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REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD
OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOBOKEN HOUSING AUTHORITY OF
THE CITY OF HOBOKEN

THURSDAY
JULY 13, 2023
7:00 P.M.

HELD IN PERSON AT
331 13TH STREET
HOBOKEN, NEW JERSEY

BEFORE:

CHAIRPERSON BARBARA REYES
VICE-CHAIRPERSON ERICA SEITZMAN
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL RUSSO
COMMISSIONER ANDREW IMPASTATO
COMMISSIONER ANDREW LEWIT
COMMISSIONER JAMES SANFORD
COMMISSIONER ANTHONY FORBES

APPEARANCES:

FITZPATRICK & WATERMAN, ESQS.,
BY: HAROLD FITZPATRICK, ESQ.
Attorney for the Board.

ALSO PRESENT:

MARC A. RECKO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
LOURDES PRIESTLEY, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION
FRANK MERCHAND, DIRECTOR OF MANAGEMENT
EMIL KOTHERITHARA, CFO (via Zoom)
DANIEL PEREZ

THERESA L. TIERNAN, RMR, CCR
CERTIFIED STENOGRAPHIC SHORTHAND REPORTER
(201) 924-7474

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1 (PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE RECITED AT THIS TIME.)

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Call the roll.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

4 CHAIRPERSON REYES: He's running late,

5 Director.

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.

7 Impastato?

8 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Here.

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

10 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Here.

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

12 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Here.

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: R. Russo?

14 J. Sanford?

15 E. Seitzman?

16 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Present.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: I would like to

18 advise those present that notice of this regular

19 meeting of the Housing Authority of City of Hoboken

20 has been provided to the public in accordance with

21 the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

22 Notice of this regular meeting of

23 Thursday, July 13th, 2023, was given by publication

24 of the annual meeting notice of the Authority with

25 amendments as necessary and was sent to the Jersey

1 Journal and Star Ledger on Wednesday, June 28th,
2 2023, as notification to the general public of the
3 meeting, sent to the City Clerk of Hoboken on
4 Wednesday, June 28, 2023, with a copy of the agenda
5 to be posted on the bulletin board in City Hall,
6 Hoboken Library, and Hoboken Police Department, and
7 posted on the Authority's website on Wednesday,
8 June 28th, 2023.

9 I direct the minutes of this meeting to
10 state that I have announced that adequate notice of
11 this meeting has been given as required by the Open
12 Public Meetings Act.

13 Thank you.

14 So, public portion. I would just like
15 to remind everyone you have five minutes during
16 public portion. I would also like to let everyone
17 know that please be respectful to everyone here, the
18 residents, the Commissioners, the Authority, please,
19 and the Director, and so our first speaker, Patricia
20 Waiters.

21 Please note that our Court Reporter is
22 on line, so when you come up to the mic, I need you
23 to say your name and spell it, please.

24 MS. WAITERS: So they can't hear me,
25 you mean?

1 CHAIRPERSON REYES: No, she's here, but
2 she wants to hear you.

3 MS. WAITERS: Patricia Waiters.

4 W-A-I-T-E-R-S, like a waiter in a restaurant.

5 Who am I speaking to anyway, Terry who?

6 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Terry.

7 MS. WAITERS: She's the Commissioner?

8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: No, she's the Court
9 Reporter.

10 MS. WAITERS: Oh, hi, Terry. You can
11 hear me?

12 COURT STENOGRAPHER: I can hear you.

13 MS. WAITERS: Thank you. Tonight I
14 just want to question a few things.

15 Is it a quorum, first of all? Are the
16 rest of them on line? Michael Russo, I text the
17 rest of them, but I'm saying, are they coming?
18 They're attending the meeting tonight.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes. Mr. Forbes is
20 running late, and Mr. Russo I have not heard from.

21 MS. WAITERS: Okay. And with the
22 public portion being first, the other items before
23 you vote on them, are we going to get an opportunity
24 to speak on those as agenda items?

25 CHAIRPERSON REYES: No. You will speak

1 on those as we do every other time. You have five
2 minutes to speak during public portion and that's --

3 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

4 MS. WAITERS: On any items of concern,
5 including agenda items.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Correct.

7 MS. WAITERS: Okay. Thank you. I'm
8 going to be speaking on a few agenda items because
9 it's not definitely clarified as to what contracts
10 is what, who money being paid to what. I'll wait
11 then after the meeting to express that, but I want
12 to stress to the Commissioners that importance, I
13 brought it across to City Council last night, of the
14 reputation and integrity in our community, very,
15 very important, and I want to be taken a little
16 serious than I have been taken in the last year.
17 So, if you wasn't doing it within the last year,
18 this is not directed to you, but this is directed to
19 the Chair, Madame Chair, with respect and the
20 governing body.

21 We all know everybody is still using
22 Covid as an excuse. I've got documentation every
23 time I wrote into Trenton, I timestamp my documents.
24 The Court system is horrible. Thursday I will be
25 going to Governor Murphy's office again for the

1 third time and, unfortunately, when the public gets
2 to use their opinion, it gets ugly.

3 I'm not a social media person. I don't
4 want to go on Facebook, I don't want to go TikTok, I
5 don't want to show some of these horrific videos,
6 including the shooting and killings that's happening
7 in Hoboken Housing. But I do have it for evidence,
8 I have no reason to lie, but I've learned to stay
9 calm, but you know what, the three times, the 30th,
10 the 6th, and the 13th I've been in Hackensack. I'm
11 having a lot of heart issues, a lot of medical
12 issues. But my daughter, that was my daughter
13 Deshon (phonetic), you notice what she did? She
14 walked in and walked out, because they want mom to
15 be that way. They say, "Mom, it's not worth it." I
16 said it's worth it. If I drop dead at this
17 microphone, I'm going assure you that everybody that
18 brought pain and/or harm and danger to me and the
19 people that look like me in Housing Authority for
20 the last 30 years will be held accountable. How's
21 that?

22 And I hope Governor Murphy get it this
23 time, when I ride all the way down there to tell you
24 the seriousness of having retaliatory measures in
25 your heart, hate, racism, and say, "No, I'm not. It

1 don't exist," to get me amped up and angry, and I'm
2 acting on emotions and I shouldn't have. Some of
3 y'all kids are holding my hand near and dear,
4 everybody in Housing love Auntie Pat. No, I don't
5 have to live here, but we are the oldest family. My
6 mother, Betty Moore, and David Little moved here in
7 1962. You seen it in her record. So, I'm going to
8 always be a part of Housing Authority. Don't shut
9 me up. Don't shut me away.

10 What I'm asking for tonight again is
11 full compliance, when all of y'all raise your hand
12 and take a vote, you got access to the government
13 because you're Commissioners. I'm going to tell you
14 again, reach out and tell the Governor, "Hear Pat
15 Waiter's voice. Give an opportunity to see her
16 facts." This ain't allegations. I'm not making
17 this up. I owe none of y'all nothing. And it's sad
18 when you work for somebody and most of your
19 management, and this is not a disrespectful, don't
20 have knowledge of what's going on, they just sitting
21 there as a scapegoat because they say I got this on
22 you and hold leverage on each other. So, you can't
23 tell me you operating Housing Authority efficiency,
24 under efficiency when this is happening.

25 So, if somebody is holding you, is gag

1 ordering you, you can't serve your tenants. How?
2 It's a conflict of interest.

3 So, I'm telling you the seriousness of
4 why I'm reaching out to HUD. I got Ms. Fudge.
5 She's over everybody in Washington. I got constant
6 documents, and again I'm asking for a federal
7 investigation. I'm starting with you guys, and Miss
8 Chair, Madame Chair, I got confidence in you. Twice
9 you left this Board and came back, so you know
10 exactly what's going on.

11 Again, Patricia Waiters,
12 P.Waiters927@Yahoo.com. All lines of communication
13 is open. All lines to talk to anybody. Please, I'm
14 wrapping it up saying this: Protect the reputation
15 of my town. Protect it. The systemic racism will
16 end tonight.

17 I'm expecting phone calls tomorrow and
18 not retaliation by not giving my daughter, that was
19 number one, an apartment. I don't have to do that
20 when you give others that don't deserve it.

21 Thank you, Madame Chair and this body.
22 Goodnight.

23 (Applause.)

24 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Kathleen Feeney.

25 MS. FEENEY: My name is Kathleen

1 Feeney, F-E-E-N-E-Y. I live in studio 2B here in
2 Fox Hill.

3 I'd like to start out by saying I'm
4 going to use my five minutes in a different kind of
5 way.

6 Someone who's part of the solution and
7 not the problem, with all due respect to Frank and
8 Mr. Recko, this Board and our wonderful office team,
9 there's somebody in this building who I consider to
10 be the heart and soul of Fox Hill. His name is
11 Mr. Laviana, L-A-V-I-A-N-A, that's Danny, our
12 superintendent. The first person I met was Ms.
13 Natalie and then I met Jimena and the rest of the
14 office staff and, of course, Frank and Mr. Recko,
15 but Danny has always just been there, and Danny, he
16 likes everyone and he's friends with everyone, but
17 the main thing about Danny is he's a hard worker.
18 He works all the time. We're not having packages
19 stolen anymore because Danny uses -- he comes up
20 with options, he comes up with ideas. We've got a
21 package room and I'll see him on a Saturday or a
22 Sunday and he'll be putting the packages in the
23 package room. I said, "This is your day off." He
24 goes, "I know," but he's always there, and luckily
25 for me he lives right down the hall from me. I'm on

1 two and he lives on another wing, and luckily for
2 all of us, we get a bonus with Danny. He's got this
3 wife named Maria and she's amazing.

4 So, I just want to share with you that,
5 yeah, there are a lot of challenges, there are a lot
6 of problems that come with living and in housing, in
7 public housing, some I never imagined I would come
8 up with, but for me, my, like, north star, my anchor
9 has been Danny. It's always Danny and Maria and I
10 feel very safe and I don't know why he likes me, I
11 just think he likes everyone. I've never seen him
12 rude to anyone or be mean, so I guess I could just
13 come up here and sing Danny Boy, but I'm not going
14 to. I'm going to end with something. My father
15 lived to a hundred. He died in 2020. My father
16 Robert Francis Feeney was in World War II. He
17 was -- he was in the army and he fought for us.
18 We're Irish and German, and my father had a saying,
19 a toast, we say it every wedding, we'd say at every
20 party, we'd say it at every football game. You
21 know, this is my dad's toast, and this is Danny.
22 Never above you. Never below you. Always beside
23 you. And to me that epitomizes Mr. Laviana, Danny.

24 So, I would like to say good things
25 before people die. So thank you.

1 (Applause.)

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Carmen Vega.

3 MS. VEGA: Hi, I would like to start by
4 saying my name is Carmen Vega, V-E-G-A. I live in
5 apartment 6E in Fox Hill.

6 Good evening, everyone.

7 I would like to start by saying Fox
8 Hill is getting out of control. Tenants not
9 respecting other tenants space, acting up, or acting
10 out in the lobby, especially.

11 The lobby is a place that you're
12 supposed to come in and out, not hang out with
13 security, security is here to secure us, not us
14 secure them. There's been an incident downstairs,
15 that I was told that I was aware of, I know the
16 cameras must have looked, of a tenant living here
17 walking around in underwears. Now, people forget,
18 and we have to respect the elderly. I know this is
19 a building where everybody who live here from now
20 on, which is great, but we have to remember that
21 there's elderly women living here. If they were to
22 see someone walking around or acting up like that,
23 they would be terrified. And that is a problem
24 here. That is one of the things going on.

25 Number two is we have people drinking

1 in the back during the day. You know,
2 unfortunately, they're drinkers, not to say that
3 they're alcoholic, but they are, you know, and the
4 problem there was there was an incident, I happened
5 to get out of my vehicle, the parking lot back here,
6 I run into them. So, now I'm part of that criminal
7 case. Okay, fine. I know they apologize to one
8 another, which, fine, but still there's a case
9 pending. And I feel that all the problems that
10 we're having, we shouldn't be having them because
11 they're -- they were not that severe in the past,
12 but it's getting worse.

13 Another incident that occurred was that
14 I was in my room, I was in my living room, excuse
15 me, and I heard some noise and it turned out to be a
16 firecracker. Not a little one, a big one. And I
17 called -- I went downstairs, I questioned security.
18 Security hesitated to call the police and I insisted
19 that they call the police. So, therefore, I do know
20 that letters were sent out again. You know, like
21 the police officer said, this is a place, we can't
22 do nothing about that, that's legit, but it's not
23 legit in housing because people live here. If that
24 would have taken another matter, you know, on
25 someone's back reverse something, whatever, that

1 would have turned out different. Okay that's
2 another incident.

3 Number three is there's too many things
4 going on. We need to, you know, take our building
5 back. We're having problems. We need to have a
6 meeting with security, their supervisor. It's
7 important because, like I said, you know, people
8 want to come downstairs and keep them company. No,
9 they're not there for that. They're there to
10 monitor this space here, you know, and another thing
11 is that I have seen with my own eyes that people
12 come in and people come out, no IDs are asked. I
13 mean, all of that, that, you know, the contract,
14 what happened to that? Isn't that in the contract?
15 They're supposed to be asking for IDs. Where are
16 you going to? Where is the delivery? I mean,
17 that's not happening like it should and that's a
18 problem because if we have them here with a contract
19 getting paid, then what do we need them for that if
20 they're not doing their work.

21 That's the bottom line.

22 And that's one of the problems of the
23 many problems that we're having here in Fox Hill.

24 Also, you know, the people are tired of
25 it. The people are tired of living like that.

1 We're living in a -- in this building like, you
2 know, Mr. Recko, I understand that you have to rent
3 out to people that are disabled, that have problems,
4 I understand all that, homelessness, we understand
5 that, but the people that you rented to, they're the
6 ones causing the problems here. So, I don't
7 understand. You have an apartment, a nice
8 apartment, and you want to cause chaos. You know,
9 that's out of order. There's no reason why elderly
10 people, 60 and plus or whatever age they may be,
11 they have to live in that fear. There's women here
12 that live alone that don't have family, and that's
13 unfair for. On my floor there was another incident
14 with another tenant, she happens to get out of the
15 elevator, which you know who she is, and what
16 happens to her? Somebody comes out of the garbage
17 area, the compacting, that's they come out of there,
18 and they happen to speak with her, ask her a few
19 words about a person in particular if she knew and
20 she responded, and the minute she turned around they
21 threw something in her face. Now, she's
22 blonde-headed. Mind you, my mother might not be
23 blonde-headed tonight, but she's blonde-headed too.
24 I mean, what about that little mistaking that person
25 with my mother? You know, these are things that we

1 have to look into. There's problems here being
2 caused with people -- there's problems here being
3 caused with people that live here. They're just not
4 outside. That woman was apprehended. We hope that
5 eventually she'll say who sent her. It's not
6 guaranteed that she'll say, because it's not
7 mandatory by law for her to say.

8 Now, you know, and the bottom line is
9 that I'm tired of living like this, really, and I'm
10 pretty sure a lot of people in this room are tired
11 of living like that. There's only so much that
12 Danny could do, and Danny tries his best, I'm just
13 wrapping it up.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Please, Carmen.
15 Thank you.

16 MS. VEGA: And I just wanted to bring
17 this issue to your attention.

18 Mr. Recko, thank you for everything you
19 do. Frank, thank you, and I know you're trying to
20 be on top of things, but I know that there has to be
21 a case in court, it has to be a process before you
22 could do anything about it. We expect that once
23 that process is done that you take action and
24 sending a notice to someone and just slapping him on
25 the hand, that's not enough anymore, because we are

1 living in danger in this place, and we shouldn't be
2 living like this, and I refuse to live in fear
3 because I know who I serve.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you, Carmen.

6 (Applause.)

7 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Okay. Director,
8 please, show that Commissioner Russo and
9 Commissioner Forbes are both present now.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Iris Launano.

12 MS. LAUNANO: My name is Iris Launano,
13 I-R-I-S, L-A-U-N-A-N-O.

14 Okay. Last time I approached you to
15 what my son. My son is disabled. He lives on 8D.
16 I am speaking for him because I'm his mother.

17 Right now he's sleeping at this time
18 because he drinks his medication and this medication
19 is no good because it messes up his system. They go
20 crazy. These kids, instead of you speaking to them
21 the way that you speak to them, there has to be
22 respect because these kids, right now my son had a
23 nervous breakdown. He don't want to come down.
24 He's medicated. So, who's going to speak for him?
25 Me. More than ten years I've been dealing with my

1 son, his issues. My son don't come out, don't hang
2 out in the front. He plays games all day, drinks
3 his medication, doesn't speak to nobody, pays his
4 rent on time, okay? And I'm not going to say no
5 names because I am going to speak with Mr. Recko
6 alone. Okay? Because it's got to stop. The abuse
7 got to stop with my son that of you knocking at
8 12 o'clock when he has medication on, at 12 o'clock
9 they're telling him that the cat litter stinks.
10 Come on. Give these kids an opportunity. I have
11 pictures that he cleans his apartment, I have
12 pictures here that I'm going to show Mr. Recko that
13 he did clean the apartment. Don't be on top of him.
14 This is why I'm telling you. I've dealt with him
15 more than ten years. Psych wards. He doesn't
16 bother nobody. He has his cats. I brought you a
17 letter from the sight of the cats, so he wouldn't
18 have no problem. Now, I got pictures that he's
19 cleaning every day. I don't want my son bothered
20 with a letter at the door and he's like this, "Oh,
21 Ma, what am I doing? Mom, please, can you speak to
22 them?"

23 He drinks medication. We have to learn
24 how to deal with these kids and don't turn their
25 face. No, I don't, oh, uh-huh, uh-huh. What are

1 you doing with these kids? You have to learn how to
2 speak to them. Not blah, blah, blah, blah, blah
3 blah, blah, blah, blah. That's not helping them.
4 You're aggravating them. He had a nervous
5 breakdown. I had to take him to the hospital
6 yesterday because of the constant cat, constant cat.
7 I got pictures. I'm going to show Mr. Recko how he
8 cleaned that apartment, and he's sick, and he
9 cleaned it in one second when I told him to clean
10 it.

11 I don't want my son bothered no more
12 because I have epileptic attacks. I have -- I have
13 my own condition and I live in Jersey City and I got
14 to deal with my son's problems every day.

15 A letter at the door. And then he's
16 got to call me and I got to come in action, then
17 when I come and I try to speak to somebody,
18 everybody turns their face. That's unrespectful to
19 me and to everybody, okay?

20 That's all I got to say, and I will
21 speak with Mr. Recko.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you. Janice
23 Sarfi (phonetic). Janice?

24 JANICE: Good evening, everybody.
25 Thank you for allowing us to speak. This is my

1 first -- this is the first time I'm joining the
2 community meeting, except for that one event at City
3 Hall where we tried to save the old church on 7th.
4 I came because my interest is in senior housing and,
5 you know, are there more housing for senior citizens
6 that are adding up in numbers in the city? I lived
7 here 31 years in the same apartment also a regular
8 rental, so but I'm interested now for space in
9 senior housing and I don't know how to go about it.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Can you stay
11 till after the meeting so we can talk?

12 JANICE: Yes, sir. Thank you. Thank
13 you very much.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

15 Sonia Owchariw?

16 MS. OWCHARIW: Thanks for having me.
17 My name is Sonia Owchariw.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Could you spell
19 your last name for the Court Reporter?

20 MS. OWCHARIW: Yes. O-W-C-H-A-R-I-W.
21 And I just want to say thanks to Rev and Dr. Russo.

22 I'm Sonia from Neumann Leathers
23 warehouse.

24 Oh, there you go. Sorry. I didn't
25 know which one.

1 I have such a story. My background is
2 journalism. I was a former reporter for Bloomfield
3 Life. I worked for Hudson Reporter. I was
4 underneath Karen Listner. I know Steven --

5 COURT STENOGRAPHER: I'm sorry, this is
6 the Court Reporter. I'm just having a problem
7 hearing you. If you could speak up for me.

8 MS. OWCHARIW: Yes, very good. Yes,
9 sorry. This is short for me.

10 I just wanted to say thanks to Reverend
11 Forbes and Dr. Russo. Thank you. They're going to
12 make it taller more me. Thank you.

13 I'm Ukranian American, that's why I'm
14 tall like the Amazon woman.

15 I just want to say thanks again, Forbes
16 and Russo. I have aplastic anemia. I'm one of your
17 disabled persons here. I'd like to thank Rev. He's
18 known me since 2016 when I was renting space at
19 Neumann Leathers. I was diagnosed with early cancer
20 and he's the first man I came to at the shelter when
21 I was cancer free to tell him, "Rev, I'm cancer
22 free." This man has always been there. I complain,
23 I say what I say, but this man has always -- oh,
24 that's mine -- this man is straight up. And I just
25 wanted to be here today because I've been here for

1 three months. I was homeless for three years in my
2 car. I had problems at Neumann Leathers. I went to
3 Hoboken Police, this is a separate issue. I moved
4 to Baltimore four years ago to go to John's Hopkins
5 in the chemo cancer discuss bone marrow transport,
6 and then we all got hit with Covid, and I'm a
7 compromised immune system. I go back on my chemo
8 medication. I'm immunocompromised. Nobody knows
9 what I go through. I'm 53. I have no family
10 support, but Rev met my mother when she was still
11 alive, and I just want to say thank you because I
12 would still be at the Hoboken shelter. I was there
13 for four months. It's not easy. It was hard work.
14 I was getting up at 5:30 in the morning. I have
15 blood transfusions every eight weeks, sometimes it
16 could be sooner. I'm on IV steroids. I'm very
17 transparent about my blood disorder because I'm on
18 a-- I'm supposed to be back on a \$500,000 chemo drug
19 called so Solaris, but I had side effects.

20 So, I just wanted to say thank you
21 because I couldn't live at the shelter one more day.
22 I couldn't live in my car one more day. My engine
23 blew because of a water coolant, and I'm Ukranian
24 American. I'm tough. I don't like the war in
25 Ukraine, Putin's losing, I understand that, but I

1 want to say thank you because it's been a hard
2 journey and it's not getting any easier, and the
3 fact that I have somewhere to go at night, I can go
4 to my doctors. I was at John Theurer Cancer Center,
5 I got New York City across the way. I went to
6 Memorial Sloan-Kettering.

7 So, I just wanted to say thanks because
8 it's been a rough road, nothing is easy for me, and
9 if you look at me you think I'm healthy, but if you
10 look at my blood work, it's bad. So I just want --
11 I'm sorry if I'm crying, but I speak -- I spoke to
12 Russo a few years ago. He helped me out with the
13 situation at Neumann Leathers. I never thought I
14 would be homeless. Why? I'm a hard working woman.
15 You know? I got a four year degree in journalism.
16 I wrote here for Hudson Reporter. I went to
17 Maryland. I had a teaching job. But when you're
18 sick were an autoimmune disease like I have, you
19 have moments you can't work. The drugs make you
20 tired and people don't give you sympathy because if
21 you don't walk around saying, God forbid, I have
22 cancer, people don't understand. Like, I'm truly
23 sick. The only care for me is bone marrow
24 transport, and I'm getting older.

25 So, I just wanted to say thank you,

1 because this man knows my history. He met my mom
2 when she was alive, and the Hoboken shelter, you
3 know, I've made some -- you know, I've talked to you
4 about the bad stuff and stuff, but they were always
5 there for me, too, in the morning time when I was
6 renting space I went there and I got coffee, I got
7 donuts, I got donations, and then when I was
8 homeless -- I'll wrap it up.

9 My friend dropped me off at Hackensack
10 emergency room, my hemoglobin dropped to seven,
11 which is low. So, I was admitted into the hospital,
12 I got two units of blood. The shuttle had nowhere
13 to go. My car was returned to Volkswagen and I
14 said, "Take me to the shelter." The first person I
15 saw was Spike. I said, "Spike, I need a place to
16 stay." He goes, "You're late," he goes, "go to the
17 warming center." I said, "No, you don't understand.
18 I just need a Hoboken shelter." He goes, "I'm
19 telling you, get on the bus. You'll have a place to
20 stay." That was January 10th.

21 Anybody who thinks I got here because
22 I'm privileged, anybody who thinks I got here
23 because I look the way I look, there's absolutely no
24 way. I worked my butt off. He worked with me,
25 Norma worked with me, Mary from Garden and now that

1 I'm here, I got my own place, my rent, my food
2 stamps, you know, I don't want to get into anything
3 else, but I just wanted to say thank you and to Dr.
4 Russo, and introduce myself because it's been a hell
5 of a journey.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you, Sonia.

8 (Applause.)

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Sherry Shahat.

10 MS. SHAHAT: Hello, my name is Sherry
11 Shahat.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Could you spell
13 your last, please?

14 MS. SHAHAT: S-H-A-H-A-T. Egyptian
15 last name.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Did you hear that,
17 Terry?

18 COURT STENOGRAPHER: I got it. Thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Okay.

21 MS. SHAHAT: Okay. I want to, how do
22 you say, reiterate on something Carmen said, that
23 had happened in the building here, in Fox Hill
24 Gardens. Not downtown, not uptown, here. Some of
25 the tenants are not behaving very well, and it's

1 bringing the building down and it's horrible. Most
2 of us are trying to get the new look, you know, like
3 you're fixing the apartments, you're going to bring
4 in the washing machines and things like that, and we
5 have to feel that things are going to go good,
6 except for these people that are bringing the
7 building down. And the way they're doing it is
8 being very disrespectful.

9 As a lady, I get very insulted when men
10 are talking dirty. I don't want to say the comments
11 they make, but it really -- it bothers me very bad
12 when men talk dirty, they think nothing of the dirt
13 they say, they think nothing of how they're treating
14 women. So, I have one suggestion that may help, if
15 we complain, if a lady goes in the office and says,
16 "Look, so-and-so talked out of place to me," or
17 "Outside they were really, you know, in decent or
18 something," and we make a complaint, can they get a
19 warning and then if they repeat it, maybe action
20 could be taken, because they go on and on like, "Oh,
21 I could say what I want," all with this. They say
22 things like, "Oh, it's grown-up talk." I said, "Not
23 to me. It's indecent talk," you know? "Everybody
24 doesn't talk the way you talk," or, you know, the
25 disrespect and the loudness, the screaming and the

1 cursing. If we could do something about that, then
2 it's a little better, one more step of getting the
3 building better.

4 Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you, Sherry.

7 MR. RIVERA SOLER: Madame President.

8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

9 MR. RIVERA SOLER: I'm sorry, I came in
10 late. Manuel Rivera Soler.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYES: I'm going to let
12 you speak today, but I will no longer allow it if
13 you're not here at the beginning. When it's over,
14 it's over, okay?

15 MR. RIVERA SOLER: My apologies and --

16 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

17 MR. RIVERA SOLER: I appreciate your
18 indulgence. I won't be long. Thank you, Board, and
19 to the residents.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Please state your
21 name and your last name for the Court Reporter.

22 MR. RIVERA SOLER: I am going to do
23 that, although she knows my voice. Manuel Rivera
24 Soler.

25 COURT STENOGRAPHER: Manny, I'm having

1 a hard time hearing you. You're going to have to
2 speak louder, please.

3 MR. RIVERA SOLER: Manuel Rivera Soler,
4 good?

5 COURT STENOGRAPHER: Just try to speak
6 louder into the mic, because you're a little low.

7 MR. RIVERA SOLER: Thank you.

8 Madame Chair, again, my apologies. I
9 just want to ask three questions and maybe a comment
10 to be quick.

11 Resolution 23-07.03, Resolution
12 23:07.06, Resolution 23-07.08, and 23-07.06, will
13 members of the public be able to understand when
14 this auction is taking place or when it's concluded,
15 what items were sold, what was the net gain as
16 opposed to the cost for participating in the
17 auction, and the other three you could -- anyone
18 could answer as at their leisure.

19 Also, I would like to take a moment to
20 just say I appreciate all of the advances that have
21 been going on in regards to -- I see some of the
22 buildings' exteriors cleaner, because I know that I
23 was always the one asking for where's the powerwash,
24 but I don't know, has it been continuing? Will it
25 continue? That's just one question.

1 Second question in regards to how
2 secure again are the buildings, some people have
3 been asking me that they don't seem to be secure.
4 I'm just conveying the message. Don't kill the
5 messenger, secondly.

6 Thirdly, I would like to also state as
7 far as the surveys for the complex, it would be more
8 important for the members of the public and the
9 residents of the housing if there could be some way
10 that they could fill out the surveys in property at
11 someplace because there's a lot of people who are
12 not participating in the surveys, and I say "this"
13 survey, but in Hoboken in general, and there's three
14 out there now that are almost deadlined. So if
15 members of the public, including you and including
16 the body, if they could help with those surveys, and
17 again, if you are going to hold a meeting, it should
18 be at least closer to a campus so that people could
19 participate, because the other one was also, the
20 last one was very scarcely attended, even though
21 there was a good crowd, but we need more residents
22 in these events, these type of events.

23 So, I appreciate again the attention.
24 One last thing, and again, the process for a person
25 becoming a member of this Board, I needed to

1 understand how complex is it, because a person
2 applies, I know that you don't take them, but if
3 there's anything you could let people who are
4 interested how to apply, even people in the building
5 who qualify, even members of other complexes, let's
6 try to give them a heads up or a hand out, so they
7 could, you know, help get on some of these boards,
8 because you know, it would behoove this Board to
9 have people, such as yourself, and others who feel
10 the people's pain.

11 And I thank you very much for your
12 attention and I thank you for your indulgence.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: I believe all
16 of the surveys are in a --

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Excuse me, excuse
18 me. If you guys are going to have private
19 conversations, I have to ask that you please step
20 outside into the hall.

21 Thank you.

22 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Well, I believe
23 the surveys in the -- you could ask your manager for
24 the survey.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Talk into the mic.

1 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Ask your
2 manager for the survey. We're going to get the
3 surveys.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYES: So the surveys,
5 they're out. Commissioner Seitzman says that
6 they're in the manager's office. If they need help
7 completing them, if anybody needs help on line,
8 HOPES does have a computer lab at the Housing
9 Authority, 532, we do have a permanent person there
10 now, so they are there daily nine to five, so anyone
11 can go into the computer lab and the staff can help
12 them, assist them with completing it if they like to
13 do it on line. It closes tomorrow. Okay. So the
14 surveys close tomorrow at 6 p.m., so if anyone here
15 would like to complete a survey, see your managers,
16 and off site you can go to the manager's office or
17 you can even go to the HOPES office at the Family
18 Resource Center.

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Our central
20 office.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Correct. I believe
22 it's the tenant survey. I don't know. He said a
23 few surveys are out, so I'm not quite sure which
24 ones he was talking about.

25 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: The only

1 survey I know is the one that's being performed by
2 the City.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYES: The City.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Re-
5 development consultant, that's on the city website.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Correct.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And in our
8 office, if you want to come to our office because
9 it's done by the consultants that are doing the city
10 redevelopment plan.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYES: And, Manny, also,
12 responding to your questions concerning some of the
13 agenda items that are on there, if you stick around,
14 I know usually when we call the resolution, we ask
15 the Director if he has anything to say. He can
16 further go into information about each resolution,
17 so you'll be able to know what it's about.

18 Motion to close public portion?

19 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Motion.

20 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.

21 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director?

22 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you,
23 Commissioner.

24 I would like to just make a note on
25 some of the issues that came up regarding lease

1 enforcement. It is important for us to communicate,
2 as you know. When you have that first item that I
3 think you even mentioned, Carmen, that our
4 management had sent them a notice, we need that
5 second notice to them, that third, that way we can
6 build that case, and that's just crucial. So, we
7 need to communicate whether it's on our other
8 developments or this development, we need to keep
9 that communication going. It really matters when
10 you go into the manager's office and say, "I was in
11 the elevator with that guy," and he said, "Sherry
12 said those things," right? It matters. Yes.
13 That's enforceable. And yes, that is a reason for a
14 notice. And yes, we all need to do that because we
15 can't do it alone. No one can. We have the ability
16 to move it, but we need you to tell us that that's
17 going on. I think you have a great management team
18 here. You think? I think they're great. And I
19 think they will -- they will follow up on that for
20 you. They know what they're doing, and then we know
21 how to evict. We've got some of that going on these
22 days. So, yes, we will keep working on that for
23 you.

24 I just want to make a note real quick
25 because, Ma'am, our Ukrainian friend, how do you say

1 your name.

2 MS. OWCHARIW: Last name?

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yes.

4 MS. OWCHARIW: Owchariw.

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Owchariw.

6 Owchariw. Okay. I'll get there. I'm sorry for
7 doing that, but it really touches my heart that we
8 could help. That's what we're for and, you know,
9 we've got problems. Are we all perfect? No, but
10 when I hear about these fine gentlemen that are in
11 the community and I know the other people around the
12 table, and I know my staff and that's why we're
13 here. We're housing people. That's what we've
14 dedicated our lives to. Are we perfect? No, but to
15 hear that we're able to provide housing for people
16 that are in your situation, I could go home and
17 smile. So, thank you and welcome. Glad to have
18 you.

19 (Applause.)

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I would like
21 to ask for just a quick real quick moment of
22 silence. Our valued resident, Renee Johnson, passed
23 this past week. A valued, respected, and loved
24 member of the Johnson family. I would get out of my
25 car and we'd talk, get in my car, get out of my car,

1 we'd stop, we'd talk in the morning and afternoon,
2 and Renee will be missed by so many at HHA, so...

3 (MOMENT OF SILENCE HELD AT THIS TIME FOR
4 RENEE JOHNSON.)

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you.

6 There has been a shorter time than
7 usual between Board meetings. Since our June Board
8 meeting was delayed until June 20th on account of
9 the Canadian smoke, the time has gone by quickly for
10 me because of my -- and I also had have a week and a
11 couple of days of vacation in between, so it's good
12 to be back to everyone.

13 I would like to mention a special thank
14 you to my staff for handling our day-to-day
15 operations while I was away.

16 Just catching up. HHA staff, if you've
17 heard, we did have a kickball game. The staff, we
18 shut down one day at about 2 o'clock and we went out
19 and played kickball and had water and Gatorade, and
20 we actually laughed together and ran some bases, and
21 had some fun. So, also I won't say who won. So we
22 continue --

23 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Could you invite us
24 next time?

25 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I think we

1 can. I think we can open that up. I'd be glad to
2 do that. Yeah, we did. Yeah, we did. We need to
3 be a good now and then, right? We need to be good
4 now and then, and with all the stress that our staff
5 had with sometimes, as you know, sometimes it's
6 tough, right? People get angry, people have issues,
7 people do all that, our staff handles it. They
8 smile, they keep ongoing. I am just so proud of my
9 staff for doing that now and then, you know, and
10 we're not the private sector, we can't get big
11 bonuses, we can't do all that, you know, so for us
12 to get together now and then to do that is
13 important.

14 A couple of issues again on evictions.
15 Just a note to our families, we have been sending
16 notices to quite. A notice to quit is essentially
17 an eviction notice. It's not your warning, notice
18 to cease is a warning. Those are starting to go
19 out. Many people have seen them already, and
20 they've been on our office to talk about them.
21 Sometimes they're due to behavior, at times, of
22 families members in the household that are not the
23 head of household, right? Sometimes it's a family
24 member, that might be a child, might be somebody
25 else, that has a serious issue, does something

1 serious out on our developments, and you get a
2 notice to adequate, get a notice of eviction. You
3 know, sometimes that's serious. I would remind
4 those that are heads of household that you do bear
5 the burden and responsibility of the actions of
6 those on your lease. You're the adult in the house,
7 right? You bear that responsibility. I have always
8 despised the task of evicting families. We never
9 want to do it. We always want to talk to people.
10 We always want to avoid it. It is the absolute
11 worst part of my chosen profession. You have to be
12 a good steward of our living units, at times it's
13 necessary. We're always open to meeting with any
14 resident that receives a notice to adequate.
15 Always. So if you should be in that situation,
16 whether it is the notices that went out recently for
17 nonpayment of rent, that notice to quit went out,
18 that are saying "Come in and see us within 30 days
19 or we're going to file a court action," whether it's
20 that or whether it's a behavioral issue that may be
21 not you, maybe it was your son, your daughter,
22 somebody that's on your lease that may have done
23 something out there that is illegal. Please, if you
24 got a problem, come and see us because those notices
25 to quit are going out and you're going to see them

1 as they pass through. Talk to your children so they
2 understand that their actions may place you in
3 jeopardy of losing your apartment. It's serious.
4 It's got to happen. And again, that's one of those
5 things of community. The police can do their part,
6 the Housing Authority can do their part, families
7 have to do your part. Talk to your kids, make your
8 kids understand how serious it really is when
9 something happens, because the police are out there
10 doing their best and so are we, which leads me well,
11 I think, into the Security Committee meeting topic
12 that we met and had a good meeting with the police
13 on July 10th. Sergeant Collins was there, sergeant
14 McCord, Chief Aguiar, Commissioners Impastato,
15 Reyes, and Forbes, along with HHA staff. I said we
16 had a lively meeting. We had a lively meeting.

17 COMMISSIONER FORBES: That's an
18 understatement.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYES: It was a
20 good thing.

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah, it was
22 a good thing, it was a good thing. And at that
23 point we put it on the table, we said: How are we
24 going to work better together? What are the
25 frustrations we're having? What are the limitations

1 the police have? What are the limitations we have?
2 We're going to be coming back and meeting again.
3 The Housing Authority's office is frustrated that
4 the HPD can't deal with some crowds sometimes. HPD
5 is frustrated that the Housing Authority takes so
6 long to evict and enforce our own policies, and then
7 we've just got to keep communicating and moving
8 forward. You know, our nighttime policy's there,
9 we're trying to enforce that. I think we're getting
10 better all the time. I think we did come up with a
11 few plans of action and then I'll ask any of the
12 Commissioners to chime in. I think we did agree
13 that we'll revise our cookout area policy to
14 designate areas to include a permit process for the
15 use of tenants in those areas. We'll make it clear
16 that tents are not to be erected anywhere else
17 without the direct approval of the Housing
18 Authority. In order to better lease violations,
19 we'd like to see a renewed effort between us and the
20 police to identify residents that are breaking our
21 policies. So, we can take the lease enforcement
22 actions against individuals, that includes us as a
23 Housing Authority taking more time to review videos
24 and identify people overnight and hopefully HPD
25 working with us to identify those folks. We will

1 renew those efforts to review cameras. We will,
2 with our legal counsel, review the nighttime policy.
3 I think we -- the one we passed last year was good,
4 but I think it needs some tweaks from our
5 conversation the other day. So wheel get together
6 and take a look at that and see if there's things we
7 can do better. And we follow -- we agreed to follow
8 up and meet again in August. So that's kind of my
9 spiel on what happened at that meeting. It was an
10 intense meeting, and but -- and I think, I
11 appreciate so much the Commissioners that made it
12 happen. We all had input. So, folks on that
13 Committee you want to add?

14 CHAIRPERSON REYES: I would just like
15 to add that as a resident, I hear you guys. I hear
16 your frustration. I know what you're going through.
17 It's not only at this site, it's across the entire
18 campus. You guys are not the only ones that are
19 having the issues, just don't think that your issues
20 and what you come here and say is falling on deaf
21 ears, because it's not. We are working, we are
22 doing the best we can to legally try to stop what's
23 going on, but everything is a process, it's not
24 going to happen overnight. And we, as residents,
25 also have to hold our neighbors accountable. And I

1 think that that's something that some of us don't
2 do. So we also need more resident involvement to
3 help us gain the -- a grasp on the security issues
4 that we're having across the entire campuses.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yeah, I will
6 say that first the next meeting needs to be, I
7 think, in person so that you just get a different
8 feel when you're -- when you're sitting there across
9 from someone and you can feel the energy and the
10 passion from the -- it's a lot different on Zoom, so
11 I think that was -- I think we share a lot of the
12 same interests, the Hoboken Police Department and
13 our Housing Authority, whether it's the staff or the
14 Commissioners, we all want the same thing.
15 Sometimes it's -- there's gray areas between
16 policies and what the law is and what's enforceable
17 and it's a really tough job that the Hoboken Police
18 Department has. I went down to the police station
19 and the Chief allowed me to sit with Sergeant
20 Collins and Sergeant Duke to review some tapes and
21 see some footage of body cameras and what they have
22 to deal with. We spent a good hour sitting there
23 and firsthand experience of exactly what they, you
24 know, Sergeant Collins has to deal with at 2-,
25 3 o'clock in the morning, and it's impossible. It's

1 literally impossible what he has to deal with. Just
2 the fact of trying to get someone to move a parked
3 car or try to get a double-parked car or trying to
4 get people to go away or go home from a loud party.
5 The attitude, the total disrespect that they are
6 encountered with many times, not all the time, not
7 everybody, and most of the time it's not even people
8 that live here.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Exactly.

10 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: It is -- it's
11 appalling and it makes you realize that it's really
12 hard what they do, and I know we all sit at home and
13 try to say, "Why are you not doing this? Why are
14 you not doing that?" but until you see it firsthand,
15 and put yourself in their shoes, it's -- you don't
16 get the perspective. So I thank -- I thank the
17 Chief for allowing me to do that. I think we have a
18 lot -- and I will say I have to say some of the
19 stuff I saw that, you know, the police get -- all
20 police around this country get a bad rap. That
21 they're -- you know, they're disrespectful, they're
22 animals, they're racist. They're, whatever they
23 are.

24 VOICE: Stop the stereotypes. That's
25 not our problem.

1 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: They just --
2 you know, some of the times they give a lot of
3 breaks. I'm not saying all the them, but sometimes.
4 What I experienced was there were things that they
5 could have wrote a ticket or they could have done
6 things and they went out above and beyond to allow
7 that person an opportunity to correct themselves and
8 follow the law.

9 So, it's tough. It's really tough.
10 We're working hard. We spend a lot of time. We're
11 continuing to spend time. The permit process, I
12 think, is going to be big. I think if we put the
13 onus on some of these people that are having parties
14 and disrespecting our property, and there's a
15 monetary consequence attached to that, I think that
16 will hit, you know, hit someone's pocket and they
17 don't -- they'll clean up after themselves or
18 they'll treat our property with respect. So, I
19 think that's important that we need to put that
20 policy in place and get to the drawing board to do
21 that.

22 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you,
23 Commissioner.

24 Sergeant, we've said it all.

25 SERGEANT COLLINS: It's his turn.

1 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yeah, from my
2 perspective to see the bodycam during the meeting,
3 it was an eyeopener for me to actually see from a
4 police officer perspective on what they see. It's
5 different if you drive by and you see folks hanging
6 out, but to actually see it from a bodycam
7 perspective, I have a totally different view on how
8 the police handle things now based on seeing the
9 bodycam footage and police action, "Hey, just move
10 along if you don't live here," doing everything they
11 have to do, but I think we really have to draw a
12 line in the sand, as you mentioned at the meeting,
13 and go after some of the residents who are harboring
14 some of these folks who are doing these things. We
15 come to the meetings and we're rah-rahing, but a lot
16 of us who are rah-rahing had grandkids and nephews
17 and nieces who are doing the shenanigans. So, you
18 know, so let's call a spade a spade, and --

19 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Absolutely.

20 COMMISSIONER FORBES: -- if we really
21 want change, let's look in our own backyard and make
22 that change and then that change will trickle down.
23 So nothing's going to happen on this level if folks
24 who are in the HHA are still allowing their
25 relatives to do the things they're doing and hide

1 and live in their house.

2 So, it's a tough job for the police,
3 but it's even tougher for us because we know who the
4 residents are who still have their kids who are not
5 on the lease, but still living in their over house
6 apartment, so let's just call it what it is, and
7 start --

8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: That's right.

9 COMMISSIONER FORBES: -- attacking
10 folks from the inside out and not from the outside
11 in. That's --

12 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Amen.

13 COMMISSIONER FORBES: My two words.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Sergeant?

15 SERGEANT COLLINS: Hi. Hello.

16 Good evening. Sergeant Willie Collins,
17 Hoboken police. C-O-L-L-I-N-S.

18 So, just on that note, I was a part of
19 the public safety meeting. I'm sorry for having my
20 back to you, but I know I got to speak into this.
21 Thank you.

22 I'll be first to say nobody in this
23 world, I think you just said it before, nobody's
24 perfect. I'm fully aware of it. So, I'm a police
25 officer for 20 years and I'm with the Hoboken Police

1 for 22, and nobody's perfect there either. I'll be
2 the first to say it. There's nobody in this world
3 that's perfect except God. People do make mistakes.
4 I hear some comments sometimes. I could speak for
5 the Hoboken Police Department. We do take it -- we
6 want to fix as much as we can. This police
7 department wants to fix as much as it can and we
8 take from every corner of this City, north, south,
9 east, and west, we take it serious. If there's a
10 problem at Maxwell Park, we want to fix it. If
11 there's a problem in the courtyard of the Housing
12 Authority, we want to fix it. Some of the negative,
13 it's just we're human beings too, and that's the one
14 thing I want people to realize. Police throughout
15 this whole country, and this world, we're not
16 machines. We're not robots. We have families also
17 that we want to go home to and, you know, kids that
18 look up to us as well, and we want to be there for
19 everybody.

20 Speaking for the Hoboken Police and our
21 mission right now, it is to help everybody. I take
22 it personal, the Housing Authority, myself, because
23 for me I was assigned down there when I was a new
24 cop. I walked down there for years. And the
25 relationship we have now that I'm able to call two

1 directors at bizarre times all day and night and
2 they actually answer, it just goes to show you that
3 everybody's taking it personal and recently Barbara
4 Reyes got a call that she shouldn't have got, but
5 she answered and she went out and was out there like
6 a soldier trying to fix things, too.

7 So, I could tell you this from the
8 police point of view, your Housing Authority, people
9 are working for you. Your Commissioners are working
10 for you. Commissioner Impastato came and sat with
11 us for an hour, like he said, and he wanted to see
12 and then he listened to me and to Sergeant McCord
13 explain the law and the Attorney General guidelines
14 and why and why not, and you know, misunderstanding
15 and TV shows of why police can't do certain things
16 and why we can. It does hurt. He watched body
17 camera footage of where we're trying to make it
18 better, and I would say ultimately it's only a very,
19 very small percent of people that just -- they ruin
20 it for the large percent. That's true. I believe
21 that anyway. But anybody with troubles or problems,
22 you could always call the police department. Chief
23 Aguiar, our command staff, pride themselves on not
24 turning anybody away. We'll do the very best we
25 can. We've been -- we were towing cars last night

1 on the public streets in the Housing Authority,
2 blocking a hydrant by 655, two in the morning. I
3 was working last night till four. The guys were
4 down there. We had an issue by 520 Jackson last
5 night. All resolved. Cars moved. Doing our very,
6 very best.

7 The issues here, Fox Hill, let us know.
8 Whoever was -- said about Danny, for the police
9 point of view, I'll tell you, I call him too all odd
10 hours and the guy always answers the phone.

11 So, listen, we're the police. We're
12 always willing to work. If you know certain
13 officers, there's Officer Huggins, Morman, Bates, if
14 you feel more comfortable talking to certain
15 officers, we'll make them available for you. If you
16 want to speak to a supervisor, I'm always around.
17 Anything we could do to make it better, that's --
18 we're all one team. So, we do want to make it
19 better, I could promise you that. We're trying our
20 very best. Nobody's perfect. We're trying our very
21 best. If anybody has questions for me or anything
22 like that, if you want to see me after the meeting
23 I'm here. Otherwise, you know, I thank you, and
24 we're just going to keep trying to make it better as
25 we go.

1 (Applause.)

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you, Sergeant
3 Collins.

4 Director, I just would like to say that
5 as I said in that meeting and Sergeant Collins said
6 before, I was part of that meeting and to me it's a
7 little bit more personal than maybe a lot of people
8 here because I live there, right? So I did take it
9 personally and I was very upset and I, once again,
10 want to apologize to them because they have been
11 nothing but great to me personally and when I call
12 or when I -- when the Director calls or anybody
13 calls, they do come out. I understand now seeing it
14 from a different perspective. As a resident, I have
15 the same frustrations you have. Why can't they just
16 get them off the grounds? That's what I want to
17 see, but there's laws that they have to follow. So
18 as I've always said, I've always been the first one
19 to applaud them when they do a great job, but I'm
20 also going to call it out when I feel as a resident
21 that the job wasn't being done properly or that I
22 felt wasn't being done properly.

23 So, again, Sergeant Collins, to
24 yourself, to the Chief, I apologize for taking it so
25 personally, but I do appreciate you guys and I do

1 appreciate what you guys do down there.

2 (Applause.)

3 SERGEANT COLLINS: Thank you.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: From my
5 perspective, taking it personally is the beginning
6 of solving it. We've got to be -- our heart's got
7 to be into this and I think we're making progress.
8 So thank you all for helping.

9 Through the special Harrison Gardens
10 capital fund allocation our design for closing off
11 the Harrison Gardens courtyard's underway. It is
12 under design. They're taking a look at how to do
13 that plus how to replace the tiles, the blocks on
14 the ground that keep shifting and shifting and
15 shifting.

16 We applied for a special security grant
17 in June. Ms. Richmond applied for that, which we
18 hope will pay for much of that.

19 Court actions for cause, as we
20 mentioned before have begun. We had a recent
21 firearms discharge and that's already been filed.

22 So, we have completed the installation
23 of additional lighting. Thank you, City, for our
24 CDBG grant on that. This lit up our darkest areas,
25 provides supplemental lighting at areas such as at

1 basketball court.

2 I will be completing my round of
3 Director meetings in July and August.

4 On the Hoboken Housing Forward update,
5 the Heyer Gruel group chosen by the City is looking
6 hopefully at a completed draft by September?
7 August? September? Right?

8 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Right.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Right, Councilman?

10 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Right there.

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Community-wi
12 de meeting was held on June 15th at the Boys and
13 Girls Club, and it was to update Hoboken,
14 particularly our residents.

15 If you remember, we held one on
16 March 22nd at 221 and Jackson and we were out the
17 door, there were so many people. I mean, we needed
18 a bigger space. So, let's get a bigger space, Boys
19 and Girls Club, and we get 50 people. So, but we
20 had -- we had folks come and I think it was great
21 breakout sessions, thanks to Gary Greenberg and the
22 Boys and Girls Club. That planning group has
23 published that survey that can be accessed through
24 the City's website and in my report anyway, I put
25 the link to the website.

1 We are working with staff and legal
2 counsel on doing a capital needs plan RFP. This is
3 all part of our redevelopment project to map out our
4 capital needs for the next ten to 15 years. We're
5 doing one for those capital needs and one for our
6 future consulting needs because our technical
7 assistance that has been given to us by HUD is not
8 going to last forever.

9 Before you tonight is results of the
10 Evaluation Committee, published their request for
11 qualifications for developers. They've completed
12 their work and as a recommendation in front of you
13 tonight that recommendation will give us a group of
14 eight development firms that HHA will look toward
15 when we publish our requests for proposals, which
16 will be our next step. This resolution tonight does
17 not have us enter into a contract with the
18 developer. All it does is prequalify developers
19 that they are qualified to move forward with us when
20 we do an RFP.

21 I would like to thank that Evaluation
22 Committee under Ms. Richmond's chairmanship for
23 their hard work in prequalifying those developers,
24 turning them inside out, making sure they've got the
25 type of experience we would want when we actually

1 publish our RFPs. They worked hard and they
2 actually finished a bit ahead of schedule. So thank
3 you, Corinne and everyone, you make the Councilman
4 happy. We're pushing. We're pushing.

5 So, next is our beat time, and we want
6 to go as fast as you do.

7 Our redevelopment team continues to
8 meet regularly with our technical advisors from the
9 Enterprise Partners, our attorney, our staff, and
10 HUD representation represented by Mr. Ellis Wilson
11 Henry.

12 For the first time last week we held a
13 joint meeting with Enterprise and the City's Heyer
14 Gruel consultants. So, we're getting them on the
15 same page. I believe if as we get closer to making
16 our first steps to reality, it's important that we
17 all be on the same page and they agree.

18 Our team's next task will be to develop
19 and publish those requests for proposals, and we're
20 getting them, right? I mean, that's awesome. We're
21 getting that.

22 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Just a quick
23 question.

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

25 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Do you have --

1 do you guys publish like meetings minutes for those
2 meetings?

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Those
4 meeting minutes aren't usually taken of our
5 procurement process, so we don't have meeting
6 minutes. No, they didn't take meeting minutes of
7 those.

8 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Is there any
9 notes or --

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I think
11 they're just taken.

12 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Nobody does
13 like a --

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No, we
15 didn't take any.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYES: We don't have a
17 secretary.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: We don't
19 have a secretary.

20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Building on
22 Commissioner's questions, when I was Chair of the
23 Procurement Subcommittee, I did take notes and
24 minutes at the meetings. And I'd like to know why
25 it's not done for any meetings of this evaluation.

1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Well --

2 COURT STENOGRAPHER: Could Commissioner
3 Sanford just talk into it mic, please?

4 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Sure. I'll try
5 to do better.

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: In all the
7 procurement meetings I've been in we've never had
8 meeting -- we've never had meeting minutes
9 published, and I don't remember, and I don't think
10 I've seen a record of any of that, that were taken,
11 maybe you submitted them to me, but I don't remember
12 that.

13 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I did not submit
14 meeting minutes, but I did take meeting minutes.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Okay,
16 well --

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: And I would
18 ask --

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Well, unless
20 they're submitted they're not real.

21 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I would simply
22 ask that minutes be produced, all right?

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Well, there
24 are certain committees traditionally don't do
25 minutes, okay?

1 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: For example,
2 when did the Committee meet? When was the last time
3 they met?

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: The last
5 time they met, Ms. Richmond you want -- when was the
6 last time you guys met?

7 MS. RICHMOND: Monday, July 10th.

8 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Monday,
9 July 10th.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Uh-huh.

11 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I'm sorry, what
12 meeting -- was committee is that?

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That was the
14 Evaluation Committee that was set up to take a look
15 at the qualifications of these eight developers,
16 firms that put in proposals to us.

17 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: But what group
18 is that?

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That is a
20 group that is identified under, is it tab 8? Yeah,
21 if you'll take a look at those names there, we had
22 passed, if you remember, a procurement policy to
23 specifically in choosing a developer, and that
24 procurement policy states that I would choose a
25 group of five to seven individuals that will

1 represent the community that will be on this
2 Evaluation Committee, and that is what we did, and
3 you'll see their names here. We have those seven
4 members, plus three advisory.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, this is
6 not the professional Procurement Committee.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No, this is
8 a special committee.

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: This is
10 another --

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Special
12 committee just to take a look at the developers.

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: He's talking about
14 it --

15 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

16 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: No, I remember
17 now.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah,
19 special committee.

20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So I do think,
21 I do think going forward we should have somebody
22 there taking notes, that would be my --

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Okay, we'll
24 be glad to do that.

25 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I don't know

1 if Corinne is able to or --

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

3 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I think

4 that's --

5 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: That's a great
6 idea, Commissioner. I would volunteer.

7 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: You're on?

8 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I'm not, but I
9 would volunteer to take notes at these meetings, so
10 there's minutes.

11 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: All right.

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So
13 traditionally --

14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: If you could
15 get -- if we can get notes --

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Like, for
17 example, at the Security Committee, we didn't take
18 notes. We didn't take minutes of the Security
19 Committee.

20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I know, but
21 that's -- that's Commissioners added, right? This
22 is like a -- this is an ad hoc committee of
23 residents. We should know as Commissioners and the
24 Board what everyone's talk about. I mean, anybody
25 have any comments?

1 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Yeah, I think the
2 only thing I would want to add to that is that it's
3 not just -- I mean, it's very specific in who was
4 chosen for the committee, a representative from the
5 City, a representative from the Board Commissioners,
6 a representative from staff at the Housing
7 Authority. So, I mean, if you look at where each
8 person is and who they are and how they're
9 associated, I think it's a good make-up of all of
10 those things and Commissioner Lewit is the
11 representative from this body on that committee and
12 maybe we could just have a synopsis or at the next
13 meeting when you guys meet just come back to the
14 Board and kind of report to us as to what happened,
15 whether that's formerly through minutes or whether
16 that's just an informal kind of presentation by
17 Commissioner Lewit, I think it's -- the Commission
18 has a good point to say we should just be apprised
19 as to what's going on. That's it.

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I have no
21 problem with that. And I think the next time
22 they'll be meeting is probably when we publish the
23 RFP and get responses from the RFP. So, on that
24 next round we'll be establishing that.

25 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: And is it

1 possible to add that committee to this list and put
2 when they meet?

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Oh, yeah,
4 sure.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yeah.

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Sure.

7 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So it's in the
8 minutes?

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah, sure.
10 We can do that. Absolutely. Absolutely.

11 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Great idea.

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No problem.
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Where was I?
16 So, so our redevelopment time committee
17 continues to meet regularly. Thank you. I'm almost
18 done. The Enterprise team are beginning our work on
19 management needs. Again, that technical assistance
20 from HUD has also given us a draft procurement
21 policy with input of that team that we're going over
22 with our legal counsel and looking forward to have
23 it to the Board for consideration in the near
24 future.

25 Our newsletter is --

1 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Excuse me,
2 Director.

3 Before you move on to the newsletter, I
4 have questions regarding the reports prepared by the
5 Committee.

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Okay. We
7 are going to do that when we get to moving on when
8 we get to that resolution.

9 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Okay.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I would
11 suggest that we talk about it when we get to that
12 resolution because that's part of the resolution.

13 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: All right.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: All right.
15 Is that good?

16 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So, I can speak
17 to both you and the Chair of that committee as to
18 when that resolution comes up for a vote?

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah. I
20 think any Commissioner can bring up a topic of
21 discussion during discussion for -- is there any --
22 when the Chair says "Is there any discussion?"
23 anything could be brought up at that point.

24 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Okay. Then I
25 will save my questions for then.

1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Good.

2 Corinne, do you want to talk a little
3 bit about your newsletter and the Hall of Fame?

4 MS. RICHMOND: Good evening, everyone.
5 Corinne Richmond.

6 Policy and Outreach for the Authority.

7 So, the newsletter is out. We publish
8 it quarterly and it gives a highlight of everything
9 that we are doing here at the Hoboken Housing
10 Authority and concerning the Hall of Fame, we had
11 our second edition of the Hall of Fame, I believe,
12 on June 5th, June 14th, and we had three -- we had
13 three inductees, J.R. Lynch, Jason Blanks and Kaylah
14 Fermaid, all were somehow related to the Housing
15 Authority with the fact that they lived here when
16 they were younger or they were born and raised here,
17 and they have gone to be basketball coaches,
18 baseball coaches, baseball coach, and one of --
19 Kaylah Fermaid is a representative in, I think, in
20 Washington D.C, is a house representative in
21 Washington D.C. For everyone that would like to
22 mention someone to be part of the part of the HHA
23 Hall of Fame, I would advise that you send me a text
24 message or you write me an e-mail or you reach out
25 to me. We welcome everyone in every walk of life.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I know we
4 talked about this in the past, but there's no way
5 to -- I don't think we added the e-mails or cell
6 phones of the Commissioners on here.

7 MS. RICHMOND: But the space --

8 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: It doesn't
9 like there's a lot of room.

10 MS. RICHMOND: Yes, it's the space,
11 it's a space issue, because we have so much
12 information that we need to cover, so if we were to
13 add all of the information of the Commissioners, it
14 won't be in the issue, but the information is on the
15 website for everyone that would like to reach out to
16 the Commissioner, they can go to the website, which
17 is the official means of communication.

18 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Got it.

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you.
20 And we'll keep working on that. We'll see. We'll
21 keep working on it.

22 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I think we should
23 add in a section we're going to call that the
24 Commissioners' corner and Chairwoman Reyes is going
25 to participate --

1 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Are you
2 volunteering me?

3 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Yeah.
4 (Laughter.)

5 CHAIRPERSON REYES: He's getting more
6 work. Sure. I say every month is one of us, how
7 about that?

8 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I'm very
10 hopeful on that.

11 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I would defer to
12 the Vice-Chair.

13 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Oh, fair
14 enough, fair enough.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So, we'll --
16 I'll knock my comments out in half on here and you
17 guys can do the other work. You guys can do it all.

18 We continue to meet with residents at
19 my office. We met with six residents since our June
20 Board meeting, and it was a short month, so we
21 continue to encourage any resident that wishes to
22 meet with me to schedule an appointment through the
23 manager's office.

24 Punch list inspections are in being
25 done on phase one of the renovations here.

1 We met with our fee accountant last
2 week to identify funds for our next round of repairs
3 and we expect to identify and start assigning that
4 work to architectural teams in August.

5 We did have a meet and greet here at
6 Fox Hill. Thank you for coming.

7 Housing For Hoboken, we'll be meeting
8 them on July 25th, and I'll be updating the trustees
9 on our redevelopment project.

10 The special allocation of capital
11 funding for Harrison is undergoing planning. All of
12 it right now is at the architects under plan.

13 The laundry room equipment installation
14 starts next week. Yeah, new laundry cards are being
15 dispersed. They've got five bucks on them, so get
16 your laundry card. They got a free five bucks. So
17 well, that's good. Preloaded with five bucks.

18 See your manager, they'll get you your
19 cards.

20 Our security camera system upgrades,
21 which is the infrastructure switches that really
22 need to be done, they're old. We've been trying to
23 get money for this for a long time and we thank,
24 again, CDBG, they are out for bids, so we hope to
25 get back to you in August with a contract for that.

1 Keep our camera system fresh.

2 The emergency generator work is in
3 progress. Pre-installation is complete. We're just
4 waiting for the generators to actually arrive. So,
5 supply of the last, I hope, of our supply chain
6 issues.

7 Monroe Gardens boiler replacements and
8 design. We're having a meeting tomorrow with the
9 engineers on that project. We hope to get that out
10 to bid soon.

11 On our uniform physical condition
12 standards, our REAC issues or what we're calling now
13 also our Inspire inspections that HUD's going to be
14 doing. As I've told you a number of times, we've
15 found a number of things that are true throughout
16 our units where our sprinkler head damage within the
17 units, that work is out to bid now. Hopefully, to
18 you in August.

19 Interior door replacements. That
20 resolution is in front of you tonight. We can
21 mention that when we get to that part.

22 Plaster work in units is being done
23 in-house and we're hoping to be able to do force
24 account labor with that. We're having a meeting
25 with our Local 97 Union about that issue.

1 Kitchen cabinet repair through our
2 approved contractor. Window repair being done
3 in-house, by a contractor, and sidewalk repair, the
4 work is happening as we speak.

5 If you're at -- if you hear some
6 grinding out there on the sidewalks, they're
7 actually grinding down our sidewalks and replacing
8 it as needed. As a result of the increased work
9 load and the management departments, everything
10 we've talked about with legal, et cetera, we have
11 authorized -- I have authorized a position of a new
12 assistant to the Director of Management, so she's
13 started with us this past week and Jimena, you want
14 to stand up and say hello to everybody?

15 (Applause.)

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Fox Hill,
17 don't get too angry. We stole her from here. I
18 know, I know. But she's very talented and we're
19 glad to have you aboard, Jimena. I think you're
20 going to do great things over there.

21 Our monthly vacancy report is attached.
22 Ninety-six percent. Again, great. Excellent. Fox
23 Hill, 96 percent, excellent.

24 We just have a little bragging to do.
25 Attachment 3, just a little touch, that we looked at

1 New Jersey public housing and New Jersey public
2 housing is at, I believe, a 92 percent occupancy
3 overall. Ninety-two percent. We are at 96 percent.

4 If you look at their history over the
5 past three years, it's been going down down down
6 down down. If you look at our history once we hit
7 2021, which is right past the elevator project, it's
8 gone up up up up up to where we are today. So, I
9 just want to brag on that. That's really a great
10 job by maintenance and by management. And I think
11 Jackie is on the Zoom. Jackie and her Local 55.
12 Thank you, Jackie, and then Frank and his management
13 team leasing up units, because once she gets done,
14 they've got to get leased, people got to get in.
15 So, thank you all for your great work.

16 We have been working on downsizing
17 folks in units. If you're in a unit and you got
18 three bedrooms and you've only got two people, time
19 to downsize. So, we've actually been doing some of
20 these now. It doesn't always make people happy, but
21 understand that that's part of what we do. We thank
22 the families that have already been downsized and do
23 understand to make more units available for families
24 with children. When I do ask the residents to work
25 with their manager, if downsizing is appropriate for

1 your families, we know it's hard to move, we do, but
2 those are the rules. Then we have to be fair and
3 get a correct size for your family.

4 Rent collection issues. We are working
5 working working away at it, and, Frank, you want to
6 give us a little synopsis of where we are?

7 MR. MERCHAND: Good evening, everybody.
8 Frank Merchand, Director of Management.

9 Commissioner Impastato, I owed you one
10 from last month, so I gave you two this month.

11 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: What's that?

12 MR. MERCHAND: The one, one is the one
13 ending 5/31 and then there's the one ending 4/30, so
14 you'll see them June and May, so this is a --

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: About five
16 pages back after my report. There you got it. Your
17 hand. Okay.

18 MR. MERCHAND: So, this is a good
19 breakdown that we'll be able to know as we're going
20 month to month, you'll be able to see the impact of
21 what's happening with the repayments what's
22 happening with outstanding rents, how many people
23 are outstanding.

24 At first glance, what we can tell here
25 is also 47 percent, if we look at -- let's look at

1 the one that has the heading June 23rd, which is the
2 recent one, the other one is for your -- so, this is
3 where we are.

4 June of 2023 was probably the worst
5 rent collection we've had in history, in the recent
6 history. It's alarming. We've been talking about
7 what we're seeing in the trend of rents and how much
8 people are falling behind. June just happened to be
9 our low and kind of like we just saw in that other
10 side for occupancy. The reason why, I wanted to
11 show you guys that occupancy chart before we talked
12 about this. If you take a look at that chart and
13 you see what the state is doing or what we did, and
14 that has to do with the singular focus of what we
15 were able to do. Our priority was vacancies.
16 First, we did the software conversion and when we
17 were done with the software conversion, right at the
18 end of October, we had a clear picture, we had
19 everybody was fresh in the system. Right there we
20 switched over. Now, our system and PIC match. Now,
21 the next step was vacancies. Almost 200 vacancies
22 at the time, 190 something, right? We have -- since
23 then we are down to the last 30 something units that
24 we need to get into, which now brings us to we've
25 reached that phase, we're going to let that ride.

1 That's going to continue growing. Now, we have
2 officially switched over and when we started in
3 October of last year, which was the tenant rent
4 collection with the repayment agreements, we started
5 with the statement. You guys wanted to make sure,
6 and I thought that was a great idea, that everybody
7 got statements instead of receipts. People started
8 to see what they have. That brought up a lot of
9 questions from what was on those statements for
10 folks. We had a lot of conversations, the managers
11 had opportunities to talk to tenants about that.
12 Some folks got into an agreement, some folks didn't.
13 We need -- now we're at that stage. So the letters
14 went out, the notices to quite. More than 500
15 notices to quit went out, and in June 29th.

16 On June 7th, again, because now those
17 notices to quit get counted every 31 days, 31 days
18 from June 29th will be the first date that we're
19 going to, now everybody that didn't respond,
20 everybody that didn't, all those court -- all those
21 are going to court, so --

22 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: For what date
23 is that?

24 MR. MERCHAND: July 29th.

25 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: July 29th.

1 MR. MERCHAND: Right. So what counsel
2 prepared was for the specific, those 20 people that
3 we continue to talk about, the larger amounts, we
4 did do certified for them to add an extra layer, but
5 that doesn't mean that we're not moving with
6 everybody.

7 So, the whole point is now we're at the
8 point that unfortunately we spoke about repayments,
9 we spoke about, "You need to pay the rent." We
10 spoke about, "Here's your the statements. We are
11 here."

12 The good news that I have for you today
13 is that people picked up the phone. So, I got that
14 letter, I don't have exact numbers for you right
15 now, but the truth of the matter is that I know over
16 \$100,000 in repayments came in immediately after
17 that. A lot of people just paid. It's a little
18 alarming because even through those balances there
19 might have been people that only owe \$50, right? So
20 but now they know, listen, I'm just going to be
21 current and they're going to be getting that notice
22 and they're going -- we're going to get to the point
23 that we are caught up to a normal level of rent
24 collection.

25 I know that Commissioner Seitzman, she

1 heard it in the conference. This is something
2 that's plaguing the entire country, but it doesn't
3 mean that we can't be the ones to show the rest of
4 the country how to do it and how to get to that
5 point that, look what we did with the -- look what
6 we he did with the vacancies, we're about to do that
7 with rent collections.

8 So, as we tighten the values I just ask
9 for your help because you're going to receive now
10 the calls, because for everybody person that gets
11 notice, unfortunately, then it's all the phone
12 calls, what are we doing, all we need is for the
13 tenants to call the office and we will enter into a
14 repayment agreements with whoever would like to. We
15 don't want to go to court, we want to get the rent
16 collection stabilized, and I think that we can do
17 it, and very similar to what the Director was saying
18 about not just for the families who are in rent
19 collection, the families who are being affected
20 because of the actions of their family members that
21 are on their lease, right? We need to come together
22 because the matriarchs, the patriarchs, the family
23 members that are here, that they're the ones that
24 we're going to feel the worst about when we have to
25 do an eviction, when we have to evict that mom that

1 didn't know what was happening in the courtyard and
2 it's not -- it's beyond her control. So we're
3 entering a tough stage right now. This is not going
4 to be like the vacancy. The vacancy correction is
5 having people getting apartments, right? Rent
6 collection is people getting evicted.

7 So, now, unfortunately, all we need is
8 everybody to just come to the table and let's work
9 together, just like we're doing with the police, and
10 when we wanted to partnership with the police, we
11 want a partnership with our tenants, we can -- you
12 are not alone in what you're experiencing as a
13 tenant. I want them to understand that. And that
14 relief of that, for that repayment agreement, frees
15 you from that balance that's over your head. You
16 still have to pay it, but it's at zero interest for
17 up to ten years. No one is going to give you a
18 loan, zero interest for ten years. The Housing
19 Authority is willing to do this right now to keep
20 you in your apartment. Please take advantage of
21 that opportunity. But, if not, unfortunately, what
22 we're going to see is a lot of court dates and then
23 that will be --

24 COMMISSIONER FORBES: So, this is just
25 an agreement, the \$100,000, is just an agreement to

1 pay.

2 MR. MERCHAND: Right.

3 COMMISSIONER FORBES: So how much of
4 that can you actually collect in the rent?

5 MR. MERCHAND: I'll get you numbers.
6 You'll see good numbers next month when I do this
7 report, you'll be able to see this. That's why I
8 wanted to --

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Also, what --

10 MR. MERCHAND: Well, you'll see --

11 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

12 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Could you go
13 over these numbers here?

14 MR. MERCHAND: The only thing --

15 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Part the 854
16 total units --

17 MR. MERCHAND: That is the complete,
18 that is the complete --

19 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: 678 of those
20 units --

21 MR. MERCHAND: Are outstanding in
22 rents.

23 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

24 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So almost 50
25 percent of all the housing units are not paying

1 months ago you came in here and you were like, oh,
2 we're making tremendous --

3 MR. MERCHAND: We did in the beginning
4 and then that was kind of already anticipated even
5 in the chart that I gave you, that most people will
6 start in the beginning, some people.

7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: The number's gone
8 up.

9 MR. MERCHAND: It did. They're going
10 up, they're going up every month.

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Let me help
12 with that because I get you, I get you on this. I
13 get you. Because it's hard to get it turned around.
14 So we're filling more units than we ever have, so we
15 got more tenants, right? So, it's rolling. So, you
16 get folks to go into repayment agreements, we're
17 patting ourselves on the back, we got -- let's pick
18 a hundred thousand in repayment agreements. Now
19 60,000 of that gets paid, but the 40,000 we thought
20 we're going to bring in, now they're not paying.
21 So, it winds up back over in this category. Maybe
22 the new folks that came in, maybe they don't pay, so
23 you got new ones rolling into this category, maybe
24 you've got some people that were current before, now
25 they're not paying. So it's a rolling people leave

1 and people come in, so --

2 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: What
3 percentage of the people that are new are not
4 paying?

5 MR. MERCHAND: That's what I was going
6 to say. June historically was the first month that
7 we saw -- we kind of were looking at the same
8 families that were owing and each month we're
9 getting a group. I will bring you those numbers
10 specifically as a graph next month so you could see
11 that, but our rent collection graph, in a bad way,
12 looks just like the -- as good as the vacancy in a
13 good way, but we will have that number. And I just
14 wanted you to see this because I think that next
15 month when you see these numbers, we're going to see
16 the impact of what the work, the paperwork is doing.

17 So, now all of everything that we've
18 tried to this point, you know, even when you're
19 putting a building together, you got to do your
20 foundation, your concrete, your windows, right? I
21 would say we're in the interior stage of this, where
22 the building is set and we're about to -- we're
23 about to turn the corner, which is the court case.

24 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I just -- it's
25 pretty frustrating when someone wins the lottery,

1 right, for Section 8, is that what the new people
2 are moving in?

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Public
4 housing.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Public
6 housing, so they get off the lottery.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

8 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: They get into
9 the unit.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

11 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: You guys meet
12 with them, welcome to the Housing Authority.

13 Are you telling me they just start
14 month one not paying rent.

15 MR. MERCHAND: Not necessarily the new
16 folks, but some.

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Some.

18 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

19 MR. MERCHAND: Some of the old folks
20 that all of a sudden they fell behind somehow. So
21 they're just is a gigantic group of tenants who do
22 not pay and, you know, it can be traced, it could be
23 traced to Covid. It could be traced to the fact
24 that there was misinformation about not paying rent,
25 it could be traced to the fact that a lot of folks

1 who did not lose their jobs stopped paying rent,
2 tried to get help and then the help said, "We can't
3 give you help. You never stopped working." "Oh,
4 but I didn't pay my rent," and so a lot of people
5 who applied and they thought for sure they were
6 going to get that help, they were denied that help;
7 \$10,000, \$15,000, so on the other hand even with
8 Commissioner, our Chairwoman who helped us with
9 giving a lot of the help through the County, that
10 helped. That was only a little bit.

11 So, unfortunately, it's just people are
12 not paying their rent and what's going to make it --
13 what's going to make it very clear is when we go to
14 court. So no more, no more, we're not going to sit
15 here and talk. We're not going to -- and we want --
16 I'm talking about we started this conversation in
17 October, right? So we can feel confident, we can
18 look at any family in the eye and say we've been
19 asking you to come in, right? We've been asking you
20 to participate. We've been asking you to please
21 catch up. We've been telling you how much your rent
22 is. For whatever reason, you just don't pay it.

23 COMMISSIONER FORBES: What's the
24 average rent that's not paid? For a poor household,
25 is it 3,000, 4,000, 5,000 --

1 MR. MERCHAND: No, I would say that
2 there are 22 families, there are 22 families, that
3 are above ten. There is the bulk of that, the bulk
4 being of the money that's owed to us is in five to
5 \$10,000 range. And the families who owe below the
6 \$5,000 range actually then really tip down to more
7 like 800, 300, and those are a lot of the families
8 that came in in June, they got that letter and those
9 were easy enough to clean up, so they came out of
10 pocket and they paid. A lot of people came with big
11 checks, \$10,000 checks, \$17,000 checks, so there
12 were some and this happened, started -- started in,
13 you know, in July, so...

14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: What's the
15 process when a new applicant comes off the list?
16 You guys sit with them and say, "Hey, are you
17 working? What's your job?" You guys do all that?

18 MR. MERCHAND: Yeah, it's criminal
19 background check; there's, you know, working
20 employment history. There's a little bit of a lag
21 when we get the recording. You must be on the
22 program at least three months before we can see from
23 the EID, your information. So, you know, as part of
24 Jimena being my assistant now, one of the things
25 that is going to be important, this will tie into

1 the conversation you guys are going to have later on
2 tonight, is that quality control happens through the
3 EID, right? Because -- and folks feel that if we're
4 looking at the EID that we're taking it personal.
5 No, it's our responsibility to go back to a certain
6 amount of years during the reset, because that's why
7 HUD provides that information and sometimes we don't
8 get it in real time, sometimes if you don't notify
9 us if there was a change in your income, we -- it
10 may taking us six months to a year before we
11 actually see it in the document, but when we see it,
12 we have to recoup, and no, it's not a punishment,
13 it's you were supposed to pay 30 percent of your
14 income at all times, so that's something that you're
15 going to see.

16 COMMISSIONER FORBES: I'm sorry. I
17 need help with this.

18 MR. MERCHAND: Yes.

19 COMMISSIONER FORBES: So you haven't
20 paid rent in this amount of time, you get a letter
21 and you come down to the HHA with a \$10,000 check?
22 I need you to help me with that. You come down with
23 a \$17,000 check, wow.

24 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

25 MR. MERCHAND: Because what happened is

1 people were holding on to the money because they
2 thought they weren't going to have to pay it. And
3 the folks that were smart enough to hold on to it,
4 then had it to pay, unfortunately it takes a lot of
5 discipline to hold on to \$10,000 and not spend it.
6 So, for most people they were supposed to be
7 bringing it, but they just said, "When the times
8 comes, I'll figure it out."

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And some
10 people inherit and some people win a lawsuit and
11 some people, there's other things that happen.

12 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: We have a -- guys,
14 I'm going to ask anyone in the public, keep your
15 comments quietly, please. Public portion is now
16 closed.

17 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: So, when I --
18 can I speak?

19 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Can you hear
21 me?

22 So, when I was -- when we were at the
23 PHADA conference and there was a session just on
24 this and this was -- there was representation from
25 all over the country. One woman from New York City,

1 from NYCHSAA, said that she had someone owe over a
2 \$100,000 and it took her two years to (inaudible),
3 and everybody sitting around the room saying, "We
4 have the same problem, what do we do?" And
5 everybody in that room is extremely frustrated
6 saying, "No one wants to evict. Nobody wants to do
7 this. Here we are, what do we do?" You're on the
8 two sides of the coin. You need money to function,
9 you need money to pay, you need money to do all the
10 buildings, but at the same time people aren't
11 paying, what do you do? And how do you work
12 together within the guidelines and the -- each --
13 each city and state has their own jurisdictions, and
14 that's why when you go to these national
15 conferences, you talk to each other and you realize
16 you're not in a bubble, but so many different --
17 didn't make a difference if you were in rural North
18 Carolina, or if you're in -- the biggest one is in
19 New York City, or if you're in Hoboken. As if you
20 sat in that room and you heard people's
21 frustrations, and really bringing it up with the in
22 a PHADA convention, going to hear certain people
23 saying, "How do we change the laws?" Maybe we have
24 to work together on the local level, then we have to
25 bring it maybe to the federal level, but it's

1 something has to be done together, because it's not
2 just us, it's everywhere, and then you're in a hard
3 in a rough spot. It's not any situation to be in.
4 It's not even --

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I would like
6 a little, if I can --

7 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: We have to
9 keep reminding ourselves we just got through a
10 pandemic. The pandemic said the courts were closed.
11 They weren't evicting people. We had people out
12 there, maybe well-intentioned, telling residents
13 don't pay rent. You're never going to have to pay
14 it. It's all good for you. Forget it. That may
15 have happened, but people didn't, so, and they knew
16 we couldn't take them to court, so they didn't.

17 So, now a year ago we were still there.
18 Now that is over, right? Now, people are, like us,
19 people around the country, are saying, "We're owed
20 all of this money." There is a national issue with
21 people being evicted. This is a homeless issue.
22 And what we've done, I am so far very proud of what
23 we've done.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Patricia, I'm
25 sorry.

1 MS. WAITERS: I'm sorry.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: We sat here
4 last, this past year, 2022, and said this is our
5 plan, right? We're going to contact everyone with a
6 balance, we're going to ask them to come in and do a
7 repayment agreement. We will bend over backwards.
8 If you can do \$50 a month, if you can do whatever,
9 we will be really flexible, right? And then we did
10 another letter and say let's do it. Then we said
11 let's do a repayment. We've been doing this for six
12 months, and saying -- over six months, saying,
13 "Look, some day this is going to happen. We've got
14 to put the other foot down," right? And we're still
15 open. I mean, somebody gets that notice to quit,
16 which is raising the ante and they come in, we'll
17 work -- we'll work it with them.

18 Now, if you make that repayment
19 agreement with us and you don't pay, that doesn't
20 make us feel good. We're going to head toward a
21 notice to quit with you, right?

22 Now, the next level, and then I'll
23 hush, the next level is if you don't pay after this
24 notice to quit, that 30 days, yes, we will take you
25 to court.

1 Now, once we're in front of the judge,
2 there's still a chance in front of the judge to say,
3 okay, this is the deal, we're going to do a
4 repayment agreement, and the judge will then bang
5 the gavel and put that officially into the record,
6 so now if you don't pay, I mean, you're out, right?
7 The judge isn't going to mess around if you make the
8 deal by the judge.

9 So, again, what I want, as a
10 perspective, is for us all to understand this was a
11 national, maybe international issue, and we are
12 approaching it as kindy and as open-hearted as we
13 possibly can. We do not want to evict one family.
14 We do not want to get to that point. We are willing
15 and able to do agreements with folks that are
16 affordable, that people can live with, but as we all
17 know, at some point we, as an organization, have to
18 draw that line.

19 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Is it possible to
20 get a running total of all the families who owe?

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Of course.

22 MR. MERCHAND: This is the report.

23 COMMISSIONER FORBES: No no, that's the
24 number.

25 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Family A,

1 family B, family C?

2 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yeah.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Family 1,
4 family 2?

5 MR. MERCHAND: No, I mean, as far as
6 names, that's --

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No, we can't
8 do names, but I think we could give you an idea that
9 here's family 1. Family 1 has four people in the
10 family and they owe \$5,000, and they live in a three
11 bedroom. Family 2 is boom boom boom. We could
12 probably do that.

13 MR. MERCHAND: All right.

14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Is it possible
15 to do a report that shows the first month they did
16 not pay rent?

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: And does it
19 also have the first notice that we send out?

20 MR. MERCHAND: No. But what we're
21 doing in that --

22 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Can you keep
23 track of that now?

24 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

25 MR. MERCHAND: And what we are doing is

1 starting this, the June 29th letters, it's where all
2 that is going to be on a spread that they're going
3 to -- we're going to track and we're going to keep
4 that.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Unfortunately,
6 what's sad, and this is no disrespect to our
7 counsel, but the only people making money are our
8 attorneys. The billable hours. All 500 people they
9 got to now go after. I mean, that bill is going to
10 be through the roof. And then there's no guarantee
11 that they get in front of the judge and they say,
12 "Oh, yeah, we'll repay," and then that's another two
13 months.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Uh-huh.
15 You've got to go through this. I believe we have to
16 go through this to get back to where we were back
17 before the pandemic, and we're at a reasonable
18 nonpayment rate of 3 or 4 percent. Is that -- that
19 you're always going to have that, but you're not
20 going to have these numbers.

21 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Madame Chair, may
22 I?

23 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Sure.

24 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I just want to,
25 you know, and I echo the frustration of my

1 colleagues here, but I also don't want to tie down
2 staff with reports that aren't going to make any
3 difference as to how we're going to proceed. I
4 think it's always important that we have all the
5 information, but having a report of family A versus
6 family B versus family C, I don't think it does
7 anything really for the process. We should get
8 that, we should definitely understand it, but I
9 don't want to tie up staff for a report that doesn't
10 make any difference for the short-term of getting
11 into a courtroom and having those repayment
12 agreements or having a judge issue a very official
13 document to say: This is the way that this family
14 needs to proceed.

15 I think taking the staff away from that
16 becomes problematic. I think having that report at
17 some point to the Commission is definitely needed,
18 but I don't think it's a matter of rushing that
19 stuff to us, because I think that hinders what we
20 need to do over the next 30 to 60 days and I'm --

21 COMMISSIONER FORBES: I mean, the
22 bottom line is we got to collect money.

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Right, we
24 do.

25 COMMISSIONER FORBES: I mean, we have

1 to collect money, so that if we keep dancing around
2 collecting it, and not focusing on where we need to
3 collect it from, that's what -- that's where my
4 focus is. I just want a snapshot of where we need
5 to collect it from. That's what I'm --

6 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: How about if
8 I offer this, and then I'll let Frank go.

9 How about if we look at this between
10 now and the next meeting and we'll see how finely we
11 can slice and dice it on the data for you, if that
12 makes sense, but, Frank, go ahead.

13 MR. MERCHAND: And I don't know if it
14 might be appropriate, but I know we have enough
15 committees, but maybe we need a special kind of
16 accounts receivable, something that we -- what we
17 focus on.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I think the
19 Finance Committee --

20 MR. MERCHAND: The Finance Committee,
21 so because that is something that continues to, and
22 I -- personally, I know that we stand here month
23 after month, right, and it's hard to see, but please
24 take a look at the past, see where we're moving.
25 We're moving in the right direction.

1 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: We're not.

2 MR. MERCHAND: No no. We are. I'm
3 telling you we are.

4 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: We're not --
5 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

6 MR. MERCHAND: You can't say that
7 though, you can't say that, though, because just
8 because one metric of what we're doing is not
9 looking right right now, this is what we need, we
10 need to prioritize with the little bit of staff that
11 we have, right? We need time or staff.

12 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I understand,
13 but you just got an assistant, right? So, that's
14 now added -- that's now added cost in your section
15 to now go collect money. That's the wrong way.

16 MR. MERCHAND: No no, because -- hold
17 on, hold on. If I could give you rebuttal on that.

18 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, the
19 process of adding new people, there's something
20 wrong there if the person joins and first month
21 they're not paying rent. So, we didn't do a good
22 enough job of: Where is your job? Let me see
23 your -- let me see your background information. Let
24 me talk to your manager. How much money is coming
25 in? If the person signs up and gets in and takes

1 the unit from somebody else that really needs it,
2 and doesn't pay, that's really upsetting, man.

3 MR. MERCHAND: So, as we sit here and
4 talk about security, right, as long as we think
5 about adding a security guard, right? But there is
6 an expense there, right? Watching the camera is an
7 expense there. We're talking about where we have --
8 we're frustrated with the focus because we can't get
9 certain things done. Where your money is going to
10 go is going to go to watch cameras and send letters
11 so that we can enforce what's happening out there,
12 that we can't do. So no, it's not about collecting
13 rent, it's about protecting everybody because we
14 don't have enough staff, we don't have enough staff
15 to -- in a regular world, the regular housing
16 authority would take all the problems that we have
17 here and then there's all the work that we do that
18 fills up the day. All these things that we're
19 dealing with after the fact don't belong in the
20 Housing Authority. That's not my job to come in at
21 two in the morning, for Rev to come out and walk,
22 for Barbara to come out and walk. That's not fair.
23 I'm at dinner with my wife and I get called because
24 there's a clogged toilet at 9 o'clock at night,
25 that's not fair, and but we do it.

1 COMMISSIONER FORBES: I think what
2 Andrew is saying --

3 MR. MERCHAND: No no no no, but what I
4 want to get out -- I'm sorry, Reverend. All I want
5 to let you know is that when you put dollar signs on
6 a Kubota or a person that's going to give us value,
7 you're crushing us. Every day that I show up here,
8 I show up for you and for them, but when you say
9 things like that to me, I --

10 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I'm looking at
11 the chart. To say it's improved, to say it's going
12 in the right direction is incorrect.

13 MR. MERCHAND: No, it's not. We're at
14 96 percent. We're better than the average in New
15 Jersey, and it starts with the agency --

16 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I'm talking
17 about collecting rent.

18 MR. MERCHAND: Yes, that's why I said--
19 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Collecting
21 rent is going in the wrong direction.

22 MR. MERCHAND: That's one measure.

23 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: The wrong
24 direction.

25 MR. MERCHAND: Wrong. We're --

1 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I would like
3 to make a point here. This was a planned process.

4 MR. MERCHAND: Right.

5 MR. H. FITZPATRICK: And I just went
6 through this, we knew at the beginning. We could
7 have evicted everyone day, but that would have be a
8 hard place. We planned to go to people first to
9 have a number of months to enter into these
10 repayment agreements. We knew it wasn't going to be
11 perfect a hundred percent, but in order to do this
12 equitably, we needed these steps and we're down the
13 road on these steps, right, that's what Frank is
14 saying. We have made a lot of progress.

15 COMMISSIONER FORBES: We're focusing
16 the --

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes. One at a
18 time, guys.

19 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Madame Chair,
20 may I?

21 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Commissioner
22 Sanford?

23 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: It's been a very
24 long, hot day.

25 May I propose that we take a five

1 minute break? Everybody can perhaps cool off and I
2 could you know use the bathroom.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYES: If you'd like to
4 take a recess, is that -- that would be fine for
5 yourself. I don't know that everybody else would
6 agree. I kind of want to move this along because I,
7 like everyone else, need to go home. I have kids at
8 home. So, if you'd like to take a recess and use
9 the restroom, by all means, you can.

10 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I will, I just
11 thought that --

12 CHAIRPERSON REYES: They're just
13 speaking about --

14 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

15 MR. MERCHAND: And what you see is
16 passion, it's not upset, and I appreciate everything
17 everyone brings to the table ever time and we're
18 playing basketball here, right, and it's how we make
19 it all, and --

20 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Okay.
22 All right. So let's move on. Thank
23 you.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Commissioner
25 Forbes?

1 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Thanks, Frank.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: We're
4 setting up the VAS vouchers and we've been working
5 on the other possibilities of doing project-basing.

6 Maintenance all the playgrounds have
7 been disinfected.

8 We did have our basketball tournament
9 on Sunday and we're hoping that this coming weekend
10 the basketball league will start on Saturday and
11 Sunday evening.

12 I talked to Michael today, he's pulling
13 together a couple of things, so it may be another
14 week, but we'll see on Saturday and Sunday.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director, I have a
16 question. What's going on with -- with the repairs
17 of that?

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So, here's
19 the status on the repairs, is that we are under
20 contract to do the new service there and paint it,
21 et cetera, but, and I agree with this, until we get
22 a little dry weather, we're just going to resurface
23 that with water underneath it and that's just
24 wasteful. We've got to wait till we get a couple of
25 weeks of good, dry weather to resurface that. So

1 we're going to have live with it and deal with it
2 until we're resurfaced.

3 In the meantime, Sammy's working
4 consistently on the goals.

5 Did you get a chance to talk with the
6 guys about the rooms today. Thank you.

7 MR. FERMAINT: I'm not that tall.

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Stand on a
9 box or something.

10 MR. FERMAINT: Hi. So basically --

11 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: You're not that
12 short.

13 MR. FERMAINT: I'm sorry.

14 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

15 MR. FERMAINT: Very good. Good. Very
16 good.

17 Okay. So, basically what I wanted to
18 try to do with the basketball court is doing it in
19 two phases. I tried to reach out to the contractor
20 to see if we can, if it can happen, but now if we do
21 it in two phases, by the time we get the court done,
22 the rims are going to be in shambles again. So, now
23 we dealing with fiberglass backboards, I'm pretty
24 sure you're aware of it. So guys are jamming on
25 them, taking them all flat. So I'd rather just keep

1 doing the adjustments until the whole park gets
2 completely done.

3 Now, the whole thing with the park not
4 getting done right away, it's because of the paint
5 job. So the moisture in the -- the floor is so
6 saturated, that once they paint the floor down, it's
7 just going to lift up the paint and it's not going
8 to be working.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: I'm okay with
10 those. I think it's going to -- because I go down
11 there every day to watch the kids play. The
12 (inaudible) have no cover on them, so that is a big
13 fear for me that one of the kids are going to bump
14 into it --

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: We can do
16 that.

17 MR. FERMAINT: Yeah.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYES: If we could just
19 get covers for both sides, I think I'd be a little
20 bit more --

21 MR. FERMAINT: Absolutely, absolutely.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYES: -- more
23 comfortable.

24 MR. FERMAINT: Absolutely.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYES: But I understand

1 everything now.

2 MR. FERMAINT: That could be taken care
3 of.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you,
5 Sammy.

6 MR. FERMAINT: You're quite welcome.

7 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Thanks, Sammy.

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So, we
9 continue to bid out the work on the four-month cycle
10 of floor stripping. We hope to have that for
11 everyone soon.

12 Our maintenance plumbing projects and
13 our unit repair special projects are attached in
14 your attachments. A little slower because it's
15 summer, but we're rolling along with them.

16 Our boiler inspections are going on
17 through the state right now and we're also hoping to
18 have the CDBG four boilers replaced as soon as they
19 get in.

20 We continue to fight with the
21 extermination. We have started some new processes.
22 We've been meeting with the City as well. We
23 started some CO2 processes under one, but it's no --
24 there's no magic wand. There's just no magic wand.
25 We think we've seen some improvement, but it helps.

1 At the Finance Committee, we reviewed
2 our fiscal year 2024 proposed budget and audit,
3 which are in front of you today. The meeting was
4 attended by our fee accountant, Bill Katchen, our
5 auditor, Michael Maurice, and I think Michael and
6 Bill's around today, and I think I'll just wait
7 maybe until those come up as a resolution --

8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes, please.

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: -- to talk
10 about them further.

11 And our ability for our residents to
12 perform direct payments is now a reality, full tilt.
13 It's up. So come to see your manager. If you want
14 to do direct payments to us out of your bank
15 account, come and see us, and your manager can set
16 that up with you.

17 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Director, just a
18 quick point on that. I know we spoke about it in
19 the Finance Committee as well as potentially a
20 specific term of any repayment agreement, is there a
21 way that we could put that into just a general lease
22 as a specific payment so that all of our residents
23 would have the -- would have that in their lease
24 from this -- and, of course, grandfather the current
25 tenants in, but --

1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Right.

2 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: It goes to
3 Andrew's point earlier, we have someone new coming
4 into the Housing Authority, we go through their
5 background checks, we understand they have a job, we
6 understand all of that. In their lease we put that
7 it is a condition of their unit that they pay direct
8 into our bank account month over month, and then
9 that becomes a point of violation in their lease,
10 which then would add to the process of removing
11 someone who is not paying their rent.

12 So, I would hope that we could look at
13 that from --

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Well --

15 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: -- the legal side
16 and then put that in any future leases that we
17 currently have for future tenants.

18 MR. MERCHAND: We can make it a
19 condition of the repayment.

20 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Repayment,
21 definitely.

22 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I know we
23 could do that.

24 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I think that's
25 definite.

1 MR. MERCHAND: That would be automatic.
2 That depends a lot --

3 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Without a date.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: But the
5 leases are not in question. We'll definitely look
6 into the.

7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Definitely a good
8 point to have us start a conversation, so...

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And the last
10 thing I'll say on the Finance Committee, is that I
11 have been in touch with our insurance broker, thank
12 you, Councilman, for your reaching out. We have
13 talked and he's looking at a couple of different
14 options for us for our insurance over the next year.

15 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I talked to a
16 couple of different contacts that I have in
17 different firms, there's multiple options there, so,
18 and I got the -- and I think I forwarded it to you
19 and the Chairwoman. Next year's state health
20 benefit plan is going to go up by another 5,
21 6 percent, so it's only going to get worse. This
22 last year was 24 percent. It's going up another 5
23 to 6 percent this coming year.

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you
25 for looking at that for us.

1 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: It's definitely
2 something we need to make a change.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah, we'll
4 shop it. It makes sense.

5 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Good.

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you
7 for that.

8 And I don't know if Daniel is anywhere
9 around.

10 MS. PRIESTLY: Yes, yes.

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Is he out
12 facing that way?

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Here he is.

14 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Hey, Daniel.

15 MR. PEREZ: Hello, everyone.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Hi, Daniel.

17 MR. PEREZ: Hey, hello, Director,
18 residents of Fox Hill.

19 So I want to say that we want to
20 Atlantic City on Tuesday, had an amazing time. I
21 really appreciate these trips. I think they provide
22 kind of like increased emotional wellbeing for the
23 seniors, they can connect with their peers, and it
24 looks like a great quality of life. So I'm really
25 thankful to Ruben Ramos for providing the buses.

1 This was our second trip. I think we probably might
2 have another trip coming up, maybe in September.
3 So, keep your fingers crossed. We had an amazing
4 time. So, I really promote these trips and again,
5 the seniors out, they get the seniors out, they're
6 able to connect and have fun on the boardwalk, so
7 and many of them can also come back to (inaudible)
8 their and some of them actually won some money, so
9 that's always good to hear.

10 The Director spoke about the basketball
11 tournament. This is amazing because it actually
12 brings the community together, you guys, all about
13 community involvement, community engagement, and
14 social cohesion, and that's what we want. So, the
15 tournament was amazing. Everyone came out. It was
16 great food, amazing giveaways, prizes, raffles,
17 right, and good music for the entire community.

18 So, now we're having a tournament
19 coming up this weekend, right? And it's going to
20 run all the way through around August 25th. So,
21 we're really excited for that and we're working with
22 that, and also the younger kids are also playing
23 basketball with Community Lifestyles in the Hoboken
24 community and that's Monday through Thursday from
25 around 3 to 7:30 p.m., and then on Saturday from 10

1 to 3 p.m. And that's amazing. So, we're keeping
2 the adults busy and we're keeping also the kids
3 involved as well.

4 And then, of course, Community
5 Lifestyle summer camp, which gives opportunities
6 like basketball, if you just want your kids to
7 participate in the summer camp, you know, get some
8 swimming lessons, some recreational trips as well,
9 some field trips, educational trips as well, so
10 please sign them up. So that's it for me.

11 Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you,
14 Daniel.

15 And that would conclude my report.

16 Thank you.

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1 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you,
2 Director.

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1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.01
2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
3 2023-07-01. A Resolution of the Housing Authority
4 of the City of Hoboken to approve the meeting
5 minutes for June 20, 2023, regular Board meeting.
6 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Motion.
7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.
8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Questions?
9 Concerns?
10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?
11 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Aye.
12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.
13 Impastato?
14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.
15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?
16 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.
17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?
18 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.
19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?
20 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.
21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?
22 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.
23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?
24 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.
25 *****

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.02

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.

3 2023-07.02. A resolution authorizing the payment of

4 the monthly list of bills for the Hoboken Housing

5 Authority.

6 Questions? Concerns?

7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Motion.

8 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Second.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Andrew?

10 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yeah, under

11 professional development there's a Houston Housing

12 Authority.

13 Can you just talk a little bit about,

14 what that is?

15 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director?

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Uh-huh.

17 Yup, Emil and Frank, you guys want to take that one?

18 MR. KOTHERITHARA: This person, this is

19 one of our employees.

20 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Emil, you want to

21 get on the mic?

22 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

23 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I can't hear you.

24 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: We can't hear

25 you.

1 MR. KOTHERITHARA: Emil Kotherithara,
2 I'm the CFO of the Authority.

3 For No. 2, Houston Housing Authority,
4 that's a training that one of our employees had
5 signed up for. It's an on-line webinar on-line fair
6 housing.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I don't know
8 if you've heard, but a new fair housing law is
9 coming down the pike that we're all going to have to
10 follow, and it was the one that was stopped a number
11 of years ago by the Trump administration. Biden's
12 retooling it and we better no about it. We better
13 know what's happening and what's going to happen.
14 We're going to have a lot of reportings and what
15 HUD's telling us is that if we're not back on top of
16 it, there's going to be trouble.

17 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: We have to pay
18 another housing authority? Like HUD doesn't --

19 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: They're
21 putting us in training.

22 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: And there's
23 only one employee for the Housing Authority?

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I believe
25 this is one person going, right?

1 MR. KOTHERITHARA: This invoice is just
2 for that one person.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.
4 There's one person going, right.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Is it on line?

6 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: On line?
7 You don't know? Do you know who's going? Visenia,
8 you want to speak?

9 MR. KOTHERITHARA: I thought it was
10 Daniel. I could be wrong.

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So no one
12 over there is going?

13 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: All right. So
14 we -- if we don't have a person going then and not
15 identified, we're going to take it off the list of
16 bills.

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah. Okay.
18 Let's say no.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYES: They're paying into
20 the Houston Housing Authority.

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Okay. Let's
22 take it off.

23 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: You understand
24 the frustration that, like, is boiling inside of me
25 right now? We're just going to spend 550 bucks,

1 we're going to sign someone up, we're going to say
2 it's fair housing, and then we're going to look
3 around the room and no one knows what who is doing
4 what --

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And I'm
6 sorry for this mistake.

7 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I mean, it's
8 like a circus.

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No, it's
10 not. I'm sorry for this mistake. It's one mistake
11 and I'm sorry for that mistake. This is an
12 incredible amount of work that we do on each and
13 every one of these --

14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I got that.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: -- things
16 and you found one, yeah.

17 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Over the years
18 I've found probably 50 of them.

19 CHAIRPERSON REYES: You did get --

20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: The -- who
21 went to the governor's conference registration,
22 September 2023? 609.18.

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That
24 definitely would have been me.

25 MR. KOTHERITHARA: That is a

1 registration forthcoming.

2 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So that's --
3 who is going to that?

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Myself and
5 Corinne.

6 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: What's the
7 Quincy's, Lake Leadville Denver.

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That was the
9 very last meal in Denver at the -- I got my receipt
10 in a little late.

11 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, who went
12 to Denver? Who was the total, so I see Sheridan,
13 3,125. Whose -- what is that and how many people is
14 that for?

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So how many
16 of us went to Denver?

17 MR. KOTHERITHARA: I can answer that
18 for you. It was four people at that 3,125, it was
19 for three nights hotel accommodations.

20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Who were the
21 four people?

22 MR. KOTHERITHARA: So Mr. Recko,
23 Corinne, Frank, and Commissioner Seitzman.

24 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: All right.
25 Okay. And United Airlines, the baggage fees for

1 that.

2 MR. KOTHERITHARA: Yeah, there was
3 return baggage fees, \$35 a bag for four people.

4 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So usually
5 it's 35 going out and 35 coming back.

6 MR. KOTHERITHARA: Yeah, so these are
7 all charges that were on our procurement card and
8 the going charges you saw in last month's list of
9 bills because of the cutoff statement as well.

10 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Cool.

11 MR. KOTHERITHARA: The 23rd of the
12 month.

13 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Can I just
14 ask, can I have, if it's too much, just let me know,
15 but if we can keep a running tally of the cost for
16 Commissioners to attend these conferences, I don't
17 know if that's too much to ask, I'm just -- I would
18 like to have a number yearend on how much money was
19 spent for Commissioners to attend conferences.

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That's not
21 hard to do, right?

22 MR. KOTHERITHARA: Yeah. Right, that's
23 something, an excess I started something together
24 for the Denver trips.

25 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yeah, and just

1 keep it going and then that's -- I think that's it
2 for me. That's it for me. Thank you, Chair.

3 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Anything
5 else?

6 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Any other
7 questions? Concerns? Director?

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

9 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.
11 Impastato?

12 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Minus the --
13 do we have to do a motion or --

14 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: It's coming off,
15 right?

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: It's coming
17 off. Do we have to do the motion, Counselor.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Counselor, do we
19 have to do a motion to remove the Houston Housing
20 Authority from the list of bills?

21 ATTORNEY H. FITZPATRICK: In my opinion
22 you should, indeed, from the floor, request someone
23 to amend the existing motion to delete that item.

24 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Motion to amend.

25 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Motion to

1 amend the list of bills to eliminate the -- under
2 professional development line item 2 for \$550.

3 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I'll second that
4 motion.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Commissioner? I
6 mean, Director?

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: All right.
8 Anything else?

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Call the roll on
10 the --

11 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: On the
13 amendment, A. Forbes?

14 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.
16 Impastato?

17 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

19 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

21 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

22 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?

23 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?

25 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.

1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?
2 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.
3 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Now, motion on the
4 an amended.
5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Motion?
6 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Motion.
7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.
8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Discussion?
9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Questions?
10 Concerns? Director?
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12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?
13 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.
14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.
15 Impastato?
16 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.
17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?
18 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.
19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?
20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.
21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?
22 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.
23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?
24 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.
25 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?

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COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO:

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.03
2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
3 2023-07.03. A Resolution to adopt and approve the
4 single audit for fiscal year 10/1/21 to
5 September 30th, 2022, of the Housing Authority of
6 the City of Hoboken conducted by Polcari & Company
7 CPA.
8 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Motion.
9 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Second.
10 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Questions?
11 Concerns?
12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Mike Maurice
13 is here from Polcari. Mike?
14 Mike.
15 MR. MAURICE: How are you?
16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Welcome.
17 MR. MAURICE: Good evening, everyone.
18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Good
19 evening, Mike.
20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Everything is
21 there.
22 MR. MAURICE: Hello. How are you?
23 Mike Maurice from Policari & Company.
24 I'll break out the order of
25 presentation based upon the reports that we issue on

1 the Housing Authority's financial statement.

2 There are three reports of ours that
3 are included on finance -- on the audit report.

4 The first is on the financial
5 statements of the Housing Authority and the other
6 two reports are on also compliance with the laws,
7 regulations, and compliance the major programs that
8 were selected. So, the audit's basically two
9 audits, if you will. It's a financial audit and a
10 compliance audit.

11 On the financial audit, the report is
12 on page -- begins on page 6 of the audit report, and
13 we issued an unqualified opinion on the financial
14 statements.

15 In our opinion the financial statements
16 were fairly presented, so an unqualified opinion was
17 issued.

18 The second report is the -- what's
19 known as the Yellow Book report. It's the report on
20 internal control of financial reporting and on
21 compliance with state and municipal laws and
22 regulations. That report was also an unqualified
23 opinion.

24 And the third report is the report on
25 compliance with major programs in accordance with

1 the uniform guidance. In that report we issued a
2 qualified opinion. There were the two findings in
3 this year's audit report. There were two programs
4 that were tested as major this year, they were the
5 lower end public housing program and the housing
6 choice voucher program. The both findings were very
7 similar in nature. They dealt with compliance
8 issues of eligibility, recertifications or lack
9 thereof of recertifications, and required
10 documentation in those forms like the signing of
11 employee disclosure lists, the 9886 forms, 5058s,
12 things of that nature. Those are repeat findings
13 from previous years. Those findings have been in
14 the audit report, I believe, since we've been doing
15 the audit now for about seven years. The management
16 has issued their response and that was included in
17 the corrective action plan, which was submitted to
18 HUD and to REAC last month, and it is so noted in
19 the report.

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you,
21 sir. And I'd like to address that again. It's very
22 upsetting to me. I think we -- Terry, how do put
23 down a dropped microphone in this, in the
24 transcript?

25 So, we're a very -- we're very

1 proactive this year on this, Frank and I spent a lot
2 of time on this issue over the last year along with
3 the managers. I'm very upset over it. However,
4 what we did in October was we brought in an outside
5 consultant firm that's a national consulting firm in
6 public housing called Nan McKay. We brought them in
7 to do an audit of our files. Before they did, we
8 did our own audit, and based on what we found from
9 them, they came in and did a training with our
10 managers and that training with our managers was
11 done over the past month in May.

12 You want to take it from there? Very
13 intensive training with testing.

14 Thanks, Mike.

15 MR. MERCHAND: Yes, so if we could take
16 it even a little bit further back, so last year's
17 audit. Last year's audit came out and just like
18 Mike said now, after an audit we have to put in what
19 our action time is. So our action plan last year
20 was we started with the QC of the files, a certain
21 amount of files per month. In the first few months
22 of looking at that, some revelations came out that
23 were alarming, right? So at that moment I brought
24 it up to the Director and I said what we're finding,
25 and I understand why now we're having a complete.

1 We keep getting these findings. I see it now across
2 and I understand that there's something that's not
3 clicking. So we were able to contract Nan McKay.
4 They came out. They did a 10 percent of our files
5 across everything, and that was in October. Then in
6 February they came in, they sat with us, with the
7 managers, what they found, and as they were -- they
8 then gave us a recommendation of what would -- what
9 would be the best type of training to work on these
10 files. So long story short, it wasn't a surprise
11 for us that we were going to have this finding
12 because we've been working on this and now we've
13 worked on it and now not just the managers, the
14 entire administrative staff attended certification
15 classes. So everybody has attended a rent
16 calculation, which was also -- and it's kind of
17 like, you know, even doctors, you have to -- you
18 have to stay fresh, right? A lot of folks have been
19 doing work for a long time and, you know, we do
20 things. This is the form we use, this is how we do
21 it. Along the way transcribing errors happened or
22 training or someone thinks they're doing something a
23 certain way or another way. This was an opportunity
24 to put all of our offices on the same page and get
25 the training. I think that -- I would hope that the

1 staff felt that it was something that was of value
2 to all of them, but now what this has given us the
3 ability is to now we're all on the same exact
4 training, the staff and myself. As we're moving
5 forward and now Jimena is going to do the new
6 quality control checks. We're going to now see the
7 improvement of where we've changed now from those
8 things, and then to be able to swiftly now adapt,
9 because now we all have the same metrics that we're
10 looking at, the same way. So I can't promise what
11 next year is going to bring, but what I can say is
12 I'm grateful for all the managers and all the staff
13 because I know that it blends in. It's always about
14 the file, but it is about everything else that's
15 happening all day long. So I appreciate the fact
16 that you're taking it as seriously as you did. I
17 know that sometimes the -- what we have in front of
18 you say seems overwhelming, but I really do
19 appreciate you all and I know that we are going in
20 the right direction with what we're doing. All I
21 need for us to do now is some of the guidance that
22 we're going to have is let's just check these boxes
23 in a way that just, like, we're saying that we need
24 from the tenants, we need from ourselves.

25 So, we need -- are going to hold

1 ourselves to a new standard, and I would hope that
2 as we get this training and then whatever trainings
3 are coming from there, that we can, you know, and I
4 want to start by saying that when Mike walked into
5 the door and he said, "This is the year." I told --
6 I looked him straight in the face and I said Mike,
7 "This is not the year." And, in fact, I handed him
8 the audit report from Nan McKay because there's no
9 way that Nan McKay could have found what they found
10 and Mike found something different, right?

11 So, we're all on the same page. It's
12 not good news right now, but it's where we are and
13 we're not in the same place. Everyone of you now
14 are equipped with the skills that we need and we're
15 going to put this -- we're going to put this behind
16 us in the next year.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Anything further?
18 Questions? Concerns?

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No. Those
20 are the main things, and everything else, by the
21 way, you know, again Mike said the financial audit
22 came through great, so those are the biggies. The
23 financial came through good, our finances are good,
24 our processes on finances is good. If you'll
25 remember the years that we had findings on

1 contracting, we had the findings on how we were
2 acquiring services, that there was questionable
3 acquisitions. Again, before I got here, all of that
4 is history. These are the only things we've got
5 left. So we're on the right track, in my opinion.

6 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Call the vote,
7 Director.

8

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

10 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.

12 Impastato?

13 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

15 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?

19 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?

21 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.

22 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?

23 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.

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25

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.04
2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
3 2023-07.04. A Resolution authorizing the approval
4 of the annual and capital budget for the fiscal year
5 October 1st, 2023, through September 30th, 2024.
6 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Motion.
7 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Second.
8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Questions?
9 Concerns? Presentations? He's coming.
10 MR. KATCHEN: Good evening, everybody.
11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Bill Katchen
12 is our fee accountant.
13 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Before you
14 start, if you can identify what we talked about at
15 the meeting the other day, where it's corrected in
16 this.
17 MR. KATCHEN: Where it's been changed?
18 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yeah.
19 MR. KATCHEN: Okay.
20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: At the end.
21 Okay, just --
22 MR. KATCHEN: So, is this for the HUD
23 or for the state budget?
24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Capital
25 budget. The annual capital budget. It's --

1 MR. KATCHEN: So the New Jersey budget,
2 okay.

3 Good evening, everybody.

4 As everybody knows, you're required
5 under the Local Fiscal Affairs Act, which was
6 amended in 1992, to include housing authorities to
7 prepare and submit to the State of New Jersey a
8 budget on a form as prescribed by them, separate and
9 apart from the HUD budget. So, you now are under
10 the umbrella of the New Jersey Department of
11 Community Affairs, Bureau of Authorities, and this
12 budget is due at the State of New Jersey 60 days in
13 advance of the starting fiscal year. So, that's why
14 I'm here tonight. I -- thanks to Marc, thanks to
15 Emil, thanks to the Finance Committee, we met last
16 week, went through the budget. Subsequent to that
17 or at that meeting there were some changes. One
18 was -- I'm getting something thrown at me. One was
19 that you wanted to increase tenant services, of
20 course, by \$50,000 to create some programs for the
21 benefit of the town, so we included --

22 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And I would
23 like to say that Commissioner Impastato really
24 pushed that, saw that, and I think it's a great
25 idea.

1 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Well, it's
2 also -- it's a little is this the time to talk about
3 it?

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Sure, sure.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: It's a little
6 more -- it's earmarked for the specific services for
7 preparing, preparing programs, correct, for the
8 benefit of our youth. So, whether it be training
9 for young adults or training for parents of the
10 Housing Authority that have youths to better equip
11 them with different services that are available to
12 them, that is what this is earmarked for
13 specifically. It is not to be for, like, services
14 that are already exist. It's new, new things.

15 MR. KATCHEN: Okay. Then a second was
16 to increase some staffing for the benefit of, I
17 believe, interaction with tenants and the
18 administrators.

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Right. So,
20 we increased it by including the position for
21 Frank's assistant, and we also -- I think we already
22 included the mod. coordinator that HUD wants us to
23 get for our modernization and contracting programs.

24 MR. KATCHEN: Correct.

25 Now, the largest increases this year

1 are, as Commissioner Russo mentioned, health benefit
2 costs, 20 to 24 percent. That's what they went up
3 this year. I mean, you have family coverage was 33,
4 34,000. Now family coverage is 41,000. That's
5 where they are. With that, of course your health
6 benefits premiums are based on a calendar year. We
7 did increase the premium by 3 percent. Now, because
8 October through December is already fixed and based,
9 that 3 percent becomes a little higher because of
10 the fact that October through December is already
11 built in. So, we're taking the 3 percent on the
12 number which isn't going to go up until January 1st.

13 We continued in Fox Hill. The
14 additional \$200,000 to support the major repairs and
15 replacements. Additionally, as HUD requires, your
16 annual reserve for repair and replacements for Fox
17 Hill went up by 2.5 percent because of the fact that
18 HUD prescribes that, requires that.

19 Utility costs went up because the HUD
20 formula that we have to follow says that they
21 anticipate utility costs increased nationwide of
22 22.5 percent this next year. Hopefully, we won't
23 see that New Jersey.

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Right.

25 MR. KATCHEN: Your HUD funding,

1 nationally we've been told to use 95 percent. So,
2 that's what we used.

3 And lastly your housing choice voucher
4 program is proposed under the current source of
5 funding to be at 91 percent for administrative
6 purposes, we haven't seen that in a long time, and a
7 hundred percent for rents, the landlords, which
8 gives you the ability to hopefully put some more
9 people on the housing choice voucher program.

10 The budget itself proposes or projects
11 for next year a surplus of \$363,678. Healthy from
12 my standpoint. Your rent, as it's been mentioned,
13 your occupancy level going up has helped a lot to
14 generate that, but the other side of the coin is
15 we're also budgeting a 5 percent bad debt allowance
16 over 300,000 bucks. That hits you right in the
17 pocketbook. So, if the number is higher, it's going
18 to reduce your excess or your surplus. If the
19 number's lower, it's going to go to your bottom
20 line.

21 Lastly, we talked about this at the
22 Finance Committee meeting. One of the pages that
23 the state will go to is called the statement of net
24 position. Now, Mike, his audit, will be reviewed by
25 the state, because they'll compare my numbers to his

1 numbers as of last year, and then there's an
2 add-back for non-cash expenses, pension, okay. And
3 I'm happy to say for the first time in I don't know
4 how long I can remember, that your surplus is
5 projected to be into this year just over \$5 million
6 for the public housing budget. I can't remember the
7 last time that it was at that number.

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: The reserve.

9 MR. KATCHEN: Surplus, reserve, equity.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And again
11 that's what HUD requires that we have that for when
12 we have that flood, when we have that major issue,
13 we've got to have some money in the bank account,
14 not to mention day-to-day operations.

15 So there's a (inaudible) and we've
16 always been really, really low, so we're getting
17 there.

18 MR. KATCHEN: Yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: We're still in
20 hardship.

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yes.

22 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: How do we --
23 what's the road?

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Passing a
25 REAC inspection or getting our, what they call CHAPS

1 through the RAM program to take our worst buildings
2 off of a REAC inspection, and then we will pass.
3 Everything else we're going to pass. It's the
4 inspection on our buildings that are the problem.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So the
6 final --

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah, but
8 that's two points out of a hundred.

9 MR. KATCHEN: Well, financially, you've
10 been fine.

11 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

12 MR. KATCHEN: Physically, what's caused
13 you to be become trouble, the problem is with the
14 receivable issue, if you get a zero on receivables,
15 that could cause your financial to be -- to now --

16 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: How many
17 points.

18 MR. KATCHEN: -- add to the --

19 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: How many
20 points?

21 MR. KATCHEN: I don't -- I have to look
22 at that.

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I think
24 financial total is 25 points.

25 MR. KATCHEN: It is.

1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Out of a
2 hundred. So, if we lose two or three points, it's
3 our physical that's making us 30 or 40 points off of
4 that -- off of that process.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Has the -- has
6 HUD just forgiven the receivable part for the last
7 three years?

8 MR. KATCHEN: No.

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, then why
10 are we not penalized from it for last year?

11 MR. KATCHEN: You probably did lose
12 points.

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

14 MR. KATCHEN: For '21.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Nationally,
16 everyone was -- everyone was and HUD hasn't said
17 okay --

18 MR. KATCHEN: So, as we discussed every
19 year, the state processes the two bites of the apple
20 process. This is the introduction phase. If the
21 Board so desires to approve the budget tonight, Marc
22 will submit it on line; Emil, actually, will upload
23 it up under the new FAST system. The state will
24 generate their review, their budget comments.
25 They'll respond to Marc and myself, we'll respond to

1 them, and hopefully in September this budget will be
2 ready for adoption.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: It will come
4 back to you in September.

5 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Where does it
6 show the changes? Is there a fiscal line item for
7 that?

8 MR. KATCHEN: No, no, no. There's no
9 change because if you remember last week, the
10 Finance Committee proposed to have those changes
11 from the original to now incorporated in this
12 budget.

13 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Right.

14 MR. KATCHEN: Yeah, so --

15 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: So, it would be an
16 amendment to the --

17 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

18 MR. KATCHEN: Correct, it's now an
19 amendment.

20 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: We did it prior
21 to --

22 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Exactly.

24 MR. KATCHEN: I think it's also
25 important to note that besides health insurance

1 premiums, statewide nationally insurance premiums,
2 general liability, building coverage, that has
3 increased dramatically to the extent that a lot of
4 places can't even get insurance today. There's not
5 riders because of the large losses from Ida, from
6 Sandy, et cetera. Well, you are a member of the New
7 Jersey PHA JIF and in light of the fact that we saw
8 this coming last year, we only -- and I hate to use
9 the term "only" -- increased the budget for
10 insurance this year by 50,000, from 1,250,000 to a
11 1,300,000, while in most instances authorities'
12 increases have been budgeted at greater than
13 20 percent.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: All right.

15 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: You might as
19 well stay there.

20 We have the other budget coming up
21 soon.

22 MR. KATCHEN: Yes.

23 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: A couple of
24 questions. Could you just walk me through the
25 surplus again? What's the amount?

1 MR. KATCHEN: Sure, okay. So, if you
2 turn to page F8. Frank 8. From --

3 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I'm going to
4 take your word for it.

5 MR. KATCHEN: Landscape. So the
6 process with the state is that they start with the
7 prior year audit.

8 So, Mike did the audit September 30th,
9 2022, and the state compares first whether I
10 generated or prepared the form using the correct
11 numbers as well, which I did, they're on the top
12 line. Take my word for that. There it is.

13 Now, then you add some larger amounts
14 on your financials, which are non-cash required
15 disclosures, OPED, other post-employment benefits.
16 If your employees retire with 25 years of service,
17 they're afforded health insurance for life. So,
18 this under -- what's the status report? Mike, it
19 has to be 45 Government Audit and Standards Board,
20 they required that all government agencies that
21 report on GAAP, I'm sorry about the alphabet soup
22 but I got to use it, General Accepted Accounting
23 Principles, that if you record what the future value
24 is to the Authority to meet that obligation of those
25 police. So, the state actually, if you want to put

1 yourself to sleep, go on line and go and search New
2 Jersey PERS, OPED, O-P-E-D, and New Jersey PERS,
3 pension study. You're going to get a report this
4 big, because they do it for every municipality,
5 every authority, every Board of Education in New
6 Jersey, and you're one piece of that, and your piece
7 of that for OPED, \$12 million; for pension,
8 8.2 million.

9 Now, the OPED number is the future
10 value of what they've calculated your allocations.
11 The pension number is your share of the unfunded
12 pension liability.

13 So, we all know, we've all read about
14 it, that up till a few years ago the state would --
15 their annual obligation would be \$1.2 billion, but
16 they only put away 900 million.

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I appreciate
18 your passion for this. I think --

19 MR. KATCHEN: There's no passion.

20 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: We keep going on
21 and on --

22 MR. KATCHEN: Okay.

23 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: But I didn't
24 stop you. So the idea for asking about surplus --

25 MR. KATCHEN: Okay, okay.

1 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: -- to better
2 understand, is this an actual surplus of money that
3 could be used to hire additional staff and
4 employees, and then where I'm going with this, is
5 earlier during this meeting, we've heard that our
6 back office staff could have used some help.

7 MR. KATCHEN: Sure.

8 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So, can -- is
9 there money in this budget? Is there a surplus
10 possible this year or perhaps next year where we
11 could hire additional staff?

12 MR. KATCHEN: Well, I think, number
13 one, you have, we have budgeted that.

14 Number two, the surplus amounts that
15 you have are two parts: One is public housing --
16 three parts, I'm sorry. One is public housing; one
17 is the housing choice voucher program; and one is
18 Fox Hill.

19 Each one of those pots of surplus
20 reserves has to be dedicated to the administration
21 of those programs.

22 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So, when you are
23 preparing these documents, going through the
24 financials, who within the Housing Authority, which
25 staff do you interact with?

1 MR. KATCHEN: Emil and Marc,
2 principally.

3 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: And, typically,
4 I am usually focused on the front end and having the
5 maintenance, but on the back end, do we have an
6 internal auditor in-house department or some sort of
7 due diligence compliance officer at the Housing
8 Authority?

9 MR. KATCHEN: Do you?

10 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Do we?

11 MR. KATCHEN: Oh --

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No.

13 MR. KATCHEN: No, and most housing
14 authorities don't because they really can't afford
15 to carry that by the staff.

16 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I understand
17 that.

18 My question, my concern is this Housing
19 Authority is about to take on a very monumental
20 redevelopment of these facilities. Millions and
21 millions of dollars. Would it perhaps behoove the
22 Board to consider hiring somebody as a finance
23 officer and an internal auditor to help analyze
24 those financials?

25 MR. KATCHEN: Well, absent what we do

1 as your fee accountant, any additional state --
2 that's a policy decision and subject to the
3 availability of annual funding.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And I would
5 just submit that the technical assistance folks that
6 are working with us have suggested some positions
7 like that and they're working with us closely and
8 the management staff and our conversation right now
9 is as we get going into next year, that may well be
10 good, that's having that -- we got that surplus
11 there, so as we come near actually going into an
12 agreement with a real developer rather than just to
13 qualify, as we go into there, we may want to bring a
14 development person onboard.

15 The second thing that we've talked
16 about that we mentioned earlier was a modernization
17 coordinator that would work with Emil to actually
18 cover our construction work and cover the
19 construction work, paperwork, everything that's
20 coming and that's in the budget, that's in the
21 budget solution. So we're going to do that, but I
22 think you're going to see us coming back to you at
23 some point in the year depending on how fast we get
24 that developer onboard, and how fast they're moving
25 for a development position, which is very similar to

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what they're talking about.

COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Thank you both.

MR. KATCHEN: Thank you. Any other questions, guys?

CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.

Impastato?

COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?

COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?

COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?

COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.

1 RESOLUTION 2023-07.05

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So, our next
3 resolution.

4 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
5 2022-07.05 [sic]. Resolution approving the AMP
6 budgets for the Hoboken Housing Authority of the
7 city of Hoboken.

8 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Motion.

9 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Questions?
11 Concerns?

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: In many ways
13 this is --

14 MR. KATCHEN: Yeah.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: -- give
16 us --

17 MR. KATCHEN: So this is the public
18 Housing Authority part, principally of that budget.
19 The numbers are identical, generates the same amount
20 of surplus. The only -- everything that's in the
21 state budget is included in here.

22 Anyone has any questions?

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Just in a
24 different format because this is --

25 MR. KATCHEN: Exactly, the format which

1 HUD would require to see as a public housing budget.

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Good?

3 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Ready. Any

4 questions? Director, call the roll.

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

6 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.

8 Impastato?

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

11 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?

15 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?

19 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you so

21 much, Bill. Good seeing you.

22 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Good seeing you,

23 Bill.

24 *****

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1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.06

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
3 2023-07.06. A Resolution of the Housing Authority
4 of the City of Hoboken authorizing the Executive
5 Director to sell authority property at public
6 auction sealed bids or through an interlocal sale to
7 another government unit.

8 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Motion.

9 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Guys,
11 conversations, if you're having them, please step
12 outside.

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And this is
14 an old from 2008 truck that's on about its last
15 wheels. Emil, Samuel, you guys want to talk about
16 this truck? You want to get in front of the
17 microphone?

18 MR. FERMAINT: We're basically trying
19 to downsize the fleet of having to use gas guzzles.
20 So, we're trying to -- we're not -- we're to the
21 point, so we're kind of trying to get our vehicles
22 more like the -- if we can utilize them, it will
23 save us a lot instead of to just keeping pumping
24 money into these trucks.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Anything
2 else?

3 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director? Any
4 questions or concerns?

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

6 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.

8 Impastato?

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

11 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?

15 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?

19 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.

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1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.07.
2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
3 2023-07.07. A Resolution of the Housing Authority
4 of the City of Hoboken to award a contract for
5 interior door repainting.
6 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Motion.
7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.
8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Questions?
9 Concerns? Director, call the roll.
10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?
11 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.
12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.
13 Impastato?
14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.
15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?
16 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.
17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?
18 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.
19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?
20 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Aye.
21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?
22 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.
23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?
24 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.
25 *****

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.08

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
3 2023-07.08. A Resolution of the Housing Authority
4 of the City of Hoboken to qualify potential
5 development providers for repositioning of public
6 housing.

7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Motion.

8 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Second.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Questions?
10 Concerns?

11 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Yes. I'd like
12 to speak with the Chair of the Committee.

13 MS. RICHMOND: Good evening.

14 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Good evening.
15 Welcome.

16 Didn't you receive my communication to
17 the Director (inaudible)?

18 MS. RICHMOND: I did receive your
19 communication to the Director.

20 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So just to maybe
21 ratchet down any potential tension (inaudible), the
22 Director asked me not to contact staff directly and
23 I am going to follow that request. So, please feel
24 free to answer any of my questions, not answer any
25 of my questions, or refer to the Director.

1 I am not here to play got you.

2 MS. RICHMOND: Understood.

3 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Are we clear?

4 MS. RICHMOND: We are clear.

5 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: You happen to be
6 the person on paper who is the Chair of this
7 Committee. I have been told that information that
8 I've requested is with this Committee, with you, and
9 all I need to view that information or to know, to
10 help me, to help me understand when that information
11 would be ready for myself, but all of the entirety
12 of the Board to read it. Are we on the same page?

13 MS. RICHMOND: We are on the same page.

14 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Great.

15 Can you please, for my benefit, for the
16 Board's benefit, for the public, walk me through
17 how -- the qualification process of the Committee
18 would go?

19 MS. RICHMOND: Okay. So as we go, we
20 have the procurement policy, the Executive Director
21 is entitled to appoint the members of the Committee,
22 which we need.

23 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Absolutely.

24 MS. RICHMOND: Okay. So there is seven
25 members and there is also three advisory members,

1 including one person from HUD, one financial person,
2 and also the legal counsel.

3 I believe there is three people from
4 the Housing Authority, myself, Frank and Emil.

5 There is one person from the City of
6 Hoboken, RJ Theofield. There is one person from
7 this Board, Mr. Aaron Lewit, one person from the
8 RAD, the Residential Advisory board, Joe McDonald,
9 and April Harris, who is from the Housing From
10 Hoboken, so that comes to the members of the
11 committee.

12 So, as far as the process is concerned,
13 we went according to the RFQ requirements. So, all
14 that require -- I have a copy of the RFQ that I can
15 share with you tonight, so all the requirements in
16 the RFQ were actually put in the spreadsheets to
17 allow all the committee members, except the
18 nonvoting one, which are the advisory members, to
19 vote.

20 So, we had three main requirements:
21 The first one was the team, the description of the
22 team, knowing what their experience was; the second
23 main requirement was the experience of the team, the
24 entity as a whole; and the third requirement was the
25 reference. And, of course, under each of the --

1 each of the main requirements, we had
2 sub-requirements.

3 So, in that spreadsheet, we looked at
4 the requirements expressed in the RFQ and whether or
5 not that team makes that, and we just went by yes or
6 no. We did not have a numerical ranking. We had a
7 nominal ranking, so we went by yes or no.

8 So, if we asked, for example, if the
9 team had experience in relocation, A, we looked at a
10 proposal where the team stating we have experience
11 in the relocation, and went and said yes.

12 If we asked, for example, if a team had
13 experience in, let's say, multiphase development and
14 the team in the proposal, in the response is the
15 team state that they had experience and we saw the
16 number and everything, the illustration is stating
17 an approval for the proposal, we went and said yes.
18 We did not have a numerical ranking as you say ten
19 or 12, we did not have that in that specific case.

20 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Thank you.

21 So, I'd like to explore that a little.
22 Before I was removed from the committee, there was a
23 numerical ranking system for evaluating and that was
24 what I am used to seeing that used for the reviewing
25 and experiences. So, I'd like to know how, how we

1 went from a numerical evaluation system to a yes or
2 a no binary system.

3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Since that's
4 a historical one, I may ask the attorney to step in
5 on that one, too. But during your experience there,
6 we didn't do these types of RFQs. There was a
7 completely different ranking.

8 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: If I could just
9 add, I just wanted to let you know, the Procurement
10 Committee still does that numerical ranking for all
11 other situations. This is a separate committee from
12 that Procurement Committee, so they have their own
13 system and I'm sure that's been guided by the
14 attorneys.

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And my
16 simplest explanation before the attorney jumps in is
17 this is was a request for qualifications, not a
18 request for a proposal. So, these firms were ranked
19 according to the qualifications. Were they
20 qualified fired to do this? That the proposal asked
21 for? Yes. That, yes. That, yes. If they would
22 have had no's, they would have been booted.

23 So, there was a request for
24 qualifications, not for which one was better, not
25 ranking these firms. They were -- all came out

1 equal. I would just like to ask if the attorney has
2 anything to say before I hand it back to you.

3 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I agree. I'd
4 like to hear from the --

5 ATTORNEY H. FITZPATRICK: I'd be glad
6 to speak to that, to the Director.

7 First of all, we have the word bid, and
8 everybody's familiar with the bid process.

9 In New Jersey, under bid process,
10 unless there is some unique thing like the laundry
11 concession, bids are decided based upon lowest
12 responsible price. This is not a bid.

13 Then we have the term RFP, where we put
14 out a request for people to be evaluated and it may
15 include a price component, but it may include other
16 components, and there are specific evaluation sheets
17 that are done by the Procurement Committee, as
18 Commissioner Russo pointed out, and we do that in a
19 very typical basis for reviewing the overall request
20 to determine a final one person result, one entity
21 result. That is not what this is about. This is a
22 different process. It is something which is
23 permitted under HUD procurement and New Jersey law,
24 but is not used as much.

25 And, quite frankly, when we started the

1 process of soliciting developers, we weren't sure
2 how many highly qualified interested developers
3 would respond.

4 In retrospect we were extremely pretty
5 pleased at the quality of the responses we got. As
6 Ms. Richmond pointed out, the fact of the matter is
7 that we've gotten very, very good responses that met
8 our criteria. There is no evaluation of the
9 responses versus each other.

10 The next step, which will be an RFP,
11 will be directed at that evaluation process. And
12 when we do that we will have a much more detailed
13 document that addresses all of the things you would
14 typically see, including political disclosure, other
15 background, and it will be evaluated by this
16 committee, because this committee has been
17 designated to deal with developers, and ultimately
18 will come up with a conclusion as to a
19 recommendation for at least one first developer on
20 our first phase of the overall reposition.

21 I don't know if that clarified anything
22 for you, Commissioner.

23 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: It's certainly
24 helpful.

25 So, in developing the selection

1 criteria for the evaluation, what is an example of
2 the positive versus a negative
3 evaluation/qualification?

4 Where I'm going with this is the review
5 appears, appears unanimous. So yes or no binary.
6 Did -- in working with the evaluation sheets, were
7 there any criterias for any of the eight respondents
8 where it was a no versus a yes?

9 MS. RICHMOND: We had one question that
10 addressed the fact that the responder, the
11 (inaudible) firm had experience in New Jersey, but
12 according to HUD, we cannot disqualify based on
13 geography. So one of the respondents had a no for
14 that specific criteria, but because we cannot
15 disqualify them at this stage based on the
16 geography. We had to accept them.

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Okay. So, with
18 each of the criteria then, if I understood what you
19 explained earlier, it was the team description, the
20 support criteria there, there was a planning and
21 redeveloping capacity experience, there's one, two,
22 three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine criteria
23 there, and there's references submitted, submit
24 three references is one criteria there.

25 Hypothetically, I'm just going using

1 myself as an example so that this doesn't sound
2 confusing.

3 If I were to present a reference on any
4 of these and the person providing the reference
5 seemed suspect or has a problem that any
6 Commissioner may have with that reference or any
7 member of the Committee, how would that be addressed
8 within the evaluation?

9 MS. RICHMOND: At this stage, we do not
10 really analyze that question, we just look at the
11 references. But if that were to be the case, then
12 we refer to the lawyer, to the legal counsel for
13 more guidance.

14 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So, I'm only
15 working off of information that has been presented
16 to me as of this time. I understand that some of
17 the information that I have requested is going to
18 require some time. Since you're already aware of
19 the items, when do you think I could reasonably
20 expect that information?

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I would ask
22 that we have a chance to review that request and get
23 back to you on that.

24 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Director --
25 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

1 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I don't know about
2 the other Commissioners. I'm in the dark as to what
3 you're talking about there, so...

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.
5 There's a whole list of things.

6 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: If you want to
7 disclose that to the other Commissioners, if you
8 don't want to disclose that to the other
9 Commissioners, but --

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I would
11 definitely be sending it to all the Commissioners
12 once I respond, without a doubt, but there's a whole
13 list of things that came in this afternoon. We were
14 getting ready for a board meeting. I didn't study
15 that.

16 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Understood.

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: With all due
18 respect, so we'll get back to you in a next couple
19 of days once we take a look at that.

20 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So, I would like
21 to throw this out there, to you as Chair of the
22 Committee, to you as Executive Director, and Harold
23 as a member of the Advisory Committee, that based on
24 the information that I have reviewed, I am concerned
25 and I am concerned that the evaluation would turn a

1 unanimous positive prequalification for all eight of
2 these developers. Because upon reviewing the
3 information and upon receiving the descriptions
4 here, if I were on -- if I were completing the form,
5 there would be negative no answers. And I'm not on
6 the committee. I'm not here to judge your work, per
7 se. I'm here in an oversight capacity. Your job is
8 to, as you see fit, run this Committee. I am not
9 trying to micromanage.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYES: And you can't
11 micromanage.

12 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: My job is to
13 provide oversight. The Board's job is to provide
14 oversight.

15 What I'm asking you as Chair is to
16 please consider that the work of your Committee is
17 incomplete. It's not complete. It's not done.

18 MS. RICHMOND: Not done based on what?

19 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Based on
20 potential negative qualifications.

21 MS. RICHMOND: I would be willing to
22 have you in my office. I have all the answers and
23 we can go over each proposal and then you'll be able
24 to judge one or another (inaudible) is complete, but
25 as far as the Committee's concerned, this work is

1 concluded, and we are agreed to the legal counsel,
2 it is complete. So if you have any disagreements,
3 which you have right now, I'll be willing to you
4 have in my office first, first thing tomorrow
5 morning and we can discuss that.

6 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I would be
7 willing to meet with you. I'm open to having you
8 convince me that my concerns are without merit, but
9 I cannot be reasonably expected to vote yes for a
10 resolution to unanimously prequalify these three
11 developers.

12 MS. RICHMOND: I understand,
13 Commissioner, that is your prerogative, but like I
14 said, I have all the evidence in my office, all the
15 work that the Committee has done separately, each
16 Committee Member has completed that separately, and
17 we can go over that and I can also go over our
18 spreadsheets here. The evaluation rate that we use,
19 along with the RFQ, and we can go over each
20 proposal, you can do it yourself as well, and if you
21 see that there is a disagreement, you can go over
22 that.

23 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I need to stress
24 this. And I'm really requesting, as one
25 professional to another professional, I have over 20

1 years of chairing experience. I used to chair the
2 Procurement Subcommittee. I really implore you and
3 the Committee to take another look at the work that
4 you've done.

5 MS. RICHMOND: I respect that
6 experience, Commissioner, and we have seven members
7 in our Committee that also have an accumulated
8 experience of over 20 years, and these people have
9 taken a look, we've been meeting for over a month.
10 These people have taken a (inaudible) and the result
11 that we are presenting tonight to the Board.

12 Again, if you disagree with the result,
13 you can go over the reports and I can go over each,
14 each response with you so that you can have your own
15 opinion based on facts.

16 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So I appreciate
17 that. Going forward, once, as counsel explained
18 regarding the RFP process, I will be paying very
19 close attention in the oversight capacity to do my
20 fiduciary duty to your -- what I was and the
21 Committee has done.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Thank you for
24 your work.

25 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

1 MS. RICHMOND: Thank you, Commissioner.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: We would all
3 greatly appreciate it if you did it overall.

4 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Madame Chair.

5 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Harold?

6 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: What this
7 basically was, they named all of the people that
8 they're going to use, and it's very comparable with
9 all. So the next step is to do the RFP.

10 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: How many
11 people --

12 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

13 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, 500 pages.

14 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: So, I just want
15 to -- I want to make a comment that I respect your
16 opinion, and you ask that the Committee respect your
17 expertise and your knowledge and your years in the
18 world of procurement, but I would say that you
19 should also respect theirs, because that's really
20 sad. They went -- that Committee they went through
21 this, both the attorney, the Director, and the
22 Chairwoman of that Committee explained that this is
23 not a who is a better type of evaluation. This is
24 an evaluation of who has sent qualifications in that
25 match those with which we need as an Authority and

1 if all eight of those have met that, then all eight
2 of those have met that. And I don't understand why
3 you would sit there and make a comment that you
4 would vote no or there would be negative evaluation
5 status on some of these, not even knowing would
6 anything happen at that committee. I think that's
7 absurd.

8 You asked for that respect and everyone
9 here tonight has given you that respect. We've all
10 sat here, we let you ask your questions, but I would
11 ask that you did the same for the Chairwoman and the
12 Committee itself. They sat, they evaluated those
13 potential developers and they came to a conclusion
14 and you sat there and you repeatedly went back a
15 number of times to the Chairwoman to ask her to
16 reconsider the decisions that she made in her
17 professional capacity. I think that's
18 disrespectful.

19 I think you should practice what you
20 preach. When you ask for that respect in return,
21 you should give that respect first.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYES: And Commissioner
23 Sanford, I would just like to add that I recall
24 receiving an e-mail that you would not like to
25 participate in any committee.

1 So, for you to sit here today and state
2 that, you know, if you were on the committee, you
3 could have, would have, or should have, but I
4 received an e-mail that you didn't want to
5 participate in any.

6 So, at this time unfortunately, the
7 committee was made and your response was taken into
8 consideration that you did not want to serve on a
9 committee. So --

10 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: May I respond?
11 May I respond to Commissioner Russo's comments and
12 your comments?

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Sure.

14 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Chair?

15 So, regarding respect for the work in
16 the committee, I believe that when I ended my
17 questions, I thanked the Chair for -- and the
18 Committee for their work. I am not here to be a
19 rubber stamp. I'm here to ask tough questions,
20 questions that no one else is asking, and if someone
21 else wants to ask those questions, they are welcome
22 to do so.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYES: And we do. In most
24 cases we do. It's not that we're not asking them.
25 We may not be asking them in a public forum, but I

1 can assure you that the Director is held
2 accountable.

3 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Very well.

4 Now, this is to address your comments,
5 Commissioner Russo, I'll wait. I'd just like to
6 address Commissioner Reyes's about the e-mail. You
7 know, the context between that e-mail was sent was
8 in response to being removed from the Procurement
9 Committee. There are other factors unrelated to why
10 I sent that e-mail and I would very much like to be
11 a part of this Committee.

12 Now, if you do pass that, I'm not going
13 to belabor the point that I could or should be on
14 the Redevelopment Committee. I'm moving on.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Commissioner
17 Russo wants to say something.

18 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Yes.

19 Listen, like I said, I respect your
20 opinion on it, Commissioner, but you talk about
21 asking questions and asking hard questions. We ask
22 those questions constantly. And when we -- and when
23 we, the other Commissioners, disagree with
24 something, it's expressed, but, but we also support
25 the things that need supporting in this Housing

1 Authority. We don't ask 15 different questions and
2 have them answered at a microphone and answered well
3 by our fee accountant about our budget and then vote
4 against that budget that we just asked questions on.
5 We don't sit here and talk about the need of our
6 Housing Authority residents and what each building
7 may need from a physical standpoint or a financial
8 standpoint and get those questions answered to us in
9 a satisfactory way and then go vote against a brand
10 new generator. We don't do that. We vote on the
11 things that need to get done for this Housing
12 Authority. Not for us, but for them. And we do
13 that on a consistent basis month after month, and if
14 there's something that we disagree with, like
15 Commissioner Impastato tonight disagreed with
16 something financially, he made a motion to remove
17 that from that fee schedule, and then we changed it,
18 and then he voted on it. That's the way the Board
19 should work.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: So that we could
22 continue to financially and physically help our
23 residents, and it gets frustrating that when I keep
24 my notes of a meeting and I go down every single
25 vote in the Housing Authority agenda tonight, you're

1 a no on every single one and some of them were as
2 simple as minutes. What did you disagree with about
3 the minutes? Because there's a Court Reporter
4 that's there. It wasn't an interpretation. It's
5 exact. It's word for word.

6 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Good.

7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: But, Commissioner,
8 if you want respect, you need to give respect.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director? Could
10 we --

11 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I'm just going
12 to say that every Commissioner is co-equal. We do
13 not report to each other. We are not subordinate or
14 above each other. All of us are appointed to do a
15 job as best as we see fit.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director?

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I have my
18 reasons for why I vote. The reasons for why I vote
19 will not be coerced.

20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director?

21 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: No one is trying
22 to coerce you.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Absolutely not.
24 You have the right --

25 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Just pointing it

1 item.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director, if
3 there's no further questions or concerns --

4 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I have one. I
5 am curious about -- so the, what was the -- what is
6 the reason why something like this doesn't go
7 through a procurement and it goes through a special?
8 Is that something that, like, inside RAD that they
9 mandate --

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yeah.

11 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: -- it goes
12 through?

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Because I
14 think -- I think the issue was when we were doing
15 the purchasing policy, it's a much larger issue,
16 that it should have not only three -- first of all,
17 three commissioners. Now, if you chose these
18 people, in the long run, and if you do choose one
19 person, they could contest it, right? This body is
20 going to have to decide on that contestation on
21 whether they're going to uphold it or overturn the
22 contestation. It's one of the reasons I'm not on
23 it. I can't be on it. And it's one of the reasons
24 that that policy says if a Commissioner serves on
25 that body, such as Aaron, if there's a contested --

1 contestation of the award, he can't participate in
2 the vote to contest it. So, yeah, we need to be
3 off. We need to be a separate independent body.

4 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, when we go
5 to actually picking, that's got to go through
6 procurement.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: No, that's
8 also going to come through this committee, because
9 again, if we pick Developer A and they contest that,
10 that contestation is going to come to me and you and
11 we're going to have to make that decision and we
12 shouldn't have been involved in picking that
13 developer. That should have been from a separate
14 body.

15 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, this is
16 how other RAD groups have done it is in the past?

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That's
18 correct.

19 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Okay. That's
20 good.

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Is that good
22 for you, attorney? Anything else on that, Harold?

23 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Well, we don't if
24 we're going to have one developer or --

25 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Go ahead, Harold.

1 Go ahead.

2 ATTORNEY H. FITZPATRICK: I think you
3 hit it, Director. The fact of the matter is that
4 the Enterprise Group and the HUD people --

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Right.

6 ATTORNEY H. FITZPATRICK: -- have been
7 very involved in the discussion of how we would pick
8 a developer, and if it were up to them, this
9 Commission would not have much, if anything to do
10 with it. I pushed back on it and made clear to them
11 that we would be prepared, as Marc said, to have an
12 independent committee do the evaluations in order to
13 avoid the concern that HUD had that it would be not
14 vetted by the entire community. But ultimately it's
15 going to the Board and the Board is going to make
16 the final determination and that part of it hasn't
17 changed. When they change and the emphasis of HUD
18 was this creation through a change in the
19 procurement policy to have a separate developer
20 committee to take all of the initial action both on
21 the evaluation and the RFQs and the ultimate
22 evaluation of the RFPs.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: When will the
25 final decision of the developer be selected by them?

1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: They will
2 make the recommendations, they will not --

3 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Or
4 recommendations for one singular developer?

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Well, it
6 depends on how many we want to go with at first, but
7 we think it will be one at this point for Phase 1.

8 ATTORNEY H. FITZPATRICK: It will come
9 to you, to the Board, for the final determination as
10 I will point out to you that that determination will
11 have to also be considered by the City and
12 ultimately the City has a say in the designation as
13 well.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That's
15 correct.

16 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I think that's
17 another reason why I think that they have to button
18 up their note taking at the meetings, just so
19 there's background evidence and there's -- right,
20 there's evidence of no bias, there's no, I mean --

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Sure. We
22 can do that.

23 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I think,
24 right?

25 MS. RICHMOND: Absolutely. I'll make

1 sure we will take notes.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you, Corinne.

3 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: And to
4 Commissioner Sanford's point, if we want to see
5 information on these firms, we're completely --
6 that's a complete open process, right?

7 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Eventually we're
8 going to have to vote on them anyway, so we're going
9 to have get all that information.

10 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Are you going
11 to send that out?

12 MS. RICHMOND: I can absolutely send it
13 to you.

14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I think that's
15 for everyone to see.

16 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you, Corinne.

17 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Thank you.

18 MS. RICHMOND: Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So Madame Chair?

20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: I would just
22 like to make a motion to table Resolution No.
23 2023-07.08.

24 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Anyone like to
25 second it?

1 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: No.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Sorry.

3 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Madame Chair, I
4 would like to make a motion to reject all RFQs.

5 CHAIRPERSON REYES: A motion?

6 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: A motion, yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Is there a second
8 for that? No, sorry.

9 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Director, could we
11 move on with the resolution?

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

13 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.
15 Impastato?

16 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

18 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

20 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?

22 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Absolutely, yes.

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?

24 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No.

25 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?

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COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Thank you.

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-07.09.

2 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Resolution No.
3 2023-07.09. A Resolution of the Housing Authority
4 of the City of Hoboken to establish a policy
5 requiring reimbursement to the Housing Authority by
6 Commissioners for certain expenses, attendance
7 expenses.

8 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Motion.

9 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.

10 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: What is this?

11 CHAIRPERSON REYES: So, would you like
12 to?

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: So, yeah,
14 sure I can.

15 So we experienced twice that a
16 Commissioner signed up to go to a conference and
17 then backed out at the last minute, and we wound up
18 having to pay for that conference and pay for some
19 travel expenses, and if you're going to sign up,
20 you've got to go.

21 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Who was that?
22 Who was the Commissioner?

23 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I should --
24 you're not allowed to say?

25 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Well --

1 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: I guess you could,
2 but I think you should probably handle that off
3 line.

4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: And the idea
5 of this is that moving forward, no retroactive, but
6 moving forward that this body knows that if you sign
7 up and the Housing Authority extends finances for
8 that, you will have to repay that.

9 CHAIRPERSON REYES: If you're not able
10 to attend.

11 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Why is it not
12 retroactive.

13 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Because we
14 thought -- I thought it was the fairest thing to do
15 because this policy was not in effect before.

16 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: What's the
17 total amount of money?

18 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I don't
19 know.

20 Emil, do you know what the total amount
21 was?

22 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: We'll get it.

23 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

24 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: That's fun. He
25 doesn't even turn his head, he just says "Emil, what

1 have you got?"

2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: What you
3 got?

4 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: He's a --

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That's
6 enough.

7 MR. KOTHERITHARA: About \$1,700.

8 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, the person
9 that signed up for --

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Two people.

11 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Two
12 individuals signed up to do something. We bought
13 airfare and hotels.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: And we lost
16 money?

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Why can't it
19 be retroactive? I don't understand how that's --

20 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: That's the
21 choice of the Board, I mean --

22 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Can I make --
23 can we make a motion to make it retroactive?

24 CHAIRPERSON REYES: No. Well, you
25 could make, you could do it, I mean, but I don't

1 think that that's fair, and I'm just being honest
2 with you, because it wasn't a policy that was on the
3 books before. So, I think it's fair now that now
4 it's on the books, we know which -- I think Lucen
5 (phonetic) does an amazing job at sending everyone
6 an e-mail with what conferences are coming up and
7 you have the ability to say you're coming or you're
8 not coming, and so I think it's a fair way --

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Could we add
10 that, though, to the running total of expense with
11 for this year?

12 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: It's an expense,
13 it should be.

14 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

15 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: So, I would like
16 to be heard on this investigation. May I speak?

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Sure, absolutely.

18 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: The presentation
19 of this resolution to me, I must go on the record
20 and say is interpreted as retaliatory. I would be
21 voting no. I urge the Authority in its best
22 interests not to engage in retaliatory action.

23 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you.

24 Commissioner Sanford, I just would like
25 to put on the record that this is in no way, shape,

1 or form any retaliatory effort against anyone. This
2 is why I just stated to Andrew that I --
3 Commissioner Impastato, that I think it's best that
4 we don't do it retroactively, we do it moving
5 forward. But as we all sat here today and we all
6 said that we have a duty to oversee the money that's
7 spent in the Housing Authority. I think it's only
8 fair that if we do not -- if we sign up and we make
9 the Housing Authority spend the money, and we do not
10 show up, then unfortunately we should be held
11 accountable. So, again this is not retaliatory. I,
12 again, also want to say that this is not to one
13 Commissioner, we've had it happen in two different
14 instances. So in no way, shape, or form is this a
15 retaliatory action towards any of the Commissioners
16 that this -- you know, that this affected.

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Madame Chair, I
18 need to go on the record.

19 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: So, if you want
20 to take it another step, if you want to take it
21 another step, you could do what I did when I was
22 there, we did a daily update. So, I said
23 unfortunately everybody has the information now. I
24 did a synopsis of what happened every day and we
25 sent it to -- all the materials so everybody could

1 get a feel of what happened, and I think it was
2 expressed the last two meetings, what was meaningful
3 for me was at that meeting was to know that we're
4 not in a box, yadda yadda, we talked about it later.
5 So, there's value there. If you want to add that in
6 and say you have to give a, you know, an extra
7 step --

8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Well, I think we
9 did add that --

10 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: No problem.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYES: -- we did add that
12 in a few -- a few months ago when we spoke about
13 doing these conferences. The Director actually has
14 asked the Commissioners to be more proactive in
15 attending these.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: These conferences
18 because, again, we all have a duty to serve on this
19 Board and we need to educate ourselves on what's
20 really happening across, not only our state, but
21 across the nation. So, with that being said, I
22 appreciate that, what you just said, Commissioner
23 Seitzman, but that was actually stated when we
24 decided that two or three Commissioners, two
25 Commissioners, I believe, at a time would be able to

1 go.

2 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: We've only had
3 one -- it's only been Denver so far?

4 CHAIRPERSON REYES: No, we had two at
5 Denver --

6 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Two.

7 CHAIRPERSON REYES: We've had two
8 different conferences.

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: What's the
10 other one.

11 CHAIRPERSON REYES: I don't know off
12 the top of my head.

13 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: State.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYES: The state
16 conference and then the Denver conference.

17 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So, is it two
18 Commissioners couldn't attend in total?

19 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Any two
20 Commissioners --

21 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

22 CHAIRPERSON REYES: -- that are
23 available.

24 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: So one
25 Commissioner could attend all?

1 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yeah. If there's
2 no one else that wants to go, you have -- when Lucen
3 (phonetic) sends out the information, she does an
4 amazing job sending it months ahead and up to the
5 registration date, if you able to attend, then I
6 would just, you know, say "I'm interested." Now, if
7 we don't have any Commissioners who can't attend and
8 it's the same Commissioner, that's not a problem, I
9 don't think. It's just -- I would like to give
10 everybody a chance. That was it.

11 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: Madame Chair --

12 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

13 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: -- I need to go
14 back on the record and repeat that the timing and
15 the presentation of Resolution No. 2023-08.08 is
16 retaliatory.

17 CHAIRPERSON REYES: 08?

18 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: I'm just
19 curious.

20 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: The comments of
21 the new Commissioners --

22 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: No one knew it
23 was you until you just --

24 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

25 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: The comments of

1 the Commissioners to engage --

2 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: -- said that.

3 (Simultaneous crosstalk.)

4 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Don't you

5 understand that?

6 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: -- engage in --

7 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: No one knew it
8 was you until you just said it was you. You
9 understand that? Does that make sense to you? I
10 didn't know who it was.

11 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: The comments of
12 Commissioner Impastato to go retroactively is
13 further evidence --

14 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: But I didn't
15 know it was you. How is it retaliatory.

16 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: -- is
17 retaliatory in nature of this resolution.

18 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Okay. Director.
19 Okay, Director, that's it. No further discussion.

20 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: You don't
21 sound good, man.

22 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Could you please
23 call the vote, Director?

24 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: I certainly
25 can.

1 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Is there a motion
2 and a second?

3 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Motion.

4 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Second.

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Forbes?

6 COMMISSIONER FORBES: Yes.

7 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A.

8 Impastato?

9 COMMISSIONER IMPASTATO: Yes.

10 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: A. Lewit?

11 COMMISSIONER LEWIT: Yes.

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: B. Reyes?

13 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Yes.

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: M. Russo?

15 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Yes.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: J. Sanford?

17 COMMISSIONER SANFORD: No, this

18 resolution is retaliating.

19 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECKO: E. Seitzman?

20 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Yes.

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1 CHAIRPERSON REYES: Thank you very
2 much.

3 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Motion to
4 close.

5 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Second.

6 (Unanimous affirmative voice vote taken at
7 this time.)

8 CHAIRPERSON REYES: No new business?
9 (Laughter.)

10 CHAIRPERSON REYES: New business,
11 anyone? I'm scared to ask. Is there any new
12 business?

13 COMMISSIONER RUSSO: Motion to close.

14 COMMISSIONER SEITZMAN: Second.

15 CHAIRPERSON REYES: All in favor?

16 (Unanimous affirmative voice vote taken at
17 this time.)

18

19 (Concluded at 10:17 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF OFFICER

1
2 I, THERESA L. TIERNAN, A Registered Merit
3 Reporter, Certified Stenographic Shorthand Reporter,
4 and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, do hereby
5 certify that the foregoing is a true and correct
6 transcript of the proceedings as taken stenographically
7 by and before me at the time, place and on the date
8 herein before set forth.

9 I DO FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither a
10 relative nor employee nor attorney nor counsel of any
11 of the parties to this action, and that I am neither a
12 relative nor employee of such attorney or counsel, and
13 that I am not financially interested in the action.
14
15

16 THERESA L. TIERNAN, CCR, RMR
17 Notary Public of the State of New Jersey
18 C.C.R. License No. XI01210

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