



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 OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

February 4, 2026

1. **MEETING** called to order at 6:00 pm by Chair, Sherry Bauer on February 4, 2026.
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 30th, 2025, 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 Star Ledger and Clerk of the Borough of Fort Lee.

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

Roll Call:

PRESENT: Commissioners S. Bauer, D. Steinberg, Shari DePalma, R. Sohmer (via Zoom), E. O'Neill (via Zoom) arrived at 6:15pm.

ABSENT: Commissioner A. Yook, C. Chung, Council Liaison Joseph Cervieri

ALSO PRESENT: Executive Director Terrence Corriston, and Sylvia Ruiz

3. Minutes:

Motion made by Dolores Steinberg and seconded by Shari DePalma, to approve the Minutes of the meeting of January 7, 2026.

Ayes: S. Bauer, D. Steinberg, Shari DePalma, and R. Sohmer

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: A. Yook, C. Chung and E. O'Neill.



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4. Executive Director's Report:

Mr. Corriston advised the Board of the following:

Mr. Corriston advised the Board that we had a short government shut down that ended yesterday. We have spent about \$8,000 this month on snow removal on two events. The last one, Ulysses was able to get assistance from the school and used one of the school vehicles to plow because the snow was just so overwhelming. All things considered, we did a good job. We did have some gripes because tenants left their cars in the parking spots. If cars are not moved when the plows come they are unable to clean it properly. We we arranged for the company to notify Mike and Carlos, since they live in the building, and let them know when they are on the way so they can knock on some doors so the vehicles can be moved and the plowing can be more effective. Commissioner Shari advised that the town had arranged for cars to park off the street in several municipal parking lots and the residents would be shuttled to their homes which may be an option for our tenants.

The request for proposals has been posted in the paper for Architects and Engineers for our Community Development Block Grant work. At this site, the office electricity and the fire standpipe electricity will be connected to the standby generator as well as to upgrade the door access which has not been updated in a long time. We want to be aware of who and when someone gains access to the building and be able to grant or take away access to tenants.

We have received complaints about smoking in the building. In 2015, HUD mandated that all public housing facilities become smoke free. We were in the process of converting to RAD at that time, so we were not required to become smoke free. Many buildings are smoke free, and HUD encourages all buildings to go smoke free. I think it is time we do it. It is going to take some time. We do have a some tenants that smoke. There are two smokers in this building who voluntarily go outside to smoke and we have two smokers in the next building who smoke in their units. It has become a huge headache for the tenant above them because she is allergic. Sylvia went into the apartment of the neighbor above and it seemed like it was being done within that apartment. I'm looking for the Board support a smoking ban. Everyone is going to receive proper notice and we will have to amend the leases to reflect that policy. The damage smoking causes to the interior of the unit is significantly more costly to turnover. Keep in



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mind that if a tenant is not happy, they are free to move somewhere else once a voucher becomes available.

There are smoke detectors that are designed to detect smoking in units that are being presently used by Woodbridge that do work.

The other request for proposal we put out was for Risk Management Services. We have had great service from Otterstedt, but it was only a one-year contract to see how it worked. This one will be for a multi-year contract. They are great in keeping us up to date with ways to improve safety, safe environment and personnel issues and working with Joint Insurance Fund (JIF). They make sure we stay compliant and they give us a lot of advice overall. They are helping us investigate alternative health insurance and checking how much we can save on that.

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

- **2487-** Bills for payment
- **2488-** Resolution adopting a Cash Management Plan for the year 2026

We must do a Cash Management Plan every year; it's a statutory requirement. They ask you to highlight what you're doing for fraud prevention and we already have a few procedures. The only significant change was adding Positive Pay, which is a way of protecting your checking account from fraud. There is one typo that needs correction. Lisa is no longer with us. The correct person is Marleny Sanchez.

- **2489-** Resolution by the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Fort Lee authorizing the Executive Director to execute an agreement with B&R Housing Solutions for Qualified Purchasing Agent Services and appointing Vincent M. Buffus to serve as the Authority's Qualified Purchasing Agent for two years commencing March 1, 2026, and ending February 28, 2028

In New Jersey, there's a bid threshold that used to go up every two years, which means the bid threshold is when you have to go out for public contracting or public solicitation for bids as supposed to do it as a simpler process. They stopped that process and said if you take a course, you're certified by the state then you have a higher threshold



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and you can purchase things without having to go through the public bid process. You can solicit proposals by phonecalls, newspapers or other ways which in turn gets you better responses than just putting it in the paper. For example it can be \$17,5000 without a QPA and \$53,000 with a QPA. What we are looking forward to is being trained on purchasing under state contracts, because if you purchase under state contracts, you are exempt from the bidding. We do not know how to do it. We tried to take classes on it. Shari you might know Vincent Bufus, who's going to be our QPA and is the Director of Operations at the Bergen County Housing Authority.

Commissioner Elsie O'Neill joined the meeting via zoom at 6:15pm.

- **2490-** Resolution Designating the official newspaper of the Housing Authority of the Borough of Fort Lee for Publications of Legal Notices

The law changes in March. All official notices will be on our own website. We will not have to advertise going forward. Although we do have to advertise for a year that our notices are on our website.

- **2491-** Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to execute an agreement with Bergen County Community Development for a Block Grant award of \$78,878.00 for Improvements to the Holtje House Handicapped Accessible Doors and Connection of the Fire Standpipe System and Administrative Offices's Electrical System to the Standby Generator.

5. RESOLUTIONS:

A motion to approve the Resolutions by Consent Agenda was made by Commissioner Steinberg and seconded by Commissioner DePalma.

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The motion was unanimously approved.

6. OTHER BUSINESS.

Mr Corriston advised that work orders and inspections are up to date. We have no current vacancies. We have one tenant in this building who is currently in a nursing home and is delinquent on her rent for several months. I spoke with her daughter hoping she was going to cooperate in giving us direction. She has not responded and has remained silent. The daughter lives out of state. We did start the process of eviction. Based on the condition she was when she left here I don't think she will be coming back. We are going to be stuck with the stuff in the apartment once we take possession.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion made by Commissioner DePalma and seconded by Commissioner Sohmer, to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 pm.

Roll Call:

Ayes: S. Bauer, D. Steinberg, S. DePalma, E. O'Neill, R. Sohmer
Nays: None



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Abstain: None
Absent: A. Yook, C. Chung

Respectfully submitted,

Terrence Corriston
Executive Director