

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE
NASHUA HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
HELD MARCH 18, 2022**

The Commissioners of the Nashua Housing and Redevelopment Authority (NHRA) held its regular meeting remotely via phone and computer teleconferencing in Nashua, New Hampshire, at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, March 18, 2022. Chairperson Thomas Monahan called the meeting to order, and the Recording Secretary called the roll at approximately 8:37 a.m. with the following responses:

Present

Thomas Monahan (in a room at his home with no others present)

James Tollner (in his vehicle with no others present)

Eric Wilson (in a private office with no others present)

Paul Deschenes (in a private home office with no others present)

Helen Honorow (in a hotel room with no others present)

Absent

Nashua Housing and Redevelopment Authority is holding this meeting pursuant to RSA 91 which permits state and local government bodies to utilize the emergency meeting provisions of RSA 91-A to conduct meetings through electronic means while preserving to the extent feasible the public's right to notice of such meetings and the ability to observe and listen contemporaneously. Pursuant to Emergency Order #2 issued pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04, gatherings of fifty people or more are prohibited. 3. To implement these orders and recommendations per the requirements of RSA 91-A:2III(B) that a quorum of a public body be physically present unless immediate action is imperative is waived for the duration of the state of emergency declared by Executive Order #2020-04. To further implement these recommendations and requirements in RSA 91-A:2III(C) that each part of a meeting of a public body be audible or otherwise discernible to the public at the location specified in the meeting notice as the location of the meeting is waived for the duration of the state of emergency declared in Executive Order #2020-04 so long as the public body provides; (a) public access to the meeting by telephone, and additional access by video or other electronic means; (b) provides public notice of necessary information for accessing the meeting; (c) provides a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access; (d) adjourns the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

The following persons were also present: Lynn Lombardi, Executive Director; Scott Costa, Assistant Executive Director; Lisa Cox, Section 8 Program Manager; Cedric Dancy, Property Manager; David Sanchez, Property Manager; Maureen Killoran, Asset Manager; Sean Fagan, Facilities Manager; James Floras, Modernization Manager, and Andrea Reed-Lenane, Recording Secretary.

MINUTES:

The Chairperson entertained a motion to waive the reading of the Authority's regular meeting minutes and nonpublic meeting minutes dated February 18, 2022, accept them, and

place them on file. Mr. Tollner made a motion, and Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked if there were any comments, additions/deletions, corrections, or discussion.

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

AYE

Helen Honorow
Paul Deschenes
Eric Wilson
James Tollner
Thomas Monahan

NAY

Motion passed.

COMMUNICATIONS:

The Chairperson entertained a motion to waive the reading of the Communications, accept them, and place them on file. Mr. Tollner made the motion to accept all Communications. Ms. Honorow seconded. The Communications were as follows: Monthly Operational Reports – February 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; Rent Collections Report.

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

Mr. Deschenes said some of the rent receivables were a little high, but he knows we are working diligently to lower them. Ms. Lombardi noted that we went from a little over fifteen percent rent in receivables last month, as Mr. Costa had explained was due to NHRA awaiting funds from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and City Welfare funds, to just over eight percent as funds have begun to come in. Ms. Lombardi said we are still waiting for a more of those funds.

Mr. Deschenes referenced the Vacancy Report, stating there are a lot of notes indicating apartments seem to have been ransacked before people vacated. Ms. Lombardi explained that many of those were long-term residents, although not all, and thus some units required a lot of renovations due to the fact the resident had been there so many years. Mr. Deschenes asked about the “lack of files” notation on the Vacancy Report and what specifically this was referring to. Ms. Lombardi explained it is the same issue we have been encountering, that being having difficulty finding qualified applicants. Ms. Lombardi went on to say there are multiple reasons that applicants may not be qualified, such as going through a full update process and upon file review it is found they have a poor criminal background or landlord reference(s). Ms. Lombardi said that some applicants who are offered apartments are unable to secure funds to lease-up, and NHRA works with these applicants by providing referrals to agencies for assistance and making the move-in process more affordable by allowing them to pay less up-front and the remainder a reasonable period of time. Ms. Lombardi further described the occurrences of

NHRA updating twenty people for a unit, ten may not respond, seven may not be eligible, and we continue to move on to the next and the next on the waiting lists. Ms. Lombardi noted while instances such as these has been improving, it has been difficult for the applications staff who work diligently on updating applicants.

Mr. Monahan asked what the notation on the Vacancy Report of “office closed for the holiday” meant. Ms. Lombardi explained this was a note added by Ms. Reed-Lenane to denote a day that may have been added to a vacancy calculation due to the office being closed on a Monday or Friday. She stated this was likely unnecessary. Mr. Monahan agreed.

Mr. Monahan said he would like to add his usual notation for the record of us currently having 2,975 families on the public housing waiting list. He estimated this was an increase of approximately 48 applications and with turnarounds likely more. Mr. Monahan said the 3,973 families on the Section 8 waiting list is a slightly lower number. Mr. Monahan noted this is still way too many, but we continue to add units and if we can work on those turnarounds faster that is revenue as well. He thanked everyone for their efforts.

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

AYE

Helen Honorow
Paul Deschenes
Eric Wilson
James Tollner
Thomas Monahan

NAY

Motion passed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

NHRA is in the process of completing bid documents for cameras and upgrades to lighting at Sullivan Terrace North and South. Solicitation of bids is expected to occur within the next thirty days.

Sewer line replacements at Maynard Homes and Ledge Street Homes will begin in mid-April, weather permitting. NHRA is working with the City of Nashua to establish a cooperative construction schedule that coincides with city paving projects in the upcoming season. NHRA wants to ensure that the street connection portion of NHRA’s work in advance of any city paving activity, eliminating the need for NHRA to repair or replace newly installed pavement.

The Board was made aware by Scott Costa of an incident that occurred at NHRA’s Lake Street property on March 7 involving the discharge of a weapon. The suspect who fired what was later determined to be a warning shot is a non-resident who lives at an abutting property and witnessed a suspect attempting to steal catalytic converters from vehicles parked in the Lake Street parking lot. There was no further NHRA involvement in this matter once the two suspects were apprehended by the Nashua Police.

Pam Sturdevant has left the employ of NHRA and there is now a vacant Section 8 Program Specialist position to be filled.

NHRA continues to work with families struggling to pay rent while awaiting financial assistance through the NH Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). ERAP funding is overseen by Southern NH Services (SNHS) and based on the large number of families seeking assistance, payments are being released to NHRA gradually. NHRA's property management staff remain in close communication with the families and SNHS, and any family who has sought assistance from the ERAP and can provide proof thereof is not at risk of eviction.

My appreciation goes out to Scott Costa, Andi Reed-Lenane and the Board of Commissioners for their support while I have been working remotely due to a family matter. I have an abundance of gratitude for each of you.

I am seeking approval to roll NHRA's four (4) ninety-day, \$200k CDs at the end of March at a 0.40% rate through Triangle Credit Union (TCU). TCU offered the most competitive rates, and if the rate increases between now and the end of March, NHRA will lock in at the higher rate.

The Chairperson entertained a motion for approval of the Executive Director's Report. Mr. Wilson made a motion, and Mr. Tollner seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked if there were any comments or discussion.

Mr. Monahan said he is glad Ms. Lombardi is back and even though she stated she was away; she was never far away and kept right at work. He said he feels he speaks on behalf of the entire Board when he says he appreciates her efforts and hopes all is going well with her family member. Ms. Lombardi thanked Mr. Monahan and said there is steady progress, and any progress is welcomed.

Mr. Monahan noted that if the Board is going to approve the add-on with respect to the Certificates of Deposit (CD) funds, as the rates went up yesterday. He requested Ms. Lombardi inform the Board what the rates of the CDs are now, and when they expire. Ms. Lombardi said the four \$200,000 ninety-day CDs are at 0.30% and expire at the end of March. Mr. Monahan said that given the rates follow the prime rates and may move up a little higher, it is good that we are waiting a few days so hopefully we can get a few more basis points. He requested Ms. Lombardi wait until the last possible time to lock-in the rates.

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

AYE

Helen Honorow

Paul Deschenes

NAY

Eric Wilson
James Tollner
Thomas Monahan

Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

**RESOLUTION NO. 22-2416
BY THE NASHUA HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
AWARDING A TWO-YEAR CONTRACT FOR LEGAL SERVICES
BEGINNING APRIL 1, 2022 AND ENDING MARCH 31, 2024, TO
GORMLEY & GORMLEY, P.C., 351 MAIN STREET, NASHUA, NH 03060
FOR HOUSING ADMINISTRATION, REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT, CONSTRUCTION
BIDDING AND CONTRACT LAW, AT A TOTAL CONTRACT COST OF
\$12,600 FOR YEAR ONE, AND \$13,200 FOR YEAR TWO FOR ANNUAL RETAINER, AND
AN HOURLY FEE OF \$210 FOR YEAR ONE, AND \$220 FOR YEAR TWO**

The Chairperson entertained a motion for approval of Resolution No. 22-2416. Mr. Tollner made a motion, and Ms. Honorow seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked if there were any comments or discussion.

Mr. Monahan said the bid was sent out to quite a few firms and given we are very happy with the services of Gormley & Gormley, and the pricing is really good, this is a job well done.

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

AYE

Helen Honorow
Paul Deschenes
Eric Wilson
James Tollner
Thomas Monahan

NAY

Motion passed.

BILLS/INVESTMENTS:

The Chairperson called for a motion to pay the bills as listed on the Cash Disbursement List - check numbers 66235 through 66346 and from the Park View Apartments Cash Disbursement List – check numbers 5649 through 5654 and to approve the investments as listed. Mr. Tollner made a motion to approve, and Ms. Honorow seconded the motion. The Chairperson asked if there were any comments or discussion.

Mr. Monahan asked about the fuel bill with the City of Nashua and how much we are paying per gallon. Ms. Lombardi said she is not certain but can investigate this. Mr. Monahan said he is sure we are getting a good rate, and this was just a question of interest.

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

AYE

Helen Honorow
Paul Deschenes
Eric Wilson
James Tollner
Thomas Monahan

NAY

Motion passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

Mr. Wilson requested Ms. Lombardi provide an update to the Board on an issue that they had spoken about with Mr. Monahan regarding Citizens Bank. Ms. Lombardi said she received information from Mr. Wilson regarding a former Commissioner, Mariellen MacKay, logging onto her personal Citizens Bank account and being able to view NHRA accounts. Ms. Lombardi explained she immediately contacted the Government Banking Division at Citizens Bank and they confirmed they had a letter from NHRA requesting the removal of Ms. MacKay and the addition of Ms. Honorow, but that the banking signature card which would have been received by a former employee here was not provided to the Board. Ms. Lombardi said this may have had to do with COVID and the fact that we were not meeting in person, however this was very concerning. Ms. Honorow signed the proper signature card, and it was submitted to Citizens Bank. Ms. Lombardi said the removal of online access to NHRA accounts at Citizens Bank was requested and processed. Ms. Lombardi was very clear that all online access to view NHRA accounts is no longer available to anyone. Ms. Lombardi further explained that approved NHRA staff utilize a system internally called Access Optima which is a commercial online banking application.

Mr. Wilson said Ms. MacKay had contacted him and advised that she used online banking and suddenly one day while she was using her personal online banking with Citizens, eleven accounts showed up on her online banking screen which were related to the NHRA. Mr. Wilson said Ms. MacKay had informed him she contacted Citizens Bank and they said it would be rectified immediately. Mr. Wilson said Ms. MacKay then waited a couple of days and when she could still see the accounts, she then contacted him to advise what was going on. Mr. Wilson said he immediately contacted Ms. Lombardi and Mr. Costa, along with Mr. Monahan as the Chairperson of the Board and let everyone know what was happening. Mr. Wilson noted he was shocked as the Treasurer that these accounts showed up on Ms. MacKay's personal online banking. Mr. Wilson said he thinks Citizens should have an explanation of why this happened. Ms. Lombardi explained that given NHRA does not have any type of regular online access with Citizens Bank, she is not sure how this could have happened. She was completely unaware it was even possible, as we do not use the type of online account access that is typical of individuals holding personal accounts. Ms. Lombardi offered to seek further information regarding this with Citizens, and said she did speak with NHRA's Government Banking Representative, stating any online access needed to be removed immediately. Ms. Lombardi

added that even she does not have online access and cannot transfer funds or conduct other transactions online, but must do these in person, as measures are in place to make sure any type of fraudulent activity is prevented. Ms. Lombardi provided examples such as requiring two signatures on checks and allowing no online wiring. Mr. Wilson said Ms. MacKay was able to provide him with balances and account numbers via email, and he finds it very disturbing that we have so much money in Citizens Bank and yet they have no explanation about why this occurred. Mr. Wilson asked that Ms. Lombardi follow-up and obtain something in writing from Citizens Bank about what happened and why, also stating this will never happen again. Ms. Lombardi confirmed. Mr. Wilson went on to say that while he certainly doesn't think Ms. MacKay would do anything fraudulent, he could not imagine the impact if anyone had hacked into her computer and gained access to those accounts. Mr. Monahan added that when he was contacted by Mr. Wilson, he called Mr. Costa immediately and said there was absolutely no wiring to take place at which point he found out that we do not wire which he feels is very important. Mr. Monahan added he is pleased we do not wire as there is so much scamming going on with it right now. Mr. Monahan noted the whole situation with Citizens Bank was frightening to think about. Mr. Monahan said he was in constant touch with Mr. Costa from the time Mr. Wilson informed him of the situation, and he knows Ms. Lombardi was directly involved in the resolution of the matter as the Executive Director. Mr. Monahan went on to say that no matter what an eye-opening experience this was, and whatever NHRA may have done or not done, Citizens Bank should assume a very large responsibility for their actions or inactions in this case. Mr. Wilson agreed. Mr. Wilson then commented that he understands the reasoning behind the number of accounts NHRA has after receiving an explanation from Ms. Lombardi and Mr. Costa, this being the need for deposit accounts to hold security deposits for the residents which earn interest and are then returned to the resident when they move, as well as others. Mr. Wilson said it would be a good idea for the Treasurer to receive a quarterly report with the balances of the accounts. Mr. Monahan agreed.

Mr. Deschenes said he knows we have a no smoking policy in place and have for a few years now, but residents are still smoking in their apartments. Mr. Deschenes noted that the other day he was in his living room, and it was almost as if someone was outside his door with a pack of cigarettes smoking one after another. Mr. Deschenes stated he is not sure who is doing it, but he thinks it is very important that we begin policing smoking in the buildings more regularly. Ms. Lombardi said she noticed the issue exists when she walked through the units after the fire damage, and that all but one of the units she viewed had an ashtray on a table. Ms. Lombardi said she reported this to the Property Manager immediately and it is being addressed. Ms. Lombardi noted that this may be a result of the winter months and residents not wanting to go outside. Ms. Lombardi stated Mr. Dancy is walking the buildings regularly, addressing issues as he comes across them. Mr. Monahan commented that we need the help of residents as well, stating that violations reported with names would be very helpful.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH MAY COME BEFORE THE BOARD:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The Chairperson entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Wilson moved to adjourn, and Mr. Deschenes seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the Recording Secretary called the roll with the following responses:

AYE

Helen Honorow
Paul Deschenes
Eric Wilson
James Tollner
Thomas Monahan

NAY

Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:12 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Andrea Reed-Lenane".

Andrea Reed-Lenane
Recording Secretary