



Fort Lee Housing Authority

1403 Teresa Drive
Fort Lee, New Jersey 07024
Tel (201) 947-7400/7401
Fax (201) 947-9710

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE

MINUTES OF SCHEDULED MEETING

DECEMBER 4, 2024

1. **MEETING** called to order at 6:05 pm by Chairperson, C. Blue, via a Hybrid Meeting on December 4, 2024.
2. Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act the Chair read the following statement:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the following manner:

On December 6th, 2023, a notice of this meeting, setting forth the date, time and location of this meeting was posted on the Housing Authority's officially designated public bulletin board at 309 Main Street, Fort Lee, New Jersey, the authority's website and provided to The Record, The Jersey Journal and The Clerk of the Borough of Fort Lee.

The Secretary is hereby directed to enter into the minutes of this Meeting this public announcement.

3. **Roll Call:**

PRESENT: Commissioners, C. Blue, S. Bauer, R. Sohmer, D. Steinberg, E. O'Neill, A. Yook, J. Blau

ABSENT: None

4. **Minutes:**

Motion made by S. Bauer, seconded by J. Blau, to approve the Minutes of the meeting of November 6, 2024.

Discussion: Commissioner O'Neill said that the minutes and roll calls erroneously reflect her presence at the meeting but that she did not attend. Mr. Corriston indicated that the minutes would be revised to reflect the fact that she was not present and did not vote.

Roll call to approve the minutes (as amended to reflect Commissioner O'Neill's absence from the meeting):



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Ayes: C. Blue, S. Bauer, R. Sohmer, D. Steinberg, E. O'Neill, A. Yook, J. Blau
Nays: None
Abstain: None

5. Executive Director's Report:

Mr. Corrison advised the Board of the following:

Our holiday dinner will be rescheduled to next month as several Commissioners are unable to attend tonight.

We held a Thanksgiving luncheon for the seniors in the building which was well attended.

We are going to have a light lunch to celebrate the holidays at which time the seniors will get gift cards and cookie tins.

Hopefully, we will once again receive toys for the children in the building which are collected by the police department from residents of the apartment buildings in Fort Lee.

Mr. Corrison advised that for Thanksgiving we also gave out eight donated turkeys to families on the program.

We received our contract for the Community Development Block Grant in the sum of \$70,000.00 for Fire Alarm upgrades. We also received a grant for the FLASH program.

We have completed applications for the next round of CDBG funding which are due on December 20th. We are applying for funds to replace the key access for the doors, and to connect the fire standpipe and office to the standby generator.

At 8th Street we are applying for \$95,000.00 to supply and install security cameras, rehabilitate the damaged waste line and rehabilitate the retaining wall in the parking lot.



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Both tenants that had previously received Notices to Cease for lease violations have complied with the notices.

Inspections: 22 of 25 Housing Choice Voucher inspections were completed in December.

Work orders for the building are all up to date.

We have one vacancy in this building and two at 8th Street. Mr. Corrison indicated that we have difficulty leasing 8th Street because the units are very small and they are noisy due to noise from the apartments upstairs as a result of the way they were constructed. Comm. Blau said there was a product which he is installing in his home which is intended to soundproof the floors. He thinks it is called Whispermat. Mr. Corrison said he had already call our Architect, Mark Montalbano who is looking into a product for us as well and will get back to us with the results.

Our HCV utilization is at 100%. We are not issuing any new vouchers due to the high rents that our tenants are paying on the voucher program. Mr. Corrison does not see any change in the near future so we will hold off on opening the wait list.

Commissioner Bauer had some concerns about Resolution 2439 which is the Schedule of Meetings for 2025. She said January 6th is not a Wednesday and that October 1, 2025 is Yom Kippur. The Board agreed to change that meeting to Monday, October 6, 2025. The schedule will be revised to show that January 6th is a Monday, rather than a Wednesday.

Mr. Corrison reviewed the proposed Resolutions with the Board. They include the payment of bills and the Schedule of Meetings for 2025. There is also a Resolution regarding the Open Public Records Act (OPRA), naming the records custodian and adopting the new form provided by the State. Finally, we have the award of a contract for snow removal with Better Image Landscaping that has been very responsive in the past.



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6. RESOLUTIONS:

- a. A motion to adopt the following Resolutions by Consent was made by D. Steinberg and seconded by J. Blau.

2438- Payment of Bills

2439- Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to Publish the Meeting Dates for 2025 (as amended)

2440- Adopting and Mandating use of the Open Public Records (OPRA) request form pursuant to NJSA 47:1A-5(f) and designating Sylvia Ruiz as Records Custodian for the FLHA and Terrence J. Corriston as Alternate Records Custodian

2441- Authorizing the Executive Director to Execute a Contract for Snow Plowing/Removal Services for the Harry J. Holtje House with Better Image Landscaping, Inc. commencing December 7, 2024 to April 15, 2025.

Ayes:	C. Blue, S. Bauer, R. Sohmer, D. Steinberg, E. O'Neill, A. Yook, J. Blau
Nays:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

Mr. Corriston raised the issue of both cost of living and merit increases for the staff, at which point Ms. Ruiz left the meeting.

Mr. Corriston stated that we previously discussed merit/comparability increases for two staff members. The increases were included in the budget presented by Mr. Furlong. One was hired at around \$40,000.00 over the summer and was told that we would consider an increase at the end of her probationary period. We budgeted an increase to \$42,000.00. The other staff member started several years ago as a clerk/typist and is making about \$40,000.00. As we previously discussed, she is now a full caseworker and has not had any merit increase, so she was raised to \$45,000.00 in the new budget.



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After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Bauer seconded by Commissioner Steinberg to approve a 5% across the board increase for staff plus a \$500.00 net, one time holiday bonus.

Roll Call:

Ayes: C. Blue, S. Bauer, R. Sohmer, D. Steinberg, E. O'Neill, A. Yook, J. Blau
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The motion was approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Steinberg, seconded by Commissioner Bauer to increase the base salary for M. Sanchez to \$42,000.00 and to increase the base salary for C. Rodriguez to \$45,000.00

Roll Call:

Ayes: C. Blue, S. Bauer, R. Sohmer, D. Steinberg, E. O'Neill, A. Yook, J. Blau
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The motion was approved.

Mr. Corriston stated that he would like the Board to consider an increase for S. Ruiz in light of the excellent job she is doing in fulfilling the numerous duties she has taken on. The Board acknowledged that she was doing an excellent job, but some members felt that in light of the large increase she received when she was promoted and the 5% increase approved, it was not appropriate to provide an additional increase at this time. Some members suggested we hold off on any decisions about an increase until another time, perhaps after she has completed at least a year in the position.



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A motion was made by Commissioner Steinberg, seconded by Commissioner Bauer to increase the base salary for S. Ruiz by \$2,500.00.

Roll Call:

Ayes: C. Blue, S. Bauer, D. Steinberg,
Nays: R. Sohmer, E. O'Neill, A. Yook, J. Blau
Abstain: None
Absent: None

The motion failed.

Mr. Corriston thanked the Board on behalf of the staff and wished everyone a happy holiday.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by J. Blau seconded by R. Sohmer to adjourn the meeting at 6:39 pm.

Ayes: C. Blue, S. Bauer, R. Sohmer, D. Steinberg, E. O'Neill, A. Yook, J. Blau
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence Corriston
Executive Director

December 30th, 2024