

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at 744 Tenth Street at 4:00 pm. Chair Soda called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm.

**Present:**

Mr. Frank Soda  
Mr. Earl Bass  
Mr. Lawrence Cook  
Mrs. Nadrué Braswell  
Ms. Marcia Massaro  
Mr. Brian Archie, Sr.  
Mr. Andrew Turton

**Also Present:**

Mr. Clifford Scott  
Ms. Angela Smith

**Absent:**

**At the Request of the Executive Director** Nancy Haley, George delValle, Tomorrow Allen-Collins, Melissa Matsulavage, Roger Lis, Mayor Robert M. Restaino, and Maria Vitello

**General Public:** Dwayne Sledge

Mayor Restaino presented the board with the City's vision and its desire to collaborate with all agencies. There will be a collaborative meeting with the city and the county on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Restaino is also looking forward to collaborative efforts between the city and housing authority. Mayor Restaino also stated he is holding a meeting on February 20<sup>th</sup> at 11 am at the Family Resource Building to speak with stakeholders on rezoning in the north end.

**I. MOMENT OF REFLECTION**

Moment of reflection was held.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING**

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Archie, seconded by Commissioner Turton and carried, the January 14, 2020 meeting minutes of the Board of Commissioners' meeting were approved.

**III. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Soda reviewed today's consent agenda. Chair Soda asked if any members needed to discuss any item or motion to remove an item. Members did not. On a motion duly made by Vice Chair Cook, seconded by Commissioner Bass and carried, the Consent Agenda for the meeting held February 11, 2020 was approved.

**IV. CHAIR'S REPORT**

- Chair Soda welcomed Mrs. Nadrué Braswell to the board. Introduction of board members as well as department heads was conducted. Mrs. Braswell will serve on the Strategic Planning Committee.
- The Governance Committee and board members received a memorandum regarding the proposed merger of this committee with the Human Resources Committee. The Human Resources Committee will become a sub-committee of the Governance Committee. Formal adoption will be forthcoming.
- The Executive Director has reassigned staff to the standing committees and the listing has been provided to board members. Chairs of the committees should note the new members.
- Chair Soda reported the probationary period for the Executive Director expired on December 31, 2019 and the board provided an evaluation as per the contract. According to the By-Laws, an annual evaluation of the Executive Director will need to be completed by July 1, 2020 and the Human Resources Committee will be creating this instrument along with the Executive Director.

- Chair Soda reported that two professional service contract request for proposals are due February 12, 2020. One is for legal services and the other is for audit services.
- Chair Soda stated the Executive Director will present a resolution for approval to contact HUD with regards to reallocating the remaining proceeds of the HOPE VI endowment fund for the development of a comprehensive program involving the Highland-Beech Corridor.
- Chair Soda stated he has provided the board with a housing demographic document and gave an overview.
- Chair Soda stated the Executive Director and Deputy will be holding meetings with staff. Ms. Smith stated individual meetings with all staff will be conducted over the next two weeks as part of succession planning and to implement cross training. Ms. Smith announced that a resident only career day (Jordan and Packard) will be conducted on March 20 at the Family Resource Building and Packard Court Community Center. Chair Soda stated the data that will be gathered from the individual staff meetings will be implemented into the succession plan with the completion of the plan to be presented at the May board meeting. Commissioner Archie asked if the residents of the Beloved Community would be able to participate in career day and perhaps having it held at the Beloved Community. Ms. Smith stated she will speak to the coordinators to set this up. Commissioner Archie also suggested to highlight training through the ATTAIN Lab. Commissioner Turton would like to see a career day held at Spallino and Wrobel Towers.

## **V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **A) Approval to request reallocation of HOPE VI proceeds**

Chair Soda gave an overview of the HOPE VI project leading up to this request. At each phase of this endeavor, board approval must be sought. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Archie suggested to address the area as “the” community versus “that” community so that everyone will be inclusive. Board members and staff agreed.

Commissioner Archie made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to request from HUD its approval for the reallocation of the remaining HOPE VI proceeds (the endowment fund) to explore the potential for a program of single-family home ownership opportunities within the Highland Avenue – Beech Avenue neighborhood including the Beloved Community and to engage community stakeholders in a process of blight elimination and streetscape improvements. Commissioner Turton seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

- Mr. Scott reported he is submitting a planning grant to the Attorney General’s office for \$500,000 for Jordan Gardens and the Highland-Beech corridor.
- Mr. Scott stated a People & Possibilities board meeting will be held next month and will be exploring grant opportunities as well as building partnerships with developer agencies. A steering committee will be established and Mr. Scott stated he would like a few board members to sit on this committee and spoke of other agencies to be a part of the steering committee.
- Mr. Scott thanked Mr. Sledge, a resident for attending today’s meeting. He announced that on February 15<sup>th</sup> from Noon – 2 pm there will be a lunch giveaway at the Niagara Falls Train Station.
- Chair Soda stated members received an organizational chart which will be a part of the strategic plan and the one on one staff meetings will be implemented into the succession plan.

- Commissioner Massaro spoke about the residency policy. Her understanding was that when the housing authority policy was established in 1997, she thought that civil service had made the housing authority create the policy but this was not true. This policy was made by the housing authority board. She would like to possibly see this policy changed in the future to perhaps offer the option to employees after five years of full time, permanent employment, the restriction is lifted. Discussion ensued.

## **VI. NFHA ATTORNEY REPORT**

- No report.

## **VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **A) Approval of bylaw amendment – Job Description for Board Members**

Commissioner Massaro made a motion to approve the amendment to the bylaws to include the job description for board members. Commissioner Turton seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

### **B) Approval of bylaw amendment – Establishment of an Executive Committee**

Chair Soda stated presently the Executive Committee exists of the Chair, Vice Chair, Executive Director and attorney. There is an opening to place the Secretary on this committee but it is not needed at this time. Vice Chair Cook made a motion to approve the amendment to the bylaws to include the establishment of an Executive Committee. Commissioner Bass seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- Next meeting: March 10, 2020 at 4:00 pm.
- Budget review session: March 3, 2020 at 4:00 pm.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Massaro, seconded by Commissioner Bass. The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

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**Chairman**