

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 744 Tenth Street at 4:00 pm. Chair Dobbs called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

**Present:**

Bishop Kevin Dobbs  
Mr. Lawrence Cook  
Mr. Brian Archie, Sr.  
Ms. Kristen Grandinetti  
Mr. Frank Soda  
Mr. Andrew Turton

**Also Present:**

Mrs. Patricia L. Barone  
Mr. Jason Cafarella

**Absent:**

**At the Request of the Interim Executive Director:** Melissa Matsulavage, Nancy Haley, Roger Lis, Angela Smith, Mary Jean Buddenhagen, Tomorrow Allen-Collins, M. Anne Smith, I. Seright, Jeannine Brown Miller and Maria Vitello

**I. INVOCATION**

Bishop Dobbs gave the invocation.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING**

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Turton, seconded by Commissioner Soda and carried, the January 8, 2019 meeting minutes of the Board of Commissioners' meeting were approved.

**III. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Dobbs announced that member Alicia Kenyon has resigned from the board due to other responsibilities and there now exists a vacancy on the board. Chair Dobbs stated he received a call from Mayor Dyster since in December Chair Dobbs announced he would not seek reappointment in April and recommended Marcia Massaro to the board. Marcia is a past employee and is very knowledgeable about public housing and would be an asset to the board. Mayor Dyster's call was to state he will advise of his decision with regards to Mrs. Massaro being appointed.

Commissioner Soda stated that Ms. Kenyon's vacancy should be filled first. Mrs. Barone stated yes and that she and Mrs. Massaro will be meeting with Mayor Dyster in the next couple of weeks.

**IV. INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

**Request approval for the award for Security Guard Services**

- Award recommendation to Trace Assets Protection Service.
- Three proposals were received. They were reviewed and graded by staff.
- Current company did not rate well.
- Contract is for one year with option for up to three years.

Discussion was held amongst members and staff with regards to armed vs. unarmed guards, the company that residents keep and the concern of the rising of mental health issues. Residents show their best selves during the interview and screening process but behavior changes once they move in.

Commissioner Soda asked if the Request for Proposal called for armed guards. Mrs. Barone stated no since that would have driven the cost up. Ms. Smith stated that Trace guards are armed and once they begin working can make recommendations to staff.

Commissioner Archie asked what the process is for implementing a new security company. Mrs. Barone stated residents are informed when the company will begin services and typically the guards are in uniform and may wear a badge. Managers will also meet with the security company prior

to their start date and an orientation and site visit will take place as well.

Commissioner Cook suggested that a meet and greet be held so the residents can meet the new guards. Ms. Smith stated that can take place at the next resident chat meeting. Commissioner Cook asked that board members are advised of the date.

Commissioner Soda made a motion to approve the recommendation of the security services contract be awarded to Trace Asset Protection Service. Commissioner Archie seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

#### **Updates.**

- Mr. Lamont Glover, CSS Coordinator will give a presentation at the March 12<sup>th</sup> board meeting.
- Mr. Roger Lis will give an audit explanation at the April 9<sup>th</sup> board meeting.
- There will be a budget review session on March 5<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm at Central Office. The subsidy will be based on last year's number since information has not been received from HUD.
- Another presentation by the ATTAIN Lab will be forthcoming.

#### **Disc Profiles.**

- Information on this tool was previously sent to board; Mrs. Barone stated she will resend.
- The profit is a character personality tool showing strengths and weaknesses. The leadership team did this.
- Jeannine Brown Miller gave an overview of the disc profile and its valuable assessment in detailing the management style of a person and their innate personality and compatibility with current leadership team. Suggested that the 2-3 finalists for Executive Director been given this. Mrs. Barone stated it is a most helpful tool.
- Commissioner Soda suggested this be used for the board retreat in July. Jeannine Brown Miller stated she can send each member the profile and meet one on one so that this can be used and be a part of the retreat. Mrs. Barone stated that Stan Quy will conduct the retreat in the summer.

#### **HUD Physical Inspections.**

- Still awaiting appeal response for Spallino Towers.
- HUD representatives are looking into this; there is a discrepancy with regards to a deadline date.

#### **Litigation Update – Packard Court.**

- There have been no further updates. A conference call amongst the attorneys took place on January 14 and awaiting update from the call.

#### **Occupancy.**

- The occupancy rate for January was 97.16%

#### **Staff Reports.**

- Board members received the following reports:
  - Aged Balance, Cumulative Rent Receivable Summary
  - Community and Supportive Services (HOPE VI CSS)
  - Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Service Coordinator
  - Successfully Transitioning Youth to Adolescence (STYA)
  - Advanced Technology Training and Information Networking (ATTAIN)

## V. Committee Reports:

### A. Finance –

Financial statements were reviewed.  
Discussion held on uncollected rents and collection loss.

### B. Family Housing Representative- Mr. Archie.

- A fundraiser will be held on March 23 to raise funds for the summer programs held at Packard Court Community Center and Family Resource Building.
- Family Resource Building has new hours of operation: Monday-Friday 8:30 am-8:00 pm and 12:00pm – 5:00 pm on Saturdays. Use of gym will be available with waivers.
- Beloved Community will host a budget workshop on February 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Discussion was held with regards to the chain of command at Beloved Community. Mrs. Barone explained Norstar is the owner and manager of the development and Mr. Glover is the liaison for the Authority. Mrs. Matsulavage stated the Authority administers the subsidy for the units designated public housing. After further discussion about the operations of the Beloved Community, Mrs. Barone stated she will have representatives from Norstar attend a future board meeting.

### C. Elderly Housing Representative- Mr. Turton.

- A transportation survey was given to residents recently. What is the update? Ms. Smith stated calls were received that residents wanted to have shopping trips. Residents recently went shopping at the Galleria Mall, went to the movies and went to Fatima Shrine. Buses were provided but participation was low and buses are costly.

### D. Facilities/Operations/IT – Bishop Dobbs – Chairman.

- No report.

### E. Planning – Mr. Soda – Chairman.

- Minutes from last meeting given to all board members.
- Committee has finalized a draft strategic plan which board members received.
- The plan will go before the Governance Committee to review and the plan will be placed on the March agenda for approval from the board.
- Committee has worked very hard over the last seven months on this and have done an excellent job.

### F. Governance – Mr. Soda – Chairman.

- Minutes from the last meeting given to all board members..
- Disc assessment profiles information given to all board members.
- Mr. Cafarella provided information with regards to executive session guidelines.
- The self-evaluation form will be sent to members for their completion. Vice Chair Cook suggested using a tool such as survey monkey to distribute.
- Website is continuously being updated but more information needs to be placed on it such as the strategic plan and bylaws and the audit.
- The succession plan should be made part of the strategic plan. Commissioner Grandinetti stated the process of a succession plan has begun.
- The following corporate policies are being requested for approval:

Request approval of the De-Concentration Policy.

Commissioner Soda made a motion to approve the De-Concentration Policy. Commissioner Turton seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Request approval of the Emergency Management Preparedness Plan.

Commissioner Soda made a motion to approve the Emergency Management Preparedness Plan. Commissioner Cook seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Request approval of the Employee Referral Program.

Commissioner Soda made a motion to approve the Employee Referral Program. Commissioner Grandinetti seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Request approval of the Time Off Policy.

Commissioner Soda made a motion to approve the Time Off Policy. Commissioner Grandinetti seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

**G. Personnel & Human Resources– Ms. Grandinetti – Chairman.**

▪ Executive Director Search Update.

Board received all resumes and a conference call was held last week to review them. Candidate list has been narrowed down to seven. Mr. Quy is contacting the candidates to schedule the first round of interviews which will be conducted via skype over the course of two days.

▪ Retiree Benefits.

Policy is in place for retirees and will bring before the board at next meeting. Mr. Cafarella reported the committee has approved a general outline and he is doing some research in preparation of the resolution.

**H. Counsel – Mr. Cafarella.**

- Ongoing issues with civil service commission. Suggested that board members may need to meet with Mayor Dyster and Corporation Counsel. Discussion ensued. The board will review its residency policy as well as other options.
- Medical Marijuana update: Any future applicant already using medical marijuana is not eligible for housing. Policy is being worked on. Current residents who are prescribed medical marijuana will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- Advised Chair to appoint another commissioner on committees that Ms. Kenyon sat on.
- Gave an overview of the Public Authorities Accountability Act of 2005 and speaking to those sections appropriate to the Housing Authority.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

- Next meeting: March 12, 2019 4:00 pm.
- Black History Program: February 23 2-5 pm at Family Resource Building.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Turton, seconded by Commissioner Archie. The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.

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**Chairman**