

Housing Authority of the Town of Windsor

Board of Commissioners

Special Meeting

September 23, 2021, 3:00 p.m.

Ludlow Room, Town Hall and Zoom

APPROVED MINUTES

Commissioner Gutcheon, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Commissioners present: Engelmann, Gutcheon, Jaamal

Commissioners absent: McKay

2. Public Comment and Written Communications

No written communications.

Andrew McAllister said the landscaping at Millbrook was poor. He asked if management recognized tenants' unions.

Stephanie Scott was displaced by the condemnation of her unit and received a letter releasing her from her lease. The town social services department has shuffled her around between out-of-town hotels and relayed a poor customer service experience from one of them. She doesn't know where to go next and needs help.

Doris Butler said she could smell mold at Fitch. She doesn't want to get sick. When will things be fixed?

Lenora Wilson regrets accepting a basement unit. She has not found the experience of emergency relocation a pleasant one.

Brian Smith says WHA staff take long weekends and neglect their duties. There has been no improvement whatsoever since the change in management in May. If they and the board really cared about the tenants, all the WHA's problems would be solved by now.

Vicky Arnesen relayed an unsatisfactory mowing incident and asked if 24/7 access to community rooms would be restored.

Sally Grossman said this meeting's change of date and location caused extreme hardship to WHA tenants. The Board must want to keep residents away.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. August 18, 2021

There were no additions or corrections. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

To approve the minutes of August 18, 2021	Aye: Engelmann, Gutcheon, Jaamal.
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4. Report of Tenant Commissioner

Commissioner Jaamal answered some of the questions from public comment and reported on happenings on WHA properties. He asked about the status of relocations at Millbrook Village, given the desire to find apartments for displaced Fitch Court residents. He spoke to the tone of communications to tenants, particularly notes and robocalls that threaten eviction.

5. Chair's Report

The chair stated that we are all on the same side here. We will never be able to rebuild to any semblance of normal if advocates are fighting amongst themselves.

Elaborating on the tenant representative's report, the chair emphasized the importance of customer service. This is still a work in progress, it seems. Given recent history, tenants are sensitive to language that might come across as threatening or bullying.

6. Financial Report

CFO Hayley Fetrow gave a summary of the agency's financials for August. The 2020 audit is not yet complete.

7. Management Reports

Mr. Cappelletti responded to questions and concerns raised in public comment. He walked the Board through his written report and answered many questions from the Board.

8. New Business

- a. Resolution 2021-14: Appointing the Board of Directors of Fitch Court Apartments, Inc.

The chair introduced resolution 2021-14. Fitch Court, a separate nonprofit corporation, needs a properly constituted Board. While we investigate better alternatives, we should follow past practice and appoint the WHA board as the Fitch board. Mr. Jaamal moved approval of the resolution; Ms. Engelmann seconded.

To approve resolution 2021-14	Aye: Engelmann, Freeman, Gutcheon, Jaamal.
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9. Old Business

None.

10. Other Items of Interest

None.

11. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

2021-14: A resolution appointing the Board of Directors of Fitch Court Apartments, Inc.

Resolved, that pursuant to Article II, Section 1 of the bylaws of Fitch Court Apartments, Inc., that corporation's Board of Directors shall consist of Carol Engelmann, Harry Freeman, Adam Gutcheon, Taariq Jaamal, and Stephen McKay. The term of each director shall expire with their term as a commissioner of the Housing Authority of the Town of Windsor.

Fitch Court Apartments, Inc.
Board of Directors
Special Meeting
September 23, 2021, 3:00 p.m.
Ludlow Room, Town Hall and Zoom
UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Directors present: Engelmann, Freeman, Gutcheon, Jaamal

Directors absent: McKay

Adam Gutcheon, WHA Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:37 p.m.

1. Election of chair

Mr. Jaamal nominated Adam Gutcheon as Board chair. There were no other nominations.

To elect Adam Gutcheon as Board Chair	Aye: Engelmann, Freeman, Gutcheon, Jaamal.
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2. Financial report

WHA CFO Hayley Fetrow gave a summary of the corporation's YTD financials. The corporation is not self-sustaining, and relies on transfers from WHA AMPs to remain operational.

3. Fitch Court groundwater infiltration

WHA Executive Director Robert Cappelletti discussed the flooding in basement units at Fitch caused by Tropical Storm Fred and Hurricane Henri. The soil was already waterlogged from the wet summer. Although a restoration company was on-site within an hour of the first report of flooding, they were unable to monitor their drying systems the day of the hurricane. The Fitch Court Tenants Union demanded that the Windsor Health Department be there first thing Monday morning to condemn the affected units. Six units were condemned, two of them unoccupied. Two tenants were able to be relocated within the building, but two tenants will not be able to return.

The existing foundation and drainage systems have not received much TLC over the years. As the weather is only getting wetter, it is likely that foundation repairs, and the installation of pumps and curtain drains will be needed before we can reopen the condemned units. These are substantial expenses that will be difficult to finance, as Fitch runs at a loss and already has two mortgages.

4. Corporate relationship to Windsor Housing Authority

The chair asked if there was a management agreement between Fitch and the WHA. Mr. Cappelletti responded that they were unable to find any record of one. Hayley Fetrow said that Fitch is currently billed for its share of WHA expenses based on a somewhat arbitrary allocation formula. If it were billed based on actual services rendered or for the actual staff time spent, its expenses would be even higher.

The chair raised a concern about the makeup of the corporation's Board and whether it was too tightly bound to the WHA. He said he asked the board's attorney to attend the next meeting to discuss these governance matters with the board.

5. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.