



Cathy Hoog, Executive Director

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**MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2023  
6:00 p.m.**

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**I. Called Meeting to Order at 6:00 p.m.**

**II. Roll Call**

Present

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

Absent

Benjamin Shallop

Also Present: Cathy Hoog, Executive Director, Debra Tucker, Assistant Executive Director, Gary Dean, Director of Maintenance, Anne Cameron, Executive Assistant, Jacqueline Guzman, Director of Leased Housing and Maureen Thomas, Director of Public Housing

**III. Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

John A. Boris moved to accept the Minutes of the 75<sup>th</sup> Special Annual Meeting held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023. Veronica Miranda seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

Nays

( ) moves to accept the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023. ( ) seconds the motion and the roll call vote is as follows:

Veronica Miranda -I did notice on the meeting minutes that there was some errors as to what I stated at the end of the meeting and there were some typos.

Cathy Hoog – The Annual Meeting or the Special Meeting?



Veronica Miranda – The Special Meeting for March 19, 2023. Page 9 of the Special Meeting Minutes.

Charity Lezama – What were the errors so that Anne can make note and correct them?

Veronica Miranda – There were some typos and I wasn't sure if I had asked if the meeting was recorded and I wasn't sure that everything I had stated at that time was noted. I just wanted to bring that to your attention.

Charity Lezama – Can we push this to the next regular Board Meeting so that Anne can look into it?

Cathy Hoog – Yes.

Charity Lezama – Veronica, we will push this off to the June Meeting so that Anne can review and correct if that is okay with you.

The Board Agreed to table the above motion until the next regular Board Meeting.

#### **IV. Tenant/Public Engagement**

Charity Lezama – I will open it up to Tenant Engagement. I would ask whether you are online or in person that you keep your comments kind and respectful and that we keep speaking time to 3 minutes.

Don Rivard – 27 Charter Street, Apartment 601, and the President of the Charter Street Tenants Association. Don Rivard commented on the Parking issues at Charter Street. People are having a hard time finding parking. There are more tenants and more cars than parking spaces. Keep in mind that we are the paying residents of that building and we are seniors and handicapped. We need to have more parking for residents.

Shannon Bailey, 32 Leefort Terrace. As everyone knows, we are going through a transition period. We have Housing Opportunities Unlimited who have been hired by Beacon Communities to help the residents and our relocation progress and to help us find places. I would like to request services such as therapists and social workers to work with tenants because moving is a lot and I feel like they need extra mental care at this point. I would request that we work with Housing Opportunities Unlimited to make sure that that is done appropriately.

Cathy Hoog – Sure, thanks for mentioning that. I don't know if you recall the woman who attended the last resident meeting, she was the Director of Resident Services for Beacon.

Shannon Bailey – Yes, I know who you are talking about.

Cathy Hoog – They are going to assign some social workers – one, possibly two to work with people individually, to work with them and find out what needs they have and to work with them concerning their specific mental health needs.

Shannon Bailey – some of the residents are getting a little antsy. There is a lot of discord. It is making a lot of other residents nervous.

Cathy Hoog – The plan is to also hold consistent meetings as well and bring people together and address their concerns. Be on the lookout for one coming soon.

Shannon Bailey – Okay, thank you.

Charity Lezama – I will be sure to follow-up.

Sue Kirby – 205 Bridge Street, Morency Manor. Sue Kirby commented on the DHCD Survey that was under communications on the agenda. The survey from last fall from DHCD was very interesting. We also got an email from Cathy about questions on a survey that we are talking about. I thought the survey was really informative. I did also notice that in terms of Salem's satisfaction compared to the large city wide we come up a little short. I want to keep that in perspective. We don't know exactly what those short comings are. This concerns me doing it only at recertification time. That is a revolving thing that happens all year. I think doing this once a year and having a consistent survey annually.

Charity Lezama – I just want to make sure that I understand your last comment in that you want to conduct a survey once a year at the same time so that you are comparing apples to apples.

Sue Kirby – all of the recertifications at all the different developments are done at different times of the year. That could work if you took all of the information at one point each year. What you would want to do and it would be helpful is at recertification take and input which developments have which responses and it may stand out that certain developments have very strong responses. The SHA Legal Contract is on the agenda. One of the things that is being brought up in the State House is the right to counsel tenants. The tenants need some education around what is in their lease because that is generally what the private conferences are about – lease violations. I want to reiterate that it would be a really good idea to have some workshops for tenants to come and say what exactly is in my lease and not wait until something happens.

Charity Lezama – Thank you Sue.

Don Rivard – There is a situation going on at Charter Street wherein there is property damage from the flood that we had from the 10<sup>th</sup> floor fire. The Insurance Company has evaluated the damage as to the structure but they are not picking up on the personal damage. Some consideration should be given with reference to peoples' loss of personal items. Some of those items lost are expensive so should be some consideration for that. Thank you.

Charity Lezama – Thank you Don.

Cathy Hoog – Just a reminder – the Board did vote to support that Bill. We took a vote formally to accentuate our support for the Bill. We were all in agreement about that, I am as well. I was planning on talking about the DHCD Survey. A little bit later. Thank you for raising that. I did want to point out that we did score higher than the state item in some areas as well. This survey is incredibly detailed and so useful. I recently sent out a rough draft of a survey to the LTOs and they have gotten back to me with feedback. Thank you so much. It is always helpful. My thoughts around that was not as complex as the DHCD survey because the response rates are tough as it is and I felt if we were to make it long and complex people would be less likely to want to complete it. It will be a voluntary survey. Some of the feedback that we have gotten around finding a consistent time to issue the survey had come from LTOs to do it at the recertification time. I think it was you, Shannon, who suggested that. Thank you for your comments on that Sue.

Shannon Bailey – I believe I responded to your email. I did point out that it does mention LTOs Because there are only 4 LTOs in the entire city and there are way more properties that in order for them to fully understand. I would suggest a workshop on that topic to explain to people what an LTO is and what their rights are, etc. etc. so that you could get better feedback.

Cathy Hoog – Agreed.

Sue Kirby – There was a woman who was on our Morency Board and she knocked on my door and asked what an LTO was.

Charity Lezama – I saw most of the feedback that you all provided and thought it was great. I think Cathy and her team are taking all of that feedback and she will have a second draft to us so that we all have a chance to review and provide feedback.

Sue Kirby – Does DHCD have another survey like this coming up? Do they do this every year?

Cathy Hoog – They do a random sample. To the best of my knowledge, they are not.

That could change. The Resident Satisfaction Survey was part of the whole 2014 of Housing Authorities and The Act Relative to Local Housing Authorities passed by Duval Patrick. For now, this is what it is. They could expand on it but I have not heard of anything new.

Sue Kirby – Are they going to be doing this in the fall?

Cathy Hoog – It is every 2 years.

Charity Lezama – Thanks Cathy.

Gene Collins – Are there copies of the DHCD survey available? I do not know anything about it.

Charity Lezama – It is in the Board Packet, Gene but we can get you a copy. We were talking about 2 different surveys. There is one the SHA is developing which was shared with you for feedback and then there was one that was conducted by DHCD and it does have the comparison to other Housing Authorities and that is what Sue and Cathy were referencing.

Cathy Hoog – Gene, you may not have gotten one in the mail. They do a random sample when they send it out.

Gene Collins – I did not get one. I would appreciate receiving a copy of the survey.

Cathy Hoog – We can give you a copy of the survey.

Gene Collins – Yes, I appreciate that. We have approximately 20 tenants on average at our meetings. We are getting concerned about the overall attitude of the Housing Authority to the tenants. The Grievance system and the way that it is written is so anti-tenant. I have had feedback from the private conferences and it is not good. There are issues that are somewhat concerning to the overall approach, for instance the non-profit status that the Board is trying to institute and I am not sure how that works. It is a process and I am working on it now. I had asked before if anyone on the Board knew about CMR 760 and there seems to be no process of fairness. That is something that I would like to bring up as a whole.

Charity Lezama – Thanks Gene.

Gene Collins – I am asking for feedback on the non-profit status and whether or not you can tap into it. The other thing that I would ask for is a copy of the survey that DHCD has done. I would like to ask the Board to consider Bertram Terrace tenants and their inclusion to join in with the Pioneer Tenants Organization. We would like to know the

process in getting our money to us for the budget. Gene also commented on receiving some schematics on the City Project that is going on near Pioneer Terrace.

Charity Lezama – I will be able to speak with you about some of these issues at the LTO Meeting and some of them I will follow up with you directly.

#### **V. Report of the Executive Director**

- See attached report of the Executive Director – April 2023

Cathy Hoog - I had planned on talking about the results of the survey issued by DHCD. We had a little bit of a discussion on that. I am happy to expand if you would like. I am quite pleased with the results of the survey. I think they are pretty much in line with the other agencies our size in the state. There is always room for improvement. We have been talking a lot about how we can better engage with folks and continue to improve our relationships with people and that is something that we are committed to.

Cathy reviewed her Executive Director's Report in detail with the Board included in the Board Packet. The Board had no questions for Cathy.

Charity Lezama – Thank you Cathy. There is a lot of information in the Executive Director's Report.

#### **VI. Communications**

- Updated Waitlist
- SHA Department Reports - Move In, Move Out, (State and Federal), CHAMP Report, Modernization Report, Voucher Report, Resident Service Coordinator Reports and Completed Work Orders for Month of March 31, 2023
- Correspondence from DHCD to Charity Lezama, Chair regarding the award in the amount of \$60,000.00 for the Salem Housing Authority and Beverly Housing Authority Resident Service Coordinator
- Results of DHCD's Resident Survey – Fall 2022
- PHN Notice 2023-05

#### **VII. Reports of the Committees**

There were no reports from the Committees.

#### **VIII. Unfinished Business**

- Salem Housing Authority – By Laws

Charity Lezama – I was going to speak briefly about the survey that is being developed. As a Board, we continue to be committed to working closely with the LTOs to make sure as a Housing Authority we are creating an ongoing process working together to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to provide feedback and one of those ways was how do we get more tenants engaged and get feedback from them. Cathy's team has created a survey and put it out there. The LTOs have seen and the Board has seen it and we all provided our initial feedback. They are working on the second draft and it will come back to us. It is in the process and I'm excited to see it move forward. As the new Chair, I am also trying to work and meet with all the LTOs. I will see Don Rivard tomorrow and then I will schedule a meeting with Gene.

Sue Kirby – We have a new President here of the Dalton House Tenants Association, Richard Greaves.

Cathy Hoog – Fantastic! Welcome Richie!

Charity Lezama - As it sits on unfinished business, I want to reaffirm our commitment as a Board to engage with the community and make sure that we are responsive and working together to get where we all want to go.

Cathy Hoog – One thing I did not mention in my ED Report, I would like to share these photos with the Board. The SHA has a great relationship with Youth Build. We have had a lot of wonderful opportunities to work with them. What they are doing right now down at Pioneer Terrace is scrapping all of the porch railing and then repainting them. It is a wonderful partnership. The labor is free and the value for them is tenfold because they are looking for experience and they want to train folks and give them an opportunity. A shout out to Youth Build, we want to continue working with them and the feedback has really been great from the residents.

Gene Collins – The young adults are from the Court System program and are unexperienced.

Charity Lezama – This program has nothing to do with the Court System. These young adults are looking to learn skills.

Gene Collins – Commented again on CMR 760.

## **IX. Recommendations of the Chair**

There were no recommendations of the Chair.

**X. Report of the Treasurer**

Bills and Transfers

Veronica Miranda moved to approve the bills and transfers for the period March 1, 2023 through March 31, 2023 as presented. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

Nays

Balance Sheet and Statements of Revenues and Expenses

Veronica Miranda moved to accept the Balance Sheet and Statements of Revenues and Expenses prepared by Fenton, Ewald & Associates, P.C. for five (5) months ending February 28, 2023. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

Nays

**XI. New Business**

New Hire – Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator

There were five (5) candidates chosen to be interviewed for the open position of Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator. Cathy Hoog interviewed two (2) candidates. Cathy will present her candidate of choice.

Cathy Hoog – Board Members I am pleased to present to you a resume and Jacqui and I had an opportunity to interview and we also put out an invitation to our Section 8 Voucher Holders and they had a chance to call in and speak to Ms. McDonough on the phone and we feel very confident given her experience and the feedback that we received. She is a very viable candidate for the FSS Program Coordinator. I am happy to answer any questions you may have. We are really looking forward to launching this program because folks have expressed a desire to participate in this program.

John Boris – Is there a contract signed at the initial hiring?

Cathy Hoog – We did receive a grant from HUD and I had to sign an acceptance for that. At this point, we would be just be presenting a candidate for consideration to hire.



Veronica Miranda – I know that this is for Federal Housing. Were LTOs included for the hiring of that position? Are there any LTOs?

Cathy Hoog – Unfortunately, there are not. The federal participants were invited to attend the interview.

Jacqui Guzman – We did have about 10 Section 8 participants who logged on to Zoom.

Cathy Hoog – It was really great to get their feedback. They asked Teri a lot of great questions.

Charity Lezama moved to make a conditional offer of employment to Teri Allen McDonough with a six (6) month probationary period for a full-time position as Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator at an annual salary of \$65,000.00 with a start date (TBD). Employment is also conditioned upon receipt of a passed SHA paid physical examination including drug test and a favorable Criminal Offense Record Information (CORI) check. Veronica Miranda seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Charity Lezama

John A. Boris

Veronica Miranda

### Legal Services Contract

Cathy Hoog presented to the Board of Directors the contract for Legal Services between the Salem Housing Authority and Casey, Lundregan, Burns, P.C.

Cathy Hoog – Board Members, we don't normally present the contract at this time. The legal services team has presented us with a slight increase in their fees. We are presenting the contract now as a result of the increase in fees. I find it to be reasonable in comparison with the going rates. It is actually significantly less than what you would find in the market. The legal team that we work with is a part of a regional legal team program that is vetted through DHCD. They do serve a number of Housing Authorities on the North Shore. We have worked with this team for quite some time and we feel confident and comfortable in their ability.

Veronica Miranda – What was the previous rate?

Cathy Hoog – Did we include the previous contract?

Anne Cameron – No, but the rate was \$160.00 per hour.

Cathy Hoog – Each of the professionals went up approximately \$100.00 per hour.

Charity Lezama moved to approve the Agreement for Legal Services between the Salem Housing Authority and Casey Lundregan Burns, P.C. for the period May 1, 2023 through April 30, 2025 for an amount not to exceed \$70,000.00 and authorize Chair Charity Lezama to execute said agreement. seconds the motion and the roll call vote is as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

Nays

Family Self-Sufficiency Action Plan

Cathy Hoog presented the Family Self-Sufficiency Action Plan to the Board of Directors for approval as presented.

Cathy Hoog – This is a relatively thick document. This can be seen as a guide book of sorts. It is for our FSS Program. I am very proud to say. It is a requirement. It is a fluid document and something we can change at any given point in time. It provides an outline and guidance for how the program operates.

Veronica Miranda – Is there a way to work public housing into this program?

Cathy Hoog – This program only serves federal participants; however, I have some really good news. The latest budget that has been presented to our legislators has included a substantially large amount of money for self-sufficiency programs. I had an opportunity to speak with DHCD a couple of weeks ago at a conference. If the budget passes which it likely will, they will be issuing another round of opportunities for funding and Salem will absolutely apply for that. So essentially, there will be a State Self-Sufficiency Program for state public housing tenants.

Veronica Miranda - I am glad to hear that. Was anybody on the Board able to look at some of the IDA documentation that I provided at the last board meeting? I think that that is great and I can't wait to see that happens. At the same time, I do not want to rely on certain legislation in order to help families that are in State Public Housing now and that really need a shot and an opportunity at upward mobility which becomes incredibly difficult in housing. What we can do as an organization to prioritize taking a stance when it comes to helping people to upward mobility?

Cathy Hoog – The concept of IDAs is very similar to an escrow account in the FSS Program. It makes total sense. It is an Individual Development Account.

Veronica Miranda – An IDA is an Individual Development Account. It serves basically as a Family Self-Sufficiency Program where state public housing tenants have money funneled into that account for purchasing a car, purchasing a home, education, healthcare and things like that. They are incentivized to earn more money and then they are able to accumulate more money so that they can rise above poverty instead of being stuck by the system.

Cathy Hoog – The nice thing about these types of grant programs is that the government will subsidize these the cost of these programs. Typically, for us to operate without getting too much into the weeds the rental income helps pay for the operations. If their income goes up, their rent increases and the FSS Program and the Housing Assistance Payment will cover the difference so that we can escrow that money for people and have it in a saving account. To be able to offer a similar program in state public housing would be fantastic. The challenge lies in how we financially support that.

Charity Lezama – Thank you.

Veronica Miranda – Thank you for what you had said in terms of the tenants' rents pay for the operations of the organization (a large percentage). Most housing authorities, about 75% of how it is funded is through the tenants. I do see an inherent issue with that because in order for the tenants to get out and to be able to save up money for a down payment they need to have some of the money that they are earning. I hope that goes through but I do think that there may be ways as an organization to help alleviate some of the poverty trap that happens with people even before that happens. What I am hearing is that we need to continue to keep people in poverty in order to fund the organization which is difficult to hear and to live through. I do want members of the Board and members of the public to be aware of the exploitative system that exists.

Charity Lezama – Thank you.

Charity Lezama moved to adopt the Family Self-Sufficiency Action Plan as presented.

John A. Boris seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Charity Lezama

John A. Boris

Veronica Miranda

### Bid for Cleaning Services

Cathy Hoog presented the lowest, responsive, and responsible bid for Cleaning Services to the Board of Directors.

Cathy Hoog – Board Members unfortunately we had to terminate our contract with the prior cleaning company. They were not operating up to par.

John Boris – Were they much more than the previous cleaning company?

Debra Tucker – No, it is all bid in the same range. They were lower than the last but not by much.

Charity Lezama moved to accept the lowest, responsive and responsible bid of \$35,004.00 from Glaring Cleaning Services for Common Area Cleaning Services for one year with one- 1 year option to renew at the sole discretion of the Salem Housing Authority. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

#### Employee Check Signing Security Agreement

Cathy Hoog presented the Employee Check Signing Security Agreement to the Board of Directors for approval.

Cathy Hoog – Apologies Board Members there was an omission last time we presented this to the Board. Joshua Bocko was not on the previous agreement that we presented to you. Apologies.

Charity Lezama moved to present the Employee Check Signing Security Agreement as presented. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

#### Collection of Losses – Quarterly Write Offs through March 31, 2023

Cathy Hoog presented Collection of Losses – Quarterly Write Offs through March 21, 2023 to the Board of Directors.

Charity Lezama moved to approve the write offs through March 31,2023 for State Development 667 in the amount of \$714.00 and State Development 705 in the amount of \$8,709.98 for a total amount of \$9,423.98 in accordance with Public Housing Notice

2017-17. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

Nays

**XII. Other Business/Late Communications**

There was no other business or late communications.

**XIII. Adjournment**

Veronica Miranda moved that the Board adjourn the Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 7:05 p.m. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

Ayes

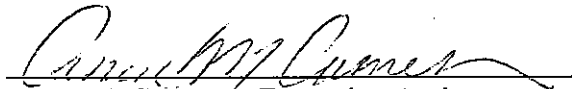
Charity Lezama  
John A. Boris  
Veronica Miranda

Nays

Respectfully Submitted,



Cathy Hoog, Executive Director

  
Anne M. Cameron, Executive Assistant