

**REGULAR MEETING
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TRENTON
HELD WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2017 12 NOON
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 875 NEW WILLOW STREET**

COMMISSIONER RAINES: This meeting will come to order. It is noted in the Book of Minutes that the required 48-hour notice of this meeting was mailed to the offices of the Times, the Trentonian, and the Clerk of the City of Trenton, as well as having been posted in the main entrance of the Authority, 875 New Willow Street, in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law. Good afternoon. Mr. Secretary, can you do the roll call, please.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: On the roll, Commissioner Gray?

COMMISSIONER GRAY: Here.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gentry?

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Here.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Taylor?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Here.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Tossie?

COMMISSIONER TOSSIE: Here.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Weldon-Gordon?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Here.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Chairman Raines?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Present. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. At this time, I'll take in a motion to adopt the agenda, please.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: So moved.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Been moved and properly seconded by voice vote. Everyone signal by saying aye.

ALL: Aye.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Okay, agenda is adopted. Next item on the agenda is the approval of minutes of the regular meeting held on January 18th, and the executive session held on January 18th. I'll take a motion.

VICE-CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So moved.

COMMISSIONER TOSSIE: Second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Any questions, comments, concerns?

(No verbal response)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Seeing there are none, Mr. Secretary, on the roll, please.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gray?

COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gentry?

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Taylor?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Tossie?

COMMISSIONER TOSSIE: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Weldon-Gordon?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Chairman Raines?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Yes. Report of the secretary.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Resolution 17-02 is a resolution to approve the disbursements for the month of December 2016. They're in the packet.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: I'll take a motion to approve disbursements for the month of -- excuse me, for the month of December 2016, resolution 17-02.

COMMISSIONER GRAY: So moved.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: It's been moved and properly seconded. Any questions?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I have questions. The last meeting, we had -- why are we still on December? What happened to the reimbursements for January? Remember we was going to -- because remember we was behind two months.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Yes, but you have your -- you requested that the two months be in this package, and it's in your package, the resolution 17-03. That's January.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Yes, but I don't see anything in here that we paid for in January. This is now February. Anything (indiscern.).

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Is resolution 17-03 in your packet?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: I thought so.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Also in December, we bought ten more stoves. And where are we putting those?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: What do you mean? Chairman, I didn't -- the question is and where are we putting the stove?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Every month we've been buying 10 to 12 refrigerators and stoves. I just want to know where are we putting them.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: We'll give you a list of them. You'll get a list of them.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Can you tell me what is BFCE? It's a registration renewal. What is that? It's for the State of New Jersey, but I don't know what BFCE means.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: What check number is that?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Check #1586, 87 and 88.

DIRECTOR: That's the Bureau Fire Code Enforcement.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: The fire code?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Bureau Fire Code Enforcement. We have to have our buildings inspected every year.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay, so we only did three buildings? What happened to Prospect Village and Donnelly?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: They come -- you have to go back and check all your notes, all your disbursements, and they may be in previous ones. But if they're not, they will do a follow-up once. Excuse me one second, okay?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay, because I didn't see it in the previous one, so I would ask the question.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Yes. I'm sorry that the -- what was it -- you will find that during the course of the year, depending on the timing and/or the application of the inspectors, that they will be -- they'll come during the course of the year either when we are able to or when they're able to. So there's no concurrent day with regard to when we should expect them. They're due in January, but they come during the course of the year when they have the opportunity to do so. And there are a number of occasions in which inspectors are called, where routine inspection, responsibilities are interfered with ad hoc and (indiscern.) requirements on the part of various departments, (indiscern.). We did a lot of this stuff (indiscern.). This is a routine state inspection of making sure the systems are correct.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Any other questions, vice chair Weldon-Gordon?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I'm done.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Any other questions from the Board?

(No verbal response)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: On the roll call, Mr. Secretary, please.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: On the roll, Commissioner Gray?

COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gentry?

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Taylor?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Tossie?

COMMISSIONER TOSSIE: Uhm-hum.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Weldon-Gordon?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Chairman Raines?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Yes.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Resolution 17-03, disbursements for the month of January 2017.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: I'll accept a motion for resolution 17-03, disbursements -- approval of disbursements for the month of January 2017.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: So moved.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: It's been moved and properly seconded. Any questions, comments, concerns?

(No verbal response)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Seeing that there are none, on the roll call, Mr. Secretary.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gray?

COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gentry?

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Taylor?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Tossie?

COMMISSIONER TOSSIE: Yes.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Weldon-Gordon?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: No.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Chairman Raines?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Yes.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Okay. We were notified recently, I think it was the 2nd of December, I'm not sure when it was -- January, to make updates to our Procurement Policy. The local office of HUD gave us a -- changes that were made to 24 CFR 200, and Mr. Martin, you might want to explain to the Board what the application is. Mr. Martin, sir.

MR. MARTIN: Good afternoon, Commissioners.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Good afternoon. Good to see you again, Mr. Martin.

MR. MARTIN: You, too, sir. As Mr. Leggett pointed out, we were contacted by HUD which (indiscern.) that we had to update the current policy to reflect the latest HUD requirements of the 2 CFR 200 at 317 to 326 as part of the Procurement standards. Also in relation to that they also brought out CFR part -- CFR 200 part 67, which updated the federal micro purchase threshold, and they also required that our current policy reflect the latest state bidding thresholds. So (indiscern.) 40A 11-6.1 for award of contracts, a state threshold is 40,000, and the small purchase threshold is 15% of that, which is currently 6,000. So this resolution is to add an addendum, addendum February of 2017, to our Procurement Policy which upgrade -- updates all these policies into our Procurement Policy.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Thank you. I'll accept a motion, and if anybody has any questions for Mr. Martin, please ask them.

MR. LEGGETT: These are required addendums we have to accept, and you have to have a quick resolution, and the reason for the timeliness of it is because HUD is asked to come in -- I think they're coming in within two, three weeks, the middle of March to go over our procurement process. So this will have to be (indiscern.)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Any other questions?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Did we have a motion?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Oh, okay, the motion and then the questions and the Secretary added some more, so I wanted to --

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: So moved.

VICE-CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: It's been moved and properly seconded. Any questions?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Yes. So Mr. Martin, you said that this doesn't take effect -- it didn't take effect 'til the first of this month, correct?

MR. MARTIN: to update our Procurement policy.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Yes, but the policy that was added to the procurement policy.

MR. MARTIN: Yes.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: It didn't take effect to --

MR. MARTIN: When did the policies take effect? I don't have a date for that (indiscern.).

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: They -- yes, they actually informed us in a memorandum that indicated that there had been changes to the Code of Federal Regulations §200, and that those changes had to be embodied in our -- in all housing authorities across the nation, and they want those changes. So they told us what the changes were and that's effective.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Okay. I just wanted to make sure that it didn't affect the resolution 17-05 in the way the bidding --

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Nothing affected -- no.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Okay.

MR. MARTIN: We are fine.

MR. MARTIN: No.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: The auditing that we're going to talk about.

MR. MARTIN: No, no, no.

MR. MARTIN: No, this is just us being in compliance with HUD regulations.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Okay, all right.

COMMISSIONER GRAY: Mr. Leggett, is this normal procedure that HUD comes in? Okay.

MR. LEGGETT: Yes, they will -- when there's a federal change or requirement or a regulatory change legislatively included, they will notify you that these are changes they want embodied in your -- in order to get federal funding, you have to have current regulations that are consistent with their regulations.

FEMALE SPEAKER: And then they'll come and (indiscern.)

MR. LEGGETT: And they'll tell you -- they actually tell us what to put in there, we don't even write it ourselves, they (indiscern.)

MR. MARTIN: (Indiscern.) --

MR. LEGGETT: Yes, yes.

MR. MARTIN: -- (indiscern.) policies.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Okay, any other questions?

(No verbal response)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: All right, Mr. Secretary, on the roll, please.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gray?

COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gentry?

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Taylor?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Tossie?

COMMISSIONER TOSSIE: Yes.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Weldon-Gordon?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Chairman Raines?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Yes.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Resolution 17-05 is a resolution to execute a contract for auditing services and you will note that as in previous years we're required to annually review our books to assure that they -- that our activities are consistent and reflective of regulation. The auditing services came in, we've had I think it's one, and reviewed and evaluated. And the auditing services, 17-04, the firm of Yeager & Boyd was determined to be the highest and the only (indiscern.) responded with the cost within the competitive range where currently they are both -- the funds are currently operating and capital funds and such. This is our annual audit.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: We'll accept a motion for resolution 17-05.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: So moved.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: So moved and properly seconded. Any questions?

(No verbal response)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Seeing that there are none, Mr. Secretary on the roll, please.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gray?

COMMISSIONER GRAY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Gentry?

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Taylor?

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Tossie?

COMMISSIONER TOSSIE: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Commissioner Weldon-Gordon?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Aye.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Chairman Raines?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Moving to unfinished business.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I have a question.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Yes. Did you have anything (indiscern.) Mr. (indiscern.)?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: I just want to make note of with regard to my report in that the bid went out for the snow removal contract that you asked for and we're reviewing the other documents with the other two of your commissioners.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: And that's more of a long-term type thing. I mean, that's not a monthly turnaround.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: We expect it in on the 28th.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Well, thank you.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: What is that?

CHAIRMAN RAINES: The snow removal.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: No, the other one.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: The other one was the (indiscern.)

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: The employment (indiscern.).

CHAIRMAN RAINES: The human resources, the re-entry policy that we discussed. I emailed it to the secretary and it's pretty involved, so it's going to take --

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: And the section 3 item that you referenced in the last meeting is going to do the -- for going out. That's quite involved because you have to identify as a -- maybe a document that corresponds to whatever there is, and we have to identify what there is first, because you can't build something you don't know about. There's a difference in every situation. Every unit that we have to prepare is a different situation, so we have to put (indiscern.) together and (indiscern.) the bid requirements.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: And Mr. Chairman, since you referenced the re-entry, and I had spoke with Mr. Leggett at our last meeting that I would be willing to assist them with this, which I have been working on, we don't really need to create a whole new policy, we just need to codify the current policy to go forward.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: All right, that's fine, and what I emailed to Mr. Leggett, and what I emailed to each and every one of the members of the Board was a template and a starting point that if you recall the meeting that we had.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Yes, I remember that and I read it, yes.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Yes, so it's just -- all right.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Vice Chair Weldon-Gordon, you had a question.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Unfinished business. I wanted to talk about the process for the elections for the senior buildings.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Ms. Brooks, would you want to --

MS. BROOKS: Sure.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Good afternoon. How are you today?

MS. BROOKS: Very good, thank you.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I was given some paperwork that was put up in the senior building.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Excuse me, Vice Chair Weldon-Gordon. We know who you are, Ms. Brooks, but please identify yourself for the record, please.

MS. BROOKS: Sure, Pamela Brooks.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Thank you.

MS. BROOKS: Sure.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Can you tell me first of all who is the body for West State Street. French Towers.

MS. BROOKS: What do you mean the body?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So you have -- the process has already been complete, we have picked a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer --

MS. BROOKS: And they've been sworn in (indiscern.).

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: -- and they've been sworn in already.

MS. BROOKS: Correct.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay. Normally they would come before the Board, so that's why I was asking for that --

MS. BROOKS: The information (indiscern.) January 18th to the Board by Mr. Leggett. They were here in person and the information that there had been a formal election, everything had gone smoothly and then they were sworn in.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

MS. BROOKS: Did you want to know their names, or--

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I can get that from you later.

MS. BROOKS: Sure.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So now we have to do Joseph and Abbott.

MS. BROOKS: Correct.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I have this memorandum here that was --

MS. BROOKS: Whose (indiscern.) is that? Is that Josephson (indiscern.)?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: It's Abbott.

MS. BROOKS: Okay.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So the last time we came to the board meeting, Mr. Willett handed us some ballots or whatever which I'm quite sure, to housing standard, that it wasn't up to par, because that's something that the housing authority needs to do. My question is, where are we with that, and looking at this paper its making me feel as though it takes 90 days for this whole thing to take process.

MS. BROOKS: Okay, I'll be happy to go through that. Is your memo that you had posted February 3rd for Ms. (indiscern.)? Does it say posted February 3rd?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Yes, February 3rd.

MS. BROOKS: Right, exactly. So from the day that we notified -- first of all we have to notify them and its 30 days in advance of a nomination meeting. So we post and let them know in 30 days or thereafter, we're going to have a nomination meeting.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So this letter was put up in February?

MS. BROOKS: Correct.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

MS. BROOKS: This memo was put up February 3rd.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

MS. BROOKS: Right. According to the by-laws, and according to the dates that are in each of these memos, a timeline is how long it takes for each of the next meeting that needs to take place, and then offhand come the bylaws. So we notify them on February 3rd that there's going to be a nomination meeting. That nomination meeting is going to take place on March the 6th. Okay, so after 30 days, according to the bylaws.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So on March 6th you're going to pick out who wants to be president, vice president --

MS. BROOKS: Correct.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

MS. BROOKS: And so we notified them that we're having that meeting at 5 p.m. at the Abbott building.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

MS. BROOKS: It's after that that they are, according to the bylaws from the nomination meeting, they have up 'til five days to submit their name. So what we do is we leave letters there with a secure box. I have the key, so after the meeting, even if you're not there, you have up to five days to submit your name.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

MS. BROOKS: Okay? So according here, it says five days that you have from that date. And then you have to have your absolute -- your election meeting no less than 45 days from the day that you had your nomination meeting. Ten just seems like a very long period because they had 30 days of notification before the nomination meeting. After your nomination meeting, which is going to be on March 6th, you cannot have an election sooner than 45 days. And then -- so from March the 6th, that's going to take us out to April 25th from the date that we're going to go there and have an election. Prior to that, and that's something we can (indiscern.) it's not in the bylaws, we're going to have the date that we're allowed for them to give their speeches to those who are interested in coming down, and we've slated that for April the 19th. So it seems like a very long time, but according to the bylaws you have to have 30 days from the day that you post and say you're going to have a nomination meeting, not less than 45 days from that nomination meeting can you then have an election. So hence that's the timeline that you see there.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay, so the nomination application forms, where will they be held at so people can fill those out?

MS. BROOKS: Sure. So, when my staff go to the meeting on March the 6th, the nomination meeting, we're going to have the forms with us --

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

MS. BROOKS: -- as we did when we went back in November, and it's called a candidate application, but it pretty much just looks like it has just lines of who you'd like to vote, either yourself or another resident, as president, vice president, and so forth. We ask that their name, their apartment number, and the day that they submitted this. This is a candidate application letter. Mr. Willetts came forth on January 18th, we didn't receive any such a thing. We received 51 separate sheets of paper which you did hand to us on the day of, which were just individual sheets of who the person was and who they were voting for. There was no formal or even -- I mean, I don't call this even informal way of going about an election. After reviewing each of these sheets received, it appears as though each person had a torn off piece of paper, five for each person or four for each person, and we had to figure out ourselves who was running for what office and who it was that was submitting it. Not only that, but if we look closely we can see that the same person's handwriting wrote that on who was running for president on several of the sheets, and pretty much just handed it to you and said please sign this. We also have sheets here where the same person who has five sheets didn't sign five times. They may have signed two times, but if you take this and look around, you can see clearly someone else signed the resident's names. So hence was the reason why after giving all that information to Mr. Leggett, we felt as though the process for which they had attempted to do their own nomination meeting was not a fair and reliable nor was there any evidence that residents had five days after their nomination meeting to submit a candidate application letter. That was not (indiscern.).

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: The -- just to add to that. The bylaws that were adopted by the resident councils and the residents of these particular buildings were done so to satisfy the requirements of the code of federal regulations. So they're not just made up (indiscern.). The rules that we have to follow are in there.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: My last question to you is what would be the process, say if we don't have a vice president, are we going to start the 90 days all over again, or can we just go without having a vice president?

MS. BROOKS: That's a great question because, again, according to the bylaws and also according to HUD, Chapter 24, you cannot have an election with less than five nominating -- you cannot have less than five. So you have to have at least five. Which is why on November the 17th we weren't able to do four, because that was our last nomination meeting that we had, November 17th, and we did not have at least five people running for one of each of the five positions. I also add that after January 18th when I received each of the sheets and we looked at those who were running for president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and sergeant of arms, not all five of them were in good standing, therefore leaving another position open, and therefore you still can't have an election if you don't have at least five. There was one person running for each of the five, and if all five are not in good standing, that leaves a position or two open and I have that information from Accounting if you need further information about that.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: First of all, what does in good standing mean?

MS. BROOKS: Sure. In good standing, there are several things we look at. Are they in the process of being evicted? Are they in good financial standing? Is their rent caught up? Are they going to have that lateness, meaning they are habitually late and those are -- most of those are the main things. Are they in violation of their lease. So for each of the candidates when they come

forward and say I'd like to run for a position, we look and make sure they don't fall into any of those buckets, and if they do not, then they are in good standing.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: If a candidate -- just for my own peace up here, is it difficult to find someone who's in good standing on all those levels?

MS. BROOKS: No, it's not. That's why we had resident counsel up and running over at French Towers. It's not difficult.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Okay, let me put it this way, then. Is it difficult to find people who want to be involved in the residence counsel?

MS. BROOKS: No, again, we got -- French Towers is up and running. We had more than one person who was vying for the position over for president (indiscern.).

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: All right, my last question then is, is the housing authority doing what they can do to help them to facilitate this process so that when they enter into it now they go straight through at the 30-day, 45-day, they come out with the positions filled and then they can start their council?

MS. BROOKS: Yes, definitely. So with the memo that we put up, and then the memo does state to them about being in good standing, that you have to be 18 years and older, they received that memo on February 3rd, so those who are interested in running for those positions, they're not going to run until April 26th. So, they know what the thing is. We've had meetings with them prior to going over their nomination meeting, so they all understand when they put their names out to run they know because we've explained it to all three buildings.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Okay, that's all I wanted to know. Does the housing authority position themselves to help them through the process so at the end of the time period this time they come up with a residence council?

MS. BROOKS: We're hoping that that will be successful, absolutely.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I have one more question. Say a candidate -- you know we have a law where you're late more than four times, what happens if this posted is maybe a month shy. Are we willing to have any leeway with that? And what I mean by that is, say a tenant is late, but they've been good lately, and they are one month from that six-months' period that they had, that they was on this non-standard list. Are we willing to have some leeway with them?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Well, let me just say this. If a person has been late for six months, that's not a (indiscern.).

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: It's six months --

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: That you have had late.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: For the year, correct?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Right.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: But what I'm saying is what happens if -- say their year might be up. Are we doing their recertification date, or are we doing January to December?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: You would do the year. The year would be the certification date.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Right. But what I'm saying is it is now February. So that was last year, do you understand what I'm saying? So that's why I'm saying are we willing to have some leeway --

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Right. We have no reason to try to deny anybody an opportunity to run for public office, particularly -- it's in the housing authority's interest to have an active and involved and an engaged resident council. All right, so we're trying to enhance that opportunity. At the same time, you have the standards, and we're required to meet those standards. We have to make sure that we guarantee the person is in good standing. As a consequence -- and these are not things we just pop up and say --

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: No, I understand.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: So what we do is we will -- what we will look at is each individual's own particular situation, and every opportunity we have to be lenient, we (indiscern.).

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Okay. The only reason why I say that because it is the senior in the disabled building; sometimes things happen. Maybe somebody had to be recertified and their check didn't come on time, I'm talking about things like that. If somebody is late, they're late. But if it is something that they had no control over, I feel as though they shouldn't be penalized. So that's why I wanted to know if there was any leniency when it comes --

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: There's not -- we don't call it leniency, we called it reasonableness, and that way we don't have to worry about anyone else saying that you are lenient as a part of your policy. Any situation that comes up where it can be explained and represented as being the problems that exist, then we look at that thing. We don't -- that's not our purpose. As a matter of fact, we -- and one of the things we found most refreshing about French Towers was that we had a very high level of participation. Not only did we have people who were in good standing who ran for public office, but I encouraged them to provide an opportunity for us to certify the election by having their level of participation that would be (indiscern.). So they went out and used -- campaigned and talked to members in the building and got everybody out, and I think the percentage --

MS BROOKS: 48% of the building that did not (indiscern.).

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: So we're not doing things that were designed to keep people from participating, we're doing things that --

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: No, I didn't say (indiscern.)

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Yes, but you have to do things that are fair. In order to be fair, you can't have a leaning situation with you and not a leaning situation with somebody else. So whatever we create as (indiscern.) leniency, will apply to everybody.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Any other questions? Any other unfinished business? Moving on to new business. Seeing there is none, report from the Chair. We will be meeting after this meeting in executive session to talk, discuss personnel and contracts. At this time we open up the meeting for public comment. I'd please ask the public to state your name and take two minutes. There are a lot of people that want -- two minutes, please, and there are a lot of people that want to speak, so -- and I will be the time keeper. Just come up to the podium and state your name, please.

JENNIFER WARREN: Hi, I'm Dr. Jennifer Warren, I'm the executive director of the (indiscern.), and I live in West Trenton, on Newell Avenue. And I just want to respond to the discussion about the elections held at Abbott. I know that the housing authority has to do what they have to do. However, I didn't know that the science of (indiscern.) for the science of forensic handwriting analysis was part of what the housing authority does. I understand that there are certain people here who have to do their job as far as making sure that processes are fair and legal. However, to assert that any documents were placed inside a nomination bag that were forged, that were developed to deceive the housing authority is absurd. And as someone who works closely with the seniors and the disabled residents in Abbott as well as in Josephson and French. I'm sure that they take offense to the fact that they were just actually sort of called tangentially, sort of liars regarding what they handed to the housing authority. Not at one time did anyone go talk with the individuals who had done a nomination to even analyze or discuss their assertions that these documents were fraudulent, as was suggested here today. And I just want to put that in the record. I think there is something dreadfully wrong when a person in power comes up and asserts that people are doing something that is illegal and wrong in a policy, and not even give the individuals the opportunity to respond to that accusation. Thank you.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Go ahead, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Well, before, can I (indiscern.)? Good afternoon, Dr. Warren, and to everyone. I have a letter here. I know what Ms. Brooks said on the record. However, for the

record, the letter to one of the residents over at Abbott clearly states that it is evident what was submitted to the Board was a series of inappropriately and insecurely handled papers. It did not say that they were fraudulent or --

JENNIFER WARREN: Well, you're talking (indiscern.)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: No, no, no, when I say I'm talking to the public, I'm responding to you what you had said. And it didn't follow the resident council bylaws. I understand what you're saying, and you're entitled to state your opinion. However, I want for the record what was turned in, because I -- myself and Vice Chair Weldon-Gordon personally took that to the executive director/Board Secretary.

JENNIFER WARREN: Just (indiscern.).

CHAIRMAN RAINES: All right, yes.

JENNIFER WARREN: I still believe that what was asserted here was some level of deceit on the part of the residents that may have not been outlined in that letter. And I also want to assert, since I'm up here and my two minutes is almost up that --

CHAIRMAN RAINES: It's been up, but go right ahead, ma'am.

JENNIFER WARREN: -- (indiscern.) residents have no access to any documents, they don't have the bylaws that Ms. Brooks is even referring to. They don't have candidate application forms. They don't have the forms to fill out to do the nominations. However, they're being punished for the fact that they don't have access to these documents to assist in the collaborative election process as HUD has stated in its policies that Ms. Brooks referred to, Title 24. These documents and resources should be available to every person that is living here in the housing authority. And that's it. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Thank you, Dr. Warren. Go ahead, Commissioner Taylor.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Ms. Brooks, are those documents available?

MS. BROOKS: Yes. When we had the nomination process back in October/November/December, the candidate application and those -- that information was provided and given out at the meeting. And then a candidate application letter came to the nomination meeting which was held on November the 17th. Every person who attended that meeting got a nomination letter from Ms. Smith who attended the meeting. Now, it does not take a forensic handwriting specialist to see that the person who is one resident whose last name is spelled differently on three forms, it doesn't take an expert to see. I'm not accusing anyone. All I'm doing is saying that someone doesn't know how to spell their last name three times.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Ms. Brooks, I have a question.

MS. BROOKS: Yes.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Did you receive --

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Can we have order? Dr. Warren, if someone else is at the podium speaking, please keep it down. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Did you receive any calls from anyone stating that they needed a copy of the bylaws or the forms to hold their elections?

MS. BROOKS: I have not. As a matter of fact, when they held their election January 10th, I was not privy, nor did I (indiscern.) January 8th (indiscern.).

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: Okay, thank you.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Is it possible this is documents to be posted in the building over there, or put somewhere they can get to them?

MS. BROOKS: Yes. I did not receive a phone call.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Matter of fact, as a -- to be quite frank with you, the bylaws, most of them came from the resident counsel who had copies of bylaws.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: But I'm just saying in order to move the ball forward here, can these documents be posted in the building instead of getting (indiscern.), how do we come to a

resolution? Can it be in there, and can we give them some assistance to make sure that we facilitate this and that their council gets up and going.

MS. BROOKS: Yes. As a matter of fact, the name of (indiscern.) was posted on February the 3rd to let them know we're going to come over and restart their process. (Indiscern.) that I can proceed (indiscern.)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Please do. Thank you, Commissioner Gentry.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: You're welcome, gentlemen.

MR. WILLETS: Clarence Willets, 490 Hoffman Avenue. Good afternoon, Commissioners.

ALL: Good afternoon.

MR. WILLETS: Just for the record, concerning the nomination slips that were submitted to the Board last month, you do have residents that are -- that cannot read or write, and they were assisted in this process but the signatures were authentic. As far as availability of materials to work with, the only time the materials come forward is when the residents initiate an election process. Other than not, they're not available. And we're not allowed to go into the resident council office, meaning it's shut down by the executive director to the residents because of a lack of a president, so forth and so on, then we really have no place secure where we can put these documents to have them on hand so that we can go through our process. Also, too, I have another question. I'm just going to leave that alone. That is an answer to the discussion (indiscern.), and yes, we do take offense to that, because it does not sound up and up. We have no reason to do those things. #2 concern, it has been demonstrated to us and shown there is no one in the building to clean the community areas and hallways. The garbage chutes need to be sanitized, et cetera. I called Amy the other day and asked is there a schedule. Is there a new schedule for cleaning of the building. I haven't gotten a return call on that. So I'm asking the Board for some assistance so we can find out what happened to our cleaning people that we had. Is there going to be a schedule reinstated so that we know exactly how the sanitation of the building will continue.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Willets.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: One quick thing.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Please.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: There's no one in this organization that's working with this organization who can be responsible to go in that office where forms can be kept? Just that we can work it out?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Yes, you can work it out.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: It can be worked out?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Of course. But the question is, is that -- it is the resident council's office.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Correct.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: So if there's any officer of the resident council that wants to get in that building, they can get in the building. The question is that you can't have anybody decide they want to get in the office and utilize the office, because we have equipment in there and things get missing.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Okay.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: But I mean, but of course, I want to go -- I want to be more accommodating than that.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: Okay.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: If you want the office open --

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: It's nice to accommodate.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Okay.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: The balance is in the middle. (indiscern.).

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Okay, I mean what I'm saying is that when you say work it out, we're talking about this being worked out here in the public. I'm saying I will have a discussion with you about those things and we can find out how to do that. So clearly --

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: So that we can have access to documents (indiscern.)

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: (Indiscern.) it's their documents. It's not -- we have no reason to do that. But you end up having people use an office because they have keys that were left over from some other era, and then things are gone. And that's it. So (indiscern.)

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: I understand controlled access; I understand that very well. But I'm just saying the availability to get here, work it out so they can move forward, because they have no residence council, and since it's a residence council office --

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: It's a blank space.

COMMISSIONER GENTRY: I understand what you're saying. If the Chair doesn't work, I'd be more than happy to talk with you to work it out, to help the seniors open them up and so they can keep moving to facilitate getting council over there.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: And technically, can they -- normally -- is there a manager in the building all day, at the senior building?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Is there a manager in the building all day?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Yes.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: At the senior building? The manager at the senior building at French has been out sick. We have a manager rotating, I think from -- between Joseph and Abbott. Is that correct, Ms. Fleming?

AMY FLEMING: Yes, that's correct, at this time.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: All right, so is there somebody they can call and say they would like to use the office from X, Y and Z?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Well, they would have to - - it's the residence council's office, it's not our office. In other words, if the resident council has five officers that are associated with that operation; if any one of those officers want that building key or whatever, they can have it. The question is if anybody else in the building, resident, wants to use the office, they have to go to the resident council to do it. I don't let people in that office without the resident council's approval.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: I understand that. But right now at this point in time --

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Right now --

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: -- there is on council.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Correct.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So in order for them to try to gather to get some things together, who can they call to have a meeting in the office?

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Who can who call someone, the resident council?

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: The tenants. The residents.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Well, they can call anybody. I mean, they have (indiscern.) over there. They can call this office. Nobody has ever called and asked for me to get in the resident council building.

MR. WILLETS: Excuse me. A directive was given by you, Mr. Leggett, for two security guards. No resident -- unless they were a resident council president, was allowed in the resident council office. They have (indiscern.) they have -- I've been there, okay. I've been there.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: Yes, but you don't talk for me.

MR. WILLETS: Okay, and this was your direct order, sir. I am not -- I'll bring -- let's bring your security guard in here and let's see (indiscern.).

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Can we have order, please.

DIRECTOR LEGGETT: If you want to that's fine with me.

MR WILLETS: We're just hoping it's not a fiasco like that last time.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Good afternoon, ma'am.

MORNA AZORE: Good afternoon. My name is Morna Azore. I live at 630 West State St Apt 112. Last year someone who cleans carpets and cleans Trenton Housing Authority came in my apartment to clean my carpet that I put in. He took \$350 from me. I stand up, I made a report to the manager, the letters were sent up here. He admitted taking the money, set out to pay \$50, \$35. He didn't pay another cent and he walked. And all French Towers (indiscern.) here. And look at me in my face. I called different persons and was told call this person, call this person. And nobody has returned my call. These are not set to (indiscern.). I'm a (indiscern.).

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Is he a resident? Is he a worker?

MS. AZORE: Yes, yes.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: He's a resident or a worker?

MS. AZORE: He's a resident and he's a worker.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: For the Trenton Housing Authority?

MS AZORE: Yes.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Who took your \$350?

MS. AZORE: Yes.

DIRECTOR: They've looked into that (indiscern.). They want explanation.

MS. AZORE: And this is not fair to me when I've just moved into the building, somebody who I didn't even (indiscern.) could (indiscern.) it was my 60th birthday. I had money in there. I just left my purse on the floor, locked the doors securely, and went down the laundry. When I came back, I couldn't find my money. I went in tears reported downstairs. Until now, nobody paid me back. I went to the police. They said it's not a breaking and entering, there's nothing they could do. Somebody with keys. So what (indiscern.) a person with keys to go in there and take my money.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Did this happen this year, ma'am?

MS. AZORE: That happened before, but this time I said I wouldn't let it go, (indiscern.) to me.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: So this is the second time?

MS. AZORE: Yes, (indiscern.). And the thing is that he acknowledged taking the money, decided to pay, and then he stopped. I called the office. I'm being pushed around. If he's working here he should be able to repay my money. He started paying it, (indiscern.) here, nothing is being done. It's not fair to me.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Okay, ma'am, someone will look into it and we will get back to you, all right. Okay? Thank you. Did you have anything else, ma'am?

MS. AZORE: Nothing else.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: All right.

MS. TAYLOR: Hi, everyone. My name is Tracy Taylor. I live at (indiscern.)

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Good afternoon, Ms. Taylor.

MS. TAYLOR: (5 Mellon) I'm here to address two issues, basically based on security. Our front door has been unlocked for almost a year. We as the tenants are supposed to be responsible to buzz each of our visitors in. Building 5 is a free-for-all for anybody to come in. I have walked in during the day and found people getting high in the building. I care for my mother. I have at night seen a homeless man sleeping in the hallway. This is an ongoing problem. Also with apartments being vacant, I live on 1B. 2B is vacant, 3A is vacant. I am constantly having my sons put up the fire escape for safety reasons because they are going up to the vacant apartments, using them for whatever purposes. This is an ongoing thing. This Sunday, 8 o'clock it happened. I called security. My question is, do they work on the weekends? I find when I do call, they don't respond. October 30th, mischief night. Because the door was not locked, the kids opened the door on 1B and bombed my door with eggs. Again, if there was a lock on the door, if you buzz someone in and you're not here to see me, I'm not answering the door. So it would have been monitored and more secure. I want to know what can be done since I would like to be in my

apartment and have peace of mind and not be disturbed with anyone else's kids or having to have my boys do the fire escape. My second issue is I see the grounds people coming and sitting there on their phones, sweeping just the bottom, or on the first floor. They are not going from the top to the bottom. I personally take pride in my area and I do keep the hallway, sweep the hallway, because again, I take pride in my area. But these people are getting paid to do a job that I don't see getting done.

COMMISSIONER TAYLOR: I'm sorry, can you tell -- what's the address again?

MS. TAYLOR: 5 Melon Street.

MALE SPEAKER: 5 Melon 1B.

MS. TAYLOR: 1B. You can drive past Melon Street and the kids are sitting on the railing, they don't move. It's like they come from afar to hang out on Melon Street. Again, back then before security used to walk through the area, or even ride through and if they seen a group of kids out there, they would have them break up. I don't see that happening. We have to take them on ourselves, but again, with the element of people that I'm dealing with, it can escalate to more. All I want to do is just be able to come home in peace and not be bothered with anybody else's child, the same respect that I give to them, that's what I expect in return.

MALE SPEAKER: No, and I understand. And thank you for your feedback and we will -- we as a Board will address it.

MS. TAYLOR: Okay, thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: You're welcome, ma'am.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: No one else is stepping up. I'll accept a motion to close public comment.

COMMISSIONER GRAY: So moved.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: All in favor, voice vote.

ALL: Aye.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Okay, at this time we are going to -- I'll take a motion for executive session. And we won't be coming back -- for personnel and contract issues. And we won't be coming back into public session. I'll take a motion.

COMMISSIONER GRAY: So moved.

VICE CHAIR WELDON-GORDON: Second.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Been moved, properly seconded. All in favor say aye.

ALL: Aye.

CHAIRMAN RAINES: Thank you, everyone, for coming out.

PUBLIC SESSION ENDED AT 12:56 P.M.

W. Oliver Leggett
Board of Commissioners
Housing Authority
of the
City of Trenton