



## **NIAGARA REGIONAL HOUSING**

*Campbell East, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, P.O. Box 344  
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Phone: (905) 682-9201 Fax: (905) 687-4844*

### Minutes

#### **NIAGARA REGIONAL HOUSING Board of Directors Meeting**

**#148 – 2016**

NRH Boardroom  
Campbell East, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way  
Thorold, ON

January 22, 2016 – 9:00 A.M.

#### Attendees

##### **Directors:**

Paul Grenier, Chair  
Councillor, Welland

Patrick O'Neill, Vice-Chair  
Stakeholder,  
Niagara-on-the-Lake

Henry D'Angela, Secretary  
Councillor, Thorold

Karen Blackley, Treasurer  
Stakeholder, Thorold

Linda Allen  
Tenant, St. Catharines

Barbara Carroll  
Public-at-Large, St. Catharines

Shirley Cordiner  
Public-at-Large, Welland

Ken Goka  
Stakeholder, Welland

James Hyatt  
Stakeholder, St. Catharines

Kelly Kendrick  
Stakeholder, Fort Erie

John Osczytko  
Public-at-Large, St. Catharines

Andrew Petrowski  
Councillor, St. Catharines

Walter Sendzik  
Councillor St. Catharines

Selina Volpatti  
Councillor, Niagara Falls

##### **Directors/ Members:**

P. Grenier, P. O'Neill, H. D'Angela, K. Blackley,  
J. Hyatt, J. Osczytko, K Goka, K. Kendrick,  
W. Sendzik till 10:50 A.M., A. Petrowski till 10:55 A.M.  
B. Carroll by teleconference till 11:07 A.M.  
S. Cordiner till 11:30 A.M., S. Volpatti till 11:45 A.M.

##### **Regrets:**

L. Allen,

##### **NRH Staff:**

E. Balmain, W. Thompson, D. Woiceshyn,  
V. Amato

##### **Regional Staff:**

Adrienne Jugley, Interim Commissioner Community  
and Social Services  
Tracey Frena, Program Financial Analyst

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 9:05 A.M.

Revised Agenda and the following were distributed:

item 3 - PowerPoint Slides presented to St. Catharines City Council  
item 4.4 - Spreadsheet for NRH Reserves,  
item 7.1 - Confidential Report re: Potential Sites for New Development  
item 8.3. - minutes of the December 8, 2015 Executive Committee Meeting

#### **1. Adoption of Agenda/Declaration of Conflict**

Defer 4.2. Welcome Niagara, Move 6.3.Surplus Land to 7.1. Closed  
Session, under Other Business add Update on Tenders and Property  
Tax Exemption Update

*Moved by P. O'Neill  
Seconded by A. Petrowski*

***That the agenda be ADOPTED as amended.***

**CARRIED**

There were no conflicts of interest declared.

## **2. Approval of Minutes**

### 2.1. Minutes of the November 27, 2015 Meeting

*Moved by J. Hyatt  
Seconded by K. Goka*

***That the minutes of the November 27, 2015 meeting be ADOPTED.***

**CARRIED**

### 2.2. Business Arising

The CEO advised that the Cease to Qualify Report along with a PowerPoint presentation was presented to PHSS Committee on January 5<sup>th</sup>.

## **3. NRH Presentations to Municipal Councils – not presented**

## **4. Staff Reports**

### 4.1. Director Meeting Attendance – Report 16-148-4.1.

Moved by S. Volpatti  
Seconded by A. Petrowski

That the NRH Board of Directors RECEIVE Report 16-148-4.1 for information.

The CEO explained that the report was provided at the request of the Executive and to generate discussion. The attendance and participation chart is used as a tool for Director evaluation, the criteria are reviewed every few years for relevance.

Items for Board consideration:

1. Should attendance exceptions remain the same?
2. Should Benchmarks be established and measured during a term?:
  - o A minimum number of meetings that a Director should attend in a year?
  - o A minimum % of meeting that constitutes attendance
3. Should Directors receive remuneration for meetings they did not attend?
4. Not all Directors participate on Committees. Should there be a weighting applied for attendance on committees?

A lengthily discussion ensued.

Moved by A. Petrowski  
Seconded by S. Volpatti

To call the question

Upon a recorded vote being requested, by H. D'Angela, the Directors voted as follows:

Voting FOR the motion (6): A. Petrowski, P. Grenier, B. Carroll, J. Osczytko, J. Hyatt, S. Volpatti

Voting AGAINST the motion (6): W. Sendzik, P. O'Neill, K. Blackley, K. Goka, H. D'Angela, K. Kendrick

Upon the recorded vote being taken, the Chair declared the motion,

*DEAD*

It was suggested that the Chair canvas Directors having poor attendance prior to next meeting regarding their commitment going forward; Directors should evaluate their schedule against NRH meeting dates.

IR - Look at best practices of other boards, W. Sendzik

Action by: E. Balmain

#### 4.2. Welcome Home Niagara Program Report

Deferred

#### 4.3. Commitment Agreement - Integrated Housing System – Report 16-148-4.3

D. Woiceshyn reviewed the report in detail; staff is recommending:

1. That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors APPROVES NRH joining the *Housing Collaborative Initiative*, a group of Housing service managers and administrators, who are launching an Integrated Housing Information System.
2. Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors APPROVES NRH purchasing the fully integrated software package developed to create efficiencies and consolidate multiple social housing programs into one system.
3. That the NRH CEO be AUTHORIZED to execute an Integrated Housing System Agreement with Arcon ISTCL Group, Inc., (AIG) with a financial commitment of up to \$20 per social housing unit, less any future commitment from the Provincial government, to acquire all modules of the new system.

IHS will be used to manage the Centralized Waitlist and replace the Lotus Notes software; Lotus is very old and no longer supported.

## Questions:

- How would NRH pay for the purchase?
- Are there other costs involved? Equipment, training, hidden costs?
- Where would NRH's data be stored?
- Who owns the program/application, who owns code keys?
- Are earlier investors paying more?
- Can NRH be part of the revenue opportunity?

*Moved by P. Grenier*

*Seconded by S. Volpatti*

- 1) That execution of a Commitment Agreement for an Integrated Housing System be DEFFERRED; and,**
- 2) Staff be directed to NEGOTIATE total costs and obligations.**

*CARRIED*

#### 4.4. NRH Reserves – Spreadsheet 16-149-4.4.

Staff reviewed purpose of each reserve. NRH reserves are held by the Region. Interest earned is not posted to the Reserve account, rather the Region rolls the interest into Region accounts.

Housing Providers are legislated to maintain reserves equal to 15% of property value. This does not apply to the downloaded former Ontario Housing Corporation units, they must be funded to the level required. Currently the reserves for Public Housing units are low, only about 3% of the asset value. The reserve for Public Housing units includes reserves for Broadoak and Fitch Street which are 100% self-sustaining and of no cost to taxpayers. The VFM audit recommended that the reserves for these units be increased. The Region's policy indicates reserves should be 35% of asset value.

J. Hyatt advised that he attended a Tender Evaluation meeting regarding structural repairs required (Health and Safety item) to a semi-detached unit. It would cost approximately \$100,000 to fix the foundation and \$300,000 to build new.

Estimates for NRH Capital requirements for owned unit portfolio are \$58 m over next 10 years.

It was suggested that staff develop a draft policy stating that any NRH Year-End surplus be automatically transferred to a building fund for new development.

Action by: E. Balmain

*Moved by K. Kendrick*

*Seconded by K. Blackley*

**That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors RECEIVE 16-149-4.4, NRH Reserves and verbal report for information.**

*CARRIED*

IR - Resend budget report, S. Volpatti

IR - It was agreed that finance be invited to provide presentation at the February or March meeting regarding reserves, what is policy, what is plan?, All

Action by: E. Balmain

## 5. New Business

### 5.1. Election of Officers

In accordance with By-Law #1, officers of the Corporation will serve at the pleasure of the Board, and shall hold such office until his/her resignation, removal, or other disqualification from service or until a qualified successor shall be elected.

The Chair was turned over to the CEO to facilitate election of the Chair/President.

#### ***Chair/President***

The CEO opened the floor to nominations for the office of Chair/President.

K. Blackley nominated S. Cordiner for the office of Chair/President.

H. D'Angela seconded the nomination.

S. Cordiner accepted the nomination.

Nominations for the office of Chair/President were called for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time.

S. Volpatti nominated P. Grenier for the office of Chair/President.

J. Hyatt seconded the nomination.

P. Grenier accepted the nomination.

Nominations for the office of Chair/President were called for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time. There were no further nominations.

*Moved by W. Sendzik*

*Seconded by S. Volpatti*

*That nominations for the office of Chair/President be **CLOSED**.*

**CARRIED**

There being two candidates for the office of Chair/President, the open ballot method was used. Ballots were distributed, Directors inserted their name on the left side of the ballot and the candidate of their choice for Chair/President on the right side of the ballot. D. Woiceshyn and W. Thompson acted as scrutineer and counter respectively.

V. Amato released phone from speaker mode, B. Carroll advised her choice of candidate, phone was switched back to speaker mode, V. Amato completed ballot for B. Carroll and gave to counter.

Results of the vote were handed to the CEO. The CEO announced that P. Grenier was the successful candidate in a vote of 7 to 6.

The CEO handed the Chair to P. Grenier.

***Vice-Chair***

The Chair opened the floor to nominations for the office of Vice-Chair.

S. Cordiner nominated P. O'Neill for the office of Vice-Chair.

K. Blackley seconded the nomination.

P. O'Neill accepted the nomination.

Nominations for the office of Vice-Chair were called for a 2<sup>nd</sup> time.

S. Volpatti nominated J. Hyatt for the office of Vice-Chair

A. Petrowski seconded the nomination.

J. Hyatt accepted the nomination.

Nominations for the office of Vice-Chair were called for a 3<sup>rd</sup> time. There were no further nominations.

*Moved by S. Volpatti*

*Seconded by J. Osczytko*

*That nominations for the office of Vice-Chair be **CLOSED**.*

**CARRIED**

There being two candidates for the office of Vice-Chair, the open ballot method was used. Ballots were distributed, Directors inserted their name on the left side of the ballot and the candidate of their choice for Chair/President on the right side of the ballot. D. Woiceshyn and W. Thompson acted as scrutineer and counter respectively.

V. Amato released phone from speaker mode, B. Carroll advised her choice of candidate, phone was switched back to speaker mode, V. Amato completed ballot for B. Carroll and gave to counter.

Results of the vote were handed to the Chair. The Chair announced that P. O'Neill was the successful candidate in a vote of 7 to 6.

**Secretary**

The floor was opened to nominations for the office of Secretary.

S. Cordiner nominated H. D'Angela for the office of Secretary.

J. Osczykko seconded the nomination.

H. D'Angela accepted the nomination.

Nominations for the office of Secretary were called for a second and third time. There were no further nominations.

*Moved by S. Volpatti*

*Seconded by K. Blackley*

*That nominations for the office of Secretary be **CLOSED**.*

*CARRIED*

**Treasurer**

The floor was opened to nominations for the office of Treasurer.

S. Cordiner nominated K. Blackley for the office of Treasurer.

J. Osczykko seconded the nomination.

K. Blackley accepted the nomination.

Nominations for the office of Treasurer were called for a second and third time. There were no further nominations.

*Moved by S. Volpatti*

*Seconded by J. Osczykko*

*That nominations for the office of Treasurer be **CLOSED**.*

*CARRIED*

**6. General Manager's Report**

- 6.1. Financial Statements as at November 30, 2015 - Report 16-148-6.1.

*Moved by A. Petrowski*

*Seconded by P. O'Neill*

***That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors RECEIVE the financial statements as at November 30, 2015.***

*CARRIED*

IR - Staff look into development of policy stating that any NRH Year-End surplus be automatically transferred to a building fund for new development,  
H. D'Angela

Action by: E. Balmain

W. Sendzik left the meeting at 10:50 A.M.

6.2. Legal Representation

The CEO informed Directors that the current external legal firm used by NRH when required, advised that it could not represent NRH due to a conflict of interest. In consultation with the Executive Committee, staff contacted several firms in the Niagara Region all of which had conflicts. In the event NRH requires external legal advice in future, it will contact the firm of Ross & McBride, in Hamilton. Fees are reasonable and no retainer required.

A. Petrowski left the meeting at 10:55 A.M.

6.3. Surplus Land – moved to Closed Session 7.1.

6.4. LEED Certification for Fitch St., Welland

The CEO advised that NRH has received a Silver LEED Certification for the Fitch St., Welland new development.

6.5. Councillor Information Request re: Market Rents Survey

The CEO advised that a memo would be going out in reply to the Councillor Information request about the Market Rent Survey of other Service Manager (SM) practices. OMSSA, the organization that assisted NRH with the survey, advised that responses were strictly peer to peer; as such, individual SM responses to each question cannot be shared.

There are approximately 35 households remaining, who, for one reason or other refuse to provide necessary information and/or cooperate. Before N9's are issued staff will prepare summaries for the tenants advising the dates and methods by which NRH staff have attempted to contact them (by mail, by phone and in person). CEO will review all letters prior to mail out. Should a Director be contacted by one of these tenants please ask to see the letter.

Many NRH households have complex needs and require significant staff time to support. J. Osczytko offered to provide one of his staff to assist with these tenants, particularly the difficult cases who may have fallen into the Cease to Qualify category.

B. Carroll disconnected from the meeting at 11:07 A.M.

All agreed that the Closed Session would be held after item 10 - Other Business, so staff would not have to leave and return.



## 8. Committee Reports

### 8.1. Appeal Hearings

Minutes of the Nov. 24, 2015 and Jan. 5, 2016 hearings were provided for information.

### 8.2. Tenant Advisory Group

Minutes of the June 10 & September 23, 2015 Tenant Advisory Group Meetings were provided for information.

### 8.3. Executive Committee

Minutes of the December 8, 2015 Executive Committee meeting were provided for information

*Moved by S. Volpatti  
Seconded by J. Hyatt*

***THAT the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors RECEIVE the minutes of the Appeal Hearings, Tenant Advisory Group and Executive Committee for information.***

*CARRIED*

Action by: E. Balmain

#### 8.a.

*Moved by H. D'Angela  
Seconded by K. Blackley*

***THAT the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors APPROVE a review of the reporting method used for appeal hearings and use of names.***

*CARRIED*

S. Cordiner left the meeting at 11:30 A.M.

## 9. For Information

9.1. Action Items from Previous Meetings – Completed in 2015  
Provided for Information.

9.2. Letter and Certificate to NRH dated Dec. 9, 2015 re: LEED Silver certification for Fitch St. East Building  
Provided for information.

## 10. Other Business

10.1. Update on Tenders – Information provided by J. Hyatt under item 4.4.

10.2. Property Tax Exemption Update

H. D'Angela advised that the motion to exempt NRH owned units from property taxes went to Council. He requested that a report come back to the Board. If Directors have any questions regarding this item please forward to H. D'Angela and he will make sure the questions are answered by Corporate Services.

11:35 A.M. - A. Jugley, T. Frena and W. Thompson left the meeting.

## 7. Closed Session

*Moved by P. O'Neill*

*Seconded by K. Goka*

***That the meeting MOVE INTO Closed Session to receive information of a confidential nature relating to a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board – Potential Sites for New Development.***

CARRIED

7.1. Potential Sites for New Development

S. Volpatti left the meeting at 11:45 A.M.

*Moved by K. Blackley*

*Seconded by J. Osczytko*

***That the Board RISE with report.***

CARRIED

*Moved by K. Blackley*

*Seconded by J. Osczytko*

- 1. That the Niagara Regional Housing Board of Directors RECEIVE report IC 16-148-7.1. Potential Sites for New Development; and,***
- 2. That staff follow direction given in closed session.***

CARRIED

## 11. Next Meetings

Monday, February 8, 2016 at 9:00 A.M.

Friday, February 19, 2016 at 9:00 A.M.

NRH Board Room

Campbell East, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way  
Thorold

12. Adjournment

***Motion to ADJOURN at 11:55 A.M.***

*Moved by K. Kendrick*

*Seconded by J. Osczytko*

***CARRIED***

Minutes Approved:

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Chair

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Secretary