

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, January 14, 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
Ms. Marcia Massaro
Mr. Brian Archie, Sr.
Mr. Andrew Turton

Also Present:

Mr. Clifford Scott
Mr. Jason Cafarella

Absent:

Mr. Lawrence Cook

At the Request of the Executive Director: Angela Smith, Nancy Haley, George Dreer, Tomorrow Allen-Collins, Melissa Matsulavage, Roger Lis, John Kinner (HANCI) and Maria Vitello

Chair Soda introduced John Kinner, Executive Director of HANCI who gave a presentation on their programs and partnership with the Housing Authority and spoke of future endeavors. A brochure was distributed and a question and answer session followed the presentation. At this time, Mr. Kinner left the meeting.

Roger Lis, Fee Accountant, gave a summary of the recent audit. Discussion and a question and answer session followed the presentation.

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 Bass and carried, the December 10, 2019 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 Commissioner Turton, seconded by Commissioner Archie and carried, the Consent Agenda for the meeting held December 10, 2019 was approved which includes the approval of the write-off accounts and a personnel action. The motion was unanimously carried.

IV. CHAIR'S REPORT

- Chair Soda reported he met with Mayor Restaino with regards to the vacancy on this board and suggested the person that is appointed to fulfill the term until May 3, 2020 should be able to be reappointed at that time for a full five-year term.
- Chair Soda reiterated that each committee meets to develop its evaluation matrix in order to present to the Executive Director to finalize the strategic plan.
- The Governance Committee will meet later this month to develop the appropriate By-Law amendments for the establishment of a merged Human Resources and Governance Committee as well as the creation of an Executive Committee and the inclusion of the NFHA Commissioner's Job Description.
- The Strategic Planning Committee will also be meeting later this month to complete its work on the NFHA Succession Plan.

- Chair Soda reported the probationary period for the Executive Director expired on December 31, 2019 and the board must provide an evaluation as per the contract. An evaluation form has been sent to board members for completion. 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 suggested holding another work session with regards to the Highland/Beech Plan 2023 to address concerns. Chair Soda suggested meeting one evening at 4:30 pm for one hour. He asked members to provide him with their availability and will confirm a meeting by the end of the week.

- Chair Soda announced that sexual harassment training for staff will be conducted January 15 and suggested board members have their training at the July retreat.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Mr. Scott asked Ms. Allen-Collins to speak on the toy giveaway sponsored by Gov. Cuomo. Ms. Allen-Collins stated the giveaway took place December 23 at the Resource and 120 toys were given out. The event went very smoothly.

- Mr. Scott stated members received a listing of all contracts the Authority is engaged in.

- Mr. Scott asked Ms. Smith to speak about the Beds for Buffalo project. Ms. Smith stated members received an informational flyer on this project. The housing authority has partnered with them by receiving donations of bedding, etc. and will be offering the use of the Packard Court Community Center gym during the spring for space to paint the beds and volunteers will be needed. The partnership includes the distribution of 25 beds to our residents. The beds are twin-sized and comes with a mattress and encasement to combat bed bugs. Discussion ensued.

- Mr. Scott reported that four housing authority scholarships are available and applications have been provided to board members. All applications are due April 24, 2020.

- Mr. Scott reported that Requests for Proposals for Legal Services has been distributed and bids are due February 12, 2020 at 10 am. Requests for Proposals for Audit Services has been distributed and bids are due February 12, 2020 at 11 am. Recommendations and approval of both bids will be placed on the March agenda.

- Chair Soda mentioned the recent article on neighborhoods that featured Commissioner Archie.

VI. NFHA ATTORNEY REPORT

- An application for a residency waiver has been drafted and will be submitted to the Human Resources Committee for review.

- A proposed contract has been drawn for the HR consultant. After much discussion amongst board members, it was agreed that this service go through a formal bid process as all other service providers the authority conducts business with.

- Discussion reverted back to the residency waiver application and as to the pros/cons of having such an application for employees. It was reiterated that for an employee to be granted the waiver, one of two criteria must be met. It was suggested the residency policy itself be abolished. Discussion ensued with regards to civil service residency requirements.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- Next meeting: February 11, 2020 at 4:00 pm.

Chair Soda asked for a motion to go into Executive Session for discussion of personnel matters. Commissioner Massaro made a motion to go into Executive Session and Commissioner Turton seconded. The motion was unanimously carried.

Executive Session began 5:21 pm
Executive Session ended 5:48 pm

Commissioner Turton made a motion to resume Regular Session. Commissioner Massaro seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Archie, seconded by Commissioner Bass. The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:49 pm.

Chairman