

## **MINUTES FROM AN REGULAR MEETING APRIL 17, 2025**

An Annual Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange was called to order at 3:30 p.m. on April 17, 2025, at 340 Thomas Blvd, Orange, New Jersey and via ZOOM web-based application. The Executive Director advised that all requirements of the Sunshine Law were met. A roll call was taken as follows:

### **Present**

Chairman Clifford Ross  
Vice Chairman Ernest Williams  
Treasurer Shara Morrow  
Parliamentarian Joseph Juliano  
Commissioner Betty McLeod  
Commissioner Hashim Garrett

### **Also Present**

Walter D. McNeil, Jr., Ph.D., Executive Director  
David Epstein, Esq., Post Polak, PA  
Cristina Mateo, Housing Manager  
Anil Gang, Maintenance Superintendent.  
Shanda Hammond, Director of Housing  
Amanda Rivera, Accountant

### **Absent**

Commissioner Coram Rimes

The pledge of allegiance was said.

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner McLeod moved to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Morrow seconded.

Chairman Ross called for discussion.

No discussion

A roll call was taken.

All Commissioners voted in favor.

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adopt and/or correction of the Minutes from a Regular Board Meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Commissioner McLeod moved to adopt the minutes. Commissioner Williams seconded.

Chairman Ross called for discussion.

Commissioner Morrow pointed out a typo at the end of the minutes. Same was corrected.

A roll call was taken.

All Commissioners voted in favor.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Executive Director McNeil advised that board that our accountant is ill and we should have a report at the next scheduled board meeting.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Executive Director reviewed the Public Housing and Section 8 Reports that were included in the board package. He advised the board about the activities that were had, the improvements in relations with the tenants and resident association, and that the new intercoms have all been installed and how they work. The board discussed how the intercom system operates.

Dr. McNeil discussed the upcoming events and activities for the next month, including a poetry reading, health seminar, and book club. He also reported on the interim and annual certifications, new admissions, and terminations. Dr. McNeil mentioned attending an event with Councilman Ross and Councilman Montague, where they discussed clearing up a bus stop and respecting the building. The conversation ended with a discussion on the water bills for two properties, which were found to be unusually high.

## **PUBLIC SESSION**

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5830-25 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange approving Bills. Commissioner McLeod moved to adopt. Commissioner Williams seconded.

Chairman Ross called for discussion.

The Board discussed various financial matters, including estimated utility payments, insurance costs, and legal fees. Amanda explains that the \$96,000 insurance payment is the final installment for the year, with the total cost having increased by about \$20,000. The intercom system project is discussed, with McNeil confirming that the current payment brings the total to 70% of the approximately \$225,000 total cost. Amanda clarifies that there are two separate line items for Post Pollock due to different funding sources. The Board also addressed legal fees from Goldstein, Kelin (formerly Goldstein, Kelin, and Booker), which are higher than usual due to delayed billing and increased legal actions for tenant terminations.

A roll call was taken.

All Commissioners voted in favor.

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5831-25 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange authorizing M&T Bank to honor checks bearing facsimile signatures of Chairman Clifford Ross, Treasurer Shara Morrow, and Executive Director Walter D. McNeil, Jr., Ph.D.

Commissioner Williams moved to adopt. Commissioner McLeod seconded.

Chairman Ross called for discussion.

No discussion

A roll call was taken.

All Commissioners voted in favor.

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5832-25 Resolution of the Board of

Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange amending the dwelling unit lease for public housing.

Commissioner Morrow moved to adopt. Commissioner Williams seconded.

Chairman Ross called for discussion.

Commissioner Morrow inquired about the changes.

The Board advised that all changes were highlighted and that the changes were made based on recommendations from HUD.

A roll call was taken.

All Commissioners voted in favor.

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5833-25 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange approving the Trespass Towing/Immobilization Agreement between Titan Enterprises and HACO for towing services at Washington Manor.

Commissioner McLeod moved to adopt. Commissioner Morrow seconded.

Chairman Ross called for discussion.

McNeil discussed the need for a towing contract to monitor the parking lot and prevent illegal cars from parking there. Shara clarified that the towing company would be contacted by security or tenants when someone is parked in the wrong spot. Cristina confirmed that the police department would need to be involved first, and they would then call the towing company. Ernest suggested that the security person should periodically check the license numbers of parked cars to ensure they are in the correct spot. Shara confirmed that this would be a zero-cost initiative to the housing authority. .

A roll call was taken.

All Commissioners voted in favor.

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adopt Resolution No. 5834-25 Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Orange the Pet Policy addendum to the lease.

Commissioner Morrow moved to adopt. Commissioner Williams seconded.

Chairman Ross called for discussion.

The Board discussed the pet policy for the building, focusing on the acceptance of emotional support dogs and the potential for certain breeds to be banned. They agreed to table the discussion until they could gather more information and consult with an attorney. The team also considered adding a clause to the pet permit about the types of animals not permitted in the building.

A roll call was taken.

All Commissioners voted in favor of tabling the Motion.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Commissioner Julian advised that on May 14<sup>th</sup>, his mother's scholarship for a single mother will be

given at Essex County College, and he would like to know if the Chairman would recommend someone to present it because he had to work late that night. Ross requested that he send him an email detailing same.

The Board discussed the effects the new administration will have on HUD/Housing Authorities, and the NAHRO Conference in Atlantic City.

Chairman Ross called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Morrow moved to adjourn. Commissioner Morrow seconded.

A roll call was taken.  
All Commissioners voted in favor

Motion to close. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned.

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Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Walter D. McNeil, Jr.  
Secretary