



NIAGARA REGIONAL HOUSING

Campbell East, 3rd Floor
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, P.O. Box 344
Thorold, ON L2V 3Z3
Phone: (905) 682-9201 Fax: (905) 687-4844

20-191-3.1.
July 24, 2020
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MINUTES

NIAGARA REGIONAL HOUSING Board of Directors Meeting

#190 – 2020

NRH Board Room
Campbell East, 3rd Floor
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way
Thorold, ON

Friday, May 15, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.

Attendees (In person and by videoconference)

Directors/ Members: W. Sendzik, J. Hyatt, G. Zalepa, K. Blackley,
T. Insinna, L. Villella, B. Butters, B-L. Souter

Regrets: B.A. Baker

Absent:

NRH Staff: D. Woiceshyn, C. Banach, J. Shickluna,
W. Thompson, M. Barton

Regional Staff: A. Jugley, Commissioner Community Services,
D. D'Amboise, Program Financial Specialist

Guests:

Directors:

Walter Sendzik, Chair
Councillor, St. Catharines

James Hyatt, Vice-Chair
Community, St. Catharines

Karen Blackley, Secretary
Community, Thorold

Gary Zalepa, Treasurer
Councillor, NOTL

Betty Ann Baker,
Community, Welland

Barbara Butters,
Councillor, Port Colborne

Tom Insinna
Councillor, Fort Erie

Betty-Lou Souter
Community,
St. Catharines & Thorold

Leanna Villella
Councillor, Welland

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at
9:00 a.m.

1. Adoption of Agenda/Declaration of Conflict

*Moved by G. Zalepa
Seconded by K. Blackley*

That the agenda be ADOPTED.

CARRIED

No Conflicts of Interest were declared.

B. Butters requested that consent item 2.5., Smoke Free Policy, be pulled for discussion.

G. Zalepa queried about the work each contractor was doing per the disbursements.

C. Banach will provide this listing to the Board.

2. Consent Items

Moved by B. Butters

Seconded by T. Insinna

That the following items be RECEIVED and/or APPROVED as stated:

2.1. Minutes of the April 17, 2020 Meeting be APPROVED.

2.2. Development Updates – Hawkins St. Project

2.2.1. Budget Snapshot as of April 30, 2020 – 20-190-2.2.1. be RECEIVED for information.

2.2.2. Development Report #7– 20-190-2.2.2. be RECEIVED for information.

2.3. Operating Statement – March 31, 2020 – 20-190-2.3. be RECEIVED for information.

2.4. 1st Quarter Report – 20-190-2.4. be RECEIVED for information.

CARRIED

3. Discussion Items

D. Woiceshyn advised that the COVID-19 report was very up to date and highlighted various initiatives undertaken by staff. It was noted that applications have increased with few requests for rent change.

T. Insinna questioned the reason for tobacco officers' involvement. W. Thompson explained that Niagara Region Public Health Tobacco Enforcement Officers are currently assisting municipal By-Law Enforcement Officers with information and enforcement regarding COVID guidelines. Public Health has informally agreed to have the officers patrol communities that NRH has identified as having difficulty with confusion about the pandemic and expectations for public behaviours. Patrols will continue as long as the officers' workload permits.

W. Sendzik inquired if a strategy was in place regarding tenant issues.

W. Thompson advised the Board that some situations are very difficult, and calling the police has little effect. Compounding the difficulties are mental health supports being provided virtually and the inability to do evictions. Staff are following up with notices, phone supports and recently with scripted calls, which have been well received.

J. Hyatt suggested offering a questionnaire similar to what he receives. W. Sendzik asked J. Hyatt to follow up with D. Woiceshyn and W. Thompson regarding a questionnaire for use with tenants.

W. Sendzik inquired about preparation for staff over the long term. C. Banach responded that work has commenced on the office plan and it will be presented to the Health & Safety Committee next week.

J. Shickluna added that calls are being made to service providers each week to share resources and best practices.

B. Butters voiced her concern for the wellbeing of staff. W. Thompson replied that management is very aware of staff, and resources such as the NRH newsletter and EAP program are being made available. D. Woiceshyn stated that the senior team meet every morning to discuss issues. B. Butters expressed her appreciation to the off-site staff for their contributions.

W. Sendzik asked D. Woiceshyn to issue a memo to all staff, from the Board, offering appreciation for their work and dedication.

K. Blackley queried about resources for tenants. A. Jugley responded that specific work is taking place for the seniors, including a call line for the seniors programs.

W. Sendzik thanked D. Woiceshyn and the senior team for their guidance and outstanding response through the COVID-19 crisis.

3.1. COVID-19 Update

Moved by B. Butters

Seconded by G. Zalepa

That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors RECEIVES the report COVID-19 Update for information.

CARRIED

3.2. New Development Strategies and Funding Opportunities

C. Banach advised that several projects with available funding were in the works and capital jobs will move forward.

T. Insinna expressed his appreciation for the numerous housing project opportunities.

Moved by T. Insinna

Seconded by J. Hyatt

That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors RECEIVES this report for information.

CARRIED

3.3. Hawkins St. Development

C. Banach noted that the successful contractor also built Carlton St. All procedures are in place, only awaiting the building permit.

D. Woiceshyn will circulate information regarding the lack of bids from local companies, should Council inquire.

W. Sendzik will meet with the Niagara Home Builders' Association to discuss this matter.

*Moved by J. Hyatt
Seconded by B-L. Souter*

- 1. That the awarding of Tender PT-19-72 to Tambro Construction Ltd. by the Public Tender Award Committee for the construction of the 55 unit and 18 unit affordable housing apartment buildings on NRH land at 6388 Hawkins St. and 7180 Heximer Ave., Niagara Falls at their bid price of \$19,775,000 (including 13% HST) BE ENDORSED.**
- 2. That this report BE FORWARDED to Niagara Regional Council for information.**

CARRIED

2.5. Smoke Free Policy Update

The board expressed concern this may trigger additional stress on staff and tenants. W. Thompson assured that care was taken to minimize impact on staff workload by commencing with only two buildings. Current tenants would not be affected, and new applicants are given a choice of residence. This initiative has the potential to reduce staff workload in buildings having issues.

*Moved by B. Butters
Seconded by B-L. Souter*

That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors RECEIVES this report for information.

CARRIED

4. Other Business

4.1. Use of Electronic Signatures

M. Barton gave an overview for the addition of this motion to the agenda.

The Chair concurred this will provide a consistent outcome, with more expedient results, during this time of physical distancing.

*Moved by B. Butters
Seconded by K. Blackley*

That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors APPROVES the use of electronic signatures, when required, for the Chair and Secretary, on NRH approved board documents and reports to Council.

CARRIED

Discussion took place on D. Harrott's retirement and how it will be acknowledged. D. Woiceshyn will communicate appreciation on behalf of NRH and present a certificate.

M Barton was asked to communicate with the Board to request their messages of appreciation for D. Harrott.

5. Closed Session – if required

6. Next Meeting

Friday, July 24, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.
NRH Board Room
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7. Termination

Motion to Terminate at 10:00 a.m.

*Moved by B. Butters
Seconded by G. Zalepa*

Minutes Approved:

Chair

Secretary