

POUGHKEEPSIE HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes of October 8, 2025 Meeting

Present: Shirley Adams, Chairman
Vincent Brugger, Vice-Chairman
Thomas O'Neill, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer @ 5:43 pm
Felicia Watson, Treasurer
Terriciena Brown, Member
Robin Johnson, Member

Absent: Jacqueta Brown, Secretary

Also Present: Sandra Boothe, Executive Director
Joanna Longcore, Attorney

The Meeting of the Poughkeepsie Housing Authority was held on October 8, 2025, at 5:18 p.m. at the Administrative Office located at 4 Howard Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

MINUTES

September 10, 2025/Regular Meeting: Vice-Chairman Brugger made a motion to put the minutes on the floor. Commissioner Watson seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Vice-Chairman Brugger made a motion to accept the minutes. Commissioner Watson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

TENANT AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Haywood Lyons, a City of Poughkeepsie resident, came to talk to the Board about using the center for his martial arts classes. Originally it was five days a week and then after 8 years he cut it down to four days. When the Boys and Girls club came in, they worked out an agreement that he would cut down to three days, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday to fit into their schedule. He said that they often left the gym a mess, and he did let them know. He said that they have now cut him out completely. They offered him a classroom on Saturday and Sunday, but that does not work for his schedule, and he needs more space than a classroom. Chairman Adams said that she has heard of issues with the Boys and Girls Club maintaining the center the way they should. It was decided to have legal counsel look at the lease and see what the parameters of the lease are. Commissioner Watson also asked if we could have some data, such as how many students they have and the number of programs.

Rich Distel, the planner for the City of Poughkeepsie, gave an update on Choice Neighborhood. They have finished the survey portion of having 70% of the residents at Martin Luther King Jr. and Thurgood Marshall Terrace complete the survey. This allowed them to collect a lot of helpful data to begin the second portion, which is looking for a developer to shape the transformative plan through HUD. He said that there are members of the Board and staff who are part of the process, two members on the steering committee, one is on the core team and Commissioner T. Brown is on the task force. But now that we've gone

to the second stage of looking at site control and property and framing what reflects what the residents would want in any future mixed income development project in the long-term phase, he's trying to figure out where we should be framing the conversation. He is here to give an update on that but knows that there's larger things also happening in multiple projects.

Vice-Chairman Brugger asked if it is just a certain area such as within the city or would it include the town. Mr. Distel replied that a minority could include the town. In the city's application, the Taylor Avenue site was referenced, but the conversation is, as the process is happening now, how are we aligning those two things to come up with the best product. The RFP is for kind of a concept coming from a developer, like an RFP looking for ideas from other developers that could possibly create a transformative North Side that could touch the town. We know the city doesn't have every public vacant land or even land with specific site control or are there spaces that are either in the City or possibly located that there could be site control. Those locations wouldn't even have to be sold. It could just be developed on from landowner that currently has it. He came here for an update on the progress that we've made in the past year. They have done the year-long children's cabinet and got as much input as possible from residents. He said how can we create a transformative plan that represents what those residents want but is also beneficial to the north side and those two sites.

Commissioner Adams asked how the PHA could help this process. He said that he guesses it's understanding the process and the one thing is Taylor Avenue. As we move forward, where does that fall in terms of an RFP that would be put out. He knows the PHA is going through their own process, and they're trying to align those that could benefit at the end from the best product. Chairman Adams asked what the city needs or what the question is. He replied that the question is in clarifying that is not off the table for future development through the process you currently have with the MOU. Chairman Adams replied that we do have a MOU with our developers that we signed it at the end of 2024. The MOU included in it language that basically says that any property that we have can be considered for development and design purposes. It doesn't mean that the board is going to accept the proposal, but it's not off the table in terms of the way the MOU is structured.

Commissioner Watson said that just for clarity, this was a joint application. From a foundational perspective, even what Richard is saying is spot on, for the land piece, but that's just a portion of it. This was the PHA and the City on the application, and she thinks it important that we have a strong voice in this whole process. She said that's what's lacking from her perspective is that we are not driving it. They talk about this parcel, but, we need to be innovative and drive the process, and that we're not doing.

Vice-Chairman Brugger said that somewhere in this whole dialogue for the last year or so, and he will take full responsibility if he misinterpreted it, but somewhere along the line, some entities have either assumed or been misled that this piece of property is fair game and that concerns him because he thinks that our loyalty at first is with the RAD developer. Mr. Distel said that he thinks it's the alignment you already have an MOU and the developer RFP could also be trying to figure out how to make those two things work where you're not repeating or doing extra things that end up leading to the same eventuality. But he thinks yes, there's been the communication of Taylor Avenue in the choice application highlighted, and

he doesn't know when the MOU happened after that, so there's trying to make sure those things are aligned.

Ms. Boothe said that maybe it would be a good idea for Mr. Distel to explain the process of the city applying for the grant and all the agencies that collaborated and assisted with it. It is a two-year planning grant, and we made it through the first year. There's a large part of when HUD visited, but we do have a steering committee that does have these two members. So those processes have been going on for a year. He could share the organizational chart that has the core team and all the task force members, which is probably like 80 to 100 people.

Vice-Chairman Brugger just wanted to get back to the one thing that has still not been answered is how did their miscommunication like that of Habitat of Humanity thinking this parcel was open game. This is what concerns him is somebody somewhere along the line might not have all the facts and that was embarrassing.

Chairman Adams asked what exactly does the City want from PHA. Commissioner O'Neill said he would like to add to that question. The question stands, but in the context of what this board has already accomplished and has been working on for two years, basically, which has culminated now in our execution of an MOU. He said maybe he's misreading, but reading between the lines here, he's hearing that what we have already done may not be acceptable to the city, and you want to exercise the city's jurisdiction over our decision-making authority and responsibility to do what you folks want to do. He said that we've been very careful in what we've done so far, and we've ended up with a developer that we trust and in his opinion, has done an excellent job on any project he's ever undertaken in Dutchess County. The PHA has been at this for a long time without any intervention from anybody, and now suddenly, we're told that what we have done may not be acceptable

Ms. Longcore said that she thinks the issue is that without anyone having any concept of what is being planned, it is hard for the City to plan to go forward. Chairman Adams said that maybe there is some miscommunication from this table. We asked our developer to be open to work in collaboration with the city. We thought what was going to happen is that the two developers or whoever, the site people involved, were going to sit down at a table. Kearney and his group were going to come to PHA. We would tell him, for example, the city seems to think that if we were to add a mini market or a daycare center to our project, it might enhance it so could you consider that in your design. This is how we sort of wrongly misunderstood how our collaboration was going to work, not that we were necessarily going to develop something and then bring it to somebody to see for them to say yea or no, because that's what the Board is to do. Not to say that they don't have a concept, the current group do have some concept of what they think might work here. What they're trying to do is to look at the zoning and congestion of what they can maybe take down and put up. So they're going through a lot of groundwork before, so we haven't seen any actual rendering. Chairman Adams went on to say that but while we are thinking the city is doing their thing, and so sooner or later, somebody's going to come and say to us, well, while you're getting ready, why don't you consider this to include in your project.

Mr. Distel said that it would have been helpful to know about the MOU as there was not transparency. Ms. Longcore said that both RAD and Choice are both meant to benefit the residents of the City. Chairman Adams said there was an assumption made, that this board was even interested in breaking that MOU. Vice-Chairman Brugger still wants to know how this Taylor Avenue property has gotten brought up to the point where there is misleading information to some entities that it might be able to be acquired or used or whatever when in fact we have a working thing. She wants a collaboration with the City. We do not want to lead the City's project. We want to do our RAD project in conjunction with the City. Commissioner Watson said that we have not been getting the communication we need from the Executive Director.

Mr. Boothe wanted clarification who is driving this planning process. Mr. Distel replied the City. She also asked for clarification on who's grant this is. He replied it is the City's because PHA doesn't have the capacity to have been a co-grantee in this. He said this is a collaboration and knowing that we should have pivoted and looked at other places earlier.

Chairman Adams said that while we are in contract the developer, she does not want to jeopardize their ability to compete. Mr. Distel said that this would not preclude them from competing. Commissioner O'Neill said that there's so many parts to this that we need to have all members of our board understand what's happening here, come to a consensus that we can then work with going forward so that no one can point a finger and say, you stabbed me in the back, or I don't agree with this. He said that he wouldn't want the fact that he might want to apply to jeopardize what he already has. He said that we went through a lot of trouble getting to where we are, and he would not want to see that implode for a variety of reasons i.e. miscommunication, prejudice against this person or that person. We have come too far to make a change, and he does not see that we have to. He thinks if we can get the appropriate avenues of communication open, and that's what we need to decide. How do we open these avenues of communication so that monthly we can sit here and have that discussion.

Commissioner Watson asked Ms. Longcore to reiterate what she said before. Ms. Longcore replied that the plan is not a planning grant for the city, but it is intended to improve PHA properties. It was for making that neighborhood better in it is a different program and it's not the RAD program, but those two properties were targeted to improve the entire neighborhood and include lifting up PHA properties, but not for anyone to take them over.

Commissioner O'Neill asked if there is a schedule of meetings in place going forward for the next few months. Mr. Distel replied that there are steering committee meetings, task force meetings, and core team meetings. Commissioner O'Neill asked if minutes are taken at these meetings. Mr. Distel replied that they are not.

Commissioner Watson said that just to be clear, Choice is not just about this parcel. Mr. Distel said that was correct, they are looking at site control on other sites. Commissioner Watson said that it would help both Martin Luther King Jr. and Thurgood Marshall Terrace. Chairman Adams said that the MOU only includes Martin Luther King Jr.

Vice-Chairman Brugger asked if Ms. Boothe will be the point person for relaying the information. It was agreed that she would be and board members that attend would help to supplement that information.

Laurie Sandow, a City resident, said that by law, the PHA is supposed to post your packet as well as your agenda to the website. Commissioner Watson said that it was posted. Ms. Sandow said that the Dutchess County Planning Federation does meetings and webinars. She said that she would send the links to Ms. Boothe. She also stated that she strongly supported the martial arts program.

RESOLUTIONS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building and Security: Jason Folscher reported that they completed 17 vacant units in September. He said they are looking to have 10 completed by the end of October, which would leave us with eight that he would like to have done by Thanksgiving. Chairman Adams asked if they outside contractors are helpful. Mr. Folscher replied that they are very helpful. She also asked if we have received any complaints about a lapse in day-to-day maintenance. He said he has not, and Ms. Boothe said that she has not received any complaints either.

Finance: Ms. Boothe reported that financials are in the packet, and if anyone has any questions, they can contact Mr. Shanley.

Personnel: None

Tenant Relations: Commissioner Watson asked about parking and roaches. Commissioner Johnson replied that the parking is fine. Ms. Boothe said that she was going to get to the roach situation in her report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Boothe reported that the new laundry room doors should be installed by Thanksgiving, and the tenant would be able to use the keycard. This will allow us to extend the hours, and we are looking at the hours of about 7 am to 9 pm, but that could change.

Regarding pest control, letters were sent to all residents that they cannot refuse pest control. We are starting to send out lease termination letters for tenants who have done it more than once. There is a lease provision that for cause, they can refuse it once, and when they do refuse it, we do inform them that you have refused, you did it for cause this time, you are not allowed to do it going forward or your lease will be terminated. For those who have refused it without cause, we are giving them a warning notice, and the lease termination will happen next time they refuse pest control. Commissioner O'Neill asked what will happen when they get to City court. Ms. Boothe replied that they will probably make some type of arrangement.

Ms. Boothe reported that Office of the Aging came to our Swartz development to offer an overview of what they do and then another session on Medicaid 101. We anticipate that before the end of the year, we will do it at all our sites for the seniors. We had a number of tenants who attended and greatly appreciated the information.

Regarding the government shutdown, everything has slowed. Our Capital Fund Grant for 2025 is on hold and has not yet been approved until the government opens back up. She said that we have \$1,000,000 in the Capital Fund that we can not touch until the government reopens. Commissioner Adams asked if we have enough money to ride it out for two or three weeks. Ms. Boothe replied that we do.

Ms. Boothe said that Charlia Frank asked if they can meet with the Board to do a presentation. Commissioner Johnson asked if it was necessary. Chairman Adams said that we need to decide on how we want the center used as they are asking for control of the MLK site.

Ms. Boothe asked if we want a work session this month. Commissioner Watson asked what the work session would be for. Chairman Adams said that we have a lot of loose ends that we have been pushing over and saying that we are going to do. She did not have her list with her. It was agreed to canvass for a work session.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

No report.

COUNSEL'S REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

I hereby certify that the minutes are true and correct and approved at the Meeting of November 12, 2025.

Jaquette Brown, Secretary