



**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COOK COUNTY
REGULAR PUBLIC SESSION
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2024 12:00 NOON**

ROLL CALL:

COMMISSONERS PRESENT	
Wendy Walker Williams – Chair	In Person
Polly Kuehl – Vice Chair	In Person
Nilda Soler – Commissioner	In Person
Dr. Normah Salleh-Barone – Commissioner	In Person
Elaine Kroll – Commissioner	In Person
Eric L. Slaughter – Commissioner	In-Person
Herb Porter – Commissioner	Zoom
HACC STAFF PRESENT	
Danita W. Childers, Executive Director	In Person
Zellores Harrison, Executive Assistant	In Person
Bernina Moore, Board Advisor	In Person
Kathleen Grady-Peralta, Comptroller/Treasurer	In Person
Sheryl Seiling, Director of Rent Assistance	In Person
Raquel Burnette, Director of Human Resources	In Person
Ernest Lofton, Director of Information Technology	In Person
Deborah O'Donnell, Director of Procurement	Zoom
Legal Counsel	
Jon A. Duncan, General Counsel	In Person
Public Attendees	
Rich M. Larsen, Novogradac & Company, LLP	In Person

- I. **Call to Order:** Chair Wendy Walker Williams called to order the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners at approximately 12:02 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Bernina Moore called the roll. Commissioners Walker-Williams, Kuehl, Soler, Salleh-Barone, Kroll, and Slaughter attended the meeting in person and were present for the roll call; Porter attended via Zoom. A Quorum was established.
- III. **Consent for Commissioner Porter to Participate Via Zoom:** Vice Chair Polly Kuehl presented a Motion to Consent for Commissioner Herb Porter to participate via Zoom. Commissioner Eric Slaughter seconded the Motion. The motion carried with all “ayes.”
- IV. **Public Comments:** Based on HACC’s public participation rules, public participants are given three (3) minutes to address the Board. Chair Wendy Walker Williams opened the floor to public comments. A member of the public expressed challenges with reasonable accommodation requests. He noted that when he contacted several property management companies, they were unresponsive. Although he was aware the Board could not assist, he was advised to file a complaint with appropriate agencies – depending on the property location – including the U.S. Department of Housing Urban Development (HUD) and the Illinois Dept. of Human Rights (IDHR). Follow-up was promised after the meeting.
- V. **Approval of the Consent Agenda:** Commissioner Nilda Soler presented a Motion to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2024 Regular Board Meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Dr. Normah Salleh-Barone seconded the Motion. The motion carried with all “ayes.” Chair Wendy Walker Williams raised a point of privilege regarding receiving Board packets no later than the Monday before the Board meetings, noting that receiving them the day prior did not allow sufficient time for review. She suggested postponing meetings if packets could not be delivered earlier and asked if there were any objections to the timeline. There were no objections.
- VI. **Presentation:** Rich Larsen, CPA, and a partner at Novogradac Company, LLP, presented the audit report for Fiscal Year 2023, highlighting the HACC’s strong financial condition, including an Unmodified Audit Opinion – the highest level of assurance – and 14 months of operating reserves. Mr. Larsen recommended optimizing cost allocations for better financial management and offered to attend a future Finance Committee meeting. Commissioners’ inquiries about fund restrictions and prior audit findings were addressed, with explanations on program-specific fund usage and confirmation that previous findings are no longer applicable, reflecting improvements in HACC’s financial processes.
- VII. **Resolution: Board Resolution 2024 – HACC – 26 A Resolution to Ratify the Submission of the Fiscal Year Ending 2023 Audited Financial Statements to HUD:** Resolution 2024-HACC-19 Requests the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Cook County to ratify the submission of the financial statements to HUD due to the urgency of filing the audit. The audited statements were submitted to HUD by the HACC staff on November 22, 2024.

After the presentation by Comptroller/Treasurer Kathleen Grady-Peralta, Commissioner Kroll inquired about HUD's feedback on the financial submission and any changes. Kathleen confirmed that HUD had provided input on differences in the unaudited FY23 submission-and noted that Rich Larsen would address HUD's inquiries and then would resubmit the financials.

Commissioner Nilda Soler made a Motion to approve the resolution to ratify the submission of the Fiscal Year Ending 2023 Audited Financial Statements to HUD. Commissioner Elaine Kroll seconded the Motion. The motion carried with all "ayes."

Resolution: Board Resolution 2024 – HACC – 27 A Resolution Authorizing the Submission of the Housing Authority of Cook County's Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2025 to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: Resolution 2024-HACC-27 approves the submission of the Housing Authority of Cook County's Annual Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 to the U.S. Department and Urban Development.

After the presentation by Executive Director, Danita W. Childers, no matters were discussed.

Vice Chair Polly Kuehl made a Motion to approve the submission of the Housing Authority of Cook County's Annual Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 to the U.S. Department and Urban Development. Commissioner Nilda Soler seconded the Motion. The motion carried with all "ayes."

Resolution: Board Resolution 2024 – HACC – 28 A Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to Award Contracts to Ten Contractors for Maintenance and Small Construction Services on an As-Needed Basis: Resolution 2024 - HACC-28 authorizes the Housing Authority of Cook County Executive Director to enter into ten contracts with ten contractors for maintenance and small construction services and small procurements with not to exceed amounts for the base one-year period and to extend their participation at the HACC's option for up to three additional one-year periods, and rescinds Resolution No. 2024 – HACC – 14, which was adopted without dollar limitations on July 11, 2024.

Commissioners asked questions and sought clarification regarding the contract dollar amounts and spreadsheet data. Questions were also raised about the \$75K budgeted for structural repairs in RAD properties, and it was clarified that this amount represents a one-year budget for RAD projects. At the same time, the total is a three-year estimate. It was further confirmed that all funds listed on the spreadsheet pertain exclusively to RAD properties.

Commissioner Nilda Soler made a Motion to approve the Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to Award Contracts to Ten Contractors for Maintenance and Small Construction Services on an As-Needed Basis. Vice Chair Polly Kuehl seconded the Motion. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

- VIII. Executive Director’s Report:** Executive Director Childers reported that the FY23 audit was submitted, that the FY24 audit is underway, with HUD’s response to extension requests are still pending. Leasing at Otto Veteran Square is progressing, with 60 units expected to be leased by month’s end and 22 units remaining to be occupied. This project is 99% complete, while discussions with APEX regarding delays and potential fees continue.

At the Walchirk Apartments Tenant Council meeting with Yolanda Mintz and Darrick Schafer, tenant concerns – including but not limited to pest control and ongoing repairs – were addressed.

A public meeting – with two public participants – was held on Dec. 4th regarding the Annual Plan, Chair Walker Williams and Commissioner Eric Slaughter appeared in person.

The success of an Employee Appreciation Luncheon held on Nov. 22nd was noted. Commissioner Dr. Normah Salleh-Barone highlighted a collaboration regarding HACC’s collaboration with Moraine Valley Community College counselors to address housing insecurity. Jennifer Hill, Executive Director of the Alliance to End Homelessness, was on the call and very instrumental in explaining the entire process of working with people with housing insecurity. Commissioner Salleh-Barone requested permission to share the recording with other community colleges.

- IX. Motion to move to Executive Session in order to discuss collective bargaining and litigation matters [Open Meetings Act Exemptions 2(c)(2) and 2(c)(11)]:** Commissioner Eric Slaughter moved to convene in Closed Session in order to discuss collective bargaining negotiation and litigation. The Motion was seconded by Commissioner Nilda Soler. The Motion carried with all “ayes.” The Board moved in Executive Session at approximately 12:54 p.m., for which minutes are kept separately.

Following the conclusion of the Executive Session, the Board re-convened in public session. It was noted for the record in public session that no votes were taken during the Executive Session other than to adjourn the Executive Session and to return to public session.

- X. Other Business:** Executive Director Childers provided an update on the ongoing elevator modernization at the Pearlman Apartments in Evanston, IL. The Board discussed the need for elevator modernization at other HACC properties. However, an assessment has not yet been conducted. The plan is to hire a consultant to perform this assessment. which will

also help to secure best pricing for modernization projects. Consequently, that agenda item was pulled, and individual contracts for properties requiring modernization will be presented to the Board after the assessment is completed.

XI.

Commissioner Elaine Kroll expressed gratitude for the HACC luncheon on Tuesday, December 10.

XII.

Adjournment: Seeing that there was no further business, Chair Walker-Williams made a Motion to adjourn. Commissioner Kuehl seconded the Motion. The motion carried with all “ayes,” and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:44 p.m.



Wendy Walker-Williams
Chair

February 27, 2025