



313 East Main Street • Newark, Delaware 19711 • Telephone/TDD 302-366-0826 • Fax 302-366-8212

**Newark Housing Authority
Board of Commissioners
October 12, 2022**

Summary of Meeting (Virtual Zoom) Minutes

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order sharply at 5:00 PM by the Chairperson, Nikki Lane.

I. Roll Call:

The Chairperson made a request for Roll Call. Board of Commissioners present: Nikki Lane, Paul Tillman, Jerry Clifton and Abeo Lucas. Marene Jordan (Executive Director) and Attorney Donald Gouge Jr. were also present. William Dresibach (Consultant) also acknowledged his presence for the meeting.

Absent: Marguerite Ashely (excused absence) and Emile Brown

Note: One Board Seat Vacant – Mayoral appointment

II. Visitor and/or Petition:

The Chairperson opened the floor to any visitor(s). Since there were none, she moved onto the next agenda item.

III. Executive Session: (Closed to the Public)

- a) CSG Advisors: William Dresibach & Nicole Graham (Consultants) provided an update on the status of George Reed Village. Q&A to follow.
- b) Update on Contract Negotiations of a Real Estate Transaction

The Chairperson asked for a motion to enter Executive Session. Commissioner Clifton made a motion to drop down into Executive Session. This motion was 2nd by Commissioner Tillman.

At approximately 5:05 PM the Board of Commissioners entered Executive Session.

Aye 4 (Ms. Lane, Mr. Tillman, Mr. Clifton, and Ms. Lucas)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

At approximately 5:39 PM the Board of Commissioners came out of Executive Session. The Chairperson asked for a motion for the meeting to become public. Commissioner Tillman made a motion for the meeting to be open to the public. The motion was 2nd by Commissioner Clifton.

Aye 4 (Ms. Lane, Mr. Tillman, Mr. Clifton, and Ms. Lucas)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

The Chairperson acknowledged an Executive Session was held to discuss the overview of the George Reed development and contract negotiations of a real estate transaction.

The Chairperson thanked our consultant for the update and his attendance.

IV. Approval of Minutes:

- (a) Meeting Minutes from September 14, 2022**
- (b) Executive Session Meeting Minutes from September 14, 2022**

The Chairperson acknowledged that everyone should have received a copy of the meeting minutes from the September 14, 2022, meeting. She asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the minutes prior to asking for a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Since there were no questions or comments, the Chairperson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

(a). Meeting Minutes from September 14, 2022

Commissioner Clifton made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the September 14th meeting. The motion was 2nd by Commissioner Tillman.

Aye 4 (Ms. Lane, Mr. Tillman, Mr. Clifton, and Ms. Lucas)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

(b). Executive Session Meeting Minutes from September 14, 2022.

The Chairperson asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the Executive Session Meeting Minutes from the September 14, 2022, meeting.

Since Commissioner Brown was not present and the Executive Session Meeting Minutes were not circulated, no action was taken. The approval of the meeting minutes was tabled.

V. Report of the Executive Director:

(a). Staff Report from September 2022

The Chairperson asked for the report of the Executive Director for the month of September 2022. Ms. Jordan provided the following report:

Community Outreach:

Homelessness Town Hall Forum in Newark and Statewide:

On September 21, 2022, State Sen. David Sokola and State Rep. Paul Baumbach held a forum at Newark's City Hall. Eugene Young-Director of the Delaware State Housing Authority, Carrie Cassey-Community Service Manager for New Castle County, and Rachel Stucker-Executive Director of Housing Alliance were all panelist for this forum.

Several of the panelist stated that many of the issues surrounding homelessness are rooted in the housing crisis. Delaware is short approximately 18,000 housing units, according to Eugene Young, Director of the Delaware State Housing Authority.

“We don’t have enough units, period,” Young said. “That’s the crux of all of this. Most of the new housing being built is single-family detached houses, but Delaware needs more diversity in its housing stock to provide more affordable options”, he added. “With the increase in housing prices over the last two years, officials have seen many people lose their housing because their landlord increased their rent or sold the building to take advantage of a strong seller’s market. The problem is even worse here in Newark, where the ever-growing student population keeps rental prices higher than elsewhere.”

Carrie Cassey, Community Service Manager of New Castle County noted, “The Newark Housing Authority offers Section 8 Housing vouchers to families in need but often can’t find any landlords here in Newark that will accept them. This is despite the agency being willing to pay 120 percent of market rate. Instead, the agency must send families to Wilmington or elsewhere in New Castle County to find housing.”

Rachel Stucker, Executive Director of Housing Alliance said her organization receives 200 calls per day from people needing assistance, and about 100 of those would be willing to go to an emergency shelter if it was available. However, on any given day, there are only between 2 and 10 available beds in the shelter the organization works with.

Mrs. Jordan added that the city needs to be more involved in challenges in offering affordable housing in our community.

Job Fair:

The Newark Housing Authority (NHA) participated in a multi-employer job fair at Glasgow Regional Park on September 20, 2022, sponsored by the Delaware Department of Labor. NHA attended the job fair with hand-outs of job descriptions for maintenance and administration positions.

Shared Housing:

The Newark Housing Authority (NHA) was contacted by a representative from Hopeful Living Housing. They offer affordable housing to the homeless, unhoused, or displaced adults in a shared independent living environment in Wilmington for temporary, short, and long-term housing. NHA has started the referral process as needed.

Delaware State Housing Authority Developer’s Forum Meeting:

The Newark Housing Authority (NHA) attended the meeting held on September 21, 2022. This meeting is held every two-years to update the State’s Qualified Allocation Plan for the Tax Credit Program.

Mrs. Jordan provided a summary of the Delaware State Housing Authority Developer Forum hosted on September 21, 2022. She mentioned the impact to the proposed Qualified Allocation Plan changes for 2023 and 2024. She also mentioned DSHA focusing on 4% credits and how they could award more. She mentioned the challenges of point scoring for small projects vs. large (Wilmington Housing Authority initiative) and challenges in the competition for 9% tax credits given the disparity in size (of NHA).

HUD's Notice of Physical Inspections:

The Newark Housing Authority (NHA) received notification on September 14, 2022, that our properties are scheduled for REAC inspections beginning on October 12th through October 13th. The inspections will include the entire property: project grounds, common areas, office, maintenance work areas, laundry room, community room, etc., and a sample of buildings and units selected at random. All residents were provided with notification of the inspections. The residents were also provided with a checklist to use as a guide to report maintenance requests prior to HUD inspections to avoid unnecessary findings.

The Chairperson asked if the Hopeful Living Housing is a nonprofit organization. Mrs. Jordan responded, "Yes."

Commissioner Clifton did a google search and mentioned Hopeful Living Housing has two offices one in Wilmington, DE and the other in PA.

The Chairperson asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the Staff Report. Since there were none, she asked for a motion to approve the Staff Report. Commissioner Clifton made a motion to approve the Staff Report. The motion was 2nd by Commissioner Tillman.

Aye 4 (Ms. Lane, Mr. Tillman, Mr. Clifton, and Ms. Lucas)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

VI. Committee Reports:

The Chairperson called for the report from the Policies, Procedures, and Compliance & Personnel Committee.

A. Report of Policies, Procedures, Compliance & Personnel Committee – Chairperson (Mr. Brown): (a). Annual Review of the Executive Director

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Mr. Brown, was not present for this meeting. A meeting with the Executive Director is pending.

The Chairperson called for the report from the Development Committee.

**B. Report from Development Committee – Chairperson (Vacant):
(a). Committee Update – George Reed Village II**

The Chairperson asked if there were any additional comments Mrs. Jordan would like to make regarding a report from the Development Committee. Mrs. Jordan restated the importance of moving forward with the redevelopment to improve the housing stock offered to its program participants.

The Chairperson called for the report from the Finance Committee.

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

(a) Monthly Financials:

The Chairperson of this sub-committee, Ms. Ashley, was not present for this meeting. Mrs. Jordan provided the financial report for the period covering April 2022 – August 2022. Mrs. Jordan mentioned that there were not any unusual expenses to report. She did refer to the Budget vs. Actual Report and referenced, BLI 4171.00 – Auditing Fees; increased from for services rendered to date.
BLI 4430.01 – Landscaping Contactor; increased from last month due to NHA services being outsourced.
BLI 4430.00 – General Maintenance Contract increase due to preparation for HUD REAC inspections.

Mrs. Jordan mentioned that we are well within the budget as we are still under budget as of the reporting of 5 months for this fiscal year's budget.

Chairperson Lane acknowledged that the percent column was added to the reports.

Commissioner Tillman commented how there are a few items that are severely over budget. Those are landscaping & plumbing and electrical contracts. He asked if this was because we do not have a maintenance person who would normally take care of these items. Mrs. Jordan confirmed that to be the reason.

The Chairperson asked if there were any questions or comments. Since there were none, she called for the report from the Strategic Planning Committee.

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

The Chairperson of the board is the Chairperson for this committee and was present. However, there was no report from this committee.

The Chairperson moved on to the next agenda item.

VII. Attorney Issues:

Mr. Gouge had no attorney issues to report.

VIII. Old Business:

- A. From the other Commissioners: None
- B. From the Executive Director: None
- C. From Legal Counsel: Mr. Gouge reported that we received an eviction for non-payment of rent on a tenant. (Routine business of the authority).

IX. New Business:

- A. From Commissioners:
- B. From the Executive Director:

- a). Board Vacancy – City of Newark Appointment. Mrs. Jordan acknowledged making the City Secretary award of this vacancy.
- C. From Legal Counsel:

X. Adjournment:

The Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Chairperson made a motion for the meeting to adjourn. The motion was 2nd by Commissioner Clifton.

Aye 4 (Ms. Lane, Mr. Tillman, Mr. Clifton, and Ms. Lucas)
Nay 0
Motion passed, Vote: 4 to 0

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:01 PM

Minutes Submitted by: Marene M. Jordan, Executive Director