



Cathy Hoog, Executive Director

Main Office and Public Housing Department
27 Charter Street, Salem, MA 01970

Section 8 Department & Procurement/Modernization
136 Canal Street, Suite 2, Salem, MA 01970

Telephone: 978-744-4431 Fax: 978-744-9614
Website: www.salemha.org

**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2023
6:00 p.m.**

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

II. Roll Call

Present

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Absent

Carly McClain was absent

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

III. Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

John A. Boris moved to accept the Minutes of the Special Meeting held on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. Charity Lezama seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Veronica Miranda moved to accept the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, October 11, 2023. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays



IV. Tenant/Public Engagement

Charity Lezama – As a reminder, please state your name and address for the record.

Sue Kirby – 45 St. Peter Street, President of the Morency Manor Tenants Association and also work part-time at Mass Union for Public Housing Tenants. There is a lot of change that is happening on the Board. It has come to my attention that there has been discussion behind the scenes about the next Chair. The next logical Chair when it changes should be the tenant who is on the Board, Veronica Miranda. She was jumped over. She has been on the Board longer than anyone else. She is also a particularly unique human being. She is a tenant and she is getting her Masters. She is an African American woman and she is gay. All of the things that we have never seen on the Board here in Salem. There has been a history of people of European descent who own their own homes. I want to shine some light on that in terms of the makeup and diversity of the Board. I was on the Board for about 2.5 years and was never considered to have a role as an officer on the Board and then the mayor spoke up and said that I should be the Second Vice Chair. I do think that we have a real opportunity here. It seems to me that this is a trend on Housing Authority Boards that tenants are placed below other people and assume that they aren't smart enough or too connected to the tenants. She has everything that you need there. I wanted to make sure that I raised that here. I also want to bring up that these meetings should be held in the tenant buildings that have rooms. Once again, nobody is here. I really think it would be the tenants, management, and Board together and have the tenants participate in the decisions that are being made. Thank you.

Charity Lezama – Thanks Sue. What I heard is that you are advocating for Veronica to be the Chair. We are not voting on that tonight. I have one more meeting but we will certainly take it under advisement.

Sue Kirby – I don't know that she wants it. It is the process that is taking place that is a red flag.

Gene Collins – 4 Pioneer Terrace, President of the Pioneer Terrace Tenants Association. Mr. Collins commented as follows:

I would like to chime in on what Sue said. The idea that a senior person is overlooked should not happen. I hope that the new, responsible Board Member when the time comes to vote for that position will do the right thing for the City of Salem. Further comments are as follows:

- Is there a preference for Salem Seniors at Salem Housing Authority?

Cathy Hoog – As an applicant?

Gene Collins – Yes.

Cathy Hoog – Yes, as an applicant a Salem Resident would have a local preference. A local preference would put someone higher up on the list. If they live or work in Salem. There is senior housing so they would go on that list.

Gene Collins – I understand that. The reason I bring this up is that a lot of the buildings were dedicated for seniors and the funding and so forth. I don't think that that is happening now it the elderly and handicapped. I think this should be looked into.

Gene Collins – I asked the question – When the tenants ask the Board questions, when is the Board going to get back to us. This is not the first time I have asked this question. I am asking again what proper format you want it to be in. Each time there is no response. This is quite a few times that I have asked how we can communicate and how we can have better communications and better outcomes for the issues that we have. I would like clarification on the turnover rate. The reason I am bringing this to the Board is that I am not getting any other feedback. The regulations allow us to go to the Board and ask the Board for relief. Mr. Collins also commented on the SHA wanting to hire an in-house Housing Inspector. That raises a red flag. The reason we have inspectors is to get an independent review of the units. I think that the Board should take a look at that at hiring an in-house inspector. There will be no independent review. Mr. Collins commented that he saw a hook-up for Dish TV and Pioneer Terrace is not included. The last issue Mr. Collins commented on was they are having a towing problem at Pioneer Terrace. I asked for a copy of the Towing Policy. We have an issue and people without cars are calling the towing company or people who have cars. The tow trucks waits for someone to come out and leave their car. That is not good. Please take a look at that. It is a very expensive issue. Thank you.

Charity Lezama – Thanks Gene.

Gene Collins – The Board really needs to take more responsibility as to what happens at the Salem Housing Authority election of the board.

Charity Lezama – Thanks Gene.

V. Report of the Executive Director

- See Executive Director's Report Attached – November 2023

Cathy Hoog – Summarized in detail her Executive Director Report for the Board .

Aaron Paternoster – Is there any type of labor agreement with Callahan for the actual construction of Leefort Terrace?

Cathy Hoog – I have not seen the contract. They did vet the general contractor through a quoting/bid process and Callahan was chosen. They are going to have a contract that outlines all of the expectations. In terms of the bidding laws and procurement, they are not subject to the same ones that we are. The developer initially worked with Callahan on some of the preliminary designs and scoping out the possibilities of the property while we were going through all of the feasibility phases and they were really fantastic to work with so I am not surprised that they had made a decision to continue to work with them. The Housing Authority is involved every step of the way through out this construction process. We will absolutely hold them accountable for everything they need to be held accountable for in terms of safety and security and ensuring that they are upholding their end of the deal.

Aaron Paternoster – Is it possible to obtain a copy of the bid spec?

Cathy Hoog – yes, we can do that.

Veronica Miranda – I have a question around the new vacancy initiative. That is great they we are helping those authorities. How did we get involved in that? Did EOHLC reach out to the housing authority or did the housing authority need to apply?

Cathy Hoog – EOHLC reached out to us as a result of the status of our agency in terms of our scoring, our vacancy rate, our performance management reviews. They felt as though the SHA would be a good choice in helping others succeed.

Cathy Hoog – The majority of the staff do overtime so it is a great opportunity for them to earn extra money. Any Maintenance Staff that would like to work overtime, after hours or on the weekends has an opportunity to help out other communities and make some extra money. If we were going to assist with CHAMP, that could be done during the day and the staff that would help out would also earn extra money for that because they would be doing extra duties. So, the agencies that qualify would be able to get the money back through a budget exemption. It is a win, win for everybody.

Veronica Miranda – thank you.

Cathy Hoog – There is a Public Housing Notice that came out about that. I can send that along if you would like. It is in an effort to help agencies who are struggling with vacancies. There is a very intense need for people to find housing. It is important that EOHLC see that vacancies get filled.

Veronica Miranda – 100%. I want to be cautious; I don't know what our bandwidth is looking like but I know that our developments need a lot of work so I am wondering how much energy is going to different places.

Cathy Hoog – The day to day operations falls under the purview of the Executive Director and I would not accept to offer help if we couldn't manage that.

Veronic Miranda – thank you.

Aaron Paternoster – Are there considerations to increase the maintenance head count at our agency?

Cathy Hoog – At this point, no. We could at some point consider it. We are feeling solid about how we are managing it all. In the future, there will be opportunities for hiring additional staffing.

Aaron Paternoster – If we were to post a requisition for two additional maintenance staff, is that something that Salem alone will be able to pursue?

Cathy Hoog – It would come through a budget presentation. Every year our budget gets presented to the Board and we have our fee accountant come and do a line by line review and answer questions the Board has. It is a great opportunity to get to know how the budgeting works in our agency and across the state. The Budget Presentation will be coming up at the February meeting. Dependent upon the financing and the structure and how much money we receive from the State Budget has a large impact on what we are able to do from year to year. We would then add it to our budget and present it to the Board at that time for consideration.

Aaron Paternoster – Beyond that budget review, is there a process or mechanism if we decide midway through the year that we need to hire another person?

Cathy Hoog – Yes, I would then make a case and present a new hire to the Board. All new hires are presented to the board. We would vet them out and do the interviewing and there is also resident participation in that process and we would seek feedback from residents and then present the candidate to the Board for consideration and if the budget allows for it mid-year it is very doable. Typically, we look at that at budget cycle because we know what we are getting for the next year.

Discussion ensued amongst the Board Members.

VI. Communications

- Updated Waitlist

- SHA Department Reports (Move In, Move Out, State and Federal, CHAMP Report, Modernization Report, Voucher Report, Family Self-Sufficiency Report, Resident Service Coordinator Reports, and Completed Work Orders for Month of October 2023)
- Picture of SHA Tenants at the Mass Union of Public Housing Tenants Convention in October 2023.

Veronica Miranda – Just wanted to shout out to Mass Union of Public Housing Tenants – it is so great that we were able to send so many tenant leaders and tenants there to learn and build solidarity and gain community. I wanted to say out loud how awesome the Family Self-Sufficiency Program is. Seven people being in the program already is amazing. I am glad to see that in the works.

VII. Reports of the Committees

There were no reports of the Committees.

VIII. Unfinished Business

- Salem Housing Authority – By Laws

Charity Lezama – is it possible to vote individually on each section? I would like to work a little more on Section 14. I understand the intent. I need a little more time to review the language and make it a little clearer as to what the Board’s role is on that.

Veronica Miranda – Is there something specific?

Charity Lezama – My concern is that it is not clear on the “how” piece. I understand the intent behind it. It is developing a review process. We need to be sure we are putting something in there as to what our role is and how we are going to do that. This could be interpreted and implemented in many different ways. I want to be mindful that there are people trying to run the organization while we are supporting them in our role. I need more clarity on that from my lens.

Veronica Miranda – I know that our role as Commissioners that we are providing oversight of the organization as a whole and the Executive Director. I agree that part can be a little sticky. I am wondering since these specific recommendations have been in the works for some time if we can pass certain parts of the By-Laws.

Charity Lezama – I am fine with everything else except section 14. Aaron, have you had a chance to read them and do you have any feedback?

Cathy Hoog – I have a question on Section 8. It has been added that my compensation is determined by the Authority but it is actually determined by State Regulation. In terms of the Executive Director’s compensation and hiring is written into regulatory language and it is pretty specific. I want to be careful around the way that is worded. We have to follow the regulatory process and there is a compensation worksheet.

Veronica Miranda – My understanding is that there are minimums and maximums. It is up to us as a Board to go into Executive Session particularly around ED evaluation and discuss using data to figure out how we want to compensate the Executive Director. You came into the position with a lot of experience. If we decided 10 years from now that if we wanted to hire an ED and they did not have as much experience we wouldn’t want to start at the top. We would want to have a discussion about that as a Board and talk about how we want to compensate.

Cathy Hoog – The ED Salary discussion does not happen in Executive Session. It is a public process. I want to be careful about regulations because the regulations are clearly defined. It is about 12 pages. The compensation worksheet aligns with the size of the agency. It is really about the responsibilities and the size of the agency that outlines the compensation of the ED. I encourage you to think about that language because it is not accurate.

Veronica Miranda – To be clear, there is a certain number and we have to pay that amount? Is that what you mean?

Cathy Hoog – There is a number that calculates the standard for the Executive Director based on the size of the agency.

Veronica Miranda – Do we have to pay that amount?

Cathy Hoog – Why wouldn’t you want to?

Veronica Miranda – I am asking, do we have to pay that amount?

Cathy Hoog – That would be the standard based on research conducted by EOHLC based on the national pay rates for people in this position. I am not sure why you wouldn’t want to pay it.

Veronica Miranda – I am not saying that it is not the salary that they deserve or that they should have to run a large organization.

Cathy Hoog – I am not sure I understand what you are saying. What are you saying?

Veronica Miranda – What I understood from what you said is that the salary is determined by outside agencies and there is a number and that number is the only number that we are allowed to pay the ED. Is that correct?

Cathy Hoog – The worksheet sets a standard for what EOHLC believes is deserved based on the size of the Authority.

Veronica Miranda – We as a Board have to be within the parameters of minimums or maximums but we as a Board decide what the compensation of the ED is.

Cathy Hoog – Based on the worksheet, yes.

Veronica Miranda – We do not have to automatically have to go with the minimum.

Cathy Hoog – If a Board decided to pay an ED less than what they deserved, the Board could do that. I don't know why a Board would want to do that.

Veronica Miranda – Respectfully, that is irrelevant. I am trying to see what our role is as a Board and I understand our role. I pulled this from another housing authority. I understand our role from everything that I have read about Board Commissioners for setting the compensation for the ED. That was important to add in there because other Board Members might not be aware.

Cathy Hoog – The guidelines were more recently updated following the 2014 Act to Local Housing Authorities that was passed. If you pulled it from another housing authority's By-Laws it may have been an older one. After that Act there were a number of changes that took place about the process for hiring, the procurement process, the compensation and how it is calculated, the percentage of increase is different too so EOHLC sets the standard specifically for Executive Directors outside of staff. All of the regulatory language is fairly new in comparison to years ago.

Veronica Miranda – So, there isn't a set amount?

Cathy Hoog – There is a set amount based on the size of the agency. That is to be used for a recommendation.

Veronica Miranda – so a recommendation and the Board ----

Cathy Hoog - If the Board pays the ED less than what they deserve, that could happen, yes.

Veronica Miranda – Thank you for phrasing it that way. Very passive aggressively. I know there are Executive Sessions for non-profits when talking about compensation for the ED and evaluating the ED. There is a whole process that the Board goes through in

terms of how we want to do that and I am wondering if that is the same here. I heard you, Cathy, say that we do not do Executive Session for this process. I am wondering your thoughts on that.

Charity Lezama – I think that each non-profit is different and what their By-Laws call for. What I am hearing from Cathy and my understanding is that this language didn't jump out at me because I feel like that was already our role. I also understand what Cathy is saying in the sense of wanting to be clear and recognizing and honoring all the work that has been done by the State and Federal Government to develop those recommendations. They are based off of a lot more data than what we have. From my perspective the most important job of this Board is to attract and attain the highest talent that we possibly can to run the organization. From my perspective, I would not want to jeopardize the opportunity to keep a really strong ED by compensation. It is important for me and hearing Cathy's concerns, I want to look at that. The 12 pages of regulatory language that Cathy referenced and give direction to Board Members on how to determine the compensation. I hear what you are saying in the sense that there is a range and guidelines that we are given to approve salary increases.

Cathy Hoog - the guidelines also outline that the process has to be public. The ED Salary calculation and process is highly regulated in that we are upheld by State and Federal Regulations. It also outlines that the ED Salary calculation process happen publicly not in Executive Session. Contract negotiations is a reason to go Executive Session but it would be for union and other personnel related matters that would be appropriate for Executive Session. I am subject to public review. The ED Employment Contract specifically can go into Executive Session for negotiations.

Veronica Miranda – Thank you. In terms of all of that, I was to be crystal clear putting that language in the By-Laws and talking about it was never to say that we should be paying an ED less. I thought it was important to clarify our roles as Board Commissioners and I don't want my words or concerns for this addition to the By-Laws to be misconstrued as a way of paying someone less than they deserve because I do not believe in that. From someone who lives in poverty, it is very important that people are paid what they deserve. I want to make that clear. This isn't a personal thing. This is not personal to you Cathy. It is something that I saw in other By-Laws and I thought it might be important especially for new people coming on the Board.

Charity Lezama – Thanks Veronica.

Aaron Paternoster – I do have a comment about Section 14. I am new to the Board. This is only my second meeting. What I heard was having proper venues for the LTOs to relay concerns to the Board. Essentially, it appears that once a month this is the

opportunity. It appears that there is a focus on empowering the LTOs and I am wondering if it is worth considering adding a commitment (I am not saying that commissioners need to attend all LTO meetings regularly but perhaps a commitment to be present whether or not commissioners engage and give feedback but to at least be present. It would be beneficial to have commissioner presence occasionally interacting with the LTOs. I don't expect us to be solving day-to-day problems. That is not our purview but another way to get a feel for whether or not policies are being implemented as intended.

Charity Lezama – There are 4 recommendations that we may need to table for further discussion. I need to read more thoroughly behind Section 8 and Section 14. Initially I didn't have a reaction to that because I feel like that is our role right now and we are already doing that. Listening to Cathy's feedback, I want to give it more thought before we add that in there. I am comfortable voting on the first page tonight and the last one which is rearranging the order.

Cathy Hoog – One minor change on the order. My ED Report should come after Tenant/Public Engagement. IV is Tenant/Public Engagement and V is my ED Report.

Charity Lezama – We will move the ED Report and place it after Tenant/Public Engagement. Is anybody opposed to that? Does everyone feel comfortable voting on those two items tonight.

Veronica Miranda, John Boris, and Aaron Paternoster – Yes.

Charity Lezama – We will table Section 8 and Section 14. It seems like Aaron Paternoster has some changes for Section 14 as well.

Veronica Miranda – I am okay with tabling those items.

Charity Lezama – I make a motion to approve the recommended changes to Section 4. and Section 5. to the By-Laws as presented. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Charity Lezama – At the December Board Meeting we will revisit Section 8. and Section 14. In the meantime, if we have strong feelings about re-wording it, we can work together so that it is presented in time.

Veronica Miranda – We need to have that to the Board Members 7 days prior to the board meeting.

Charity Lezama -Thanks everyone for your feedback.

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 October 1, 2023 through October 31, 2023 as presented. Charity Lezama seconded the motion and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

XI. New Business

Year End Submissions

Cathy Hoog – For our new board member, at the end of our fiscal year we are obligated to submit a number of documents that round out the year. Those documents are included in your board packets. The first one included our operating statements for year end. The State requires us to submit a certification of the Top 5 paid employees in the agency and a certificate of compliance with notification procedures for Federal and State Lead Paint Laws. Those 3 things require a separate vote. I am happy to answer questions on each of them. They only require these items once a year so it is understandable if it gets fuzzy.
Veronica Miranda – Why do they want those 3 items together?

Cathy Hoog – The Top 5 Compensation and Year Ends make sense. With the Act of 2014 there was a tremendous amount of transparency that needed to come to fruition. There were a lot of regulatory changes as a result. There is a reason for publicly sharing the Top 5 compensated employees because of history issues with other agencies so rounding out the year end and reporting that publicly makes sense. I think the Lead Paint Compliance is something that need once a year and they put the vote in with the end of the year operating statements so that people don't forget.

Quarterly Operating Statements (Quarter Ending 9/30/23) and Year End Financial Statements (FYE 9/30/23) for Programs 4001 and MRVP

Cathy Hoog presented the Quarterly Operating Statements (Quarter Ending 9/30/23) and Year End Financial Statements (FYE 9/30/23) for Programs 4001 and MRVP and request signatures for same.

Charity Lezama moved to accept the Quarterly Operating Statements (Quarter Ending 9/30/23) and Year End Financial Statements for Fiscal Year Ending 9/30/23 for Programs 4001 and MRVP. John A. Boris seconded the motion, and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Fiscal Year End 9/30/2023 Certification of Top 5 Compensation Form

In accordance with the request of EOHLC Cathy Hoog will submit to the Board the Fiscal Year End 9/30/2023 Certification of Top 5 Compensation Form. Cathy Hoog will submit the Top 5 Compensation Form to EOHLC together with said Certification.

Veronica Miranda moved to certify and execute Fiscal Year End 9/30/2023 Top 5 Compensation Form as submitted by Cathy Hoog for the Salem Housing Authority to be submitted with year end documentation. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Certification of Compliance with Notification Procedures for Federal and State Lead Paint Laws

The Executive Director will present the Certification of Compliance with Notification Procedures for Federal and State Lead Paint Laws.

Charity Lezama moved to certify and execute the Certification of Compliance with Notification Procedures for Federal and State Lead Paint Laws as submitted by Cathy Hoog, Executive Director for the Salem Housing Authority to be submitted with year end

documentation. Veronica Miranda seconded the motion and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Cathy Hoog's Performance Evaluation

The Board Members discussed Cathy Hoog's performance evaluation.

Charity Lezama – Cathy Hoog's Performance Evaluation is a public process. We used a new evaluation this year that was still a little challenging for us to use but much better than last year's . I was able to give a lot more feedback this year so I do appreciate that. After reviewing the evaluations that were submitted the majority of the board members gave Cathy 4s and 5s. From my lens, I want to hi-light and from your performance the importance of running a large organization, is attracting and retaining talented staff and how far that goes in order for us to accomplish our obligations from an operations perspective and also in serving the community that you are serving is so critical and I think that the retention that you have had on your leadership team and your staff team really shows the strengths that you bring to the role outside of money that you have brought in in the last year and your comprehensive knowledge of it all. From my lens, I want to bring that to forefront you are able to lead a staff team that has proven excellence that has been recognized by the State by them continuing to ask you to do more. Also, retention of staff, you can't downplay the fact that it is so important and critical in the work that you do. It starts at the top. I want to really recognize that in my comments. Overall, it was a really super successful year. I had an opportunity to review all of the reviews that you received and they are really solid.

Cathy Hoog – Thank you. I appreciate that.

Aaron Paternoster – Cathy is very accessible in helping me navigate my way.

Cathy Hoog – If you have any questions at all anytime, please do call. It is a lot of data, a lot of information and a lot to process. I will help you in any way along the way in helping you understand it all.

Aaron Paternoster – I will also say as the new labor appointee, I can tell by discussions that you care for your staff which is great and that is very important to me that you take of the people who work for you.

Cathy Hoog – They are the reason we are so successful. The leadership is important but the management structure and all of the people that make the day to day happen is the reason why we are so successful. I commend them and I probably could do it more. We have an awesome team and the recognition is very much appreciated. It means a lot to us to be recognized by the State and Federal Government. It is tough work. We are all here because we enjoy it.

John Boris – Thank you so much.

Veronica Miranda – I want to say publicly that I did not fill out the evaluation form and I don't know what happened to my brain the last couple of months but I was under the impression that it was February that we did the evaluation. My apologies for not bringing this up sooner. It is great that there is a different evaluation form. When comparing the two evaluation forms, it seems like all of the things that were on there were taken from the other one or a lot of things were taken from the other one. I also did not have data. Again, this is on me for not raising it sooner. I don't think I should evaluate from personal feelings or what I remember in the past year. In order to have the most objective evaluation that we can that it would be helpful to get some data and that is something we do on the other board that I am a part of.

Charity Lezama – Veronica, what kind of data are you looking for because we have a lot of data that we are given each month. That was where I was able to pull some of my feedback from and also Cathy's ED Report where she highlights the financials and there are also a lot of state evaluations that the organization has to go through. Are you looking for them to pull that together for you?

Veronica Miranda – more concise data for example: these are the things that happened over the last year that Cathy lead. I agree with you and I read them all at each meeting. It is hard to come down to the end of it and then try to remember what it was and then go into all of the emails and pull all of the packets hurts to do that. I am wondering if we could have a more organized process not only in what we are asking. It would have been helpful to have something around values on the evaluation. I have been able to pull some values and her behaviors and the way that she runs things. For an example, that Cathy values the staff and wanting the best for them. My idea is to have a more concise thing that the ED presents for us to use for consideration of the evaluation.

Charity Lezama – What I am hearing is for the board to redesign the annual performance review and then you are asking Cathy to do a self-evaluation. You are asking Cathy to do a self-evaluation and compile all of her work for the year and present it to the Board.

Veronica Miranda – No, I don't want that because it would be 1,000 pages.

Cathy Hoog – The intent of the monthly data that we present is in an effort to help the board oversee the operational success of the agency. All of the areas of the day-to-day operations are presented in data each month.

Veronica Miranda – having certain data laid out is very important.

Charity Lezama – I think there are other tools that you can use. Last year I asked Cathy to send me the goals she had set for herself. What are Cathy’s goals in 2024 and then she could share those goals in January 2024 and then you have some benchmarks to look towards. I think it is important that Cathy know what you are evaluating her on.

Whatever you decide on, it is important for her to know what she is being evaluated on. I think we can all agree based on these monthly meetings and all of the data that is presented to us each month that there has never been any alarms. It has always been a well-run authority and Cathy and her team have consistently met all of the benchmarks that have been set by the State and has been very responsive to us as a Board and to the community and reacting to that as much as she can within her power to meet the needs. From my lens, super.

Cathy Hoog – thank you for all of that. I really appreciate it. For our new board member, there are other methods of evaluating and monitoring the success of the authority through the State and Federal Government we are audited intensely on many aspects of our operations. There is also a performance management review where the State comes through and inspects our properties and common areas and there are extensive financial audits and they issue a resident satisfaction survey to the residents and that is part of the public performance manage review in various areas safety, security, maintenance of the housing authority. We recently decided to create our own satisfaction survey to see if we could collect more data in that area. There are a number of things that come down the pike throughout the year to the commissioners to outline where the end results are. You will receive that in a palpable report with data that shows how the authority is doing. There are a number of different opportunities, aside from the monthly data that is presented, to draw conclusions about the operations of the agency.

Sue Kirby – We just had our recertification and I did not get a survey. How can that be included in the performance evaluation?

Charity Lezama – I think wherever you all land in the new year as a Board whatever data points are important then you can pull them out and follow them. It is important to have Cathy be aware of that. I think tenant surveys is a great one.

Veronica Miranda – All of that is measurable. I often get lost in the bigger more macro ideas so if there is something that we had like the goals for year that Cathy had for the year and we are going based off of that. I think it is a more objective way of looking at

things if someone doesn't have the time to go back into all the packets and pull out the Executive Director Reports. Second to that, I want to say as a commissioner and some of that may be on me in terms of not feeling like our roles are clearly defined. It took a while for me to realize that and I had to do a lot of research on my own to try and figure that out. This commission set the mission for the organization and then we expect Cathy to carry it out. Those are my thoughts around the evaluation. I felt like I could not fairly and accurately evaluate. I am looking for more measurable data.

Aaron Paternoster – Is this typically the timing of the performance evaluation.

Cathy Hoog – Yes.

Aaron Paternoster – I may have missed something but it sound like there is an end of the year report.

Cathy Hoog – No, there is not. We have annual audits, performance management reviews, inspections, and resident satisfaction surveys. All of that data happens throughout the year.

Aaron Paternoster – Would it be possible to get a high-level summary as opposed to digging through month-to-month board packets? This may aid in completing the performance evaluation and it would be helpful to have some sort of a quick summary.

Cathy Hoog – yes, sure. Just as a reminder there is mandatory State Board Member Training that is every two years. It is helpful because it highlights regulatory changes, the position of the Board, anything that is new and different that has changed. That process is fairly new as well which was a part of the 2014 regulatory shift which was to ensure that Board Members received regular training and support to fully understand what their role is. It is a very valuable resource. It would be easy for us to summarize the data points for sure.

Veronica Miranda – I think that it is important not to rely on State and Federal audits and to use that as a reason for us to not due our due diligence as Board Members. We are signing off on this and there is a Board for a reason. We are to provide oversight and that is our roll and it is spelled out in a million different ways in different places. Just wanted to name some of the issues like what happened at the Chelsea Housing Authority, I am sure that they were turning in their documents with the State as well or maybe not. I think it is important to have things in our policies to hold Board Commissioners accountable and for the Board Commissioners to have oversight.

Charity Lezama – Is that in reference to the By-Laws or Cathy's Evaluation.

Veronica Miranda – It was when we were discussing Cathy’s evaluation and all of the oversight, audit and reviews the agency has to go through as a state entity.

Quote to Conduct the Annual Single Audit and Agreed Upon Procedures

Cathy Hoog presented to the Board of Directors Quote to Conduct the Annual Single Audit and Agreed Upon Procedures.

Cathy Hoog – It is time for us to procure another auditor for the next 3 years and we did receive a quote from Marcum and the amount was \$96,000. 00 for 3 years. We are presenting this to the Board tonight. We are required on an annual basis to submit an AUP as well as a single federal audit. These auditors go through our financial records, our tenants’ accounts receivables, our tenants’ files, and the calculation of tenant rents as well as our modernization contracts and expenses on an annual basis. The state extended us another year to use Marcum for the AUP audit because it has been very difficult to find a firm. The state will be issuing another RFP to hopefully a larger pool of auditors for housing authorities to choose from. It is limited at this time.

Charity Lezama moved to accept the lowest, responsible and responsive quote from Marcum, LLP in the amount of 96,000.00 for three years to conduct the Annual single Audit (Three Years) for fiscal years ending September 30, 2023, September 30, 2024 and September 30, 2025 and Agreed Upon Procedures (One Year) for fiscal year ending September 30, 2023. Veronica Miranda seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Certificate of Substantial Completion as of October 6, 2023 for EOHLIC Project Number 258166 Waterproofing and Brick Repointing at Phillips House.

Cathy Hoog presented to the Board of Directors Certificate of Substantial Completion as of October 6, 2023 for EOHLIC Project Number 258166 Waterproofing and Brick Repointing at Phillips House.

Debbie Tucker – This project was for waterproofing and brick repointing at the Phillips House which is our family handicapped building. The contractor did a fabulous job. We received some CPA funding for it so we are happy to say that this project is complete. There is a ladder for the interior attic that is on order and taking forever to get. All of the other work has been completed.

Cathy Hoog – A special thanks to the City of Salem CPA Committee for supporting us. It is a historic building and it was in touch shape.

Aaron Paternoster – How long did the repointing take?

Debbie Tucker – it wasn't long at all. I think it was a couple of months.

Charity Lezama moved to accept the Certificate of Substantial Completion as of October 6, 2023 for 258166 Waterproofing and Brick Repointing at Phillips House. Veronica Miranda seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Wage Match Guidelines

The Executive Director will present the Wage Match Acknowledgement Regarding Confidentiality of Information and DOR Disclosure and Security Training for Safe Guarding Information as per Public Housing Notice 2019-16.

Cathy Hoog – On an annual basis we need to certify our staff and ensure that they are board approved and signing off on the document that states that they will follow procedures and protocol for assessing wage match. It is a software program that the housing authority utilizes as a third-party verification system that is used to verify income and to ensure that people still qualify for the subsidy that they receive. It is a process that is taken very seriously because it protected information and data. On an annual basis we have our employees who are authorized named publicly and our request to allow them access. They must sign off on certifications that they abide by the rules and procedures in accessing wage match.

Anne Cameron – The staff that has access to the system are:

Maureen Thomas
Joshua Bocko
Massiel Garcia
Alexandra Rodriguez

Cathy Hoog – They are the staff that access the system and they would be required to sign the certification certifying that they will follow protocol rules and procedures and protect the data that they access.

Veronica Miranda – Why does the Board have to vote on updated PHN Notices? Did the Board always have to vote on PHN Notices?

Cathy Hoog – No, I think the way this is worded may be a little confusing. We are only referencing a PHN that laid out the requirements for this process.

Veronica Miranda – okay. Why do we have to vote on it? This is the only option, correct? Or do we have other options?

Cathy Hoog – We really don't have other options. The point of this procedure is to hold people accountable to ensure that they are publicly named. It is recognized as a process that is important and sensitive and that we need to be responsible for the data.

Veronica Miranda – Okay. Does this change in terms of when people change their income when they need to submit all of the bank statements and documentation. Does it change anything? Is this the sheet where we give our Social Security number and then the organization does what they do?

Cathy Hoog – Yes. There is an authorization for the resident to sign that explains that we are required to get their prior authorization and that is something that the auditors look for specifically because of the reliance on the state resources for the subsidy we have to ensure that the income is being reported accurately.

Veronica Miranda – okay. I would like to look into that a little bit and the reason why is because I would like to know if that is an option where housing authorities cannot have to go by wage match guidelines but I found as a tenant and other tenants that I speak to that the process of applying and certifying and changing your income and updating your income to be incredibly invasive. Even though the organization has our social security number and they can see what we do, we also provide 6 months of bank statements listing out everything. It feels very invasive as a tenant. I think it is one of those things that erodes a person's sense of dignity and economy. Again, not advocating for working around that system but highlighting the fact that if there is a way that we can verify with third party without being incredibly invasive, I think that we should look at it.

Cathy Hoog – I think we are talking about 2 separate processes. One is the interaction and the verification process that we collect and the third-party verification process that we are required to do. We are required to utilize this system so that we can verify that the income information is accurate. We have a similar process on the federal side of the program which is EIV (Enterprise Income Verification) basically it is the same thing just a different type of software. There is no way for us to get around the third-party verification. The recertification process itself sounds like something we could have some further conversations about for sure. There is a lot to it and it is based on the

requirements of the government. The flexibility is limited. We could talk about some ideas that you have.

Veronica Miranda – The third-party verification makes sense. I wonder if there are ways to ensure that the person is providing that verification while not going above and beyond to pull apart their finances. I agree with the third-party verification. How I understood it in the law is vague and that the Salem Housing Authority/Property Managers decide if the verification is enough in order for them to sign off on it. It does seem like there is a little bit of flexibility in terms of how much we can ask of people and maybe giving a little more grace and flexibility in the process.

Cathy Hoog – Points taken. I think it would be worth some further conversation.

Veronica Miranda – Thank you.

Charity Lezama – Specifically to this vote. We are not voting on any of the things you just spoke about. We are voting on the staff who have signed the certifications.

Veronica Miranda – Do we need to do that and if not, I would like to look at all of the other options instead of approving this option.

Charity Lezama – We are not approving the Wage Match Guidelines. We are approving that all four staff members above have signed the certification.

Veronica Miranda – Okay, got it.

Cathy Hoog – We have no choice in using the system. We have to use the system.

Veronica Miranda – okay, thank you,

Aaron Paternoster – in the event that there is a data breach, does the responsibility of remediation fall on the housing authority or does it fall on the state?

Cathy Hoog – It is a state run software program so I am assuming that the State would take responsibility for it. On the local level, we have an obligation to protect the data so we would hold responsibility for that.

Veronica Miranda – Don't we shred things pretty often.

Cathy Hoog – What we are allowed to shred – there are a whole set of laws on what we can and can't shred and what we can retain.

Veronica Miranda – got it.

Charity Lezama moves to approve and acknowledge that all authorized employees have read and thoroughly understand the contents of Public Housing Notice 2019-16 and that all authorized employees at the Salem Housing Authority have read and signed the attached “Acknowledgement Regarding Confidentiality of the Department of Revenue’s Information and DOR Disclosure and Security Training for Safeguarding Information and that all authorized employees have signed the acknowledgements and are on file at the SHA and authorize Cathy Hoog, Executive Director and Charity Lezama, Chair to execute a form named “Executive Director/Board Approval” to be sent to EOHLC. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes
Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Section 8 Management Assessment Plan (SEMAP)

The Executive Director will explain the Section 8 Management Assessment Plan (SEMAP) to the Board.

Cathy Hoog =- On an annual basis we are required to submit a certificate to the Federal Government to evaluate our Section 8 Program. We have to go through a number of indicators and go through random samples to ensure that we are up to par with the regulations 24CFR our federal regulations. We have passed all our indicators and we are now in a position to submit. It required a board vote. This is also subject to auditing. It is heavily reviewed by the federal annual audit as well. It is a self-assessment but it is also reviewed by a third party and verified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Veronica Miranda moved to approve the Section 8 Management Assessment Plan (SEMAP) as submitted and to authorize Cathy Hoog to submit said report to the

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). John A. Boris seconded the motion and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes
Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Negotiating Team - Union Negotiations between Salem Housing Authority and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employes Local 2742, Council 93 – September 2023

Cathy Hoog – last month we presented the negotiating team inadvertently leaving out Gary Dean. He is generally a part of the negotiation team as the Director of Maintenance. We would like to add him to the negotiation team. We have just started the process of the negotiations.

John A. Boris moved to appoint Gary Dean, Director of Maintenance, as an individual of the negotiating team along with Cathy Hoog and Christina Granese, Esq. for the Salem Housing Authority during Union Negotiations between Salem Housing Authority and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employes Local 2742, Council 93 – September 2023. Charity Lezama seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows:

Ayes

Charity Lezama
John A. Boris
Veronica Miranda
Aaron Paternoster

Nays

Annual Holiday Employee Luncheon

Cathy Hoog asked the Board of Directors for approval to hold the Annual Holiday Employee Luncheon on (date T/B/D) from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. for the Salem and Marblehead Housing Authority Employees

Cathy Hoog – Board Members we would appreciate the support to host our annual holiday luncheon. It is a lovely event. Everyone looks forward to it. We utilize unrestricted funds to provide lunch for our employees, which is very well received and appreciated on an annual basis. We would appreciate continued support.

Veronica Miranda – Did we vote on something like this already?

Cathy Hoog – We have two events per year. An appreciation luncheon event for our employees and we have a holiday luncheon.

Veronica Miranda – Okay.

Cathy Hoog – Thank you.

Charity Lezama moved to authorize Cathy Hoog, Executive Director to hold the Annual Holiday Employee Luncheon on (TBD) , 2023 from 12:00

noon to 3:00 p.m. at the cost of approximately Two Thousand Dollars (\$2000.00).
Veronica Miranda seconded the motion and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Charity Lezama

John A. Boris

Veronica Miranda

Aaron Paternoster

XII. Other Business/Late Communications

Veronica Miranda – For the next Board Meeting, can we make sure we prioritize being in a development?

Charity Lezama – Yes, noted. Thank you.

Veronica Miranda – Thank you.

XIII. Adjournment

Veronica Miranda moved that the Board adjourn the Special Meeting of November 15, 2022 at 7:45 p.m. John A. Boris seconded the motion and the **roll call** vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

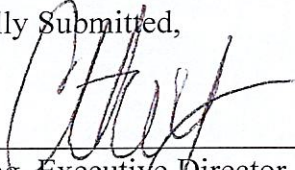
Charity Lezama

John A. Boris

Veronica Miranda

Aaron Paternoster

Respectfully Submitted,



Cathy Hoog, Executive Director



Anne M. Cameron, Executive Assistant