

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 3001 Ninth Street at 4:00 pm. Vice Chair Giancola called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm.

Present:

Mrs. Maralynn Giancola
Mr. James Swift
Ms. Colleen Todd
Mr. Brian Archie, Sr.
Mr. Andrew Turton
Mr. Earl Bass (via ZOOM)

Also Present:

Mr. Clifford Scott
Mr. Jason Cafarella
Ms. Angela Smith
Ms. Tomorrow Allen-Collins

Absent:

Mr. Lawrence Cook

At the Request of the Executive Director: George Dreer, Eric Fields, Roger Lis, Melissa Attfield, Samika Sullivan, Matt Montalbo, Erica Handley, Maria Vitello

I. MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Vice Chair Giancola noted that Chair Cook is not able to attend today's meeting since he's not feeling well.

AUDIT PRESENTATION BY DRESCHER & MALECKI

Ms. Handley conducted an overview of the March 31, 2021 audit. There were no significant deficiencies. Mr. Montalbo reviewed the financial analysis and observations. Mr. Scott thanked Ms. Handley and Mr. Montalbo for their presentation as well as Mr. Dreer and Mr. Lis for their work (at this time Ms. Handley and Mr. Montalbo left the meeting).

FINANCE SUMMARY PRESENTATION BY MR. LIS

Mr. Lis conducted an overview of the authority's financial statements, the submission schedule from HUD as to when certain documents are due, and the formula for the operating subsidy. Mr. Lis stated this work is through a team effort and thanked Mr. Dreer, Ms. Smith, Ms. Attfield and Ms. Vitello. Board members thanked Mr. Lis and staff as well.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETING

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Swift, seconded by Commissioner Archie and carried, the October 12, 2021 monthly meeting minutes of the Board of Commissioners were approved.

III. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

After review, a motion was duly made by Commissioner Archie, seconded by Commissioner Turton to approve the consent agenda for the meeting held November 9, 2021. The motion was unanimously carried.

IV. CHAIR'S REPORT

Vice Chair Giancola announced the 2022 meeting schedule was included in this board packet.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A) Approval of the Award for IT Support Services

Mr. Scott stated an invitation to bid was issued on September 20, 2021. Four companies responded to the invitation to bid but only one company submitted a bid. The one responsible bidder was Nate's Copier and Computers. Mr. Scott reported staff continues to be happy with their service, especially with their response time when issues arise. Mr. Scott recommended awarding this contract to Nate's in the amount of \$43,329.60.

After discussion, Commissioner Turton made a motion to approve the Information Technology Support Services for Computers and Associated Devices contract be awarded to Nate's Copier and Computers for one (1) year with the option of retaining services of up to three (3) years, in the amount of \$43,329.60 for each year. Commissioner Bass seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

B) Approval of Amendments to the Statement of Policy

Mr. Scott thanked Ms. Smith, Mr. Cafarella, Ms. Attfield and her staff for their work on updating this policy. Ms. Smith reported the statement of policy has all the HUD rules and regulations as well as the lease rules and regulations. When HUD issues guidelines, Ms. Attfield and her staff update the section of the statement in policy the HUD guideline references. Certain sections of this policy are included in the tenant orientation. This policy is available at every site office if a resident wants to look at it. Commissioner Turton asked if the policy is reviewed yearly with re-exams. Ms. Smith said yes, since there are certain sections residents need to sign off on each year. Commissioner Archie asked if the Beloved Community would have this document as well. Ms. Smith stated yes.

Commissioner Turton made a motion to approve the amendments to the Statement of Policy. Commissioner Swift seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

C) Approval of RAD Application and Distribution of RFP for co-developer for LIHTC assistance to the NYS Housing Finance Agency

Mr. Scott stated the grant award of \$500,000 was received through the New York State Attorney General's office. The board members of People & Possibilities were given a list of expenses pre-development. The consultants on this team include legal, financial, architect, engineer, planning and fundraiser. Due to the numerous resident meetings held, resident engagement has been achieved and will allow the authority to move forward. Mr. Scott then reviewed and read the resolution.

Commissioner Swift made a motion to approve to apply for assistance in the RAD program and to distribute an RFP to identify a co-developer for low income housing tax credit assistance to the New York State Housing Finance Agency. Commissioner Todd seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Mr. Scott outlined what the next steps will entail. The physical needs assessment will be completed over the next two weeks and then it will be submitted to HUD for application. HUD will issue a CHAP ID in order to submit the application. Mr. Lis stated he is working on a RAD project with another housing authority and the process is very interesting. Mr. Scott stated he estimates the cost of the Jordan Gardens renovation to be between \$22 - \$27 million dollars.

Mr. Scott asked Ms. Sullivan for a program update. Vice Chair Giancola stated she attended the Trunk or Treat program at the Packard Court Community Center. She said it was well attended, the kids were wonderful and thanked Ms. Sullivan for a great job. Ms. Sullivan distributed flyers detailing upcoming programs at PCCC and spoke about the Youth Entrepreneurship Program currently taking place. Ms. Sullivan announced the Kwanzaa Celebration will be held on December 22nd from 5-7 pm and will be honoring Ms. Khaleelah Shareef, former director of the Packard Court Community Center.

Mr. Scott asked Mr. Fields for an update. Mr. Fields stated the after-school program is doing very well. There are 50 kids in attendance and 15 on the waiting list. A mentoring program for middle school aged boys will begin in January. The two facilitators for this program are Mr. Markus Williams and Mr. Eric Flynn. These gentlemen will also be present at the middle schools in collaboration with the school district. Rev. Joyce Scott has been instrumental in the Pain and Peace grief program. He is also looking into renewing the Sweet Ladies program. The Niagara Falls Chapter, The Links is involved as well.

Mr. Fields stated the Department of Labor will be returning to their office at the Family Resource Building soon as well as the ATTAIN Lab. The Lab is finalizing protocol in terms of COVID. Students must provide a negative test result and continue to be tested every 7 to 10 days as well as being vaccinated. The classroom will now house 12 stations versus 24 stations for social distancing. Niagara County Employment & Training may incorporate training with the Lab in the future. Commissioner Archie stated since COVID testing is no longer free, is assistance available for the students. Mr. Fields stated he will look into that. He also announced that Memorial Hospital will have a booster clinic for all three vaccines within the next few weeks.

Ms. Sullivan stated she is working on a violence prevention grant to assist with Mr. Fields' mentoring program and is working on a similar program for girls.

Mr. Scott stated the U.S. Tennis Association will host classes in the spring and will assist in the multi-use gaming area. Mr. Fields stated another meeting with Bank on Buffalo is scheduled for next week. Commissioner Bass suggested those entities be approached for monetary donations.

Mr. Scott asked Ms. Allen-Collins for an update. Ms. Allen-Collins reported that negotiations with the AFSCME union will begin soon. The employee handbook is being updated. She is also working on a two-way communication system for residents and managers. Mr. Scott stated he will be announcing the new Director of Maintenance and Modernization soon. Ms. Allen-Collins stated she is working on filling positions.

VI. NFHA ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Cafarella reported he will be sitting in on the union negotiations as the board's representative. The landlord-tenant cases are slow going. Mr. Cafarella requested going into Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations.

Commissioner Turton made a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations. Commissioner Todd seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Executive Session began at 5:14 pm

Executive Session ended at 5:41 pm

Commissioner Archie made a motion to return to Regular Session. Commission Todd seconded and the motion was unanimously carried. Regular Session resumed.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

The next board meeting will be held on December 14, 2021 at 4 pm at the Family Resource Building. The public hearing regarding agency plan will be held on November 19, 2021 at 4 pm at the Family Resource Building.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Bass, seconded by Commissioner Turton. The motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:42 pm.

Secretary