MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE VILLAGE OF OAK PARK
TUESDAY, JULY 28, 2026
MILLS PARK TOWER
7:45 AM

OFFICIAL RECORD

QUORUM

PRESENT: Commissioners Kelm, Sood, Teitelman, and Chairperson Muse
ABSENT: Commissioners Socall, and Walz
STAFF: Alberty, Bottoms, Carpenter, Cobb, Pope
GUESTS: Mills Park Tower Residents

Chairperson Muse called the meeting to order at 7:55 AM

APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 9, 2026 OPHA'S REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Chairperson Muse asked if there were any corrections to the June 9, 2026, OPHA regular meeting minutes. There were none

It was moved (Kelm) and seconded (Teitelman) to approve the June 9, 2026, OPHA regular meeting minutes. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Garnet Faye (Apt. 12F)

Mr. Faye: Mr. Faye expressed concerns regarding excessive heat on the upper floors of the building, stating that hallway temperatures had reached approximately 90 degrees during the previous week. He commented that the current air circulation design allows warm hallway air to enter resident units beneath the doors, creating uncomfortable living conditions. Mr. Faye emphasized that the issue is not tolerable and urged that it be treated as a priority. In response to a question, he stated he could personally speak to conditions on the 12th floor but believed the issue existed throughout the building.

Executive Director Pope acknowledged the concern and stated that the HVAC issue was already scheduled for discussion later in the meeting but agreed to move it to the top of the agenda due to its importance. He explained how the building's air handling system circulates air through rooftop units serving the hallways on floors 2 through 19.

Commissioner Kelm asked if insulating drapes can be added to the hallways to reduce the heat.

Nora Natof (Apt. 9F)
Ms. Natof requested that a placeholder be added to each elevator to summarize important monthly activities and events for residents. She stated that it would help keep residents informed and encourage greater attendance at community activities.

Mary O'Kearsey (Apt. 9C)
Ms. O'Kearsey asked for clarification regarding the building's policy on installing ceiling fans. She explained that when she first moved into the building, she was told a ceiling fan could be installed by a licensed electrician; however, when she later inquired about installing one, she was informed that ceiling fans were no longer permitted and that existing ceiling fans are removed when units become vacant. Executive Director Pope responded that he was not certain of the reason for the policy but indicated it could be related to electrical load requirements or other building considerations. He stated that staff would review the current policy regarding ceiling fans and provide clarification.

Charlene Lloyd (Apt. 11H)
Ms. Lloyd requested that questions and concerns raised by attendees be incorporated into the final draft presented to the OPHA. She asked that the response time and procedures for addressing elevator issues be reviewed. Ms. Lloyd also expressed concerns regarding the tenant screening and building access process, including whether new residents are informed of building policies and whether concerns related to unauthorized guests and resident safety are being adequately addressed. She stated that some residents feel their concerns are not being heard or receiving sufficient follow-up from management. Additionally, Ms. Lloyd asked for an update on the MPT construction progress, including the completion of the front lobby, installation of the mailbox/cubbyhole units, completion of the bathrooms, and the anticipated project completion timeline. She requested an update on whether the original projected completion date of August remains accurate.

Executive Director Pope responded to Ms. Lloyd's concerns, stating that the construction project timeline would be addressed as part of the meeting agenda. Regarding concerns about individuals entering the building and resident behavior, Mr. Pope explained that all residents are required to meet the same eligibility criteria and that established policies and standards of conduct apply to all residents. He stated that residents should continue to report concerns to management, which reviews and addresses issues as appropriate. Mr. Pope noted that management is unable to provide information about individual residents or disclose details regarding actions taken in response to concerns due to privacy requirements.

Vassa Powers (Apt. 16H)
Ms. Powers emphasized the importance of having event reminders visible throughout the building. She requested that MPT consider placing monthly reminders or notices in each elevator to help keep residents informed of upcoming events, activities, and

meetings, noting that additional visibility would be beneficial as some residents may not always recall scheduled events.

Candice Webb (Apt. 3L)
Ms. Webb inquired about alternative funding opportunities following the unsuccessful grant application and expressed concerns regarding heat-related challenges at the property. She emphasized the previous conversation regarding the importance of resident reminders and additional communication. Ms. Webb also thanked the board and MPT staff for their continued efforts.

David Kelm (Apt. 12D)
Mr. Kelm discussed mailbox placement at America House, noting that the height appeared more accessible compared to the current mailbox setup and questioned the differences in USPS requirements.

Chairperson Muse asked if there were any further public comments. There were none.

QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REVIEWS

Mr. Sinn reviewed the financial reports for Mills Park Tower and the Housing Choice Voucher Program. He noted that funding is slightly below budget due to timing and occupancy levels, with expectations that funding will improve as occupancy increases. He highlighted higher expenses related to telephone costs, training, utilities, maintenance, and HVAC repairs, while overall expenses remain generally on track. Chairperson Muse inquired about HUD funding delays and whether the organization has been impacted by current federal funding decisions. Executive Director Pope explained that the impact to Mills Park Tower is primarily related to occupancy levels rather than federal funding restrictions. He noted that occupancy has improved and expects the funding gap to decrease but may not fully close by year-end.

Mr. Sinn continued with the Housing Choice Voucher Program financials, noting that administrative fees are ahead of budget and overall funding and expenses remain on target. Chairperson Muse asked about potential impacts to voucher funding and program operations. Executive Director Pope explained that HUD's current funding approach has created challenges nationwide, including the use of a lower baseline funding amount that has limited the ability to add new voucher participants or approve moves. He noted that OPRC is working with HUD Region 5 and monitoring funding levels to ensure current program participants continue to receive assistance.

MPT CONSTRUCTION

Executive Director Pope provided an update on the Mills Park Tower renovation project, noting that unforeseen issues discovered during construction, including fire system conduit relocation and code-required wall framing replacements, have extended the project timeline. He reported that the lobby renovations are largely complete, the redesigned package cubbies are in production, restroom renovations are underway, and the final phase will include the living room area. A revised construction schedule will be shared with the Board, Resident Council, and residents once finalized, with project completion now anticipated in November.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

MPT REPORT
Ms. Carpenter briefly summarized the Mills Park Tower occupancy, leasing, resident demographics, waiting list, building activities, and maintenance for the month of June 2026. She highlighted the continued progress in increasing occupancy, noting that as of the end of June, Mills Park Tower had 181 occupied units and 17 vacant units. There were five move-ins and two move-backs during the month. Ms. Carpenter reported that the waiting list consisted of 821 applicants, including 87 applicants with resident preference and 734 without preference. For July, 7 move-ins were scheduled, including 1 move-in occurring that day, with 2 additional move-ins scheduled for August.

Ms. Carpenter reported that 6 applicants accepted and 4 declined offers at the end of June, with one applicant requesting to return to the waitlist and three applicants withdrawing their names. She reported four elevator call-outs during the month, 30 work orders requested and completed, and continued efforts to rehabilitate vacant units. Ms. Carpenter also provided updates on building activities and projects, noting that the community room continued to be used as a cooling center, the first-floor renovation had moved into its second phase, Advanced Mechanical assessed a noisy rooftop motor, and Stanley repaired the rear entrance door after a brief outage. Ms. Carpenter provided an update regarding the recent elevator issue, explaining that one elevator was out of service for approximately six days near the end of June and beginning of July. She stated that the freight elevator experienced recurring issues requiring multiple service visits. After several attempts to resolve the issue, a technician identified and corrected the problem, and the elevator has remained operational since the repair.

Commissioner Teitelman asked how many vacant units would remain after the nine scheduled move-ins in July and August, assuming no additional move-outs. Ms. Carpenter estimated that the building would have approximately 9 vacant units remaining after accounting for 1 scheduled move-out. Commissioner Teitelman expressed appreciation for the continued improvement in occupancy given the need for available housing. Ms. Carpenter noted that she had 4 applicant folders pending background checks, which could result in additional move-ins in August, and explained that once the current applicant pool was exhausted, staff would return to pulling additional applicants from the waitlist. Commissioner Kelm asked about resident activities, including the Fourth of July event. Ms. Carpenter explained that the event was moved indoors due to the extreme heat and included boxed lunches from Famous Dave's. She noted that attendance was higher than previous events, with residents enjoying the opportunity to gather in the community room or take meals home.

HCV REPORT
Ms. Cobb briefly summarized the activities and accomplishments of the Housing Choice Voucher Program team during the month of June 2026, highlighting a lease-up rate of

our regular vouchers of 431. Ms. Cobb reported that the total lease-up number of 431 includes 417 regular vouchers, along with project-based vouchers and Foster Youth Initiative vouchers. She noted that 16 regular vouchers remained available, while the Mainstream voucher program for persons with disabilities had 62 vouchers leased. Ms. Cobb reported that several applicants had been scheduled to come in during July; however, due to ongoing communication with HUD, those appointments were placed on hold. She added that the Non-Elderly Disabled program remained at four participants. Regarding the waiting list, Ms. Cobb reported that six individuals who had previously been issued vouchers were still searching for units, with the expectation that those individuals would be leased by September. One voucher from the 2024 waiting list had expired year-to-date.

Ms. Cobb provided an update on the Foster Youth Initiative (FYI) program, reporting that 21 referrals had been received year-to-date, with 10 active leads and five available vouchers out of the agency’s 15-voucher allocation. She noted that one additional FYI voucher was anticipated to be leased in August. Executive Director Pope highlighted the success of the program and noted that by the end of August, approximately 11 of the 15 vouchers were expected to be utilized. He explained that due to the increased need and successful utilization of FYI vouchers, the agency may consider submitting an application to the federal government for additional FYI vouchers. He noted that these vouchers assist individuals aging out of the foster care system who may otherwise be at risk of homelessness. Ms. Cobb added that additional competitive FYI vouchers could have a quicker lease-up process because they are tied to specific referrals of individuals who are ready to receive vouchers and obtain housing.

Ms. Cobb reported that the Housing Choice Voucher Program completed 14 inspections during the month of June, with no payment abatements resulting from failed inspections. She noted one move year-to-date related to a previous abatement, 22 interim changes completed year-to-date, 10 participants withdrawn from the program, 5 participants searching for units after moving out, 3 informal hearings completed, and 9 requests to port to other housing authorities. She further reported that the agency was billing other housing authorities for 29 participants, had absorbed two families year-to-date, and was billing other housing authorities for 32 program participants. Commissioner Teitelman asked about the 9 participants searching for units and whether that number was typical or concerning. Ms. Cobb clarified that the 9 participants were individuals who had ported into Oak Park from other jurisdictions and explained that participants may later choose to return to their previous jurisdiction or move to another nearby community if Oak Park is not the right fit.

OLD BUSINESS

ANNUAL PLAN

Executive Director Pope provided an update on the development of the Annual Plan, reporting that the Resident Advisory Board meeting was recently held and generated productive discussion with residents. He noted that comments received during the meeting would be incorporated and referenced in the Annual Plan. He reported that the draft plan was expected to be completed by August 5 and made available for public

review and comment, followed by a public hearing on August 19 at Village Hall. He explained that the Annual Plan primarily addresses broad programmatic goals and significant operational changes. He added that the plan may include language regarding the Housing Authority's intent to apply for additional Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers if approved.
Commissioner Teitelman asked whether the upcoming HOTMA policy changes needed to be referenced in the Annual Plan. Executive Director Pope confirmed that HOTMA had been referenced in the previous year's plan and would be included again this year as part of the required implementation language.

HA-2026-07-01 - RESOLUTION APPROVING UPDATES TO OPHA ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN AND ACOP (ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY) TO CONFORM WITH HOTMA (HOUSING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH MODERNIZATION ACT) REQUIREMENTS AS IMPLEMENTED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
Executive Director Pope provided an overview of the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA), explaining that although the legislation was adopted by Congress in 2016, implementation has taken nearly ten years due to extensive rule-making, public comment, legal challenges, and required technology updates. He explained that the changes are intended to simplify program administration while also benefiting program participants. One key change allows participants to report decreases in income at any time to reduce their rent contribution, while increases in income will generally be addressed during the annual recertification rather than requiring immediate reporting. He also noted that staff have undergone extensive training to prepare for implementation and that the Board must adopt the required policy changes at least 120 days, (September 3, 2026), before the January 1, 2027 implementation deadline. The proposed updates include amendments to the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan and the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP), utilizing HUD's model language to ensure compliance with federal requirements.

Commissioner Sood asked what implementation of the HOTMA changes would require. Executive Director Pope explained that staff would begin applying the new requirements during the recertification process beginning in September for participants renewing in January. He noted that documentation requirements and certain eligibility criteria, including the treatment of assets, would change under the new regulations. He emphasized that the vast majority of Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing participants would not be affected by the changes, but staff would proactively work with the small number of households impacted to ensure they understood the new requirements.

It was moved (Sood) and seconded (Teitelman) to approve the HA-2026-07-01 - RESOLUTION APPROVING UPDATES TO OPHA ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN AND ACOP (ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY) TO CONFORM WITH HOTMA (HOUSING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH MODERNIZATION ACT) REQUIREMENTS AS IMPLEMENTED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

AYES: Commissioners Kelm, Sood, Teitelman, and Chairperson Muse

NAYS:

ABSENT: Commissioner Socall, and Commissioner Walz

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

<u>ENERGY MATTERS UNIT AC REPLACEMENT - GRANT APPLICATION UPDATE</u>

Executive Director Pope informed the Board that the grant application to replace aging and inefficient resident air conditioners was denied. Staff are seeking additional information regarding the reason for the denial and whether it was due to limited funding or another issue with the application. Chairperson Muse asked if Executive Director Pope is able to find out more information to why MPT was denied and if there is a possibility to reapply for the grant.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE JULY 28, 2026, REGULAR MEETING

Chairperson Muse asked for a motion to adjourn the July 28, 2026 regular meeting. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Andrew Teitelman, Secretary