REGULAR NHA BOARD & HRH LLC MEETINGS
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 5:00 PM

COMMISSIONERS:
Reginald C. Foster, Chair
Jim Flanagan, Vice Chair
Amanda Berman, Treasurer
Janice Bennett, Resident Commissioner (remote)
Geoff Engler, Commissioner

NHA STAFF:
Cheryl Gosmon, Executive Director & Secretary
Michael Thorstad, Deputy Executive Assistant

GUESTS:
Matthew Zajac, Deputy Director, Planning and Development, (CHA) (remote)
Christian Abney, Project Manager, Planning and Development, (CHA) (remote)

Chairman Foster called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM. He called the roll of Commissioners with all reporting present on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, for the Needham Housing Authority (NHA) Board & HRH LLC Regular monthly meeting: Reg Foster, Jim Flanagan, Geoff Engler, Janice Bennett, and Amanda Berman. He noted a quorum of all five commissioners. He also noted for the record that this is a hybrid meeting as permitted by the law signed by Governor Maura Healey, on March 28, 2025, for the purpose of extending the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law until June 30, 2027. This extension allows the COVID-19 enacted measures allowing remote participation for board members to continue. This is the second time these popular provisions have been extended, allowing public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location, and to provide “adequate, alternative” access to remote meetings.

He stated that the NHA secretary provided adequate notice of this meeting by preparing a Public Notice dated December 5, 2025, setting forth the date, time, and place of this meeting. The said notice was filed with the Clerk of the Town of Needham and provided to those who requested it. He introduced the guests Matt Zajac and Christian Abney from the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) for today’s meeting.

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

Chair Foster noted that agenda item F., 1. would be taken out of order and moved to the first agenda item to accommodate the guest speaker Matt Zajac, Deputy Director, Planning and Development of CHA. He recognized Mr. Zajac who provided an update on CHA’s consulting activity and discussed CHA’s status report to the NHA Board on the Seabeds Way Preservation & Modernization Project (“SBW Project”), which covered five topics: (1) the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Repositioning, (2) Design Updates, (3) Town Approvals (Zoning/Permitting), (4) Relocation, and (5) Financing.

Mr. Zajac noted CHA's work is assisting the NHA to switch from federal public housing to project-based Section 8 vouchers, which relates to HUD's repositioning activities. He noted CHA received back an updated rent comparability study, which helps to show what payment standard the federal government will use. He also noted that CHA and NHA got a more favorable payment standard than the last time, which will help leverage more private debt to fund the renovation than before. He commented that this is helpful overall to make sure that CHA and NHA can fund the SBW Project's scope. He reported that NHA has executed proposals to do two additional studies of the existing conditions, which are an environmental report and an updated capital needs study. He mentioned that the residents are likely to see site visits get scheduled in January, and one site visit to involve some additional testing related to asbestos-containing materials. He commented that all the testing will be in accordance with all the rules regarding safety. He noted the ultimate goal is to make sure that the SBW Project remediates the asbestos-containing material 100%. He reported that CHA is working with its legal team to draft and submit a request to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) for procurement relief, which will hopefully allow CHA and NHA to hire a general contractor in a more affordable and timely way.

Mr. Zajac provided a brief update on the continued design work being done by the architectural firm of Bargmann Hendrie + Archetype, Inc. (BH+A). He reported that the architect, BH+A, has continued to work on the construction documents (CDs). He noted that the CHA and NHA will keep working with BH+A to refine that scope. He also noted that, at this point, CHA is tailoring the SBW project's scope to the available budget, and items on the margins may fall in or out of what's in it as they learn more about the cost of the work. He commented that CHA will keep the NHA Board and residents involved in those updates one hundred percent of the way, and no changes have been made to the scope since the last resident meeting in any permanent or official way. He provided additional related comments.

Mr. Zajac then provided comments on the interaction that CHA and NHA has had with the Town of Needham. He noted that Chair Foster met with the town's administrator to discuss the legal agreements about utilizing CPA funding for the SBW Project and to not pay real estate taxes, and the outcome of this meeting was positive. He provided additional related comments.

Mr. Zajac then provided comments on the relocation planning. He reported that CHA and NHA applied to EOHLC for the ability to start holding vacant units as vacant at NHA's other properties, which allows those units to be available as a relocation resource when it's time to start the SBW Project. He also reported that EOHLC approved of that request. He noted such units can start to be held vacant as the agency (NHA) sees fit. He stated that there will be a similar request to HUD to hold units vacant in the NHA federal public housing properties at Seabeds Way, Captain Robert Cook Drive, and High Rock Estates. He provided additional related comments.

Mr. Zajac then provided a brief update on the financing and various sources of funding for the SBW Project. He noted the permanent loan comes from Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP). He commented that CHA and NHA continue working with lender MHP to maximize their loan with regards to the rent comparability study and trying to get the most debt into the SBW Project to support the renovation. He also commented that the predevelopment loan is planned to come from the organization Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) that offers affordable financing for organizations to fund the expenses for the affordable housing development until the start of construction. He reported that CHA submitted an application for a $400K predevelopment loan request, which is processing. He commented that CHA is hopeful this predevelopment loan will be approved to help pay the costs of the architecture and CHA's work through when construction starts. He commented that the predevelopment loan then would be paid back by the other sources of funds that become available. He commented that CHA is also hopeful to bring this actual document to the NHA Board for approval probably in February 2026. He noted that the CHA and NHA are looking to work on an update of the overall PRI budget in the new year (2026). He expressed his appreciation to everyone.

Chair Foster added that the building permit fees were agreed to be waived in a recent town meeting that's confirmed with the Town Manager, as a good decision by the Town of Needham for the SBW Project. He expressed his appreciation to the Town of Needham and thanked it for this. He made additional comments. He then opened this part of the meeting for questions or comments from the NHA Board of Commissioners, residents, and attendees. A general discussion followed.

RESIDENT/COMMUNITY INPUT - Covered at the end of this meeting.

Linden Chambers Residents Association (LCRA) members, specifically the LCRA Treasurer, Marlene Costa, and LCRA Vice-Chair, James Burke, requested that they have the opportunity to comment on certain agenda items at the end of the meeting. Chair Foster provided response comments to their request.

Chair Foster then recognized Marlene Costa, who is a resident and Treasurer of the LCRA. She asked a question about the funding monies regarding the SBW Project's renovation to continue. Chair provided response comments to her question.

DISCUSSION/APPROVAL ITEMS – NHA & HIGH ROCK HOMES LLC

A. Review & Approve:

1. NHA Bill Schedule/Check Warrant

   Motion and Vote

   Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Flanagan to approve the December 10, 2025, NHA Bill Schedule/Check Warrant in the amount of $382,956.89.

   Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:
   Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan votes aye; Commissioner Bennett votes aye; Commissioner Engler votes aye; and Commissioner Berman votes aye.
   The motion carried. The vote was 5-0-0.

2. HRH LLC Bill Schedule/Check Warrant
   Motion and Vote
   Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Flanagan to approve the December 10, 2025, HRH LLC Bill Schedule/Check Warrant in the amount of $18,685.18.

   Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:
   Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan votes aye; Commissioner Bennett votes aye; Commissioner Engler votes aye; and Commissioner Berman votes aye.
   The motion carried. The vote was 5-0-0.

B. The Consent Agenda:

1. NHA & HRH LLC Regular Monthly Meeting Minutes 11/19/2025
2. NHA Special Board Meeting Minutes 11/13/2025
3. Milne, Shaw & Robillard, PC Monthly Accountant's Report
4. NHA Monthly Vacancy & Workorder Report
5. NHA Tenant Accounts Receivable Report
6. NHA Tenant Accounts Receivable & Aging Report

Motion and Vote
Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Foster and seconded by Commissioner Flanagan, the NHA Board approved the Consent Agenda as submitted.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:
Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan votes aye; Commissioner Bennett votes aye; Commissioner Engler votes aye; and Commissioner Berman votes aye.
The motion carried. The vote was 5-0-0.

C. NHA Policies:

1. Review & Approve: Draft NHA Private Use of Community Room Policy
Chair Foster recognized the NHA Executive Director Cheryl Gosmon, who introduced and described the draft NHA Private Use of Community Room Policy. Ms. Gosmon explained that this policy establishes standards, requirements, and procedures for governing how NHA residents may deserve and use community rooms for private use or exclusive activities, meetings, events, or functions. She stated that this policy is designed to ensure safe, respectful, and appropriate use of community space while protecting NHA property and maintaining harmony within residential buildings. She asked for the NHA Board's consideration to approve this draft policy. She stated the NHA Board had initially reviewed this draft policy in the previous NHA Board Regular Monthly Meeting that was held in November 2025. She provided additional comments to the NHA Board regarding the need, purpose, scope, and use of this policy.

Chair Foster asked Ms. Gosmon if she had received any input from the residents regarding this draft policy. Ms. Gosmon stated she had not. A discussion followed.

<u>**Motion and Vote**</u>
Upon a motion duly made by Commissioner Bennett and seconded by Commissioner Berman to approve the NHA Private Use of Community Room Policy as submitted.

<u>Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion</u>:
Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan votes aye; Commissioner Bennett votes aye; Commissioner Engler votes aye; and Commissioner Berman votes aye.
The motion carried. The vote was 5-0-0.

D. Request for Proposals (RFP) for Independent Public Audit Services - Update
Chair Foster recognized Ms. Gosmon who delivered an update on the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Independent Public Audit Services. She explained the reasons for this RFP. The NHA doesn't currently have an auditor. The NHA contract with Milne, Shaw & Robillard, P.C. ends on December 31, 2025. The NHA has subsequently hired a new Fee Accountant, CBIZ, formerly known as Marcum, which was its auditor. She provided additional comments. A discussion followed.

Chair Foster added to Ms. Gosmon's status report that the NHA Board will need to select and form a Subcommittee to advise Ms. Gosmon when proposals are received by the NHA to review, which he stated will consist of himself and Commissioner Berman.

E. Executive Director's Report
Ms. Gosmon delivered an update on the following items:
1. HUD NSPIRE Inspections – Update
2. Review & Discuss: Draft NHA Housekeeping Policy
3. Draft - NHA Parking Policy for Linden, Chambers, Captain Robert Cook Drive, and Seabeds Way – Placeholder
4. Draft - Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) and Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) – Placeholder
5. Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) – Placeholder

F. Preservation & Redevelopment Initiative (PRI) – partially covered earlier in the meeting
Chair Foster noted agenda item F., 1. was covered earlier in the meeting. He then delivered an update on the following agenda item F. 2.
1. Seabeds Way Preservation & Modernization Project
   CHA's Mr. Zajac provided a status update on the SBW Project at the beginning of this meeting.
2. Linden Terrace Phase 1A Redevelopment Project
   Chair Foster provided a brief update.
3. Monthly Reports: Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) and AHSC Peabody Developer LLC

4. Administrative

G. New Business –

1. 2025 Executive Director Performance Review Process and Schedule
   Chair Foster proposed to move this agenda item to the next NHA Board Special Meeting that is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, at 5:00PM.

Informational Items –

Ms. Gosmon delivered an update on the following items:

- NHA Website – Signed Proposal with Arcem Digital Solutions
- CBIZ Contract – New Fee Accountant
- Springwell December Newsletter
- Letter to Sarah Byrnes, Director of Mass Union
- Notice to Residents on HUD REAC Inspection

H. Adjournment of the Regular NHA & HRH LLC Meetings

Motion and Vote

Upon a motion duly made by Vice Chair Flanagan and seconded by Commissioner Bennett to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 PM.

Chair Foster called the roll of Commissioners in favor of this motion:
Commissioner Foster votes aye; Commissioner Flanagan votes aye; Commissioner Bennett votes aye; Commissioner Engler votes aye; and Commissioner Berman votes aye.

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

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Respectfully submitted by:
Michael Thorstad, Deputy Executive Director