



NORTHAMPTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

MAY MINUTES
MAY 20, 2024
Approved on June 17, 2024

Members of the Northampton Housing Authority met via “Zoom” on Monday, May 20, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.
Upon Roll Call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT: Chairperson Carney; Vice-Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Brooks & Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.
Commissioner Jones joined the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

ALSO PRESENT: Jack Redman; Sharon Kimble; Attorney Tom O'Connor; Keith Walsh; Danielle McColgan; Jose Cruz; Deb Walker & Heather Maxwell

TENANT COMMENT

SALVO RESIDENT – this past week I saw a person outside in the parking lot and I thought they were having a seizure so I called the police and they took him away. I heard on the radio there is a zombie like drug around and I saw one resident like this five times. It looks like it is coming here and I am concerned and it is an issue we should think about. I would like to know how to use Narcan as should the residents. Resident then read a quote – “One mistake you should never make in this life is to allow yourself to be recruited by someone to hate or dislike another person who hasn’t wronged you. Only a fool inherits other peoples’ enemies as a sign of loyalty.”

MCDONALD RESIDENT - assumption, accountability and ambition. There is a Board member assuming things. My Volvo was towed. There is a huge addiction problem at Northampton Housing Authority. Cara needs to help end mental health addiction crisis. She is skilled at handling money but I question her people skills.

STAFF COMMENTS

NONE

PUBLIC COMMENT

NONE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Jack read the report with updates.
Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield asked if the Executive Director’s report could be mailed.
Jack will mail it out.

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 2024 REGULAR MINUTES

Commissioner Brooks put forth the motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Richards.

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Carney; Vice-Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Jones & Commissioner Brooks.

VOTING NAY: Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield

ABSTAIN: NONE

Therefore Chairperson Carney approved the Motion.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – in the tenant comment there should be a space between Jo Ella. I also want an insertion of what I said that the minutes did not relay of which she gave a hard copy to Jack Redman.

Vice-Chairperson Richards – approve the minutes per transcript and submit Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield's statement in today's minutes.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I don't want it put on the back page I want it inserted where it should be.

MOTION

TO ACCEPT THE CORRECTION SUBMITTED BY COMMISSIONER TARBUTTON-SPRINGFIELD.

VOTING YAY: Commissioner Cancel & Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

VOTING NAY: Chairperson Carney; Vice-Chairperson Richards & Commissioner Brooks.

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Jones.

Therefore Chairperson Carney stated the Motion failed.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – in the minutes it just states Cara's first name, it should be changed to read her whole name – Cara Leiper.

MOTION

CORRECT THE NAME OF CARA WHO SPOKE DURING THE APRIL MEETING TO CARA LEIPER.

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Carney; Vice-Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Jones; Commissioner Brooks; Commissioner Cancel and Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

VOTING NAY: NONE

Therefore Chairperson Carney approved the Motion.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – on page 5 of the minutes I asked if we lost Vice-Chairperson Richards. I would like to put in a comment from Chairperson Carney that Vice-Chairperson Richards is no longer in the meeting.

MOTION

ADD TWO LINES TO THE EXISTING MINUTES

VOTING YAY: Commissioner Cancel & Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

VOTING NAY: Chairperson Carney & Commissioner Brooks.

ABSTAIN: Vice-Chairperson Richards & Commissioner Jones.

Therefore, Chairperson Carney stated the Motion failed.

MOTION

APPROVAL OF THE APRIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Brooks put forth the motion to approve, seconded by Vice-Chairperson Richards.

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Carney; Vice-Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Brooks & Commissioner Jones.

VOTING NAY: Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

Therefore, Chairperson Carney approved the Motion.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION

CLARIFICATIONS REGARDING THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN “RECORDING SECRETARY” AND “SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield would like to table the discussion until the Executive Director is at the meeting.

Attorney O’Connor – according to Chapter 121B section 7 it says the Executive Director shall be the ex-officio secretary – by statute. She was hired to be the Executive Director by the Board. Once she is the Executive Director she is also the ex-officio secretary. Attorney O’Connor went on to explain about the “recording secretary” – I am not sure what is meant by that but I think it is the person responsible for taking the minutes, you might consider them a secretary of some sort, a minute taker and that is something very different. Open meeting law Chapter 30A section 22, it doesn’t use the word secretary anywhere in the body of the Open Meeting Law nor in the regulations do they use that word secretary. The only thing both the statute and the regulation states and it is pretty much verbatim on both – “a public body shall create and maintain accurate minutes of all meetings.” It does not say who takes them or who directs them to be taken, it just requires they be taken. It is up to the Chair to delegate the task of recording the minutes.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – if she is the ex-officio secretary let her be called that. Does the letterhead need to be changed, or use one letterhead for us and one for everyone else? I would like some clarity.

Commissioner Brooks – the major problem is this – Cara is the ex-officio person of this board as a statute and our by-laws as is the case in most such meetings. What happens and what she is called in Cummington, Huntington, Easthampton or Hatfield and wherever else, should not concern this board. That is her concern, not as the Director of Northampton but as acting Director of those other boards. Cara is the boss here, the Director here and that is the only thing we should be concerned with.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – we are the boss, we are the board, an oversight of the Executive Director who is doing the operation and running it and the legislature is above us. The thing is if it is going to be ex-officio secretary I have no problem with that.

MOTION

APPROVE CHANGE ORDER #214123-CO-0001, 0002, 0003 AND 0004 FOR CAHILL BOILER AND WATER HEATER REPLACEMENT TOTALING \$2,711.62.

Change Order # 1 - \$1,447.06 – relocate zone valve panels for Bldg. A

Change Order # 2 - (\$1,319.31) – credit for Building A - HVAC valves installed

Change Order #3 - \$1,743.56 – change in location for combustion air termination for community building.

Change Order #4 - \$ 840.30 - add point of use mixing valves for two public sinks in the community building.

Commissioner Jones put forth the motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Brooks.

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Carney; Vice-Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Cancel; Commissioner Brooks & Commissioner Jones.

VOTING NAY: NONE

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

Therefore, Chairperson Carney approved the Motion.

MOTION

Approve Executive Director to enter into 6 Month Emergency Management Contract with Hatfield Housing Authority due to the resignation of their Executive Director

Jack Redman gave information on the agreement.

Vice-Chairperson Richards put forth the motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Jones.

VOTING YAY: Chairperson Carney; Vice-Chairperson Richards; Commissioner Cancel & Commissioner Jones.

VOTING NAY: Commissioner Brooks & Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield.

ABSTAIN: NONE

Therefore, Chairperson Carney approved the Motion.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – I received the communication on the 16th of May – isn't that when you went there?

Chairperson Carney – I got it on the 10th of May.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – just because you are asked doesn't mean you say yes. Don't need to give praises and raises for bad behavior.

Commissioner Jones – it is a six month contract, if Hatfield approves or it goes to Amherst, fine. I am basically in favor of it. I am also tired, I am not going to be here until midnight tonight. I didn't sign up for school board or city council for a reason. I am just not doing this.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – you are welcome to go to sleep.

Commissioner Brooks – if residents had come to Cara first and asked her to take that office because their Director was leaving I would say yes, but that is not the case. She is submitting it because Jack and Sharon went over there and talked to some people.

Chairperson Carney – did you get the email from Cara Leiper on May 10th?

Commissioner Brooks – addendum now, the people of Hatfield have to approve it. It should have been laid out first, not Cara being asked. I think we over reach.

Chairperson Carney – asked Jack Redman to go over the timeline.

Jack Redman – the State was contacted first by Hatfield, the State and State Representative reached out to Northampton and Amherst. The Executive Director sent an email to the Board. The Executive Director is leaving at the end of May and they won't have anyone there as of May 29th.

Vice-Chairperson Richards – I think it is an honor for us to be asked by Representative Sabadosa and the Mayor. Our board has been up for controversy on many issues and I think it is time for us to come together. I think Hatfield is a perfect fit at least for 6 months to see if we like it and they like it. I don't think it is going to drain anything from our Housing Authority so I would be very much in favor of it.

Commissioner Cancel – I do appreciate this being brought up to the Board and in a different way than it happened with Easthampton. This seems to be a bit more organized and transparent. I agree with

Commissioner Jones where this is sort of an emergency situation and we are not stuck with it long term we are just simply open to the idea of being offered the opportunity to manage that for 6 months. Having said that I am not sure that if it comes to the board in the future that I would support that but I certainly support this effort here to help out in an emergency basis.

Commissioner Tarbutton-Springfield – Greenfield may have expressed an interest. Just because you are asked you don't have to say yes. Let's get things taken care of here.

Vice-Chairperson Richards put forth the motion to adjourn the May meeting at 6:55 P.M., seconded by Commissioner Jones. All were in favor.