



Niagara Regional Housing

NIAGARA REGIONAL HOUSING

Campbell East, 3rd Floor
2201 St. David's Road, P.O. Box 344
Thorold, ON L2V 3Z3
Phone: (905) 682-9201
Fax: (905) 687-4844

12-110-2.1
March 30, 2012

Minutes

NIAGARA REGIONAL HOUSING Board of Directors Meeting

#109 – 2012

NRH Board Room
Campbell East, 3rd Floor
2201 St. David's Road
Thorold, ON

Friday, February 24, 2012 – 9:00 A.M.

Attendees

Directors/

Members: K. Murray, C. Jolliffe, B. Baker, G. Marshall,
A. King, T. Rigby, G. Marshall, P. O'Neill,
J. Osczytko, B. Hannah, K. Blackley till 9:43 A.M.,
D. Barrick at 9:49 A.M.

Regrets: S. Cordiner, R. Katzman

Absent: D'Angela

NRH Staff: L. Beckwith, M. Fearnside, W. Thompson, M. MacLellan
V. Amato

Regional Staff: K. Chislett, Commissioner Community Services
D. Mino, Program Financial Analyst
D. Pelette, Manager Housing Hostels and Homelessness
at 9:48 for item 10.

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 9:06 A.M.

The General Manager requested that report *Update on Reserve Funds* be added as item 3.6. In addition, an updated version of report 12-109-3.4., *Manchester Homeless Pilot Update* and an amended version of By-Law #2, were distributed.

Members/Directors:

Karen **Murray**, Chair
Public-at-large,
St. Catharines

Henry **D'Angela**, Vice-Chair
Councillor, Thorold

Betty Ann **Baker**, Secretary
Stakeholder, Welland

Catherine **Jolliffe**, Treasurer
Stakeholder, Welland

Karen **Blackley**
Stakeholder, Thorold

David **Barrick**
Councillor, Port Colborne

Shirley, **Cordiner**
Public-at-Large, Fort Erie

Barbara **Hannah**
Tenant, Niagara Falls

Alan **King**
Stakeholder, Welland

Ronna **Katzman**
Councillor, St. Catharines

George **Marshall**
Councillor, Welland

Patrick **O'Neill**
Stakeholder,
Niagara-on-the-Lake

John **Osczytko**
Public-at-Large, Welland

Tim **Rigby**
Councillor, St. Catharines

1. Adoption of Agenda/Declaration of Conflict

*Moved by B. Hannah
Seconded by P. O'Neill*

That the agenda be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

2. Approval of Minutes January 27, 2012 Meeting

*Moved by J. Osczytko
Seconded by C. Jolliffe*

That the minutes of the January 27, 2012 meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

Business Arising

2.1. There was no Business Arising

3. New Business

3.1. 2011 Unaudited Year End Results - Report 12-109-3.1.

*Moved by B. Baker
Seconded by A. King*

The Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors recommends to Regional Council that any 2011 year end operating surplus be transferred to the NRH Reserve for the Owned Units.

CARRIED

3.2. Action Item – Homelessness Funding – Report COM 4-2012

The General Manager advised that K. Chislett would be doing a presentation on this topic later in the meeting for item 10.

*Moved by G. Marshall
Seconded by P. O'Neill*

That Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors receives COM 4-2012, Development of a Strategy to Advocate for Increased Homelessness Funding report for information.

CARRIED

3.3. Operational Reviews Semi-Annual Status Report – June 2011 – December 2011- Report 12-109-3.3.

M. Fearnside, Manager Housing Programs, presented highlights of this report.

Moved by K. Blackley

Seconded by A. King

That Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors receives 12-109-3.3., Operational Reviews Semi-Annual Status Report – June 2011 – December 2011 for information.

CARRIED

3.4. Close-Out Manchester Homelessness Pilot – Report 12-109-3.4.

W. Thompson, Resource Unit Manager, answered director questions regarding this report.

Moved by T. Rigby

Seconded by J. Osczytko

That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of directors receives report 12-109-3.4., Manchester Homeless Pilot Update for information.

CARRIED

3.5. Borrowing By-Law #2 – 12-109-3.5.

The General Manager advised that the Region's legal department recommended changes to the wording of By-Law #2 originally provided by external legal counsel and presented in report 11-106-3.4., *Pending Acquisition of Land-Phase 2 Financing, Borrowing By-Law #2*, approved by the Board at the November 25, 2011 meeting.

A draft of the amended By-Law #2 relating to the borrowing powers of the Board of Directors was submitted and discussed.

Moved by A. King

Seconded by K. Blackley

That Niagara Regional Housing Board approves revised By-Law #2 and that it be enacted as a by-law of the Corporation, and any two directors of the Corporation be authorized and directed to sign the same and to affix the corporate seal of the Corporation thereto.

CARRIED

3.6. Update on Reserve Funds – Report 12-109-3.6.

The General Manager reviewed the report with Directors. Corporate Services has requested that funds for Future Employee Benefits be transferred from the NRH Reserve Fund into a new reserve for Future Employee Benefits.

Moved by C. Jolliffe

Seconded by B. Baker

That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of directors approves setting up a new reserve for Future Employee Benefits.

CARRIED

4. Closed Session – Not required

5. General Manager's Report

NRH Re-Organization

The General Manager advised Directors that Public Health and Social Services approved the NRH Reorganization report and it will be on the Council agenda for March 1st.

Online Reports

At the Public Health and Social Services Committee meeting it was requested that a protocol be developed for Agencies, Board and Commissions on the posting of Board reports on their websites.

Welland Development

On January 10, 2012 Council received for information COM 03-2012, regarding the 235 Fitch St. development. On December 13th, NRH Board approved in principle the advancement of the Fitch Street site to the Development phase. Staff continued work with the architect to prepare drawings necessary for municipal site plan approval. It was recommended that a budget for the project be presented to Committee and Council for approval.

Moved by B. Baker

Seconded by K. Blackley

- 1. That, the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors acknowledges committed architectural fees to complete development drawings in order to develop tender documents; and,***
- 2. That, a project budget be developed for Board and Council approval.***

CARRIED

6. Chair's Report

No report.

K. Blackley left the meeting at 9:43 A.M.

7. Committee Reports

- 7.1. Executive Committee, Karen Murray, Chair
No approved minutes.
- 7.2. Governance Committee
No minutes.
- 7.3. Investment Committee, H. D'Angela, Chair
No minutes.
- 7.4. Applicant/Tenant Appeals Committee
Minutes January 10, 24 and February 7, 2012 hearing were provided for information.
- 7.5. Tender Awards Committee, A. King, Chair
No minutes.
- 7.6. Tenant Advisory Group, B. Hannah
No Minutes of the quarterly meetings.
- 7.7. Housing Provider Advisory Group, C. Jolliffe, Chair
No minutes.
- 7.8. Community Advisory Group, B. Baker, Chair
No Minutes.

8. For Information

- 8.1. Action Items from Previous Meetings

Correspondence/Media

- 8.2. Thank you Letter, Housing, Health, and Woman's Well-Being Study, from St. Michael's.

9. BREAK – not required

10. Strategic Planning Session – Homelessness

- D. Pelette, Manager Housing Hostels and Homelessness joined the meeting at 9:48 A.M.
- D. Barrick joined the meeting at 9:49 A.M.

Niagara Housing First Pilot was presented by Katherine Chislett, Commissioner Community Services. Slides were distributed.

Statistics show that housing the homeless or those at risk of being homeless saves a community from \$13,000 to \$30,000 per year in temporary and/or emergency services, and there is a great deal of research throughout Canada and the US that demonstrates the effectiveness and cost savings of helping people rapidly access housing as a first step towards long term stability and addressing other issues they may have in their lives.

Traditional models for the most vulnerable homeless people (people living on the streets, in shelters, or very precariously housed) often required that the individuals address the issues that may have made them homeless first before they could “earn” a home, moving from streets to shelters to transitional housing and then graduating to get permanent housing. Housing First approaches support people to have permanent housing first, and then provide supports to address any issues they may want to deal with, and supports to help them be successful in housing (such as learning the rights and obligations of being a tenant). Both the provincial and federal governments have endorsed housing first as a preferred approach to addressing homelessness.

The Housing First Pilot for Niagara is built on the housing first model, but differs in that Niagara does not have the resources that housing first projects would usually have. Instead, the proposal will be to work collaboratively with the community. Specifically, approximately 70 rent supplements would be available for use by community agencies. The community agencies would be required to (a) serve people who are absolutely homeless or at high risk of ending up on the streets or in our shelters (b) provide supports to those individuals to help them find and keep housing at their own cost (c) work with landlords to access private sector rental units and manage the relationship with the landlord and (d) participate as part of a collaborative group to oversee the pilot. As there are a number of community agencies in Niagara Region who already serve people who are homeless, what the pilot does is to give those agencies another “tool” in their “toolkit” to support their clients, and maximize their effectiveness. Anticipated outcomes are a reduction in the number of street homeless and in our shelters.

The Rent Allowances would be provided under the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) program, funding of \$800,000 over a 3 year period has been allocated to this pilot to cover up to \$350.00 per month in housing costs only.

Ms. Chislett also reviewed a number of risks and limitations to the pilot, all of which are related to the lack of funding available to operate a full model housing first project, and proposed approaches to addressing those risks and limitations. One area not yet resolved is how to resource the research elements of the project. She acknowledged the collaborative work done with NRH staff in developing the model and in its implementation, and thanked the Board for their thoughtful comments and questions, and their support for implementing a difficult and high risk – but much needed – pilot project.

Ms Chislett also provided information about COM 04-2012, under item 3.2.

A document entitled *Applicants on the Waiting List who are Homeless* was distributed. There are currently 514 Households on the waiting list with homeless status, this does not represent all homeless in Niagara, only those who have applied for housing.

11. Other Business

There was no other business

12. Next Meetings

Friday, March 30, 2012 - 9:00 A.M.
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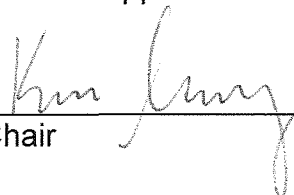
13. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 10:55 A.M.


Moved by A. King

Seconded by P. O'Neill

Minutes Approved:



Chair



Secretary