

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE VILLAGE OF OAK PARK  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025  
MILLS PARK TOWER  
7:45 AM**

**OFFICIAL RECORD**

**QUORUM**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Teitelman, Walz, Kelm, Sood, and Chairperson Muse

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Socall

**STAFF:** Pope, Carpenter, Cobb, and Jones

**GUESTS:** Mills Park Tower Residents

Chairperson Muse called the meeting to order at 7:47 AM.

**APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 14, 2025, OPHA REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Chairperson Muse asked if there were any corrections to the January 14, 2025, meeting minutes. Commissioner Teitelman mentioned that the minutes included with the paper board meeting packet handed out at the meeting were the final version, rather than the earlier version previously emailed.

It was moved (Kelm) and seconded (Walz) to approve the January 14, 2025, meeting minutes of the Housing Authority of the Village of Oak Park. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Nora Natof (Apt. 9F):

Ms. Natof inquired about Wi-Fi services and whether they are currently being offered to new residents at Mills Park Tower. Executive Director Pope confirmed that Mills Park Tower does not provide Wi-Fi services to residents.

Ms. Natof further noted that Wi-Fi service had been available in the past and asked whether any efforts were being made to secure a new provider. Ms. Carpenter provided context, explaining that a contractor named Lenny had previously rented space on the roof. However, Director Pope clarified that the space was leased specifically for the placement of a Wi-Fi antenna used to transmit signals across the area, and that the antenna itself is owned by the provider, not by building management.

Ms. Powers (Apt. 16F) mentioned that she has been in contact with Lenny and believes he is interested in continuing service with the building. Ms. Mills (Apt. 5J) shared that during her time

at Mills Park Tower, she was never billed for phone or Wi-Fi services. However, she recently received an invoice without prior notice or explanation, and that this was concerning to her.

Commissioner Kelm noted that in the absence of Wi-Fi service, residents can attach an antenna to their televisions to view visitors at the front door. He also pointed out that Xfinity offers a Wi-Fi plan for low-income customers at a rate of \$14.95 per month.

Charlene Lloyd (Apt. 11H):

Ms. Lloyd raised a concern regarding the elevator doors closing prematurely. A maintenance worker, along with several residents, witnessed the incident and intervened to prevent the doors from closing while Ms. Lloyd was attempting to board. She requested that the sensors on the elevator doors be inspected. Ms. Carpenter documented the incident, indicated that she herself had also had a similar experience, and stated that she will provide an update once further information is available.

Ms. Lloyd also inquired about the status of the Mills Park Tower resident bathroom rehabilitation project. This topic was previously discussed during the Mills Park Tower Resident Council meeting, where residents sought clarification on the total number of bathrooms requiring rehabilitation and how many had been completed. Director Pope explained that the project must be included in the capital improvements budget before work can proceed.

Additionally, Ms. Lloyd expressed concerns about the wall protectors installed in the small elevator, noting that they obstruct access to the handrails and requested their removal. Director Pope clarified that the protective padding is in place to help preserve the condition of the elevator and is primarily used during move-ins to prevent damage. Ms. Carpenter indicated she would look at the padding and see if there is a way to access the handrails when the padding is up.

Linda Harris (Apt. 4F):

Ms. Harris raised concerns about safety following notification of delays in infrastructure improvements under the "E" train station at Harlem Avenue and South Boulevard. She stated that she is afraid to walk under the viaduct, she emphasized the importance of addressing safety issues. Director Pope acknowledged her concerns and stated that he has not received any updates or information from the Village of Oak Park regarding the project.

#### **HA-2024-11-01 APPROVAL OF HOUSING FORWARD'S LEASING OF 112 S. HUMPHREY**

Housing Forward's request to lease the vacant space at 112 S. Humphrey Ave. (formerly leased to Catholic Charities for the Accolade Adult Day Care program) will be used as space to provide overnight shelter, providing a stable and consistent location for individuals seeking shelter. This represents a shift from Housing Forward's previous rotating temporary shelter (PADS) model, which was in place for many years prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, to a more permanent overnight shelter arrangement.

The 112 S. Humphrey Ave. space is well-suited to meet Housing Forward's needs, and they are in the process of finalizing a buildout plan. This plan includes maintaining most of the existing interior walls and fixtures while adding two new separate bathrooms to accommodate the shelter's needs. Additionally, renovations will include adding multiple windows in the east facade to improve natural daylight, as well as the addition of a sprinkler system. The overall buildout process, from design to permitting and construction, is expected to take approximately 8-12 weeks.

As permit approval is contingent on an executed lease, the Board has reviewed the lease, with the understanding that the final terms are expected to align closely with the proposed agreement.

Commissioner Walz questioned Paragraph 28, specifically about the ability to terminate the lease if government funding is restricted. It was clarified that termination could occur, but only after the initial three-year period. This provision was included in the document before recent events.

Chairperson Muse inquired about the insurance coverages required of the landlord, particularly whether additional insurance would be required from Housing Forward under this arrangement. Executive Director Pope responded that Housing Forward would need to carry sufficient insurance to meet the required risk management standards for the facility.

The Board agreed to proceed with approval of the lease under terms substantially similar to those presented and reviewed so as to ensure that the renovation and shelter operation can move forward as planned.

It was moved (Walz) and seconded (Teitelman) to authorize the approval of Housing Forward's leasing of the 112 S. Humphrey space.

AYES: Commissioners Teitelman, Kelm, Sood, Walz, and Chairman Muse.

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Socall

## **DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

### **MPT REPORT**

Property Manager Carpenter briefly summarized Mills Park Tower's occupancy, leasing, resident demographics, waiting list, building activities, and maintenance for the month of January. She noted a January occupancy rate of 93% and stated that one resident moved in while there were two move-outs. Of the 13 vacant units, 10 are ready for leasing.

The current waiting list expanded during the reporting period, with 31 individuals requesting applications, and 12 completed applications having been returned.

Ms. Carpenter shared updates regarding the elevators at Mills Park Tower. The new elevator, Car #1, is now operational. During the first week, there were three service calls, all of which were addressed. Charlie will conduct an additional check on the elevator door to ensure everything is functioning properly. Meanwhile, construction on Elevator #2 is now underway. Ms. Carpenter also reported that 215 work orders were submitted during this period. The very high volume, compared to a typical month of perhaps 50, was due to a proactive maintenance effort in which staff checked the heating systems in every unit. Additionally, thermostats were inspected based upon additional resident requests, contributing to the total work order count.

Regarding community activities, Mills Park Tower continues to host regular programs. The Tai Chi class remains popular, with strong resident participation, and yoga sessions on Fridays also are experiencing good engagement rates. Home-delivered meal services continue, with seven residents receiving meals and an additional eight residents benefiting from these services.

Commissioner Kelm raised a question about the 16-week timeline for completing the second elevator, given that many delays on the first elevator were related to aspects of the reconstruction process that would cover both units. Director Pope agreed that he believed the timeline should be shorter, but confirmed that the original project timeline estimate provided for under the terms of the existing contract specifically identified a period of 16 weeks for the second elevator. Nonetheless, the contractors have indicated that they will be providing an updated schedule with more precise estimates for the overall completion timeframe. While some of the previous work should shorten the timeline, Director Pope stated that he is sticking with the original 16-week estimate for now until these further updates are provided by the contractor.

### HCV REPORT

Ms. Cobb, Director of HCVP, reported for January that the utilization rate is currently at 100%, with a total of 436 participants in the regular voucher program. For the Mainstream programs, there are 67 participants, reflecting an 81% utilization rate. Additionally, there are four Non-Elderly, Disabled (NED) participants, representing a 27% utilization rate.

Regarding the waiting list, 20 applicants were interviewed, and it is anticipated that they will be eligible, pending final follow-ups before voucher issuance. One new Fostering Youth to Independence (FYI) program participant lease was signed in January, bringing the total number of participants to three. Ms. Cobb also summarized additional lease agreements, participant transfer information, and shared an update on participants relocating to Oak Park from other jurisdictions.

### Inspection Services RFP

Ms. Cobb shared that the proposal deadline for the HCV Inspection and Rent Reasonableness Determination RFP has been extended until March 15th, and we hope to receive additional submissions. In fact, an email was received requesting information about whether the inspection

RFP remains open. This indicates continued interest, and we are optimistic about receiving more proposals before the new deadline.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

NONE

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Director Pope shared plans to initiate the Annual Plan session in May, following the general approach and timeline taken last year. This session will provide all residents with an overview of the process, explaining how it works and what to expect moving forward. Additionally, another meeting will be scheduled to walk through the timeline with the Resident Council leadership.

## **ADJOURNMENT OF FEBRUARY 11, 2025, REGULAR MEETING**

Chairperson Muse asked for a motion to adjourn the February 11, 2025, regular meeting.

It was moved (Teitelman) and seconded (Sood) to adjourn the February 11, 2025, regular meeting. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Andrew Teitelman, Secretary