

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHLANDS
Ptak Towers
215 Shore Drive, Highlands, NJ 07732

January 24, 2018
REGULAR MEETING
Minutes of Public Portion

OPENING

Gloria Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Ida Tkoch, Commissioner
 Dolores Francy, Commissioner
 Ellen Williams, Commissioner
 Ray Goddard, Commissioner
 Gloria Miller, Chairperson

Also Present: Douglas G. Dzema, Executive Director
 Renee DeMarco, Residential Operations Manager
 John Bonello, Attorney

Absent: Rebecca Kane, Commissioner
 Mae Rugg, Commissioner

(Note: Hereafter, titles are abbreviated as: Chair, VChair, Comm, ED, Res, Atty)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *November 21, 2018, Regular Board Meeting and Public Portion.*

Motion made to adopt the minutes by Comm Goddard and seconded by Comm Williams. Chair Miller asked for a vote.

Aye	(4)	Tkoch, Williams, Goddard, Miller
Nay	(0)	
Abstention	(0)	
Absent	(3)	Kane, Rugg, Francy

PRESENTATION OF BILLS

Motion made to ratify the voice vote approving the December 2017 Bills List Summary and to approve the January 24, 2018 Bills List Summary by Comm Goddard and seconded by Comm Williams. Chair Miller asked for a vote.

Aye	(4)	Tkoch, Williams, Goddard, Miller
Nay	(0)	
Abstention	(0)	
Absent	(3)	Kane, Rugg, Francy

CORRESPONDENCE

ED Dzema: There were 9 notices that were distributed over the last two months and they ranged from the Christmas Party to bulk pick up.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Comm Williams: Our group meets monthly, February 20 is the next meeting. Changing the name as Storytelling and Life Stories sounds intimidating to people as they think they have to come and tell about their lives. We are looking to work with the high school to see if we could do some intergenerational story telling; as well as with the historical society. The new name of the program is Sharing Stories New and Imagined. You can come in with stories made up or real.

Comm Tkoch: EDDzema would you please explain to everyone the Board of Commissioner duties. Specifically for me as I am the resident commissioner and the residents confide in me, expecting me to go into the office and pass their information on. A couple of people say we don't need the board of commissioner. EDDzema: Legally we are bound to have an executive director and a board of commissioners. Your goal as a board member and/or a commissioner is to set policy. You can listen, but should never be a go between as it puts you in a bad/awkward position. They need to come to the administration, everyone is welcome to speak with Renee or give her a note. It is not for the board members to be a conduit at any time.

January Vacancy Report: Ptak and JPM have 0 vacancies. Ptak has 11 residents and 143 non-residents on the waiting list. JPM has 6 residents and 67 non-residents on the waiting list.

OFFICERS & STAFF REPORTS

ED Dzema

Capital Report: - Ptak Towers:

- Our unground storage tank removal is now complete. We are just waiting for a no further action letter.
- We have poured the additional section of pad in the smoking section. We are waiting for the new bench to install, which is on backorder.
- Much of the capital work has been held off as we don't have extensive money for it and we are waiting for RAD. We now have the RAD conversion commitment (RCC) and HUD's approval. We have received \$911,000 from the FHLB. This is to be used for capital improvements. The building will go from a Public Housing entity to a Section 8 entity. In March we will have RAD meetings, one here at Ptak and one at JPM. We anticipate closing in the next 90 days. We are also looking to close a loan with Investors Saving Bank for \$500,000 to add to the capital improvements of the buildings also. We also have to convert our software and our current policies have to be upgraded and converted to coincide with the RAD program. We expect to have \$1.2 million for capital improvements.

OLD BUSINESS – Comm Williams – I took a tour of JPM and as I mentioned couple meetings ago. I hope the community room is addressed in the RAD list of capital improvements when we get the funding, as the room is unusable.

NEW BUSINESS – Comm Williams - NAHRO has a calendar contest for children, “What Does Home Mean to You”. I talked to Renee to see how many families at JPM may be interested in participating in this and I’m working with office to get JPM children involved in this. I will work with the families at JPM that are interested in participating.

RESOLUTIONS –

FY18-016 – Resolution authorizing the hiring of a part time custodian.

Motion was made by Comm Williams and seconded by Comm Tkoch.

Aye	(5)	Tkoch, Francy, Williams, Goddard, Miller
Nay	(0)	
Abstention	(0)	
Absent	(2)	Kane, Rugg

PUBLIC PORTION

Jackie White, apt. 102 – Living here do we have an advocate we can go to when we have problems? EDDzema – I suggest you go to our staff/the office if you have a problem.

Mary Sommer, apt. 414 – I moved in when the weather was nice outside. This is a government controlled building and I thought smoking was forbidden and against the law. Since the weather got colder, people are smoking cigarettes and marijuana inside apartments on my floor. I can’t come out of my bedroom or go into the hallway in the morning, when the office is closed after 4:30pm, or on the weekends because of the smoking odors. Something has to be done about this. AttyBonello – the board has authorized the staff and myself to aggressively enforce the non-smoking rules. In order to enforce it we need the cooperation of people who witness the smoking or feel it is clear that it is coming from a particular unit. Using marijuana is having possession of a drug which is illegal here. Anyone using drugs under the HUD regulation fall under our “One Strike Policy.” If caught with any drug including marijuana, you will get a 3 day notice and will be evicted. I think it is clear here that if you are smoking and do not stop you will be evicted.

Trish Flannery, apt. 402 – I live on the 4th floor also. Recently smoke has been coming into my apartment. If you can’t prove who is doing it, what are we supposed to do?

AttyBonello – it is a long process. Over time enough proof may accumulate to establish grounds for eviction. Comm Goddard – every month we have a vacancy report and the numbers go up, right now 146 on the Ptak waiting list. That is because the cost of a unit in the Highlands has gone up 30%-50% in the last year with the cost of a 1 bedroom apartment at \$1400 to \$1500. If you live here and are smoking, ignoring the rules you will be evicted and have a real hard time finding a place to live.

Victoria Marks, apt. 311. You talk about proof -- you have exterminators, maintenance, contractors, entering the apartment; why aren’t they reporting the smoking? Renee

DeMarco – please remember these are all scheduled entries. If tenants are smoking in their apartment they are smart to clean up/spray/open windows/burn candles before the apartment is entered by the contractor, maintenance; etc.

Larry Wallace, apt. 206 – Referring back to what Jackie White asked, is there an advocate for us to go to rather than the office? Say for legal notices that are given to us from the building management. I can't afford an attorney. AttyBonello – you can come to the board. L. Wallace – I wouldn't want to go to the Board either. AttyBonello - Call an attorney/legal services.

Evelyn Banks, apt. 405 – Several years ago you were approached to have round table meetings and you had just one. Could we continue to have these with just you? People would be more comfortable talking to you in an informal setting. EDDzema – I would agree to that. Having the board here and hearing all the complaints is even better as I would only go to them and this is a healthy environment for that. We are going to meet to talk about the RAD program and I will try a meeting aside from that where we can discuss a number of topics that I think the residents are interested in/and they can tell me what they want to talk about.

Chair Miller closed the public portion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION /ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Comm Francy to move to Executive Session and adjourn meeting, and seconded by Comm Williams. All in favor.


-Chair Miller closed the public meeting at 7:50 PM.

Motion to adopt January 24, 2018 Regular Board Meeting, Public Portion Minutes moved by Commissioner Goddard and seconded by Commissioner Williams.

Roll Call for Adoption of January 24, 2018 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

	Ayes	Nays	Absent	Abstain
Commissioner Kane				X
Commissioner Rugg			X	
Commissioner Tkoch	X			
Commissioner Francy			X	
Commissioner Williams	X			
Commissioner Goddard	X			
Chairperson Miller	X			

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes adopted at a Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Highlands, New Jersey, duly called and held on the 27th, day of February, 2018.



 Douglas Dzema
 Executive Director