

Housing Authority of the City of Orange

Board of Commissioners – Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: June 18, 2025 • Location: Virtual/Hybrid (Washington Manor community room viewing)

Called by: Chair Clifford Ross

1) Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Executive Director Walter McNeil announced that this regular monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners was duly advertised in *The Star-Ledger* and *The Orange Transcript* in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act (“Sunshine Law”).

2) Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Ross called the meeting to order. Vice Chair Ernest Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Roll Call

- Present: Chair Clifford Ross; Vice Chair Ernest Williams; Commissioners Betty McLeod, Shara Morrow, Joseph Juliano
- Absent: Commissioners Hashim Garrett, Coram Rimes
- Also Present: Executive Director Walter McNeil; Counsel (Ms. Moore); Staff (Dawn, Christina, Shanda)
- Quorum: Yes

4) Adoption of Agenda

Motion: Williams; Second: Morrow.

Roll Call: McLeod–Yes; Morrow–Yes; Giuliano–Yes; Williams–Yes; Ross–Yes. Motion carried.

5) Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting May 15, 2025

Note/Correction: One line erroneously states “no discussion” though discussion occurred regarding the administrative fee; staff to correct.

Motion: Morrow; Second: Williams.

Roll Call: Morrow–Yes; Giuliano–Yes; McLeod–Yes; Williams–Yes; Ross–Yes. Motion carried.

6) Treasurer’s Report (FY ending March 31, 2025 – year end)

Executive Director McNeil presented a summary in lieu of the consolidated sheet (to be forwarded):

- Overall position: Approximately \$200,000 positive (in the black) versus projection.
- Treasurer and ED previously reviewed; Treasurer concurred.
Chair confirmed the Authority is operating within budget.

7) Executive Director’s Report

a) Housing Choice Voucher / Section 8 (HCV)

- Interims: 50 • Annuals/Special Inspections: 14
- New Admissions: 2 • Terminations: 0
- Participants under HAP Contract: 546
- Monthly HAP paid: ≈ \$640,000; Utility Reimbursements: ≈ \$2,455
- FSS Participants: 31; FSS Escrow Disbursed to Recent Graduates: \$5,207
- Port-outs: 19; related admin fee item noted \$17.96; other admin/port-out payments ≈ \$32,000
- Program Status: HCV (SEMAP/CMAP) and Public Housing performance “Excellent/Outstanding” per HUD indicators.

Clarification (FSS): A payment of \$6,462.26 to Navy Federal was an approved interim use of a participant’s escrow to satisfy a debt consistent with the participant’s goals (credit repair/homeownership readiness). Escrow balances are retained until graduation; interim uses are capped per policy.

b) Public Housing (Washington Manor & scattered/WA units)

- Rent Roll (month end): \$95,000 • Collections: \$108,000 (includes arrears repayments)
- Vacancies: 4 (as of end of May)
- Inspections: Annual–17; Interim–3; Total–17
- Work Orders: Received–82; Completed–81
- PIC Score: 99.61
- Resident Services:
 - 102 food bank participants (Washington Manor); 1 at Walter G.
 - Community & fitness rooms open; computer classes led by resident Frank Smith (stipend volunteer) receiving positive reviews; assisting residents with portal (rent/work orders/recerts).
 - Events (June): General meetings (incl. French/Spanish/Creole sessions); Father’s Day Pool Tournament with men’s self-care training; Bingo with Lincoln Financial (final expense/insurance partner). Office closed June 19 (Juneteenth). Beltone hearing checks June 20, 11:00 AM; LifeStation June 25.
 - Upcoming (July): Resident meetings July 3 & 7 (incl. Spanish/French/Creole); Health Fair July 9; Resident Fashion Show July 24 (resident participation encouraged).

c) Capital/Facilities

- HQ Parking Lot & Security Gates (JA Alexander): Project cost ≈ \$220,000. Concrete and fencing largely complete; electrical/key-fob integration under review (pursuing reuse of

existing fobs/controllers to reduce cost). Slurry seal pending. Standard 10% retainage applies.

d) Real Estate Transactions

- 209 Park Avenue: Basement mortar repairs completed per purchaser inspection; closing anticipated next week (counsel managing).
- Taylor Street: Tenants scheduled to vacate July 1; oil tank removal planned via neighbor access; site restoration to follow.

e) RAD / Development

Active meetings with WIN Group and counsel regarding Management & Development Agreement (MDA) for Walter G. Alexander IV and Washington Manor needs assessment; Board may need a special meeting over the summer.

f) Golf Outing & Scholarships (OHDC)

- Shackamaxon CC reserved; September 15, 2025. Tricky tray planning underway. Goal to award three scholarships.
- Eligibility: Applicants must be listed household members in OHA public housing or OHA Section 8 households. Notices/Constant Contact to be sent.

8) Public Comment

Residents viewed from the Washington Manor community room (~20 attendees; Mr. Hicks facilitated).

- Tenant Association VP requested new tables and chairs for the community room; reported a well-attended Father's Day event (June 15), largely supported by resident donations.
- Announcement: Orange Police Department workshop on Sexual Harassment/Bullying at 340 on June 25, 1:00–3:00 PM. Public session then closed.

9) Resolutions

a) R-5840-25 — Approval of Bills

Motion: Juliano; Second: Morrow.

Discussion included: 209 Park Ave basement repair (pre-closing requirement; nominal relative to sale proceeds).

Roll Call: McLeod–Yes; Giuliano–Yes; Morrow–Yes; Williams–Yes; Ross–Yes. Adopted.

b) R-5841-25 — Authorization for the Executive Director to Pay Routine Bills During July–August 2025

Bills will still be distributed to Commissioners for review; no separate monthly resolution during recess.

Motion: Morrow; Second: Williams.

Roll Call: McLeod–Yes; Giuliano–Yes; Morrow–Yes; Williams–Yes; Ross–Yes. Adopted.

c) R-5842-25 — Amend Pet Policy Addendum to Lease (HOTMA alignment)

Key points discussed:

- For assistance/support/service animals, size/breed restrictions may not be imposed; reasonable accommodation required case-by-case (subject to safety/history).
- Pet limits (e.g., one dog or one cat or one fish tank/bowl; two caged birds; one small caged animal) apply to pets; multiple dogs/cats not permitted as pets.
- Staff will continue case-by-case evaluations where assistance animals are involved.
Motion: Williams; Second: Morrow.
Roll Call: Williams–Yes; Morrow–Yes; Giuliano–Yes; McLeod–Yes; Ross–Yes. Adopted.

d) R-5843-25 — Award One-Year Contract to MDD Connections, LLC for Public Education/Relations services for OHDC and OHA

- Scope: Enhance web and social media presence; coordinate media coverage; attend/key events; align messaging with development initiatives (e.g., RAD/WGA IV).
- Selection: RFQ process; interview by ED, Vice Chair Williams, and OHDC Chair; strong references and experience.
- Amount: \$25,000 (negotiated; below prior PR engagement).
Motion: Juliano; Second: Williams.
Roll Call: Williams–Yes; Morrow–Yes; Giuliano–Yes; McLeod–Yes; Ross–Yes. Adopted.

10) Unfinished & New Business

- Summer Recess: No regular meetings in July/August; special meeting may be called if MDA negotiations require Board action.
- Air Conditioner Initiative: Survey complete; pursuing 10,000 BTU GE units (\approx <\$250 each) funded via Capital Plan to replace/assist where needed and reduce electrical load.

11) Adjournment

With no further business, motion to adjourn by Williams; second by Morrow. Voice vote: All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
[Name], Board Secretary
Housing Authority of the City of Orange