

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 3:30 pm at 744 Tenth Street, Niagara Falls, NY. Chair Giancola called the meeting to order at 3:36 pm.

Present:

Mrs. Maralynn Giancola
Mr. Brian Archie
Mr. James Swift
Mr. Gerald Cracknell
Ms. Colleen Todd
Mrs. Gloria Dolson

Also Present:

Ms. Angela Smith
Mr. Jason Cafarella

Absent:

At the Request of the Interim Executive Director: Jamie Allen, Roger Lis, George Dreer

I. MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Chair Giancola asked that are thoughts and prayers go to Brian Sarama from Beacon, who lost his wife Kelly and unborn son Noah last week unexpectedly. Please pray for Yolanda Walker-Price, her nephew was hit by a car last week and remember the families of the Georgia School shooting and 9/11 which is tomorrow. Please keep all in your thoughts and prayers. Chair Giancola asked for a moment of silence.

II. PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES TO THE PHARMACY TECH STUDENTS

Chair Giancola and Ms. Smith presented a certificate and a \$250.00 stipend to students who completed and passed the Pharmacy Technician Program. Ms. Smith reported that all students got an 80-94%.

III. PRESENTATION OF AUDIT

Erica Handley, Director at Drescher & Malecki presented the March 31, 2024 Audit. She stated that this is a draft and the numbers are not final, they will change due to Cornerstone's finances. The numbers will be updated once they have Cornerstones Audit. Ms. Handley reported that there were no significant changes from last year to this year. The Audit is made up of a Financial Audit, no significant deficiencies and Federal Audit, the compliance side. The Financial Analysis shows an increase in total assets, increase in liabilities and overall change in net position, slight decrease. The operating revenue decreased and the operating expenses increased. Cash flow is important to look at since cash used is the bulk of the decrease. It was a successful Audit and no items stood out, nothing to note.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETINGS

On a motion made by Commissioner Cracknell, seconded by Commissioner Swift and carried, the June 11, 2024, monthly meeting minutes of the Board of Commissioners was approved.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Facilities & Residential Affairs/Senior Living/Community

Commissioner Archie reported that we are planning a Senior Halloween activity for ST and WT residents, combined, on October 24th. He will be attending HUD resident training in a few weeks and will do training with the tenant councils.

B. Finance – Chair Giancola –

Mr. Lis reported that we are working on the Cornerstone dilemma and we will get thru it. After reviewing the financial reports for May, June and July, Chair Giancola asked for a motion to approve the reports. Commissioner Todd made a motion, Commissioner Swift seconded and the motion was unanimously carried. Chair Giancola asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-43 write off accounts in the amount of \$11,854.86. Commissioner Archie made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Todd, all in favor, motion passes.

C. Governance/Human Resources – Commissioner Swift –

Commissioner Swift reported that he reviewed the leave of absence report and it was all positive. Many people are leaving positions for promotions. After reviewing the Personnel Action Chart and Leave of Absence Request, Commissioner Swift asked for a motion to approve the Personnel Action Chart. Motion made by Chair Giancola, Commissioner Archie seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

D. Strategic Planning – Commissioner Todd –

Commissioner Todd reported that there was no meeting, no quorum.

E. Occupancy Reports –

Ms. Smith reported that we are not at the percentage we want to be. The high rises have the highest vacancies. We have to focus on ST and WT and take away the negative stigma. We have a good social media publication right now.

Commissioner Archie made a motion to enter into Executive Session for contracts and personnel. Commissioner Todd seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Executive Session began at 4:04 pm

Executive Session ended at 4:52 pm

Commissioner Archie made a motion to add an agenda item, Commissioner Swift seconded it, all in favor. Chair Giancola made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-57 as read.

WHEREAS, the Interim Executive Director is scheduled to retire from the Niagara Falls Housing Authority in the last week of September 2024; and

WHEREAS, in anticipation of this, the Board has posted the Executive Director position on multiple trade sites to open the window to accept applications from qualified candidates; and

WHEREAS, after the initial round of interviews were completed, the Board was not satisfied with the scope of the search and the search has been recommenced; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to fill the position of Executive Director with the most qualified candidate as quickly as possible; and

WHEREAS, the estimated time it will take to begin the search and conduct interviews will not be completed until after the Interim Executive Director will retire; and

WHEREAS, the Board must take action to insure that the operations of the Authority are not interrupted; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to contract with former Interim Executive Director, Patricia Barone, and former Interim Executive Director, Angela Smith, as independent contractors to temporarily fulfill the duties of the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director through the transition with the newly hired Executive Director;

WHEREAS, the current Interim Executive Director earns the following salary package:

Hourly rate: \$65.934

Employer Payroll taxes: \$5.044

Health Insurance: \$16.503

HRA Funding: \$3.846

Dental Policy: \$0.568

Max Dental: \$0.549

Total rate of benefits: \$92.44 per hour; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to contract with Patricia Barone and Angela Smith, separately, as independent contractors, for an hourly rate of \$75.00; and

WHEREAS, Patricia Barone shall work no more than ten (10) hours per week; and

WHEREAS, Angela Smith shall work no more than fifteen (15) hours per week; and

WHEREAS, the independent contractors shall only be compensated for the hours that they work "in person" for the Authority and that they shall not be compensated for virtual or off-site work;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Niagara Falls Housing Authority authorizes the Chair to enter into an independent contractor agreement with Patricia Barone to conduct the duties of the Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director at a rate of \$75.00 per hour for no more than ten (10) in person hours per week; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Niagara Falls Housing Authority authorizes the Chair to enter into an independent contractor agreement with Angela Smith to conduct the duties of the Deputy Executive Director at a rate of \$75.00 per hour for no more than fifteen (15) in person hours per week. Motion to approve resolution 2024-57 as read by Commissioner Archie made by Commissioner Cracknell and seconded by Commissioner Dolson, all in favor. Motion passes.

VI. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Giancola reported that she is unavailable for the board retreat and asked to move it to after the board meeting on November 12th. All in favor. There will be Commissioner training in Miami Florida January 5th -8th, please let Jamie know if you are interested. Some committee meetings will be every other month, Strategic planning will be in October since there was no meeting in September. A schedule will be sent out. NU's President's Dinner will be 10/29 at the casino, if interested, please let Jamie know.

VII. INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A) Approval of the Audit

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-45 approval of the Audit. The Audit will change when we get Cornerstone's Audit. Commissioner Archie made a motion to approve pending changes. Motion made to change language to pending made by Commissioner Archie and seconded by Commissioner Cracknell and the motion was unanimously carried.

B) Approval of the Business Continuity Plan

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-46 the revised Business Continuity Plan. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-46 was made by Chair Giancola and seconded by Commissioner Todd and the motion was unanimously carried.

C.) Approval of BFNC Sublease Agreement and Rent Increase

Ms. Smith stated that the BFNC is renting our school section at FRB and she thinks we should get money to sublease. Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-47 BFNC sublease agreement and rent increase. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-47 was made by Commissioner Archie and seconded by Commissioner Cracknell, the motion was unanimously carried.

D.) Approval of Changes to the pet policy

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-48 changes to the pet policy. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-48 changes to the pet policy was made by Commissioner Swift and seconded by Commissioner Todd and the motion was unanimously carried.

E.) Approval of the Warehouse Truck

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-49 the WH truck. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-49 was made by Commissioner Cracknell and seconded by Commissioner Todd and motion unanimously carried.

F.) Approval of 8 Window Replacements at PCCC

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-50, 8 window replacements at PCCC. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-50 was made by Commissioner Archie and seconded by Commissioner Swift and unanimously carried.

G.) Approval of Porch Repairs at Cornerstone

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-51 porch repairs at Cornerstone. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-51 was made by Commissioner Dolson and seconded by Commissioner Cracknell. All in favor, motion passes.

H.) Approval of Purchasing Departments Purchases up to \$250.00

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-52 to allow the Purchasing Department's purchases up to \$250.00 without prior approval from the Executive Director. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-52 was made by Commissioner Todd and seconded by Commissioner Swift. All in favor, motion passes.

I.) Approval of HUD RRI Guidance

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-53 HUD's RRI Guidance. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-53 was made by Commission Archie seconded by Commissioner Swift, motion unanimously carried.

J.) Approval of Generator Service and Maintenance

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-54 Generator Service and Maintenance at Wrobel and Spallino Towers. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-54 was made by Commissioner Cracknell, seconded by Commissioner Todd, all in favor, motion passes.

K.) Approval of the Whistleblower Policy

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-55 the Whistleblower Policy, which is part of the Employee handbook. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-55 was made by Commissioner Todd, seconded by Commissioner Archie, all in favor, motion passes.

L.) Approval of Storage Building

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-56 a storage garage at Cornerstone. This is everything that comes with the garage that was already approved. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-56 was made by Commissioner Swift, seconded by Commissioner Todd, motion passes.

N.) Updates on Niagara Falls Housing Authority matters

Ms. Smith reported that Community Day is on Saturday, September 14th from 1-5 pm. There were no findings with the CDBG Audit. There was environmental testing done at WT and unfortunately there was contamination in the soil so instead of public art at WT they want to do a gate with a mural.

NFHA ATTORNEY REPORT-

Nothing to report

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

No Special Meeting

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 8, 2024, 3:30 pm – Administrative Office

Board Retreat: Tuesday, November 12, 2024-TBA

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at ~~12:15~~ 5:29 pm.



Secretary