

Commissioners:
Chair James Seveney
Vice-Chair Terri Cortvriend
Gary Gump
Ronald Harnois
Sharlene Patton

**Portsmouth Housing Authority
Town of Portsmouth, Rhode Island
Board of Commissioners**



**Meeting Minutes
for Friday, February 18, 2022 at 1:00 PM
Conducted in-person from Portsmouth Town Hall**

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL at 1PM

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: James Seveney, Terri Cortvriend, Gary Gump, Ron Harnois and Sharlene Patton

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

GUESTS: Linda Ujifusa – Vice-President, Portsmouth Town Council

2. CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

- A. Public report made to announce results of a vote taken during executive session at PHA’s January 26, 2022 meeting. Chair reported that because the Board was unable to resume the public Zoom connection after adjourning from the January 26 executive session, the following announcement is repeated today in public session:
 - a. One vote taken to authorize Charles Levesque Esq. to represent the PHA Board on matters related to HUD issues. All commissioners voted in favor.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES *

- A. Approved the minutes for our January 26, 2022 meeting on a motion by Vice-Chair Cortvriend and seconded by Commissioner Gump. Passed with a unanimous vote.

Vice-Chairwoman Cortvriend will post approved copies to Secretary of State and Town of Portsmouth websites.

4. FINANCIALS AND BILLS *

- A. The Board held a short discussion of our monthly financial reporting process. Our monthly cash/revenue statements to HUD continue to be submitted as required by the management agent. Further, Phoenix Properties received official verification that our Quaker Manor LLC annual financial audit report for the 2017-2018 operating year was received through the HUD REAC portal in January 12, 2022. There is still much work to be done finishing and submitting overdue annual audit reports (for 2019 and 2020). Phoenix continues to work directly with Coastal Housing Corp’s accounting firm, PPA LLP Accountants, to get these audits completed as quickly as possible.

No votes Taken.

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5. COMMUNICATIONS *

- A. The Chair briefed the entire Board on the communications that have taken place since our January 26 meeting:
 - a. Phone Conferences with PHA legal representatives Kathie Soroka and Chuck Levesque re. HOD complaint.
 - b. Complaints received by Quaker Manor/Estates residents on loss of heat on Saturday, February 5, 2022.
 - c. Notified by Phoenix Property Mgmt of loss of our maintenance technician, February 5, 2022.
 - d. Conference call with HUD Enforcement lawyers, Friday February 11, 2022.
 - e. Email updates to the Board members were sent on February 5 and 12, 2022.

No votes taken.

6. OLD BUSINESS*

- A. The Board discussed status on the continuing services of PPA Accountants to complete the outstanding audits they were contracted to conduct by Coastal Housing Corp. Quaker Manor LLC audit requirements remain incomplete. Phoenix management continues to liaison PPA to facilitate completion. The Board also determined that it has no formal action to take on this issue as it is a contractual matter between Coastal and PPA. Coastal, as one of their transition actions as former management agent for Quaker Manor LLC and Quaker Estates I,II,III,IV must resolve the performance issues with PPA and fulfill their obligation for submitting these overdue audit reports.

No votes taken.

7. NEW BUSINESS *

- A. Discussions on finding a replacement accounting firm to finish remaining audits was set aside for the reasons stated above under Old Business. The PHA does not have a contractual relationship with PPA Accountants. We look to Coastal Housing Corp to resolve the issues and complete the required reports as soon as possible.

No votes taken.

- B. No further discussion on future plans of our management agent relating to both Quaker Manor LLC and Quaker Manor Estates. This will be taken up in the future once the issues with HUD audit compliance is settled.

No votes taken.

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8. REPORTS *

- A. None. The chair reported that, as directed by the Board after approval of the PHA annual report for 2021 at our January 26 meeting, he submitted the final report to the Town of Portsmouth leadership on January 27, 2022.

No votes taken.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT/OPEN FORUM

Three members of the public attended the meeting, all were residents of Quaker Manor and/or Quaker Estates. One person asked a general question related to how Quaker Manor came to the financial and management difficulties we are currently experiencing. All board members participated in the ensuing explanation on the history of Quaker Manor LLC, particularly since the 2017 approval and implementation of HUD's "Rental Assistance Demonstration" (RAD) program.

There was a fourth attendee at today's meeting, the Hon. Linda Ujifusa, Vice-President of the Portsmouth Town Council was present for the meeting. She was there at the invitation of the PHA Board. We are very appreciative of the time she spent participating in the meeting and getting a more detailed perspective on the issues we face.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. At approximately 1:45pm, the Board voted to enter into executive session, under to RIGL §42-46-5(a)(2) to continue our consideration of HUD's complaint related to Quaker Manor LLC outstanding audit reports. Vice-President Ujifusa was invited and attended as well.

The motion to enter executive session was made by Vice-Chair Cortvriend, seconded by Commissioner Gump... all voted in favor. During executive session there was one vote taken, which passed unanimously. PHA Board adjourned from executive session at 2:30pm and returned to open session.

The chair announced the results of the vote taken, which was to approve Ms. Kathie Soroka, Esq. of law firm Nixon Peabody as an alternate legal counsel advising the PHA on HUD related issues.

11. NEXT MEETING:

- A. TBD. The PHA Board will meet as necessary to satisfy the outstanding HUD requirements and pending complaint.

12. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Gump; seconded by Vice-Chair Cortvriend - passed unanimously at 2:40pm.

Pursuant to RIGL § 42-46-6(c) These minutes will be posted on the Secretary of State's website, and Town of Portsmouth website once approved.