of Commissioner Kirk. Ms. Gosmon and Commissioner Kirk will continue the conversation offline.

2. Monthly Management Report
3. Draft Pet Policy – Review and Approve (no discussion)
4. Draft Grievance Policy – Review and Approve (no discussion)
5. Draft Prohibited Recreational Equipment Policy – Review and Approve (no discussion)
6. Draft Deceased Tenant Policy – Placeholder
7. Any other issues/updates of NHA: Chair Foster referred to an email he received from EOHLC moving up their deadline date for renewing the Executive Director's Contract. He noted that this would be an agenda item that could be included in the NHA Special Board meeting agenda.

F. Discussion – Creating a Consent Agenda

Ms. Gosmon reported on the efficiency of creating a Consent Agenda and including the practice for the NHA Board meetings. Ms. Gosmon stated that a Consent Agenda would reduce time spent discussing routine reports, meeting minutes, etc. It would allow the Board to allocate more time to substantive issues that require discussion, decision-making, or creative problem-solving. Ms. Gosmon will report on examples of best practices for the Board's consideration at the next meeting.

G. Status Updates and Approvals – Preservation & Redevelopment Initiative (PRI)

Chairman Foster delivered an update on the following items.

1. Linden Street Redevelopment Project—The Planning Site Plan Review.
2. Seabeds/Cook Preservation & Modernization Project
3. Community Preservation Act Funding Application – Due November 1, 2024.
4. Monthly Reports
CHA
AHSC Peabody Developer, LLC
5. Administrative
PRI Budget

H. Status Updates – Internal Initiatives

1. Cook’s Afterschool Program – Update

Ms. Gosmon referred to Commissioner Scheideler’s recommended Policy, Mission, and Goal statement for the Cook’s Afterschool Program and reported on activities occurring at the Cook’s Afterschool Program. Ms. Gosmon shared her plan to study the Cook’s Afterschool Program to determine its desirability, feasibility, and viability. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Scheideler moved forward with his proposal for a policy and mission statement for grades K-6.

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Scheideler and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to accept his proposal for a Policy, Mission Statement, and Goal to be accepted as our objective.

Discussion: Commissioner Kirk questioned whether the proposal for a Policy, Mission Statement, and Goal applies based on the Executive Director’s plans to conduct a study to determine the desirability, feasibility, and viability of the Cook’s Afterschool Program.

Chair Foster stated that Commissioner Kirk makes a good point. He explained that the study might reveal the same or different conclusions and that the policy statement may need to be updated to reflect that, but we don’t know yet.

Commissioner Scheideler stated that the policy statement could be adapted should the population of students in grades K-6 increase.

Ms. Gosmon stated that she and Commissioner Flanagan favor the policy statement.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:

Commissioner Foster votes aye;

Commissioner Scheideler votes aye;

Commissioner Kirk votes aye;
Commissioner Flanagan - absent
Commissioner Bennett - absent

The motion carried. The vote was (3 ayes, 2 absent) 3-2.

I. New Business

Review & Approval – Letter to Town Meeting Members supporting MBTA Communities Act Warrant Articles. Chair Foster noted that Commissioner Flanagan is working on a statement of support for the MBTA Communities Act relative to the Town Meeting Warrant Articles. A brief discussion followed. Commissioners expressed their commitment to submitting a statement supporting the MBTA Communities Act.

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler, the NHA Board of Commissioners approved the submission of this draft letter to Town Meeting Members tomorrow, supporting the adoption of Warrant Articles 10 and 11.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:

Commissioner Foster votes aye;
Commissioner Scheideler votes aye;
Commissioner Kirk votes aye;
Commissioner Flanagan - absent
Commissioner Bennett - absent

The motion carried. The vote was (3 ayes, 2 absent) 3-2.

A brief discussion ensued on scheduling a virtual Special Board Meeting for Monday, October 28, 2024, at 2 pm.

J. Adjournment of the Regular NHA & HRH LLC Meetings

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Scheideler and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to adjourn the October 17, 2024, Regular NHA & HRH LLC meeting at 7:03 PM.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:

Commissioner Foster votes aye;
Commissioner Scheideler votes aye;
Commissioner Kirk votes aye;
Commissioner Flanagan - absent
Commissioner Bennett - absent

The motion carried. The vote was (3 ayes, 2 absent) 3-2.

Respectfully submitted by
Cheryl Gosmon