

**NEEDHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HIGH ROCK HOMES, LLC  
BOARD MEETINGS  
AMENDED MINUTES**

**Thursday, June 15, 2023**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

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

**NHA STAFF PRESENT:**

Cheryl Gosmon, Exec. Director  
Nayda Sanchez, Leasing (Remote)

This is a Hybrid meeting. Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 7:39 pm. He called the roll of Commissioners with all reporting present on Thursday, June 15, 2023, for the Needham Housing Authority (NHA) and High Rock Homes (HRH) LLC Regular Board meeting. He noted that the Secretary of the NHA provided adequate notice of this meeting by preparing a Public Notice dated June 12, 2023, 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.

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**Announcements from the Chair:**

Chair Foster Announced that the Select Board had adopted two new housing committees: Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group and the Town-Financed Community Housing Oversight Committee (T-CHOC). Chair Foster referred to the 2022 Performance Management Review (PMR) Report. He stated that he and Ms. Gosmon met with Bob Pelletier, our Housing Specialist from the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities – EOHLIC (formerly DHCD). He added that he and Ms. Gosmon will share more about this later in the meeting.

**Resident/Community Input:**

Sue Biasizzo reported that Jessica Reese, Virgil Barber, and herself are meeting tomorrow to discuss plans to resuscitate the Cooks Bridge Tenants Association (CBTA). She stated that the CBTA has yet to receive support from the Massachusetts Union of Public Housing Tenants because they are highly short-staffed. On another note, Ms. Biasizzo added that a Resident Advisory Board (RAB) has been formed. She said that the RAB has met with Ms. Gosmon three times and that the meetings have gone well. She mentioned that Curtis Rush, the NHA's Federal Housing Manager, has distributed information on the RAD/Section 18 Blend to residents. She noted that it has been beneficial. Ms. Biasizzo suggested that the Commissioners walk the Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive properties.

David Shubow commented on phone security issues and elder abuse concerns. Chair Foster suggested that Mr. Shubow report problems of elder abuse to the Needham Police Department. Sue Biasizzo commented that there will be two presentations in July and August on elder abuse.

Ross Donald commented on the importance of establishing a Local Tenant Organization (LTO). He also commented that he would like to see the establishment of a Resident Advisory Board for Linden and Chambers. Commissioner Bennett noted that it is up to the residents how they want to organize and contribute to their communities. Ms. Gosmon pointed out that she and Mr. Donald have had email conversations regarding this. She added that she plans to meet with residents and Mr. Donald soon.

Kalpna Shaw commented that it is essential for residents of elderly housing to have some training on attending Zoom meetings.

**A. Review & Approval:**

NHA Bill/Check Warrant

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to approve the check register listed on the Warrant dated June 15, 2023, in the amount of \$403,271.22.

Discussion: None.

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

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

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

**B. HRH LLC Bill/Check Warrant**

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Bennett to approve the High Rock Homes, LLC check register listed on the Warrant dated June 15, 2023, in the amount of \$32,441.28.

Discussion: None

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

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

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

**C. Review & Approval -- Board Minutes**

1. 4/27/2023 NHA Special Board Meeting

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to approve the 4/27/2023 NHA Special Board Meeting as submitted.

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

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

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

2. 5/2/2023 NHA Special Board Meeting

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to approve the 5/2/2023 NHA Special Board Meeting as submitted.

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

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

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

3. 5/18/2023 NHA & HRH LLC Regular Board Meeting & NHA Annual Meeting.

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to approve the 5/18/2023 NHA & HRH LLC Regular Board Meeting & NHA Annual Meeting as submitted.

**C. NAHRO Salary Studies Status Updates and Approvals – Preservation &**

Ms. Gosmon and reported on this item. She stated that she and Chair Foster met with Sunny Shaw, NAHRO Consultant and PHA Executive Director. Ms. Shaw was contracted to complete a salary study for the NHA while Steve Merritt was Interim Executive Director and felt it was important that Ms. Gosmon be equipped with solid information to make salary decisions for the next 2-5 years. Chair Foster described Ms. Shaw’s methodology. He pointed out that the study will determine whether the NHA’s compensation structure is aligned with like industry salaries. A brief discussion followed.

**D. Information & Discussion: Executive Director’s Report**

1. Monthly Financial Report – May 2023

Ms. Gosmon presented the Monthly Financial Report from Milne, Shaw & Robillard, P.C., Certified Public Accountants/Management Consultants. A brief discussion followed on how expenses are allocated across the various programs.

2. Monthly Management Report

Ms. Gosmon presented the Monthly Management Report. A brief discussion followed.

3. NHA Five-Year Plan Update

Ms. Gosmon pointed out that a copy of the draft NHA Five-year Plan is included in the Board Packet for the Commissioner’s review and consideration. A brief discussion followed. Ms. Gosmon stated that she would inform the RAB of any comments and suggestions from the NHA Board of Commissioners. Ms. Gosmon noted that this meeting starts the 45-day review period before a Public Hearing on the Plan.

4. Hiring a Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Coordinator – Informational Item

Ms. Gosmon reported on this item. She stated that a copy of the job description is included in the Board Packet. She added that the job description has been posted in the Hometown Weekly newspaper. Ms. Gosmon reported that she has hired two people for the Resident Opportunity Self-Sufficiency Coordinators.

5. Needham Housing Authority 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Update  
Ms. Gosmon reported that she has contracted with a graphic artist to develop a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo and a committee of community partners has been formed to plan the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration.
  
6. Any other issues/updates of the NHA – corrections per request of the Chair  
Performance Management Review (PMR). Chair Foster and Ms. Gosmon led the discussion on this item. Chair Foster noted that he and Ms. Gosmon had received the Performance Management Review (PMR) results from Bob Pelletier, Housing Management Specialist for the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC). He also noted that he and Ms. Gosmon met with Mr. Pelletier today regarding the results of the report.

The PMR evaluates Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) on: Occupancy, Tenants Accounts Receivable (TAR), Board Member Training, Certifications and Reporting Submissions, Annual Plan Submission, Adjusted Net Income/Revenue, Operating Reserve, Capital Spending and Staff Training and Certification. LHAs receive a score of “No Findings” which indicates that a housing authority meets or exceeds expectations; “Operational Guidance” which indicates that the LHA must make slight changes to improve in that performance area; and “Corrective Action” which indicates that housing authorities must develop and implement a plan of action to correct any deficiencies noted in order to improve performance to a satisfactory level.

Chair Foster referred to the NHA’s 2022 PMR results has noted in the letter from EOHLC’s Housing Management Specialist dated June 12, 2023, which stated that, “The LHA fell below the EOHLC set scoring threshold (less than equal to 65%). As there has been a change in Executive Director/Management Agent since the review period, EOHLC is not issuing a “strike” as we normally would when a housing authority falls below the threshold. As a result of the LHAs performance on this PMR, however, the LHA will have a PMR next year, including the Desk Audit and Site Visit.”

Chair Foster also referred to the actions that the NHA must take to address poor performance and non-compliance during the current fiscal year that should be taken by the LHA Executive Director and Board after receiving the results of the 2022 PMR: 1. Review Performance Management Review (PMR) Ratings and Recommendations provided to the LHA and Board as part of the PMR Close Out package. 2. Create a Corrective Action plan that the LHA will undertake to address each PMR Rating. 3. Schedule a meeting with EOHLC’s Housing Management Specialist and/or Facilities Management Specialist to discuss the actions your LHA will take to address PMR findings or to request further technical assistance.

The NHA has received a finding of corrective action in the 2022 PMR for Tenant Accounts Receivable (TAR), Adjusted Net Income, and Operating Reserve. The NHA has also received findings of corrective action for criteria relating to four areas of the PMR Physical Conditions Report: Criteria 1 - 100% of units inspected during FYE under review; Criteria 2 – Unit inspection reports create, track, and report Work Orders for inspection repairs, and Work Orders are completed within 30 days or added to DM/CIP; Criteria 3 - Unit inspection reports accurately reflect necessary repairs; and Criteria 4 – Work Orders created for every vacancy and completed within 30 days (or waiver requested).

Chair Foster stated that this is to be taken seriously. He added that a Corrective Action Plan must be completed, and a meeting must be scheduled with the EOHLIC's Housing Management Specialist and or Facilities Management Specialist to review Board Approved Corrective Action Plan.

**E. Status Updates – Preservation & Redevelopment Initiative (PRI)**

1. Linden/Chambers Redevelopment Project

Chair Foster led the discussion on this item. He recapped the townwide all Chairs meeting and reported on zoning activity. He stated that there is strong town support for this project, but more time is needed and as result we would not meet the October 2023 deadline for the annual funding cycle for Low Income Housing Tax Credit. He added that there is strong support for moving forward in the spring of 2024. Chair Foster referred to the Planning Board meeting on June 20, 2023, at the PSAB and encouraged members to attend. Chair Foster referred to zoning and Attorney Smart's memo to the Planning Board recommending the creation of a special overlay district that would permit the NHA to develop 252 units by right subject to Site Plan Review. Chair Foster stated that there will be a meeting with the Conservation Commission on Thursday, June 22, 2023, at 7 pm regarding the marshland, wetland area at the end of the Chambers Street parking lot.

Chair Foster reported on the two new Select Board Committees/advisory groups: Housing Needham (HONE) Advisory Group and Town-Financed Community Housing Oversight Committee (T-CHOC). Chair Foster stated that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) announced that they have issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Housing Finance Consulting Services. This person would advise the CPC and the Town on finances relative to the PRI.

Chair Foster referred to the Town of Needham Housing Plan that was unanimously approved by the Planning Board in January and submitted to Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (formerly DHCD) for approval, which is in compliance with the MBTA Communities Act.

2. Seabeds/Cook Preservation & Modernization Project

Chair Foster reported that the NHA has received proposals for the repositioning of Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive. He added that a designer selection is being formed to review the proposals.

3. PRI Budget – Sources & Uses of Funds  
Chair Foster stated that he does not have an update on this item.
4. CHA Monthly Report  
There was no discussion on this item.

**F. Status Update – Internal Initiatives**

1. Roofing Replacement Project at CRCD – Update  
Ms. Gosmon reported that although this project has started it is at the mercy of the weather.
2. Paving Project at SBW & CRCD – Update  
Ms. Gosmon reported on this item. She stated that she has met with two civil engineers and one architect and has obtained proposals from each. She added that she will provide an update to the Board at the July meeting.
3. Cook’s Afterschool Program – Update  
Ms. Gosmon reported that the Cook’s Afterschool Program ended today. Ms. Gosmon expressed her appreciation to Laurie Blake for keeping the program going to the end of the school year.
4. Unit 42 – CRCD – Update  
Ms. Gosmon reported that she is working to get this unit back online. She added that she has had two plumbers come in to assess the plumber repair for this unit. She stated that she is meeting with a general contract regarding other repairs to the unit.

**G. New Business**

1. Executive Director Goals  
Chair Foster opened this item for discussion. He stated that Ms. Gosmon’s draft goals statement is a credible and really good draft. He added that the objective tonight would be to receive input and comments from each Board member and vote to adopt the goals. Chair Foster summarized the process for now and the end of the year. A brief discussion followed.

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Kirk and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler to adjourn to approve the Executive Director Goals and to authorize the Chair to present them to the Executive Director for signature.

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

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

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

**H. Adjournment**

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Scheideler and seconded by Commissioner Kirk to adjourn the June 15, 2023, NHA and HRH LLC Board meeting at 9:10 pm.

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

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

**The motion carried. The vote was unanimous, 4-0.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

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Cheryl Gosmon  
June 15, 2023