

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF NORMAN
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
12:30 p.m.
ZOOM MEETING**

MINUTES

ITEM 1. ROLL CALL

Chairman Jeff Cummins declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 12:34 P.M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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| Jeff Cummins | Chairman |
| Marianne Ratliff | Vice-Chairperson (Arrived at 12:38 pm) |
| Paul Austin | Commissioner |
| Jan Hunter | Commissioner |

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

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| Rick McKinney | Commissioner |
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STAFF PRESENT:

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| Karen Canavan | Executive Director |
| Sherrri Hunt | Deputy Executive Director |
| Barbra Ruth | Executive Assistant |
| Bobbe Feher-Nist | Director of Public Housing |
| James Henslee | Maintenance Supervisor |
| Allison Failing | Section 8 Supervisor |

VISITORS PRESENT:

None

ITEM 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE LED BY CHAIRMAN JEFF CUMMINS.

The Board and staff recognized Sherrri Hunt for 20 years of service to the NHA.

ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

ACTION REQUESTED: A motion to approve the Agenda for the September 14, 2020, Regular Board Meeting, as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff and seconded by Commissioner Austin to approve the Agenda for the September 14, 2020, Regular Board Meeting. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 4. CONSENT DOCKET

INFORMATION:

This Item is placed on the Agenda so that the Board, by unanimous consent, can designate those routine Agenda Items that they wish to be approved or acknowledged by one motion. If any Item proposed does not meet with approval of all Board Members, that Item will be heard in regular order. Staff recommends that Items 6 thru 8 be placed on the Consent Docket.

ACTION REQUESTED: A motion to place Items 5 thru 8 on the Consent Docket to be approved by one motion.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff and seconded by Commissioner Austin to approve items 5 thru 8 on the Consent Docket for the September 14, 2020, Regular Board Meeting. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM JULY 13, 2020, REGULAR BOARD MEETING.

ACTION REQUESTED: A motion to approve the minutes from the July 13, 2020, Regular Board Meeting, as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: Approved on Consent Docket.

ITEM 6. CONSIDERATION OF 2021 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE AND 2021 SCHEDULED NHA BOARD MEETINGS.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: Approved on Consent Docket.

ITEM 7. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NUMBERS NHA 20-21-002 AND NHA 20-21-003, RESOLUTIONS TO DROP TENANT ACCOUNT RECEIVABLE (DEBT).

It is policy to drop all accounts over 6 months old. This is to keep out Tenant Accounts Receivable (TAR) low on our books. A high TAR ratio will result in our PHA receiving a lower score on the Management Assessment Sub System (MASS) in REAC. MASS is a subcomponent used to calculate our score in determining the Agency's status as "High Performer".

Staff has attempted notification to residents to collect the accounts without success. All accounts being dropped by this resolution are a result of the tenants vacating without notice, have had their leases terminated, or given notice and left without providing a forward address. The account information will be turned over to the credit bureau and placed on the Happy Tenant Check. The Happy Tenant Check is a reference system used by PHA's across the country to determine if a client owes any PHA money. They will also be turned into the Oklahoma Tax Commission for capture of any state refund if they meet the minimum balance requirement of \$50.00.

Staff respectfully requests approval of Resolution Numbers NHA 20-21-002 and NHA 20-21-003.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: Approved on the Consent Docket.

ITEM 8. RATIFICATION OF VEHICLE PURCHASE FOR SECTION 8 INSPECTOR.

The Section 8 vehicle, 2000 Ford Ranger, has reached the point of needing to be replaced. I did obtain Board approval (verbally/electronic) to purchase another Santa Fe and this item appears for ratification.

AutoMax Hyundai provided the lowest quote. Other dealerships contacted were Edmond Hyundai and Bob Howard Auto Mall.

Although the Board approved \$25,000, I was able to further negotiate the price down to \$24,000 for a silver 2020 Hyundai Santa Fe.

Staff requests ratification approving the purchase from AutoMax Hyundai.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: Approved on the Consent Docket.

ITEM 9. CONSIDERATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST, 2020.

Section 8 has a total of 1,224 vouchers under lease. Currently there are 649 families on the waiting list.

Rose Rock Villa is 100% occupied. There are 2 approved applicants on the waiting list.

General Occupancy (Scattered Sites) and Redbud Village were both 100% occupied with 17 approved applicants on the waiting list.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Commissioner Austin and seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff to approve the Administrative Report as presented. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 10. CONSIDERATION OF YEAR END FINANCIAL STATEMENTS JUNE, 2020 AND ROUTINE CLAIMS AND CREDIT CARD EXPENSES FOR AUGUST, 2020.

The low rent program had a net income of \$246,836.99 for the year while budgeted to come in at \$187,861.00. You will notice we came in well under budget for utilities (perhaps a result of more energy efficient chiller/boiler system), total maintenance expenses, and administrative costs. Other factors include a fair increase in revenue (interest).

Section 8 had a net income of \$156,020 in administration for the year.

The combined net income for the year is \$402,856.99. 2020 has been an incredibly rough year but our staff pushed hard and did a fantastic job in not only fulfilling our obligations to our clients but staying well under budget for the year.

As of year-end, low rent had \$1,299,023.79 in unrestricted cash reserves while Section 8 had \$1,525,858.03 in unrestricted cash reserves.

HAP "Shortfall" - There is a possibility we will hit what HUD calls "Shortfall" this year. Meaning, the funding HUD has promised for Section 8 HAPs may not cover our obligation. We lease units based on our attrition and to achieve maximum expenditure of all HAP funds. Each year, HUD funds us based on what we spent the prior year, but not more than we were promised by HUD. Due to COVID, many of our clients lost

income which caused our portion of the rent to the owner to increase.

In addition, the number of families terminating from our program fell short of meeting our anticipation; also due to lost wages. However, it now appears that we will hit our target and not go into "Shortfall". In addition, I had applied for an "Extraordinary Circumstances" grant (HUD COVID relief) and we were awarded \$250,255 for HAP expenditures.

This should take care of our landlord obligations. However, should we go into 'Shortfall', HUD has other funding sources that should be set aside to assist us. The last option is to pay our landlord obligations from our Section 8 Reserves. Some of those reserves can ONLY be spent on landlord obligations (HAP payments).

CARES Funding – Attached is a copy of our expenditures under the HUD CARES (COVID Relief) funding. You will notice that HUD has now awarded us additional funding under the Section 8 program. All total thus far, we have \$322,471 in CARES funding for the Section 8 Program and \$62,814 in CARES funding for the Public Housing LR Program. The Section 8 CARES funding can be spent on just about anything pertaining to Section 8. This includes cars, year-end incentives, day care, and the examples list goes on and on. Public Housing can only spend money on Public Housing program expenses as well. Funds cannot cross programs.

The Routine Claims and Credit Card Expense Reports are attached for your review.

Maintenance over time for the month was \$115.28.

Credit Card expense for the month was \$1,332.21.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff and seconded by Commissioner Austin to accept the Financial Statements, Routine Claims, and Credit Card Expenses as presented. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 11. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NUMBER NHA 20-21-005 TO AMEND THE SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM REGARDING PROCEDURES.

Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program is required by HUD to keep an updated Administrative Plan to include HUD regulations and local policies. Staff has recently reviewed their plan and found the following items need changed to bring our policies current with our day to day activities.

Chapter 4, Part I: The Application Process

4-I.B. Applying for Assistance

Requested Change:

Effective September 15, 2020, NHA will only be accepting applications via the Waitlist website. Website address is <https://www.waitlistcheck.com/OK1158>.

Paper submission will not be accepted. Applications may be accepted by paper submission or by mail in cases of reasonable accommodations if such accommodations are documented and approved. Applications must be complete in order to be accepted by NHA for processing. If an application is incomplete, NHA will notify the family of the additional information required.

4-III.C. Selection Method Local Preference

Addition Requested:

3. NHA will offer a preference to applicant families that currently reside within the Norman City Limits. Documentation will be required to be provided to obtain this preference.

Chapter 11, Part I: Annual Reexaminations

Notification of and Participation in the Annual Reexamination Process

Requested Change:

Families will be required to complete the annual reexamination interview by mail. All information, including the required annual reexamination packet, required documentation from the family, how to submit the documentation, and the due date of when the items are to be returned will be supplied to the family. The required documentation can be returned via USPS mail, fax, e-mail, or by placing in our lobby drop box.

Notification of the annual reexamination interview will be sent by first-class mail to the participant and to any alternate person/agency of their choosing to assist with the process. This notice will contain the due date for the required items to be presented to the NHA.

If the family has not provided any or all of the required documentation to complete the annual reexamination, NHA will send a second notification by first-class mail to the participant and to any alternate person/agency of their choosing with a new due date.

If the family fails to respond to both attempts made to complete the annual reexamination interview by mail without NHA approval, or if the notice is returned by the post office with no forwarding address, a notice of termination (see Chapter 12) will be sent to the family's address of record, and to any alternate address provided in the family's file.

An advocate, interpreter, or other assistant may assist the family in the interview process.

11-I.D. Conducting Annual Reexaminations

Requested Change:

Families will be asked to bring all required information (as described in the reexamination notice) to the NHA office by the due date listed on their notice. The required documentation can be returned via USPS mail, fax, e-mail, or by placing in our lobby drop box. The required information will include a NHA-designated reexamination form, an Authorization for the Release of Information/Privacy Act Notice, Marijuana

policy, as well as supporting documents or forms related to the family's income, expenses, and family composition.

Any required documents or information that the family is unable to provide at the time of the due date will be provided a notice to supply within 10 days of the due date. A second notification will be sent to the family if required documents are not provided and must be provided within 7 days of the notification. If the family is unable to obtain the information or materials within the required time frame, the family may request an extension.

If the family does not provide the required documents or information within the required time period (plus any extensions), the family will be sent a notice of termination (See Chapter 12).

Chapter 16, Part III: Informal/Formal Reviews and Hearings **16-III.B. Informal Reviews for Applicants, Scheduling an Informal Review**

Requested Change:

A request for an informal review must be made in writing and delivered to NHA either in person, fax, e-mail, or by first-class mail, by the close of business day, no later than 10 days from the date of NHA's denial of assistance.

NHA conducts all informal reviews over the phone. A phone number and extension will be provided to the applicant in order to complete this process.

NHA must schedule and send written notice of the informal review phone conference within 10 days of the family's request.

The family may request to reschedule a review for good cause, or if it is needed for reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. Good cause is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family. Request to reschedule a review must be made in writing prior to the review appointment. At its discretion, NHA may request documentation of the "good cause" prior to rescheduling the review.

If the family does not phone within 15 minutes of the scheduled time, and did not reschedule the review in advance for good cause, the review will be documented as a no show and the file will remain closed as addressed in previous correspondence by NHA.

16-III.B. Formal Reviews for Applicants, Scheduling a Formal Review

Addition Requested:

Upon determination of the informal review, if the applicant does not agree with the disposition of the review, the applicant may request a formal review.

A request for a formal review must be made in writing and delivered to NHA either in person, fax, e-mail, or by first-class mail, by the close of business day, no later than 10 days from the date of NHA's denial of assistance from the informal review.

NHA conducts all formal reviews over the phone. A phone number and extension will be provided to the applicant in order to complete this process.

NHA must schedule and send written notice of the formal review phone conference within 10 days of the family's request.

The family may request to reschedule a review for good cause, or if it is needed for reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. Good cause is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family. Request to reschedule a review must be made in writing prior to the review appointment. At its discretion, NHA may request documentation of the "good cause" prior to rescheduling the review.

If the family does not phone within 15 minutes of the scheduled time, and did not reschedule the review in advance for good cause, the review will be documented as a no show and the file will remain closed as addressed in previous correspondence by NHA.

16-III.C. Informal Hearings for Participants, Scheduling an Informal Hearing

Requested Change:

A request for an informal hearing must be made in writing and delivered to NHA either in person, fax, e-mail, or by first-class mail, by the close of business day, no later than 10 days from the date of NHA's decision or notice to terminate assistance.

NHA conducts all informal hearings over the phone. A phone number and extension will be provided to the participant in order to complete this process.

NHA must schedule and send written notice of the informal hearing phone conference within 10 days of the family's request.

The family may request to reschedule a hearing for good cause, or if it is needed for reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. Good cause is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family. Request to reschedule a hearing must be made in writing prior to the hearing appointment. At its discretion, NHA may request documentation of the "good cause" prior to rescheduling the hearing.

If the family does not phone within 15 minutes of the scheduled time, and did not reschedule the hearing in advance for good cause, the hearing will be documented as a no show and the file will remain closed as addressed in previous correspondence by NHA.

16-III.C. Formal Hearings for Participants, Scheduling a Formal Hearing

Addition Requested:

Upon determination of the informal hearing, if the participant does not agree with the disposition of the hearing, the applicant may request a formal hearing

A request for a formal hearing must be made in writing and delivered to NHA either in person, fax, e-mail, or by first-class mail, by the close of business day, no later than 10 days from the date of NHA's denial of assistance from the informal hearing.

NHA conducts all formal hearings over the phone. A phone number and extension will be provided to the applicant in order to complete this process.

NHA must schedule and send written notice of the formal hearing phone conference within 10 days of the family's request.

The family may request to reschedule a hearing for good cause, or if it is needed for reasonable accommodation for a person with disabilities. Good cause is defined as an unavoidable conflict which seriously affects the health, safety or welfare of the family. Request to reschedule a hearing must be made in writing prior to the hearing appointment. At its discretion, NHA may request documentation of the "good cause" prior to rescheduling the hearing.

If the family does not phone within 15 minutes of the scheduled time, and did not reschedule the hearing in advance for good cause, the hearing will be documented as a no show and the file will remain closed as addressed in previous correspondence by NHA.

Staff respectfully requests approval of Resolution Number NHA 20-21-005 to make changes to our plan as presented.

Discussion:

Section 8 Supervisor Allison Failing shared with the Board the proposed changes regarding procedures. The Board discussed various options available to the client if they want to fill out an application for housing. In the past, they would come in to the office and ask for an application, fill it out and then bring it back. Allison shared with the Board that the NHA will now be accepting applications through the new software Wait List Check. The Board discussed other options that were still available for those wishing to apply but did not have access to the internet. The Board asked Director Canavan if she could look into what it would cost to have a computer/tablet with some type of protective covering placed in the lobby for accessibility.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff and seconded by Commissioner Hunter to approve Resolution Number NHA 20-21-005 amending the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program regarding procedures. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: 3

NAYS: 1 – Commissioner Austin

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 12. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NUMBER NHA 20-21-004, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE NHA LOW-RENT ADMISSION POLICY REGARDING CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AND PROCEDURES FOR RE-EXAMINING GRIEVENCES AND APPLICATIONS.

During COVID, the NHA implemented changes preventing in-person contact. Those changes also streamlined several processes within the program such as mailing re-examination packets and applications along with conducting hearings over the phone. We have found those to work very well and would like to amend our policy allowing the continuance.

In addition, our previous policy was to deny applicants with a drug related history within the past 10 years. We would like to reduce that number from 10 to 5 years.

Attached, was the proposed Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy.

Staff respectfully requests approval of Resolution Number NHA 20-21-004.

Discussion was had and the Commissioners each expressed their concerns with the idea of reducing the criminal related history from 10 years to 5 years. After careful consideration, the Board could not come to an agreement and no motion was made.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: No motion was made.

ITEM 13. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION NUMBER NHA 20-21-006, A RESOLUTION TO REVISE THE NHA EMPLOYEE SICK LEAVE POLICY.

The current sick leave policy leaves room for interpretation. To ensure compensation only to employees who have achieved eligibility, revisions are necessary. Below, please find the current wording for the Sick Leave Policy as well as the proposed changes.

Current Sick Leave Policy regarding payment of accrued but unused sick leave.

Upon retirement, employees with 20+ years of continuous service or who have reached the age of 62 shall be compensated for accrued but unused sick leave at a rate of 1 day for each 3 days accumulated.

Proposed Sick Leave Policy regarding payment of accrued but unused sick leave.

Employees having reached the age of 62 years or with 20+ years of continuous service to the NHA who have provided at least a 2 week notice for resignation **AND** fulfilled their 2-week notice shall be compensated for accrued but unused sick leave at a rate of 1 day for each 3 days accumulated. Termination of employment by the NHA will cause the employee to be ineligible for any pay on accrued sick leave. Failure to provide and fulfill a 2 week notice of resignation will result in the employee being ineligible for any pay on accrued sick leave.

Staff recommends approval of Resolution NHA 20-21-006 as presented.

Commissioner Austin wanted to know how many hours staff can accumulate. Executive Assistant Barbra Ruth replied that staff can accumulate up to 360 hours of unused sick leave. Upon resignation, they are allowed to take 1/3 (120 hours) of those hours with them.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Commissioner Austin and seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff to approve the revised sick leave policy as presented. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 14. CONSIDERATION OF BIDS TO REPLACE ROSE ROCK VILLA WINDOWS.

The NHA solicited bids in accordance with our procurement policy. A mandatory pre-bid conference was held. Contracting Services Inc. and ATG Construction were the only contractors in attendance.

ATG provided the only bid, which is concerning regarding the ability to compare prices and verify the bid as reasonable. However, while preparing to solicit for bids, we did obtain some cost estimates that may assist in determining the ATG bid as reasonable. Anderson Windows did provide an estimate of \$299,500 for materials only.

The ATG bid came in at \$300,000 but we only have \$246,485 budgeted within the Capital Fund Program (CFP). Consequently, we are \$53,515 short of fully funding the project from CFP. However, our reserves are extremely healthy and can afford this long overdue expense.

Staff recommends approval of the bid from ATG in the amount of \$300,000.

The Board discussed the project and was concerned that only 1 bid was received. The Board agreed to place it out for a rebid.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Commissioner Austin and seconded by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff to place it out for rebid. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 15. CONSIDERATION TO RELOCATE PUBLIC HOUSING OFFICE STAFF TO THE NHA ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.

Since COVID, we have certainly operated outside the box. This has been difficult in many ways but has also revealed the opportunity for changes that benefit the agency as well as the client. Also, the Public Housing (PH) Office Receptionist/Inspector position is vacant. Again, allowing an ideal time to make changes.

I would like to move the PH office staff (of two) into the NHA administrative building. This will save the NHA operational costs and will provide a better "team" environment.

PH will no longer need to fill the PH Receptionist/Inspector position as those services are already being provided by Section 8. In addition, Section 8 can conduct the PH inspections. However, Section 8 will need to be compensated by the PH program since HUD mandates we keep the program funds separated.

Regarding providing offices for the two PH staff, the admin building file room will be cleared and made into two offices. The server, currently located in the file room, will need to stay and have a closet built around it. The server closet will also need a mini split AC. I am in the process of obtaining bids to install a wall to divide the file room, install 4 new electrical outlets, enclose the server, and install a mini split. I anticipate this to cost around \$6,000.

Staff requests authorization to move the PH staff into the Administration Building and spend up to \$6,000 for remodeling.

Discussion was had over whether or not it was in the best interest of the residents to move the Public Housing staff to the Administrative Building. After discussion, no motion was made.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: No Motion

ITEM 16. CONSIDERATION TO ADD ANOTHER MAINTENANCE POSITION TO PUBLIC HOUSING.

The current maintenance staff consists of 4 members. With the addition of our Housing Concepts units, we need to increase the staff to keep up with repairs.

Executive Director Canavan would like to increase the Maintenance Department with the addition of a Maintenance Mechanic B. According to our Organizational Chart, this position has a salary range of \$22,280-\$33,091.

Staff requests authorization to permanently increase the Maintenance Department to 5 members by hiring a Maintenance Mechanic B.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approve as presented.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff and seconded by Commissioner Austin to add another permanent maintenance position to Public Housing. The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Cummins declared motion carried.

ITEM 17. NEW BUSINESS

None

ACTION REQUESTED: As desired by the Board.

ACTION TAKEN: None

ITEM 18. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

None

ACTION REQUESTED: No action necessary.

ACTION TAKEN: None

ITEM 19. COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Vice-Chairperson Ratliff stated that she thought Deputy Executive Director Sherri Hunt was an exemplary employee and wanted to thank her for her years of service and on how great the budget looks.

INFORMATION: This item appears on the Authority's Agenda for the Board to make comments and to afford an opportunity for citizens to address the Board.

ACTION REQUESTED: As desired by the Board.

ACTION TAKEN: None

ITEM 20. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION REQUESTED: A motion to adjourn the September 14, 2020, Regular Board Meeting.

ACTION TAKEN: A motion was made by Vice-Chairperson Ratliff and seconded by Commissioner Austin to adjourn the September 14, 2020, Regular Board Meeting.

The following vote was recorded:

YEAS: All

NAYS: None

Chairman Jeff Cummins declared motion carried.

ADJOURNED AT 1:39 PM

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 9th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2020.

Chairman

SEAL

Attest By:

Executive Director