

Newark Housing Authority
Board of Commissioners
June 10, 2020
Revised August 12, 2020

Summary of Meeting (Virtual Zoom) Minutes

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at approximately 5:35 PM by the Board Vice-Chairperson, Marguerite Ashely. The Call to order was delayed due to technical difficulties experienced by the Executive Director.

I. Roll Call:

Board of Commissioners present: Marguerite Ashley, Donna Shand, Paul Tillman, Emile Brown and Dr. Lewis. Marene Jordan (Executive Director) was also present.

Absent: Nikki Lane, Attorney Donald Gouge Jr.

Note: Due to the Zoom invite link provided for this meeting, Nikki Lane and Don Gouge were not able to join the meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes:

(a). Meeting Minutes from May 13, 2020

The Vice-Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the May 13, 2020 meeting. Before the minutes were approved, there were a few typos and corrections noted. Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was 2nd by Ms. Shand.

Aye 4 (Ms. Shand, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

III. Report of the Executive Director:

(a). Staff Reports from May 2020

The Vice-Chairperson asked for the report of the Executive Director for the month of May 2020. Mrs. Jordan provided the following report:

May Staff Report:

City of Newark Rental Housing Work Group update:

As part of the Mayor's and City Council's regular Zoom meeting held on May 18, 2020 (in part) to discuss the Rental Work-Group Recommendations, NHA prepared a Public Comment to be read for the record during the council meeting. Suggestions were:

- Designate a percentage of new units built as affordable housing, or
- Pay a fee in-lieu of, or
- List property and Lease to a Section 8 participant.

Use of funds paid into the housing fund kitty – Payment of fee in-lieu of

1. Use the kitty to help house families who fall below the 30% AMI,
2. Consider City's own Voucher program.

Mrs. Jordan reported in reading the meeting minutes from the council meeting that there was positive feedback from the council members.

Such as:

Mr. Horning asked the City Solicitor to review the language to amend the zoning codes requiring new developments to include a percentage of affordable housing or pay a fee in-lieu.

Mr. Wallace was comfortable moving forward with all the recommendations.

Mr. Lawnhorn referred to the payment in-lieu of for increased density and felt that it granted developers in college towns the opportunity for more density because non-student residents did not want to reside with students. He agreed that it made sense to match the façade/design of affordable housing to a single family home development so that it could blend as a neighborhood.

Resident Window Air Conditioners:

NHA was contacted by the First State Community Action Agency Summer Cooling Assistance Program. Now through September, residents may qualify to receive an energy efficient window air conditioner through this summer program. NHA shared the information with all its tenants.

Board of Commissioners Upcoming Vacancy:

Mr. Harris, Chairperson has confirmed that he will be resigning from the board. However, NHA has not received his written notice. The seat held by Mr. Harris is reserved for a resident appointment (a program participant). NHA will circulate a notice to the residents to inquire if there is any interest in filling this seat as an appointment from the Governor's office.

As far as the Chairperson position of the board, once the seat becomes vacant the board can proceed with nominations to fill this position.

Donated Resident Face Masks:

NHA was contacted by Pastor Hackett from the St. John's AUMP Church located on New London Road in regards to face masks that he would like to drop off for our tenants. Pastor Hackett dropped off 50 face masks at Alder Creek and provided NHA with 50 as well.

Mobile Food Bank Distribution Event:

Pastor Hackett also informed NHA that the Church will be hosting a Mobile Pantry Food Distribution Event at Alder Creek on Thursday, June 18, 2020 from 10:30 am – 12 Noon.

Cares Act - Supplemental Funding:

NHA received notification that HUD has disbursed approximately \$74,000 in CARES Act Supplemental Operating Funds to NHA/Alder Creek. These funds are separate from the annual disbursements. These funds are to assist with expenses related to COVID-19. Some COVID-19 related expenses are as follows:

- Increase of water consumption
- Increase in trash removal
- Cost of delivering supplies so that staff or residents can shelter in place, thereby reducing exposure
- Cost to safely transport residents that test positive to a quarantine facility
- Cost to sanitize units/office area
- Cost for computer updates to handle the increase in flyers, letters to residents and landlords
- Cost of supporting residents in quarantine such as health-related supplies (i.e. masks, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, thermometers). NHA is planning to provide care packages to all 54 residents.
- Payment of salaries to PHA staff unable to work because of virus public health restrictions (stay-at home orders/self-quarantine requirements)

The expenditure of these funds is targeted to be ending December 31, 2020 unless HUD extends the date. NHA is in the process of receiving a quote to provide all public housing residents with care packages that will include health-related supplies.

Mr. Brown asked if NHA can use some of these funds to upgrade the computers. Mrs. Jordan responded, “Yes.” The upgrades would resolve the technical difficulties in hosting virtual meetings.

NHA also received an additional \$15,669 in Administrative Fees revenue under the Section 8 Program as supplemental funds under the CARES Act. NHA is currently exploring options on how to utilize these funds.

July 2020 Board Meeting:

Mrs. Jordan reminded the Commissioners that the board does not meet during this month.

Scope of Work – Maintenance Contractor:

NHA solicited the request for services for a Maintenance, Snow Removal and Ground Keeping Services Contractor due to the unforeseen death of NHA’s former Maintenance Contractor who died from complications related to COVID-19. The Scope of Work is posted on NHA’s website as well as listed in the Newark Post. The contract is expected to be awarded in June.

Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the Staff Report. The motion was 2nd by Ms. Shand.

Aye 4 (Ms. Shand, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

V. Committee Reports:

A. Report of Policies, Procedures, Compliance & Personnel Committee – Chairperson (Mr. Brown):

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Mr. Brown was present and acknowledged there was no report from this committee. However, he acknowledged that the revisions to the By-Laws does fall under this committee and would be discussed later on the meeting.

B. Report from Development Committee – Chairperson (Vacant):

(a). Committee Update:

The Vice-Chairperson of the Board acknowledged that this committee still does not have a Chairperson so she asked Mrs. Jordan to provide the update. Mrs. Jordan provided the following report.

Mrs. Jordan acknowledged providing the board with a written development update prior to this meeting. The report answered questions and provided follow-up feedback requested from commissioners during the last meeting. Its purpose was to assist them in becoming more informed prior to their voting in selecting a developer partner for the redevelopment of George Reed Village II.

The report provided the name of the management company for the Michaels' Organization and also included additional responses from references who have worked with the Leon Weiner Associates. The commissioners had no additional questions regarding the supplemental development update that was provided.

A brief discussion took place regarding the number of units proposed for the redevelopment.

Mrs. Jordan noted that the Strategic Planning Committee had established goals that were approved by the board that would be incorporated into the redevelopment. The goals were inclusive of improving the quality of housing we offer our program participants and to expand the number of affordable housing units offered to assist additional families.

Ms. Ashely replied, "We are not adding additional units."

Mrs. Jordan replied, "We are." She explained that under the Low Income Public Housing Program, HUD has established a Faircloth Limit. The Faircloth Limit is the number of units approved by HUD for NHA to own and manage under this program. NHA's limit is 98 (42 at Alder Creek and 54 under NHA's Management- two properties were sold).

She added, "The redevelopment opportunity allows NHA to add 14 Project Based Section 8 units into the deal structure: thus, offering additional units netting the NHA no less than 68 units."

Mrs. Jordan reminded the commissioners of our intent to convert our public housing units into Section 8 units. This would mean that NHA would function like New Castle County in the sense that only the voucher program would be administered by NHA.

Dr. Lewis asked if there would be adequate funding.

Mrs. Jordan replied, "Yes, with projected analysis and proforma's presented."

Mr. Tillman, as a new board member, expressed that he was at a disadvantage because he did not know enough. He deferred to the other board members before voting.

Ms. Shand noted that she was not on the board when Alder Creek was redeveloped. However, she did acknowledge that we have improved our vetting process. She added that Leon Weiner Associates is a pillar in the community. She indicated how their reputation speaks for them. She added the analysis prepared by CSG Advisors was compelling and thinks partnering with Leon Weiner is best for NHA.

Dr. Lewis acknowledged that he is also a relatively new board member but will rely on the presentation presented by CSG as well as the support from Mrs. Jordan.

Ms. Ashely was not in favor of partnering with either developer as expressed in previous board meetings. She supports a rehabbing and keeping the buildings in their current configuration.

Mr. Brown was in favor of redevelopment. He acknowledges that Mrs. Jordan will be the primary contact person and will be heavily involved. Therefore, he stated, "I will support what is best for NHA."

Mr. Tillman thanked Ms. Ashely for her decision. However, after hearing from each of the commissioners individually, he felt comfortable in voting.

The Vice-Chairperson asked for a motion for the Newark Housing Authority (NHA) to select Leon Weiner Associates as the developer partner for the redevelopment project. Mrs. Brown made a motion that NHA partner with Leon Weiner. This motion was 2nd by Donna Shand.

Aye 4 (Ms. Shand, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)
Nay 1 (Ms. Ashley)
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 1

The individual votes were recorded as follows:

Paul Tillman – yea
Emile Brown – yea
Marguerite Ashley – nay

Donna Shand – yea
Dr. Horacio Lewis – yea

C. Report of Finance Committee – Chairperson (Ms. Shand):

(a) Monthly Financials:

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Ms. Shand, was present. She noted no financial reports are available due to COVID-19. However, Mrs. Jordan informed the reports will be available at our next meeting in August. She added, “NHA is working on the unaudited financials and the independent audit is scheduled for the 3rd week in July.”

D. Strategic Planning Committee – Chairperson (Ms. Shand):

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Ms. Shand was present. A discussion took place regarding a date for the planned Commissioner Workshop that was scheduled for March 25th but was canceled due to COVID-19. Ms. Shand asked for feedback from the Commissioners.

Mr. Tillman, a new board member, felt the workshop would help with his learning curve and would afford him a better opportunity to be engaged. He was open to the month of July since the board does not meet this month.

Dr. Lewis felt that the rescheduling of the workshop should be postponed until sometime in the fall due to COVID-19.

Mr. Brown and Ms. Ashely both had no objections to rescheduling the workshop in July.

Ms. Shand proposed July 22nd or 29th as possible dates.

Mrs. Jordan was charged with confirming that these dates are available and reporting back to the board.

V. Attorney Issues:

Mr. Gouge was not in attendance to report any attorney updates as they relate to NHA.

VI. Old Business:

- A. From the other Commissioners: N/A
- B. From the Executive Director
 - 1. By-Laws; Edits to Meetings and Voting during a Pandemic

Mrs. Jordan referred to the By-Laws. Specifically, Article III – Meetings

- Section 2 – Regular Meetings
- Section 4 – Emergency Meetings
- Section 6 – Manner of Voting

Mrs. Jordan opened the discussion by indicating that this section of the By-Laws was a topic for discussion some years ago when one of the commissioners (State Representative

Baumbach) could not attend the meeting in person and was able to participate in a conference call but was not able to vote on any of the agenda items. “Here we are again, under a different set of circumstances.” She said.

Mr. Brown mentioned, “There is no need to re-create the wheel. We can refer to the State of Delaware to see what language they have adopted.”

Mr. Tillman mentioned that we could also refer to the City of Newark.

Mrs. Shand added that we could also adopt some language from the General Assembly.

With that being said, Mr. Brown noted that Mrs. Jordan and he will work on some language to present at the next board meeting.

C. From Legal Counsel: N/A

VII. New Business:

- A. From Commissioners: N/A
- B. From the Executive Director: N/A
- C. From Legal Counsel: N/A

VIII. Visitors and/or Petition: N/A

X. Adjournment:

The Vice-Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Brown made a motion for the board to adjourn. The motion was 2nd by Dr. Lewis.

Aye 4 (Ms. Shand, Mr. Brown, Dr. Lewis and Mr. Tillman)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:36 PM

Minutes Submitted by: Marene M. Jordan, Executive Director