

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 at 744 Tenth Street at 4:00 pm. Chair Soda called the meeting to order at 4:05 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, Tomorrow Allen-Collins, Melissa Matsulavage, Roger Lis, Samika Sullivan, and Maria Vitello

General Public: Chris Angelo, Chad Whittaker (Renewables WorldWide), Edwin Viena (Niagara Gazette)

Chris Angelo, CEO and Chad Whittaker from Renewables WorldWide gave a presentation on energy savings. Chad gave an overview of their program and information was distributed. This company also works with Ampion in the energy saving field. If the housing authority is interested in this program, a decision will need to be made within a month. A question and answer session followed and Messrs. Angelo and Whittaker then left the meeting.

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 February 11, 2020 meeting minutes of the Board of Commissioners' meeting were approved.

III. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Soda reviewed today's consent agenda. A correction will need to be made in the write-off resolution. Packard Court and Wrobel Towers are listed but it should read Jordan Gardens and Wrobel Towers. Motion was duly made by Commissioner Turton, seconded by Commissioner Archie.

Vice Chair Cook spoke about the ATTAIN LAB and its utilization. He noticed partnerships listed that were no longer in business and that reports had old information in them. Mr. Scott stated he will speak to the staff at the lab. Ms. Allen-Collins stated she has spoken with the regional office about these same concerns and it is being addressed. Vice Chair Cook stated the level of outreach needs to increase and a form for advertising and strategizing to expand outreach should be explored. Mr. Scott stated he and Ms. Allen-Collins will meet with the staff and report back next month. Vice Chair Cook asked about a program audit. Commissioner Archie suggested a door to door outreach at Jordan Gardens and doing an interactive survey. Ms. Smith stated one of the ROSS Coordinator's functions is to link residents to the Lab and that is being worked on.

Chair Soda stated in the financial statements a bar graph has been provided showing a surplus at the end of this fiscal year. He also thanked Mr. Cafarella for the residency information provided for today's meeting. The Human Resource Committee met earlier today and has approved the personnel actions for today's meeting. The Consent Agenda for the meeting held March 10, 2020 was approved.

IV. CHAIR'S REPORT

- 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 take place at today's meeting. The committee will see policy revisions and updates to the Handbook. Personnel management will be handled by the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director.
- Chair Soda reported he and Mr. Scott toured Sandstone Springs. It is anticipated that 30-40 jobs will become available by late summer.
- Chair Soda stated the residency information was discussed in the Human Resource Committee meeting. He stated he needs a response and direction from the board as to the consensus of modifying, abolishing or continuing the policy. Chair Soda asked counsel to research to see if the authority can go through Niagara County Civil Service for exams.
- Chair Soda stated the Executive Director in his report provides information on Census Tract 202. Chair Soda read some of the demographic analysis to the board.
- Chair Soda thanked Mr. Lis for the budget presentation held March 3rd. The housing authority will realize a surplus for this fiscal year as well as the next fiscal year.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A) Approval Operating Budget FYE 4/1/2020 – 3/31/2021

Vice Chair Cook made a motion to approve the operating budget for fiscal year April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. Commissioner Turton seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

B) Approval of Legal Services

Commissioner Turton asked about the criteria and scoring. Mr. Scott explained the criteria includes the general response to the proposal and presentation (15 points), quality and experience and ability to provide services (50 points), previous experience with NFHA (5 points) and cost (30 points). Commissioner Bass asked if the proposals were blind to the reviewers (name of firm blacked out). Mr. Scott said no. Chair Soda asked if this can be done in the future. Commissioner Bass stated he would like to see this done since it would eliminate bias and any objection from outside. Further discussion ensued.

Vice Chair Cook made a motion to award the Legal Services contract to the firm of Jason J. Cafarella for one (1) year with the option of retaining services of up to four (4) years. Commissioner Massaro seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

C) Approval of Audit Services

Commissioner Massaro made a motion to award the Audit Services contract to the firm of Drescher & Malecki LLP for one (1) year with the option of renewing services of up to two (2) years. Commissioner Turton seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Mr. Scott reported he has provided the board with information on the Highland Avenue / Beech Avenue plan and that Mayor Restaino has provided a letter of support.

Mr. Scott reported that a planning grant for Jordan Gardens has been submitted for \$500,000.

Mr. Scott reported that meetings with staff are going very well and have received good feedback.

The Request for Proposal for a Human Resource Consultant will be going out within the next 30 days.

Mr. Scott stated he is working with the Peace Makers on a community event to honor Jesse Richardson.

Ms. Allen-Collins spoke about the Let's Talk Conference being held March 13. This is its 14th year and this year's theme is "Beauty in our Backyard." This conference will highlight topics on mind, body and soul and other topics not addressed in school. Samika Sullivan is the keynote speaker. The Male Summit will be held on April 3 and the keynote speaker is Qadree Ollison, running back for the Atlanta Falcons and former resident of Jordan Gardens. She encouraged all board members to attend these events.

Ms. Smith spoke about the upcoming career days for residents at each site in April and will invite Sandstone Springs to attend.

Ms. Haley gave an update to the Wrobel Towers bathroom renovation.

Mr. Scott stated People & Possibilities will have a meeting in April.

Ms. Sullivan gave an update on activities and programs at Packard Court Community Center. Thank you postcards will be sent to community sponsors and supporters. Last month, the UPK class held a fashion show last month that was very well attended. A job fair was hosted for the kids. Applications were completed and interviews are taking place. The "jobs" focus on the responsibility for the upkeep of the Packard Court Community Center. Kids are paid in points; they can be redeemed for a prize at the end of a week or saved and turned into cash at the end of the month. Donations are appreciated. Ms. Sullivan reported she is working on several local grants.

VI. NFHA ATTORNEY REPORT

- Mr. Cafarella thanked the board for retaining his services
- Mr. Cafarella will be researching the entity for the energy savings program.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Approval of bylaw amendment – Merging of Governance/Human Resource Committee

Commissioner Massaro made a motion to approve the amendment to the bylaws merging the Governance and Human Resource committees. Commissioner Bass seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

B) Energy Savings

Chair Soda asked for a motion authorizing the Executive Director and legal counsel to research this program and to review and engage in the contract. Vice Chair Cook made a motion to the above. Commissioner Archie seconded and the motion was unanimously carried. Mr. Scott thanked the board for the authorization in this energy program.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Bass asked about the photos of the homes in the Highland/Beech information packet and how the homes were selected. Mr. Scott stated the photos are for sample purposes only and for assessing the area. Discussion ensued.

- Next meeting: April 14, 2020 at 4:00 pm.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Turton, seconded by Commissioner Massaro. The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Chairman