

**NEEDHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HIGH ROCK HOMES, LLC**

**BOARD MEETINGS  
MINUTES**

**Thursday, September 21, 2023**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

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

**NHA STAFF PRESENT:**

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

**GUEST:**

Ben Wilson, Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype  
Margaret Moran, Deputy Executive Director of Development

This was a Hybrid meeting. Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 7:39 p.m. He called the roll of Commissioners with all reporting present on Thursday, September 21, 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 September 18, 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.

=====

**Announcements from the Chair:**

Chair Foster noted that there are six attendees online.

Chair Foster stated that there are two meetings this evening. One is the NHA/HRH LLC Regular Board Meeting. The second is the Public Hearing on the Needham Housing Authority's State-aided Public Housing 2024 Annual Plan.

Chair Foster mentioned that he had invited Representative Denise Garlick to this meeting to present a legislative and district update but that she had a last-minute conflict. He will reschedule the meeting with her.

Chair Foster stated that he wanted to introduce Teresa Santalucia from Klein Horning, LLP, the law firm that will help the NHA negotiate a Developer Agreement, but she has COVID. He will reschedule the meeting with her.

Chair Foster reminded the community of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration at the Needham Golf Club. This event will occur on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, from 4 pm to 6 pm.

**Public Hearing – 2024 State Public Housing Annual Plan**

Chair Foster opened the Public Hearing on Needham Housing Authority’s State-aided Public Housing 2024 Annual Plan at 7:45 p.m. Ms. Gosmon introduced the 2024 Annual Plan document detailing the housing authority's overall operations. She stated that the plan includes the Capital Improvement Plan, Maintenance and Repair Plan, Operating Budget, Policies, and other elements. Ms. Gosmon summarized the details of capital projects. She described the maintenance and repair plan and outlined the operating budget. Ms. Gosmon stated that the Annual Plan is available on the NHA website at [www.needhamhousingauthority.org](http://www.needhamhousingauthority.org) and the state’s website at [www.mass.gov/local-housing-authority-lha-reports](http://www.mass.gov/local-housing-authority-lha-reports).

Ross Donald commented on the inefficiency of the surveillance cameras. He mentioned that he is working with residents on starting an LTO.

There being no further persons wishing to make a public comment, Chair Foster closed the Public Hearing on the Needham Housing Authority’s State-aided Public Housing 2024 Annual Plan at 7:50 p.m.

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Kirk and seconded by Commissioner Bennett to approve the Needham Housing Authority’s State-aided Public Housing 2024 Annual Plan.

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.**

**Resident/Community Input:**

Jessica Reese, President of the Cook’s Bridge Tenant Association (CBTA), commented that she and Ross Donald attended a workshop about getting new people to attend the LTO meetings. She stated that she got some excellent ideas, such as sending our robocall meeting reminders and doing visuals within the meetings to get ideas on what people are interested in and what is important to them. Jessica mentioned a training that would be free to residents on conflict resolution. She stated that the Mass Union of Public Housing Tenants will hold its annual conference on Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup>. She added that she is planning on attending this event with other residents. Jessica also mentioned that residents hope to return to receiving monthly newsletters rather than quarterly. Residents like getting the monthly newsletter and the monthly calendar in the back of the newsletter to help them track everything else that happens within the month. She also stated that the CBTA elections will occur in the new year.

Ross Donald stated that he and other residents continue to work on restarting the LTO Linden Chambers, which is going to be necessary. He noted a correction that he is trying to include the High Rock families in the formation of an LTO. He stated that there is no social service

coordinator, she will be out sick for a while, and no Springwell social service person. He noted that this points out the need for an LTO to keep these things going. He mentioned opening 164 Linden Street for community use. He added that it had been used for maintenance and storage for about ten years. It's not the highest and best use of this space. He stated that it is the consensus of the residents to use the space for a community purpose, such as a design center where we can hold a lot of the documentation and predevelopment work. Ross commented on the unit inspection process.

Chair Foster commented that Ross had been brought up on a couple of occasions the destiny of 164 Linden Street. Chair Foster stated that 164 Linden might be Ground Zero for starting the redevelopment. He encouraged Ross to stay tuned. He added that it would not be prudent to add any improvement to that building.

### **Review & Approval:**

#### **A. 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 September 21, 2023, in the amount of \$510,015.38.

##### **Discussion:**

Commissioner Kirk asked about a payment to Allen & Major for \$6500. Ms. Gosmon explained that Allen & Major is the civil engineer for the paving project at Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive. Commissioner Kirk also had a question on a particular bill and the payment distribution. Commissioner Kirk expressed a concern that the maintenance staff are purchasing the weed killer Roundup, something that she has asked the previous administration not to do.

##### **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.**

#### **HRH LLC Bill/Check Warrant**

##### **Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Kirk and seconded by Commissioner Bennett to approve the High Rock Homes, LLC check register listed on the Warrant dated September 21, 2023, in the amount of \$25,593.37.

##### **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.**

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

1. 7/20/2023 NHA & HRH Regular Board Meeting Minutes

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Kirk and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler to approve the 7/20/2023 NHA & HRH Regular Board Meeting Minutes as amended.

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.**

**C. Revisions to the NHA Smoke-Free Policy**

Ms. Gosmon stated that she is proposing a name change from the current Smoking Policy to Smoke-Free Building Policy. Ms. Gosmon noted that this policy will allow the NHA to work better with the court system and to introduce support to help residents who need it to stop smoking. Ms. Gosmon noted that she had received several complaints from the Needham Public Health Department on Public Nuisance complaints relative to secondhand smoke. Ms. Gosmon stated that she would meet with the CBTA and the RAB to have them weigh in on the policy. A general discussion followed on including vaping in the policy. Chair Foster commented that the policy should consider medical THC vaping and what would be the right policy for this. He added that the Smoke-Free Building Policy should prohibit the use of recreational marijuana.

**D. Donation of the NHA High-Roof Large Van for Community Outreach Program**

Needham Police Chief John Schlittler and Officer Kelley Scolponeti joined the meeting. Chief Schlittler and Officer Kelley thanked the Needham Housing Authority for donating the High Roof Large Van for the Police Department's Community Outreach Program. A brief discussion followed.

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Kirk and seconded by Commissioner Bennett to approve the donation of the Needham Housing Authority High Roof Large Van to the Needham Police Department's Community Outreach Program.

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**

**E. Information & Discussion: Executive Director's Report**

1. Monthly Financial Report – August 2023

Ms. Gosmon presented the monthly financial report for the Board's consideration.

2. Monthly Management Report

Ms. Gosmon presented the monthly management report for the Board's consideration. Chair Foster referred to the CHAMP article in the MPR radio program. Ms. Sanchez

shared with the Board some challenges the NHA experiences with working with the CHAMP waitlist.

3. Staffing Update

- a. Ms. Gosmon stated that the NHA has three vacant positions. Ms. Gosmon stated that it was her goal to promote from within and to fill the positions with the qualified staff she currently has. Ms. Gosmon stated that she has consulted with the NHA's fee consultant, and we are underspent in the salary budget line item. Ms. Gosmon noted that the Collective Union Agreement expires on December 31, 2023. She stated that she is working with the Authority's attorney to renew this agreement. Ms. Gosmon also noted that the ROSS-SCs are leaving the program due to family challenges.

4. Needham Housing Authority 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Update

Ms. Gosmon provided a brief update on plans for the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

5. NHA Federal 5-Year Plan

Ms. Gosmon stated that the 5-Year Plan has not been submitted. Some small changes will need to be made before the plan is submitted to HUD.

6. 2022 NHA Draft Audit Placeholder

Ms. Gosmon commented on the 2022 NHA Draft Audit. She stated that the report looked good. She noted that there is a report that she would need to submit relative to the 2022 HRH Audit report. It was the consensus of the Board to meet with the auditors at the October Board meeting.

7. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) 2024 Application Submitted

Ms. Gosmon stated that the next round of funding for the FSS 2024 application has been submitted.

8. Any other issues/updates of NHA

**F. Status Updates – Preservation & Redevelopment Initiative (PRI) (R. Foster)**

1. Linden/Chambers Redevelopment Project

Chair Foster noted that the BH+A and CHA continue to work very hard on the development of Linden/Chambers. He stated that the Team is scheduled to meet with the Planning Board on October 3, 2023. Chair Foster noted that November 1, 2023, is the deadline for CPA funding applications.

2. Seabeds/Cook Preservation & Modernization Project

- Introduction to BH+A Team

Chair Foster welcomed Ben Wilson and Margaret Moran and invited them to share a brief update on the Modernization of Captain Robert Cook Drive and Seabeds Way. A general discussion ensued.

3. Approval of Development Partner Negotiation Committee

Chair Foster stated that the NHA has a law firm confirmed for negotiating the Developer Agreement. Chair Foster noted that he would like the Board to

consider approving his recommendation for the negotiating committee to work with Klein Horning, LLP.

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Scheideler to appoint a Developer Negotiating Committee made up of himself, Ms. Gosmon, Vice-Chair Eleanor Evans, and Jonathan Driscoll of Driscoll & Driscoll, P.C.

**Discussion:**

Vice-Chair Evans asked what authority the committee would have. Chair Foster responded that the authority is to negotiate to produce the best agreement we can and work with Klein Horning, LLP, but not to approve the agreement. The agreement would be brought to the full Board for approval.

**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**

4. **PRI Budget Update**  
Chair Foster stated that a draft report is in place. He noted a gap in funding development for Seabeds Way and Captain Robert Cook Drive. He noted that he and Ms. Gosmon met with the NHA's Fee accountant on the PRI.
5. **CHA Monthly Report – Questions?**  
There were no comments from the Board on this item.

**G. Status Update – Internal Initiatives**

1. **Roofing Replacement Project at CRCD – Update**  
Ms. Gosmon reported that the project is progressing very nicely. The roofing project is nearly complete. Ms. Gosmon stated that the contractor has done a great job.
2. **Paving Project at SBW/CRCD and Linden/Chambers– Update**  
Ms. Gosmon reported on this item. She stated she is working with a civil engineer/architect firm for this project. She also reported on the 667 1, 2, and 3 paving projects.
3. **Unit 42 – CRCD – Update**  
Ms. Gosmon reported that this project is moving along. She added that she has a plumber in place to work on the repairs for this unit and a general contractor regarding other repairs.
4. **Resident Opportunity & Self-Sufficiency Service Coordinator (ROSS-SC) Grant Update**

Ms. Gosmon reported that the ROSS-SCs are doing a great job. She added that they have been meeting with residents and scheduled evening and weekend meetings with them.

5. Family Self-Sufficiency Service Coordinator Grant – Update

Ms. Gosmon reported that the FSS Coordinator is doing a great job structuring the program.

**H. New Business**

**I. Adjournment**

**Motion and Vote**

Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Scheideler and seconded by Commissioner Bennett to adjourn the September 21, 2023, NHA and HRH LLC Board meeting at 9:25 pm.

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

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

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

---

Cheryl Gosmon  
September 21, 2023