

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
NASHUA HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
HELD ON JANUARY 20, 2023**

The Commissioners of the Nashua Housing and Redevelopment Authority (NHRA) held its regular meeting at the office of the Nashua Housing and Redevelopment Authority, 40 East Pearl Street, Nashua, New Hampshire, at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, January 20, 2023. Chairperson James Tollner called the meeting to order, and the Recording Secretary called the roll at approximately 8:31 a.m. with the following responses:

Present

James Tollner
Eric Wilson
Paul Deschenes
Helen Honorow
Thomas Monahan

Absent

The following persons were also present: Bob Mack, Director, City of Nashua Welfare Department; Lori Wilshire, President, Board of Aldermen; Scott Costa, Assistant Executive Director; and Andrea Reed-Lenane, Recording Secretary.

MINUTES:

The Chairperson entertained a motion to waive the reading of the Authority's regular meeting minutes dated December 16, 2022, accept them, and place them on file. Mr. Deschenes made a motion, and Mr. Monahan seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked if there were any comments, additions/deletions, corrections, or discussion.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The Chairperson entertained a motion to waive the reading of the Communications, accept them, and place them on file. Mr. Monahan made a motion, and Mr. Deschenes seconded the motion. The Communications were as follows: Monthly Operational Reports – December 2022 – consisting of Public Housing and Section 8 Waiting List and Applications Report; Vacancy Report; Vacancy Report Compilation Sheet; Work Order Report; Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) Utilization Report CY2022; Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) Utilization Report CY2023; and Rent Collections Report.

The Chairperson asked if there were any comments, additions/deletions, corrections, or discussion.

Mr. Deschenes noted that it is indicated on the report that some of the rents have been paid for since the printing of the report but not in full. Mr. Costa explained this could be due to outreach which has not been responded to in a timely manner, such as late rent letters or because of repayment agreements in place. He said that if there were concerns about specific

account receivables, he would research them. Mr. Deschenes said this would not be necessary. Mr. Wilson noted that the report was printed on December 31, 2022 and monies were noted as received well after that date, indicating it is updated. Mr. Costa confirmed and said the reported data changes daily based on new repayment agreements and actual payments received. Mr. Monahan said it looks like a lot of balances were due that date and noted there should be even more of a fluctuation. He commented there is a pretty good receivables percentage, and it would reflect even lower if the noted payments were averaged in. Mr. Monahan said he noticed a higher-than-average number of eviction letters were sent out. Mr. Costa said that the property managers are on this.

Mr. Monahan said that on the HCVP Utilization Report CY2022 it was interesting to note that the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) from January to December increased every month. Mr. Costa explained that there is an Annual Contributions Contract that is the funding NHRA expects to receive, and we then enter the total funds received into the Voucher Management System (VMS) which depicts actual data. Mr. Monahan commented on the difference between the HAP and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) disbursement and asked why we appear to be behind. Mr. Costa said there are HUD held reserves and there is no longer a bulk sum of money given up front. A discussion took place about the difficulty voucher holders are having with finding apartments and the standards landlords must meet under the HCVP.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

NHRA held a resident meeting at Arel Manor on December 22nd with the following staff and Board members present: Paul Deschenes, Commissioner, David Sanchez, Property Manager, Yami Sanchez, Assistant Property Manager, Christian Gaudette, Facilities Manager, and Amy Brasil, Assistant (Facilities Management). Approximately thirty-five (35) residents were in attendance and the meeting went very well. I want to thank David and Yami for providing Spanish translation throughout the meeting. Concerns were discussed and residents were provided with forms to report any future concerns by name or anonymously. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 26th at 1:30 p.m.

Sullivan Terrace South experienced the emergency issue of having no hot water in the building. After numerous attempts to make repairs, an emergency replacement of the system was required. The work was completed by Highline Mechanical and took place on January 12th and January 17th. NHRA sought approval from Boston's HUD office to complete the work on an emergency basis, and \$113,839 from the Capital Fund Program grants were allocated to pay for the work. The equipment specified resulted in \$2,400 in rebates. Scott Costa is working out how these will be presented, either by offset of a future gas bill at Sullivan Terrace South or in a physical check.

The opening of the Monahan Manor waiting list will be advertised publicly in *The Nashua Telegraph* and *The New Hampshire Union Leader* as well as shared with local community agencies before the end of the month. The advertising and opening of the waiting list will follow the requirements set forth by the NH Housing Finance Authority and the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Potential applicants will be notified of the new waiting list, current income limits, eligibility requirements, when and where to apply,

among other required details. This is a very exciting opportunity for NHRA to provide much needed affordable housing opportunities to low-income families, and I anticipate the waiting list will fill quickly.

Mr. Costa said he had a few items to add to the report beyond what the Board had already received. He stated Mr. Bob Keating and he had a discussion last week. Mr. Keating was inquiring about the potential number of families interested in returning to Monahan Manor. Based on the feedback from Housing to Home, NHRA's relocation consultant, it currently stands at approximately fifty percent. Mr. Keating went on to express how pleased he was at how NHRA handled the relocation, and how seamless the transition was going. Mr. Costa let him know NHRA would be available to talk if additional questions arise.

Mr. Costa stated that Gottesman & Hollis, the attorneys who share the rear parking lot with NHRA, settled at paying \$15,785 for the paving.

Mr. Costa said NHRA and Union have reached negotiated terms. He thanked Lynn Lombardi, Commissioner Wilson, and Commissioner Tollner for their involvement. The proposed changes are being incorporated into a draft copy for presentation to the Board of Commissioners and the AFSME Council 93. Once completed and ready for review, Ms. Lombardi can either email them to the Board for review and consideration, or this can be presented at the February Board meeting.

The Chairperson entertained a motion to except the Executive Director's Report. Mr. Monahan made a motion, and Mr. Wilson seconded.

Mr. Tollner noted it was excellent that we received such positive feedback from Mr. Keating. Ms. Honorow said it was good to hear such high praise.

Mr. Tollner and Mr. Monahan commented the Union negotiation completion was a job well done. Mr. Tollner said this was good for everyone, especially for the workers.

Mr. Monahan brought up the community meeting at Arel Manor and asked if Ms. Labarge had been present. Mr. Deschenes said yes, and to her satisfaction he believes progress was made. Mr. Costa said the parking lot issues that had been a piece of the problem at Arel Manor was addressed as he signed the contract with New England Paving for that parking lot to be ripped out and remodeled. He also noted that there will be parking created in the rear of Arel.

Mr. Deschenes asked if NHRA would be able to reach out to a condominium complex near Arel Manor to see if we could utilize a few of their spaces for visitor parking at that development. Mr. Costa said he may be able to reach out, and a brief discussion took place about parking. Mr. Tollner stated that another communication should be sent to residents about parking.

Mr. Monahan gave kudos to Mr. Costa for negotiating the paving costs for the rear lot at 40 East Pearl Street with Gottesman. He said it was a job well done. Mr. Costa thanked Mr. Monahan and noted he is glad it will help with NHRA's budget.

Mr. Deschenes said there is a sinking area in the rear parking area at Sullivan Terrace South that needs to be repaired. Mr. Costa noted he will investigate this and have it repaired.

Mr. Monahan asked when the 40 East Pearl parking lots will be done. Mr. Costa said these will be done on a weekend in the spring and explained how he will be conducting the work.

The Chairperson asked if there were any comments or discussion.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

BILLS/INVESTMENTS:

The Chairperson called for a motion to pay the bills as listed on the Cash Disbursement List - check numbers 67510 through 67653 and from the Park View Apartments Cash Disbursement List – check numbers 5725 through 5735, including ACH debits and investment accounts.

Ms. Honorow made a motion to approve, and Mr. Deschenes seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked if there were any comments or discussion.

Mr. Monahan asked whether a payment for an environmental study to EBI Environmental was part of the contract. Mr. Costa confirmed and explained what it included.

Mr. Monahan noted the amount of money being spent on utilities and other expenditures for utility reimbursements. He asked if NHRA uses utility allowances in the rental calculation and if this is how the utility reimbursements come about. Mr. Costa explained that we do use utility allowances and the process of how rent calculations can result in utility reimbursements from NHRA.

Mr. Costa explained that he is planning on extensive fuel efficiency improvements on the interior of the buildings now that so many exterior capital improvements have been done. A discussion took place on what is being planned.

Mr. Monahan noted that Monahan Manor should be much more energy efficient based on the new construction. Mr. Monahan also asked about rebates for energy efficiency and if we are eligible. Mr. Costa said we should be eligible for some rebates and if we are, he will ensure the money comes to us.

Mr. Tollner asked about a check to Colliers Project Leaders, stating he was wondering what this was for and if it was a reimbursable expense. Mr. Costa explained and said this was exclusive of Monahan Manor.

Mr. Tollner asked about a check written to NewBanks Boston, Inc. Mr. Monahan explained it was for the tax credit funding.

Mr. Monahan confirmed that all monies noted as Monahan Manor are reimbursable. Mr. Costa additionally explained that no checks are written until the reimbursement funds are in the account.

Mr. Tollner asked about the target date for the completion of Monahan Manor. Mr. Costa said he is looking at a target time frame of mid-July 2023 for building A, and that he anticipates releasing the buildings for occupancy in quick succession.

A discussion took place about building occupancy and what would be required for this to be done in a safely and in a timely manner. Mr. Monahan noted that each building could be filled in a reasonable period as long as all life safety issues are addressed. Mr. Monahan also discussed the process of opening the property to occupancy while any construction is still going on, one building at a time. Mr. Costa said discussions are being held now and have included the Nashua Fire Department and Hutter Construction.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Deschenes asked where the camera installation stands at Sullivan Terrace North and South. Mr. Costa said the servers are backordered as well as some other supplies; however, this is of course happening with every industry. Mr. Costa explained he required the vendor to install the servers and test them before bringing them on site to ensure they are working properly. He detailed the lighting improvements, as well as the anticipated changes that those who live there are likely not anticipating.

Ms. Honorow asked if anyone attended the Aldermanic meeting where the Mohawk Tannery was discussed. Mr. Tollner said he attended, and, in his opinion, it was a good presentation and appeared to be well received. He said there were a few questions, such as back taxes, which Mr. Cummings clarified. Mr. Tollner noted this is a tremendous opportunity for affordable housing and he felt everyone left there comfortable with the idea. Mr. Monahan said he was not at the meeting but watched it. He noted he was very impressed with the presentation. Mr. Monahan thanked Ms. Wilshire very much for supporting the NHRA at the meeting. Mr. Tollner said he will work with Ms. Wilshire to obtain a copy of the presentation for the Board members. Ms. Wilshire said she had a copy, and she will email it.

Ms. Wilshire spoke about the feedback she received, noting that the back taxes and inclusionary fee would be a sticking point for some people. She said that not getting the full twenty-percent of the inclusionary fee and getting the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (P.I.L.O.T.) instead was an issue. Mr. Monahan said the NHRA getting the amount of money that has been discussed gives us the opportunity to leverage that into something far bigger whereas if it went somewhere else, wherever that may be, the entity would likely come back to us anyway at some point for assistance. He said he thinks we could do a tremendous amount for the community. Ms. Wilshire said she agrees and overall, it went very well. She said she does not want to create any roadblocks for what she believes to be a good project as does many other Aldermen.

Ms. Honorow said she received a communication from the Alderwoman in her area noting the issue with the taxes, and therefore it appears to her as well that this will be the largest sticking point. Mr. Monahan noted this is a very common thing with a Department of Environmental Services (DES) involved development. Mr. Monahan said he can understand why the P.I.L.O.T. would bring up some response from the Aldermen as it is market rate. He elaborated on why this would a positive fiscal impact to the community.

Mr. Tollner commented that if there is a way to get a communication to the Board of Alderman about how many people the money would reach based on what NHRA could do with it, that would likely be effective. He suggested we reach out to Mr. Cummings or Mr. Sullivan and request they have those conversations with the Board of Alderman. Ms. Wilshire agreed. Mr. Monahan noted that NHRA does not want to interfere with the process. Ms. Honorow asked Ms. Wilshire if at the meeting Mr. Cummings addressed that they do not want to ignore the inclusionary regulation that was passed with the exception of this case, and on a case by case basis. Ms. Wilshire confirmed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Bob Mack from Nashua City Welfare said that they continue to work with NHRA to help people get housing and remain housed. He said they sometimes experience timing issues when clients come in to request assistance, as they come in panicky having been offered a unit at the last minute. Mr. Mack said they will continue to do the best they can; however, he requested assistance with timing of notifications to applicants, noting the low number of staff members on board at the welfare office and the increase they have in their need to assist a growing homeless population. He additionally asked for flexibility as they often cannot get people into an appointment for four to five days. Mr. Mack commented that he was happy to hear about the progress with Monahan Manor. He then noted that the latest twenty million dollars funded into the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is being used to fund stays for people in hotels. He then elaborated to say that this funding was going to run out for single individuals on April 1, 2023 and for families on June 1, 2023. Mr. Mack said his agency is very aware of this and is attempting to plan accordingly with the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and the various agencies across the State of NH who are administering these programs. Mr. Mack suggested a possible landlord incentive program as people are continuing to struggle with finding housing. He noted an increasing elderly population that are homeless as they require a certain level of care and cannot be in a shelter environment. Mr. Mack said this was informational only and wanted to simply pass along the information.

Mr. Wilson asked if we let applicants know when they are at the top of the list so they can plan. Mr. Costa said when we have available units we reach out to applicants and prepare them. He explained to Mr. Mack that we do our outreach to applicants. Mr. Wilson asked how far in advance applicants are given notice they must be ready to move. Mr. Costa explained that communication is given on a regular basis once an applicant is at the top of the waiting list. Ms. Reed-Lenane explained the process of updating applicants from the top of the waiting list through the notification to applicants that have been approved for public housing that a unit is coming available to them. A brief discussion took place regarding notification to applicants. Mr. Costa assured Mr. Mack that NHRA will do what we can to be sensitive to the needs of his agency.

Ms. Honorow asked about the different waiting lists that NHRA has and how they work. Mr. Costa explained that the public housing waiting lists are not development-based. A site-based waiting list will be in place for Monahan Manor based on the specialized housing and eligibility requirements.

The Board thanked Mr. Mack for his attendance, and he exited the meeting.

NONPUBLIC SESSION:

The Chairperson entertained a motion to enter nonpublic session. Motion made by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Monahan.

There being no further discussion, the Recording Secretary called the roll with the following responses:

AYE

Thomas Monahan
Helen Honorow
Paul Deschenes
Eric Wilson
James Tollner

NAY

The Board entered nonpublic session at approximately 9:39 a.m.

The Board rose from nonpublic session at approximately 10:20 a.m.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE BOARD:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

The Chairperson entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Monahan moved to adjourn, and Mr. Deschenes seconded the motion.

There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrea Reed-Lenane
Recording Secretary