

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 3:30 pm at 744 Tenth Street, Niagara Falls, NY. Chair Giancola called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

**Present:**

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

**Also Present:**

Ms. Angela Smith  
Mr. Jason Cafarella

**Absent:**

**At the Request of the Interim Executive Director:** Jamie Allen, George Dreer, Brian Hutchison, Santino Cafarella

**I. MOMENT OF REFLECTION**

Chair Giancola asked for a moment of silence for the Means family, who were tenants of ours, that passed away along with Jim Faso, Darryl Richardson, Angela Smith's daughter's father, Aretha Lane's mother and Steven Rivers' brother. Attorney Cafarella reported that his time at the Housing Authority is coming to an end and he is stepping down on November 25<sup>th</sup>. Brian Hutchison, who has a lot of background in different organizations will step in his place temporarily.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETINGS**

On a motion made by Commissioner Swift, seconded by Commissioner Todd and carried, the October 8, 2024, monthly meeting minutes of the Board of Commissioners was approved.

**III. COMMITTEE REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

**A. Facilities & Residential Affairs/Senior Living/Community**

Committee did not meet today.

**B. Finance – Chair Giancola –**

Chair Giancola reported that the Finance committee met with George Dreer and Roger Lis today. Chair Giancola asked for a motion to approve the report Commissioner Cracknell made a motion, Commissioner Archie seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

**C. Governance/Human Resources – Commissioner Swift –**

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 Dolson seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

**D. Strategic Planning – Commissioner Cracknell –**

Committee did not meet today.

**E. Occupancy Reports –**

Ms. Smith reported that we are working diligently to get the numbers up and she gets reports of files they are working on. HUD receives a monthly report.

**IV. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chair Giancola reported that she is calling for a special meeting on November 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm to interview 3 candidates for the Executive Director. Attorney Cafarella stated that two resolutions will also be presented and we will go into executive session to start the process. Chair Giancola then reminded everyone that the board retreat is tonight at 5:00 pm and stated that next month we would like to hold a Christmas dinner after the meeting.

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

**A) Approval of a new compressor for the A/C unit at WT for the rec room**

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-66 approval of a new compressor for the A/C unit at WT for the rec room. Motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-66 was made by Commissioner Dolson and seconded by Commissioner Todd, motion was unanimously carried.

**B.) Approval of Unity Park Audit**

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-67 approval of Unity Park Audit. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-67 was made by Commissioner Dolson and seconded by Commissioner Todd, motion was unanimously carried.

**C.) Approval of the Employee Handbook Updates**

Ms. Smith asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2024-68 approval of the Employee Handbook updates. Ms. Smith reported that we sent the Employee Handbook to our Attorneys to update it and the Attorneys recommend the changes. Commissioner Swift stated that he feels like there is some stuff that needs to be looked over. Motion to table the vote was made by Commissioner Swift, seconded by Commissioner Archie. Commissioner Swift will highlight wording and what isn't clear and the committee will go through the handbook. Ms. Smith reported that the policy was written prior; HR and staff wrote the policy. Ms. Smith stated that the lawyers will have to be there to explain what the changes are. Commissioner Todd thinks the board should look it over, Commissioner Dolson states it is unclear and Commissioner Cracknell doesn't mind looking at it. Commissioner Archie states they should look it over and ask HR to get clarification before they call the Attorneys. Resolution 2024-68 has been tabled to go to the committee for further review.

**D.) Approval of Job Positions**

Ms. Smith asked for approval of Resolution 2024-69 approval of job positions for Administrative Assistant-Housing Programs and Director of Housing Programs. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-69 was made by Commissioner Swift and seconded by Commissioner Cracknell, all in favor.

**E.) Updates on Niagara Falls Housing Authority matters**

Ms. Smith reported that there is a job fair tomorrow with over 30 employers. We are looking into purchasing another truck. The legal bids are being reviewed and there will be a decision by the end of the week. NPIRE is all done. The Thanksgiving feast is postponed until next year and our resident Christmas party will be at the Double Tree. FRB will have security when the kids are there. There was training with the legal team and staff on how to handle grievances and union matters. Wrobel Towers public work is still going on and HUD is making a site visit next week to JG on 11/20.

**NFHA ATTORNEY REPORT-**

Attorney Cafarella reported that he has a late resolution that he would like the board to consider. The Attorney that the HA hired for Unity Park/Cornerstone said it was going to be done by June and it is still not done. The former Executive Directors' name has to be removed and has to be updated with Angela Smith's name. The next step would be to have the transaction done. Motion asking to approve a late resolution, Resolution 2024-70 was made by Commissioner Swift and seconded by Commissioner Todd, all in favor, unanimously carried. Motion to approve Resolution 2024-71 Unity Park/Cornerstone Village ownership and management agreement was made by Commissioner Archie and seconded by Commissioner Dolson. All in favor, motion passes. Attorney Cafarella reported that he has one item for executive Session and for a legal update, it is just standard Landlord tenant issues.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Archie reported that Catholic Health is requesting 40-50 parking spots at the FRB. Ms. Smith will talk to our insurance company and Attorney Cafarella will engage in a conversation with them.

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 3:30 pm – Administrative Office

Commissioner Dolson made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters for ED interviews. Commissioner Swift seconded and the motion was unanimously carried. Permitted to stay for Executive Session was Santino Cafarella and Brian Hutchison

Executive Session began at 4:19 pm  
Executive Session ended at 5:08 pm

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

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Cracknell made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Todd seconded and the motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm.

  
Secretary