

NEEDHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

Tuesday, August 30, 2022

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Reginald C. Foster, Chair
Eleanor Evans, Vice-Chair (remote)
Ed Scheideler, Treasurer
Janice Bennett, Commissioner
Penny Kirk, Commissioner

NHA STAFF PRESENT:

Steve Merritt, Interim Executive Director
& Secretary
Cheryl Gosmon, Assistant Executive
Director

Guest: Margaret Donnelly Moran, Principal, Cambridge Housing Authority
Nathalie Janson, Senior Project Manager, Cambridge Housing Authority

This is a Hybrid meeting. Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm and called the roll of Commissioners with all reporting present at the August 30, 2022, NHA Special Board meeting. Chair Foster stated 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 26, 2022, 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 requesting it. Chair Foster noted that the meeting is being recorded.

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Chair Announcements:

Chair Foster summarized the meeting agenda. He stated that he has prepared a draft budget for the Preservation and Redevelopment Initiative (PRI) for the Commissioner’s consideration and resident input. He also stated that the Commissioners would review and comment on the Housing Plan Working Group’s draft document on their Needham Housing Plan, Section III.C, & Priority Housing and collectively prepare a response to the Housing Plan Working Group.

Chair Foster welcomed Margaret Donnelly Moran and Nathalie Janson to the meeting.

1. Review the 2021-2023 Preservation and Redevelopment Initiative (PRI) Budget and CHA Task Order numbers 2, 3, and 4.

Chair Foster began with a brief recap of the work that has been done to date between the NHA and the CHA on the preservation and redevelopment of the NHA’s properties. He referred to major milestones completed thus far which include the following:

- CHA Team was launched in July 2021, right in the middle of the pandemic.
- NHA Board and Staff Training in October 2021 on the preliminary repositioning strategy for both the state and federal properties.
- Mass receives the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in December 2021

- NHA received an award of \$1,250,000 from ARPA funding for the preservation and redevelopment of the NHA's state properties, which are 152 units at Linden and Chambers.
- NHA Awarded \$1,487,978 in Community Preservation Act funding at the 2022 Annual Town Meeting.
- Draft Property Conditions Report (PCR) – August 2022
- RFS notice published for A/E proposals for Linden and Chambers (6 proposals received)

Chair Foster spoke about the importance of the PCR Report, pointing out that it is critical because it documents the existing conditions and outlines the dollar amount needed for repairs to revitalize the buildings for the next 20 years. He stated that the NHA Board of Commissioners will meet to finish the repositioning strategy of its federal properties from its original regulatory platform to the project-based Section 8 platform which unleashes opportunities and provides predictable, stable rental assistance.

Chair Foster described the work of the Local Selection Committee. He stated that the DHCD will review the proposals, and the Local Selection Committee of five Needham citizens will recommend an A/E firm to the NHA Board this fall.

Chair Foster stated that in December 2022 the Board would submit applications for another round of CPA funding in preparation for the spring 2023 Annual Town Meeting.

Chair Foster summarized activities in Quarter 1, 2023. He stated that the expectation is that the NHA will receive approval for repositioning applications from HUD and will conduct another RFS to hire an A/E firm to design the renovation and modernization for Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive. He noted this would not include the High Rock Estates Development. He summarized activities in Quarters 2 and 3, 2023 which involve negotiations with the Town and neighbors relative to zoning associated with the Linden and Chambers developments. He summarized activities in Quarters 3 and 4, 2023, which involve funding renovations for Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive as well as more definitive information on how to move forward with the preservation and redevelopment of Linden and Chambers.

Chair Foster referred to the CHA Task Orders. He stated that the NHA is ready to retire Task Order #1, noting that Task Order #1 was approved by the Board in July 2021 and most of the items associated with this Task Order are done. He stated that Task Order #2 will take over for Task Order #1 and will be the general PRI program planning and management. He added that the remaining items from Task Order #1 will be completed under Task Order #2. Chair Foster stated that Task Order #2 comprises work items 1-3 number one. He stated that Task Order # 3 is the Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive preservation and modernization, and Task Order # 4 is the Linden and Chambers Redevelopment. Chair Foster noted that the Task Orders represent the tasks that lead to the budget.

Chair Foster presented the 2021 PRI Budget version 4.5 which has been developed over the last four months. He stated that the budget is \$4,271,009. He summarized the activities that make up this number. He stated that there are five major projects that have been identified: Initial Planning and Development and Federal Repositioning; Continue PRI Planning and Management of Task Order #1; Seabeds/Captain Robert Cook Drive Preservation and Modernization Project; Linden/Chambers Redevelopment Project; and High Rock Estates Redevelopment Project. He stated that the period covered for the budgets is between July 2021 and December 2023. Chair Foster described the expenses associated with the PRI budget, which include NHA 3rd party services, CHA professional services, CHA 3rd party expenses, and CHA other miscellaneous expenses. Chair Foster described existing and committed funding sources. He stated that the total committed funding is \$2,246,859. Chair Foster stated that there are several other funding sources for which no decision has been reached but will be considered to meet the overall budget of \$4,271,009. Chair Foster presented an overview of potentially available funding sources and described the criteria used to tap into the funding sources. Chair Foster stated that once the CY2021-2023 PRI Budget is approved CHA will continue to update the budget estimates and expenditure accounting reporting which will be done quarterly. He stated that what the Board will be asked to do tonight is to review and approve CHA Task Orders #s 2, 3, and 4 as well as approve the 2021-2023 PRI Budget version 4.5. Chair Foster yielded the floor to CHA and invited them to share their thoughts on the presentation.

Margaret Donnelly Moran agreed that it is a good idea to have quarterly updates. She added that the Task Orders and the budget and will give the Board a detailed picture of what the next eighteen months will look like. She expressed her appreciation to Chair Foster for his presentation.

Nathalie Janson echoed what Ms. Moran just said. She added we are charting a path forward for these projects and it is based on certain assumptions that we have in terms of the timing and those can change. She stated that at the end of the day it can have certain complexities, or it can be simpler in some ways but that the CHA has noted the assumptions in terms of what the schedule is.

Steve Merritt stated that this is quite a document. He expressed his appreciation to Chair Foster for a great presentation. Mr. Merritt stated that we have heard a lot of numbers tonight. He stated that a budget is a plan and there is flexibility in this plan over the next year and a half. He added that the numbers are realistic and balanced out with extra potential income ensuring that the NHA won't fall into a perilous situation. He stated that it is great that there will be quarterly updates. He stated that he feels safe with the budget and that the accounting system that the NHA uses should handle the reporting.

Commissioner Kirk asked if funding would give the NHA the base that would allow us to borrow. Chair Foster responded that he ran some numbers noting that the numbers have not been looked at by CHA but based on the numbers that we knew at the time per our Facilities Master Plan. He added that based on the current subsidy funding that we are

getting from our federal properties would allow borrowing approximately \$12M to \$14M, which is not enough to rebuild.

Commissioner Scheideler asked if there is an inflation factor built into the PRI budget. Ms. Moran stated that we will see inflation more on the construction side. She added that another area that will be substantially impacted is the rising interest rates and the capacity of firms to move projects forward because everybody is challenged with hiring. She stated that there is a lot of work but not a lot of capacity.

Chair Foster opened the meeting to public comment and recognized NHA resident James Burk. Mr. Burk expressed an appreciation for the report and complimented Chair Foster on his leadership. A general conversation followed on the consolidation of bank accounts.

Ross Donald referred to the PRI Budget and asked, in terms of real labor, maintenance, and ongoing work that is needed now because these matters need to be resolved now. He also asked that in the future how will the properties be maintained. He stated that future design ought to address maintenance and that if maintenance is a problem the plans should include a design that eliminates maintenance.

Chair Foster that Mr. Donald makes a reasonable point. He added that one of the benefits of going through a major modernization of Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive as well as the redevelopment of Linden and Chambers is that those will be brand new units with brand new appliances etc., which means the maintenance load will go down. He added that just by definition the point Mr. Donald makes will happen if we can succeed in pulling this off. Chair Foster reiterated the importance of a Resident Advisory Board (RAB) for our federal and state developments. He stated that the RAB would be a valuable body for solutions, communications, and suggestions.

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Evans and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to approve Task Orders, 2, 3, and 4 as submitted and to be signed by the Executive Director following the meeting.

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

Commissioner Evans votes, aye; Commissioner Bennett votes, aye; Commissioner Kirk votes, aye; Commissioner Scheideler votes, aye; and Commissioner Foster votes, aye.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous 5-0.

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Bennett and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler to approve the 2021-2023 Preservation and Redevelopment Initiative (PRI) Budget as submitted.

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

Commissioner Bennett votes, aye; Commissioner Scheideler votes, aye; Commissioner Kirk votes, aye; Commissioner Evans votes, aye; and Commissioner Foster votes, aye.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous 5-0.

2. Comments on NHA draft response to Housing Plan Working Group
Chair Foster opened this item for discussion. He stated that the Housing Plan Working Group has asked committees and boards to review their draft document to ensure the Housing Plan Working Group is on the right track. A brief discussion followed referencing p.10. Chair Foster stated that he would get back to the Housing Plan Working Group Chair with a note on the NHA Board of Commissioner's position on the plan.

Chair Foster took a moment to genuinely thank Margaret Donnelly Moran and Nathalie Janson as well as the entire CHA Team for their help. He stated that the NHA could not in a million years get this far without their help. He stated that the NHA Board of Commissioners appreciates their technical knowledge as well as their professionalism.

3. **Adjournment**

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Kirk and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler to adjourn the NHA Special Board meeting of August 30, 2022, at 8:49 pm.

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

Commissioner Foster votes, aye; Commissioner Evans, aye; Commissioner Kirk, aye; Commissioner Scheideler, aye; and Commissioner Bennett, aye.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous 5-0.

Minutes Prepared by

Cheryl Gosmon