



# Fort Lee Housing Authority

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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 OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**December 3, 2025**

1. **MEETING** called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair, Sherry Bauer on December 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 22<sup>nd</sup>, 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, D. Steinberg, A. Yook, Shari DePalma, C. Chung, E. O'Neill (via Zoom), R. Sohmer (via Zoom)

ABSENT: Council Liaison Joseph Cervieri

ALSO PRESENT: Executive Director Terrence Corriston, Thomas Furlong (Accountant), and Sylvia Ruiz

4. **Minutes:**

Motion made by Dolores Steinberg and seconded by Shari DePalma, to approve the Minutes of the meeting of November 5, 2025.

Ayes: S. Bauer, D. Steinberg, A. Yook, Shari DePalma, C. Chung, E. O'Neill, and R. Sohmer

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None



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## **5. Executive Director's Report:**

Mr. Corriston advised the Board of the following:

Mr. Corriston congratulated Roberta Sohmer on being reappointed by Governor Murphy as Commissioner. She took the oath of office during the meeting.

We had a well-attended Thanksgiving Luncheon for the residents. The staff did a great job setting it up. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. It was a lot of fun. We had our first movie afternoon which Sylvia and Marleny put together. They had popcorn and showed "Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> St". While attendance for the movie was not high for this first event, there was enthusiasm for continuing with the program. We really appreciate the staff for doing this for our participants.

Mr. Corriston reported that the government shutdown has ended. He and Tom spoke with our HUD field representative as soon as she returned to make sure we were in good standing. She advised that we were one of the few housing authorities in New Jersey that is not in a shortfall this year.

Mr. Corriston advised that HUD has rescinded previous Fair Housing notices about criminal background checks for housing applicants. The previous notices from 2015, 2018, and 2022 regarding the cautious use of criminal background checks and providing a second chance for people with criminal records have been rescinded. The Trump administration is now focusing on safe housing and emphasizing the obligation to conduct criminal background checks.

There is a new law which was adopted last year and goes into effect in 2026 stating that public notices must be posted on the Housing Authority website. Newspaper readership is so low and newspapers have been closing. Our website must be our main focal point for notices. We must provide copies to the state as well as set up a dedicated section on our website for public notices. We also have to publish a notice in the newspaper every month for a year, stating that our public notices are on our website.

Grant applications will be submitted this week for the deadline of December 19<sup>th</sup>. The grant application for HJHH will be submitted for \$146,000 for exterior



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restoration and sidewalk repairs. The grant application for 8<sup>th</sup> Street will be for \$55,000 for exterior painting and fire escape maintenance.

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

- **2478-** Bills for payment
- **2479-** Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to publish the monthly Board of Commissioners' meeting to the various newspapers.
- **2480-** Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute a contract for Landscaping and Ground Maintenance services for calendar years 2026 and 2027 with the option for one or two additional years with Better Image Landscaping Inc.

Only one bid was received from our former landscaper who was better than our current one. The new contract is cheaper (\$5,024 vs \$5,200 for HJHH and \$2,419 vs \$3,700 for 1<sup>st</sup> St)

- **2481-** Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute a contract with Kraft Power Corporation for maintenance of the Standby Generator System at Harry J Holtje House in the amount of \$2,520 per year.
- **2482-** Resolution authorizing the submission of a late budget to the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

Our budget was submitted 6 days after the November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline to the state. It was late because we were waiting for the state figures on pension and health benefits. A resolution is required to acknowledge the late submission, however there are no penalties incurred for the late submission.

- **2483-** Resolution approving payment of additional insurance premiums for a portion of employees' 2026 State Health Benefits.

There is a 37% increase for the employee's share of their health benefit costs. This will cause two of our lowest paid employees to have a reduction



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in take-home pay despite their 4% salary increases. Mr. Corriston proposed that the Housing Authority cover 75% of the employees' share of the health benefits. The risk manager will continue exploring alternative health benefit plans.

Work orders are up to date. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, we have no vacancies. 8<sup>th</sup> St is also fully leased. All vouchers are up to date. We have several people looking for apartments at this time.

## 6. RESOLUTIONS:

A motion to approve the Resolutions by Consent Agenda was made by Dolores Steinberg and seconded by Chris Chang.

- **2478-** Bills for payment
- **2479-** Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to publish the monthly Board of Commissioners' meeting to the various newspapers.
- **2480-** Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute a contract for Landscaping and Ground Maintenance services for calendar years 2026 and 2027 with the option for one or two additional years with Better Image Landscaping Inc.
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The motion was unanimously approved.



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## 7. OTHER BUSINESS.

Ms. Ruiz exited the room while the commissioners discussed salaries, raises, and bonuses.

Commissioner Bauer indicated that in the past, employees were given a bonus in addition to the cost-of-living increase.

After discussion, Ashley Yook made a motion, seconded by Roberta Sohmer to give seven employees a bonus of \$500 net.

Roll Call:

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

After a brief discussion about Ms. Ruiz's salary, a motion was made to increase Ms. Ruiz's salary to \$86,000 by Commissioner Chang and seconded by Commissioner Steinberg.

Roll Call:

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

Commissioner Yook advised that she would have agreed to a lesser figure.

Commissioner Yook had a budget question regarding the Sundry expenses for Thomas Furlong, our accountant. She asked him to provide more detail in the Sundry accounting. Mr. Furlong agreed to do so.



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## 8. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion made by Ashley Yook and seconded by Chris Chang, to adjourn the meeting at 6:48 pm.

### Roll Call:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence Corriston  
Executive Director