



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

September 3, 2025

1. **MEETING** called to order at 6:01 pm by Executive Director, Terrence Corriston on September 3, 2025.

2. Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act the Executive Director read the following statement:

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

On December 22nd, 2024, 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 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 S. Bauer (Zoom initially, and then in person), E. O'Neill (Zoom), R. Sohmer (Zoom), D. Steinberg, (Zoom), Shari DePalma

ABSENT: A. Yook, C. Chung

ALSO PRESENT: Council Liaison Joseph Cervieri, Exec. Director Terrence Corriston, and Sylvia Ruiz

4. **Minutes:**

Motion made by Dolores Steinberg, seconded by Sherry Bauer, to approve the Minutes of the meeting of July 2, 2025.

Ayes: S. Bauer, D. Steinberg, E. O'Neill, R. Sohmer



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Nays: None
Abstain: Shari DePalma
Absent: A. Yook, C. Chung

5. Executive Director's Report:

Mr. Corrison advised the Board of the following:

Mr. Corrison welcomed Sharri DePalma, our new commissioner to the Board. She is part of the Raimondo family which donated the land where these buildings are built and are longtime supporters of the Fort Lee Housing Authority.

The auditor was here today for the Fort Lee Housing Authority Audit for 2024. Tom was here also to work with them on some final open matters. It was laborious process, particularly for Sylvia in getting all the documents requested by the auditor. We appreciate their hard work and hope to have positive results.

I had previously mentioned the impact of the proposed federal budget on housing. There are a lot of negatives in it for housing programs. For example, The President's budget proposal of block granting funding to the state. Which would mean that instead of HUD administering the programs, each state would get the money to administer their own housing program much like the unemployment and other state level programs. It would change everything we know about the program and states would run the programs differently. One of our major concerns are the cuts proposed for the housing programs and the community development programs. They are also talking about a 2-year limit for housing assistance except for the elderly and disabled participants. This would impact not only the residents but also the landlords and developers as well. This may also further the housing crisis because landlords are likely to be hesitant to rent to voucher holders knowing the 2-year limit and not knowing the end result if they will be able to pay the rent. The idea would be to force people to become more sufficient, but two years is such a short time. It is legal for housing authorities to implement this time limit now. There are housing authorities who have tried to do this but most have done away with it because it doesn't work. New budget proposals also include eliminating the Family



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Self Sufficiency program. Overall, the proposed budget is not good for housing.

Commissioner O'Neill asked if this would be better or worse for some states. Mr. Corrison advised that for some states it would be worse, but he doesn't know how it would impact New Jersey. One thing is if the states are going to take over it will be with less money and that is going to be the real problem. There will be 43% drop in assistance.

Commissioner DePalma asked what would happen to HUD. Mr. Corrison advised that they may eliminate or minimize its role in affordable housing. This is the President's budget and it is still up for debate.

Commissioner Bauer asked what would happen to the residents of our housing. Mr. Corrison advised that our seniors will not have to move out however the families would have to move when their time is up.

Commissioner Bauer advised that this would mean a bigger turnover.

Commissioner DePalma mentioned that the residents would not have to move out if they can afford their rent. Mr. Corrison replied that unless we give them some consideration and that's if we're allowed to. The point is that they want to make the housing available for more people.

Councilman Cervieri pointed out that our FSS program is designed to help people get off subsidy and we have had a lot of success. We should be the model for the state, if the state actually takes over.

Mr. Corrison reported that the wait list was opened and it went very smoothly. Thanks to the staff, they did a great job. Christina was in charge of it, and she did a really good job. A computerized lottery selected 300 people for our wait list.

HUD allows us to open our list for the preference of people who live or work in Fort Lee since our existing listed was depleted of this preference.

Mr. Corrison advised that he received an email from the investigator from US Attorney's office regarding our former Deputy Director and informing us that the County Prosecutor has decided not to pursue the case either.



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There is no law enforcement agency pursuing any claim against our former Deputy Director. He asked the Detective and was told that there were several factors including the age of our former Deputy Director. The Federal government also advised that because she had minimally benefited in comparison to how much she helped people who were in need. Even if she didn't follow the rules, they didn't want to pursue the case.

Commissioner Bauer walked into the meeting at this time.

Mr. Corrison introduced our accountant Thomas Furlong and said he will be giving a brief overview and answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Furlong went on to say that the auditor was in the office today completing the audit for 2024. Everything seemed to go well. Sylvia was running around making copies, getting files and doing everything which helped them move along quickly. This is the second year we've been with these auditors, so they are relatively new to us and they were hired relatively late and were rushing to get it done. It will be presented at our next meeting. I do not expect any findings this year. Last year we had the FSS Escrow which we have since straightened out and have gotten all the balances to them. The auditors were satisfied with it.

As Mr. Corrison mentioned that our fiscal year budget which begins January 1, 2025 is coming up so we have to present it to the Department of Community Affairs. We hope to do this in October.

2026 is going to be an interesting year because of the proposed federal budget. It is looking to cut administrative fees and HAP subsidies so we're going to have to work with our budget. There have been some staff changes, so I think that's going to help our budget. We have less staff, so I don't anticipate it being a difficult budget to balance. We do have a very good surplus here. We have put away about a million four through the years, which would help us sustain any cuts for the next few years. Hopefully these changes will not be long term.

Commissioner Bauer asked if it's possible that our Community Development grants could be cut. Mr. Furlong advised that this would be where the reserves come into play. Since we converted to RAD in 2018, we have been putting away money in an R&R account. We are in a good financial standing and if we have drastic cuts we'll deal with it at that point.



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One good thing is that we converted to RAD being that the government is attacking housing authorities that are still in public housing. They are forcing those housing authorities to convert to RAD by telling them if you don't use your funding you have to send it back, which is something we don't have to deal with. They have no right to request the money back from , however they could cut our subsidies or our administrative fees. They can also say, you have x amount of money so now our funding would be less because of what we have in reserve.

Commissioner Bauer asked if this could be done with the FSS money and Mr. Furlong advised that they will not touch that money.

Mr. Corrison advised the board that John Donovan, who has been our modernization coordinator for many years is retiring at the end of the month. He's helped with procurement and with engineering. He's a retired engineer for the Port Authority. I hope to enter into an interlocal agreement with Bergen County Housing Authority to help us with our procurement and those things. I believe we will save money and they have a great staff there that would be able to help us. I don't think we have to hire someone else to come in and do that job.

We are in the Joint insurance Fund and part of their plans and requirements is to have protection from cyber risks and computer risks. They find that the two biggest losses they face are workers comp and cyber-attacks. They have a lot of incentives to encourage you to reduce cyber-attacks. We went through a survey with our IT company, and it was found that we need to upgrade both our hardware and our software programs in order to meet the threshold that Joint Insurance Fund would like us to be at. Sylvia did a lot of homework to purchase under the state contracts for computers. It would be about \$11,000 to replace all computers and bring them up to date. The computers were purchased in 2014. We are cloud based. It will cost about \$1000 to do the computer set ups. We are going to purchase them through the state contract to make sure we get the best pricing. We do have the funds to do this and we also have wiggle room because of Lisa retiring and not hiring anyone to replace her at the moment and John retiring and hopefully working something out with Bergen County.

We are up to 522 vouchers issued with 7 or 8 looking for places to live. These are new people from our lottery waiting list. Commissioner Bauer asked if we had found any errors in the applications chosen in the lottery.



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Mr. Corrison and Sylvia advised that errors have been found, and in such cases the applicant's point score has been adjusted on the list.

Commissioner DePalma asked if they have to be housed in Fort Lee. It was advised that yes initially however if there is a hardship then there may be an exception.

Mr. Corrison reviewed the following proposed Resolutions with the Board:

- **Resolution 2468-** Bills for payment
- **Resolution 2469-** Resolution for Renewal of Membership in the New Jersey Public Housing Authority Joint Insurance Fund.

6. RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 2466- Bills for payment

A motion to adopt **Resolution 2468** was made by S. Bauer and seconded by D. Steinberg.

Roll Call:

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

Resolution 2469- Resolution for Renewal of Membership in the New Jersey Public Housing Authority Joint Insurance Fund.

A motion to adopt **Resolutions 2469** was made by S. Bauer and seconded by D. Steinberg.

Roll Call:

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



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7. OTHER BUSINESS.

Mr. Corrison advised that we received our SEMAP score of 93% which qualifies us as a high performer under HUD standards.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion made by S. Bauer, seconded by D. Steinberg, to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 pm.

Roll Call:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence Corrison
Executive Director