

The Board of Commissioners of the Niagara Falls Housing Authority (NFHA) met in a Monthly Board Meeting session on Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 3:00 pm at 744 Tenth Street, Niagara Falls, NY. Chair Giancola called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

Present:

Mrs. Maralynn Giancola
Mr. Jim Swift
Mr. Gerald Cracknell
Mrs. Colleen Todd
Mr. Brian Archie

Also Present:

Tomorrow Allen-Collins, DSL
Mr. Brian Hutchison

Absent:

Mrs. Gloria Dolson

At the Request of the Executive Director: Jamie Allen, George Dreer, Gradycia Williams, Dana Colangelo, Santino Cafarella

I. MOMENT OF REFLECTION

Chair Giancola wanted to take this moment and reflect on all the craziness that is going on in the world and hope for peace along with a prayer for Ken Killian, Superintendent, who lost his wife last week. A moment of silence.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETINGS

On a motion made by Commissioner Cracknell, seconded by Commissioner Archie and carried, the February 11, 2025 monthly meeting minutes of the Board of Commissioners was approved.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Facilities & Residential Affairs/Senior Living/Community

Commissioner Archie reported that they just met today after several months and that they are sending out invitations to properly update the board. He invited Lateesha McElrath to speak briefly on wellness. Lateesha is the owner of Community Wellness Works which provides preventative wellness screening, mobile Phlebotomy and corporate wellness. Her goal is to screen as many individuals as possible to make individuals healthier in mind and body in work spaces and in the community.

B. Finance – Chair Giancola –

Mr. Lis reported that we are expecting a lot less subsidy this year and we will be using some of our reserves for next year's budget. Both Community Centers are costing the Housing Authority over \$250,000 and that is not including supplies. There has been an increase in cost, a decrease in subsidy, which tightens up our budget. Chair Giancola asked for a motion to approve the reports. Commissioner Swift made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Todd. All in favor, motion passes.

C. Governance/Human Resources – Commissioner Swift –

Commissioner Swift asked the board to review the Personnel Action chart. 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 Commissioner Archie, Commissioner Cracknell seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

D. Strategic Planning – Commissioner Cracknell –

Commissioner Cracknell reported that they have a meeting next month and will go over in detail the Succession Plan that they received last meeting. The goal is to make some adjustments.

E. Occupancy Reports –

Ms. Williams reported that they are down to 77 people on the waiting list for a one bedroom. The applicants that applied in November have been placed in occupancy and the re-exams are completed on the housing side. Commissioner Swift asked why there are so many vacancies for Wrobel Towers. Ms. Williams reported that she had a large list for Spallino Towers and Wrobel

Towers and many people take Spallino Towers because it is centrally located. She stated that she is working on Wrobel Towers.

IV. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Giancola reported that they had an excellent meeting with Linda Goodman from Beacon that was very informative. She stated that once she receives more information from Linda, she will bring it to the board.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A.) Approval of Write Off Accounts

Dr. Allen-Collins asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-13 to approve the write off accounts. Commissioner Swift stated that the rent collections are getting higher and asked if we need to do something else. Ms. Williams stated that we just had the holiday season and some people don't pay rent during that season. Also, the managers have been more focused on the re-exams, but will be back on track collecting rent this month. Dr. Allen-Collins stated that we need to streamline our process which will help collect rent. Attorney Hutchison reported from a legal perspective that from November-December we fall off with evictions and from January to March there are a lot more evictions. Some people are waiting for their tax returns to pay their rent. Motion to approve Resolution 2025-13 was made by Commissioner Cracknell, seconded by Commissioner Swift. All in Favor, motion passes.

B.) Approval of JBM Contract

Dr. Allen-Collins asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-14 approval JBM consulting services contract. Dr. Allen-Collins reported that structure is needed and JBM will be able to assist in rebuilding the structure. Her contract will be for six months with the Housing Authority.

Commissioner Archie asked if we had the work that she did prior when she was here. Dr. Allen - Collins stated that we are paying her for consulting services and that the structure falls down when people leave. Commissioner Swift asked if she will be doing board training. Dr. Allen-Collins said if it is necessary. Dr. Allen-Collins stated that she will give a report to the Board of how she is helping her help the Housing Authority. Motion to approve Resolution 2025-14 was made by Commissioner Swift, seconded by Commissioner Todd. All in favor, motion passes.

C.) Approval of Operating Budget

Dr. Allen-Collins asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-15 the operating budget. Motion to approve Resolution 2025-15 was made by Commissioner Archie, seconded by Commissioner Todd, all in favor. Motion passes.

D.) Approval of Award of Contract to Armor Construction

Dr. Allen-Collins asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-16 award of contract to Armor Construction. Motion to approve Resolution 2025-16 was made by Commissioner Archie seconded by Commissioner Swift. All in favor, motion passes.

E.) Approval of the Employee Handbook with Changes.

Dr. Allen-Collins asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2025-17 the Employee Handbook with changes. Dr. Allen-Collins invited Ms. Colangelo to speak on what she did to the handbook. Ms. Colangelo stated that she has been working on the handbook since October. She stated that the pages didn't match up with the amendments so she has been updating the pages, the memos from the lawyers and the changes. Motion to approve Resolution 2025-17 was made by Commissioner Cracknell, seconded by Commissioner Swift. All in favor, motion passes.

F) Updates on Niagara Falls Housing Authority matters

Dr. Allen-Collins reported that she will be in HUD training on Thursday. She extended Kaylyn Townsend's contract for another year with us as our grant writer, who has been very instrumental in getting us grants. We sent out an RFP for Legal Services because we were told that we needed a transaction attorney for RAD. We were also told by Linda Goodman that we should have an Asset Manager to oversee the project. Dr. Allen-Collins stated that she is looking into a platform where she

can communicate with our residents more rapidly and she is still working on a solution with the AFSCME union and snow removal. Our annual Spring cleanup is scheduled for May 23rd.

VI. NFHA ATTORNEY REPORT-

Attorney Hutchison reported that Commissioner Archie asked about Board positions and terms, and the most recent by laws was from May 2023 for 5 years. He stated that the eviction process is very forgiving to residents. In the past 3 months there has been minimal warrants for people to be removed. Some residents take the eviction process very seriously and will get caught up and there are resources that can help people who fall behind.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 3:00 pm – Administrative Office

Commissioner Todd made a motion to enter into Executive Session. Commissioner Swift seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

Executive Session began at 3:52 pm

Executive Session ended at 4:28 pm

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

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Swift made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Todd seconded and the motion was unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:29 pm.



Secretary