

**MINUTES OF THE MEMBERS' AND AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF THE  
NEW YORK STATE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION**

**HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2024 AT 9:00 A.M.  
641 LEXINGTON AVENUE  
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10004**

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**DIRECTORS AND DESIGNEES**

**PRESENT:**

Kenneth Adams	Chairman
RuthAnne Visnauskas	Commissioner, the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal
Bethaida Gonzalez	Member (via video conference)
Sadie McKeown	Member
Joyce Miller	Member
Jesse Olczak	New York State Division of the Budget, representing the Acting Director, Member (via video conference)
Chris Curtis	New York State Division of the Taxation and Finance, representing the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance, Member (via video conference)

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Chairman Adams presided over the meeting.

Mr. Joseph Palozzola, Vice President and Assistant Counsel to HCR, formally opened the meetings and acted as secretary.

Mr. Palozzola noted that Mr. Jesse Olczak, representing the Director of the New York State Division of the Budget, and Mr. Chris Curtis, representing the Commissioner of Taxation and Finance, are participating via video conference from the Capitol Building, Room 131, in Albany. Mr. Palozzola also noted that Ms. Bethaida Gonzalez is participating from the Syracuse Regional Office, 620 Erie Boulevard, Suite 312.

A public notice was given of the time and location of the venues in accordance with the New York State Open Meetings Law.

Mr. Palozzola asked for motions and seconds to call to order the February 15, 2024 meetings of the New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation (HTFC), New York State Housing Finance Agency (HFA), and the New York State Affordable Housing Corporation (AHC). Ms. Miller motioned to call the HTFC Board to order and Chairman Adams seconded the motion.

Mr. Palozzola then asked for individual votes for each HTFC Board member.

Mr. Palozzola asked for motions and seconds to call to order the February 15, 2024 HTFC Audit Committee meeting. Chairman Adams motioned to call the HTFC Audit Committee to order and Mr. Olczak seconded the motion.

Mr. Palozzola noted that he would accept the prior votes of Chairman Adams, Mr. Curtis, and Mr. Olczak.

Mr. Palozzola noted that these motions and seconds would be used, unless specific items called for a different vote, or unless any Member wished to record his or her vote differently.

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**The first item on the agenda for the HTFC Board was the adoption of the minutes of the HTFC Board meeting held on January 25, 2024.** There being no objections or corrections from the Members, the minutes were deemed approved.

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**Chairman Adams stated that Item 2 on the agenda was a resolution authorizing an Affordable Homeownership Opportunity Program award for the Greater Rochester Housing Partnership.**

Thomas Abbot presented.

Mr. Abbot explained that he was requesting \$1 million in AHOP subsidy to support the construction of five affordable single-family homes in Rochester, NY. The sponsor for this project is the Greater Rochester Housing Partnership, a non-profit housing developer and lender that began operations in 1992 – they are the lender on another project the Board has approved with Greater Rochester Habitat for Humanity. The participating lender for this deal is CPC. The homes consist of one two-bedroom home and four three-bedroom homes. These homes are the final five homes in a greater twenty-four-home project that GRHP has been undertaking with the City of Rochester. They have been using municipal funds for a lot of these and are now bringing AHOP money in. Mr. Abbot explained the benefits of this – that a lot has been learned from the previous rounds about hard costs, appraised values, and how to market these homes. The homes are all electric and designed with longevity in mind. They are located in the Upper Falls neighborhood directly north of downtown Rochester.

Mr. Abbot continued that the project has a standard suite of construction sources – a small charitable donation and the permanent funding sources include \$900,000 in ARPA funds from the

City of Rochester. These homes will reach very deep affordability and are in line with 43% of AMI for the two-bedroom home and an average of 47% of AMI for the three-bedroom homes. Sales prices are just over \$100,000/home.

Ms. Gonzalez said that she was pleased to see three-bedroom homes being developed as that is a big need upstate.

Commissioner Visnauskas asked whether the other houses that had been developed with the City of Rochester had sold. Mr. Abbot responded that there have been several phases, many of the homes have been finished and sold, and there are three or four that are in the process of being marketed and sold.

Ms. McKeown’s recusal from voting on this item was noted for the record.

Sara Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING AN AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM AWARD FOR THE GREATER ROCHESTER HOUSING PARTNERSHIP.**

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**The third item on the agenda was a resolution authorizing a Community Development Block Grant Economic Development Program awards.**

Crystal Loffler presented.

Ms. Loffler explained that she was requesting approval for two new CDBG Economic Development Program awards. With Board approval, OCR would enter into agreements for \$435,000 for Niagara County to support the Niagara Truck Center and \$300,000 for Wyoming County to support the continuation of the local microenterprise grant program.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AWARDS.**

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**The fourth item on the agenda was a resolution authorizing Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Program awards.**

Ms. Loffler presented.

Ms. Loffler explained that just over \$25 million was included in the New York State budget for the Neighborhood and Rural Preservation Program. This is an annual program that provides administrative funding to support a network of nearly 200 Rural and Neighborhood Preservation Companies. Most of these awards were approved by the Board last June, but OCR opened a Notice of Funding Availability to allow some new organizations to join the program to fill vacancies from organizations that dissolved or were terminated from the program. OCR reviewed the applications and is requesting approval from the Board to issue awards for one new Neighborhood Preservation Company – Jubilee Homes in Syracuse – and two new Rural Preservation Companies – Cap 21 a/k/a Living ADK covering parts of Hamilton County and Seneca Housing covering Seneca County.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING NEIGHBORHOOD AND RURAL PRESERVATION PROGRAM AWARDS.**

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**Chairman Adams noted that the fifth item on the agenda was a resolution authorizing a Downtown Revitalization Initiative award for the Landmark Society of Western New York.**

Ms. Loffler presented.

Ms. Loffler stated that she was requesting Board approval to enter into a grant agreement for \$200,000 with the Landmark Society of Western New York. Ms. Loffler explained that HTFC works in partnership with DOS and ESD on DRI activities – in this case the project was originally assigned to DOS but once a connection was identified with another HCR award it was suggested that HTFC handle the project. The funding is for improvements to St. Joseph’s Park in Rochester which complements the Finance and Development project Alta Vista which also received DRI funding.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motions were carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING A DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE AWARD FOR THE LANDMARK SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK.**

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**The sixth item on the agenda was a resolution authorizing Targeted Home Improvement Program awards.**

Ms. Loffler presented.

Ms. Loffler stated that \$50 million was included in the FY 23-24 budget for a homeowner stabilization program. She noted that Commissioner Visnaukas had answered questions about this during her budget testimony and thanked her for that. This funding was intended to support the expansion of an owner-occupied repair program piloted in East Buffalo known as B-HIP. An analysis was completed to identify areas around the State that should be targeted for this funding – they were areas with persistent and structural discrimination in housing. Through this analysis one community was identified in each of the nine REDC regions outside of western New York for the Targeted Home Improvement Program, or T-HIP – the Village of Hempstead, the Bronx, Newburgh, Albany, Binghamton, Utica, Syracuse, Watertown, and Rochester. Ms. Loffler explained that HTFC issued a NOFA in late October, and HTFC staff have reviewed the applications that were received and are proposing awards for each of the twelve applicants, for a total award of \$41 million.

Commissioner Visnaukas commended Ms. Loffler and Dina Levy and their team for this program – it is going into areas with a lot of Black and brown homeowners and a lot of distressed housing and is going to be used in a very targeted way to offer home improvements that will allow people to stay safely housed in those communities.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolutions transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING TARGETED HOME IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AWARDS.**

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**Chairman Adams then stated that item 7 on the agenda was a resolution authorizing an amendment to the contract with Emphasys Computer Solutions, Inc.**

Dan Buyer presented.

Mr. Buyer explained that this request pertains to an ongoing contract with Emphasys to provide a new technology solution for Section 8. HTFC did a lot of training last summer with local

administrators many of whom have since asked for additional training. In the interest of keeping the program going and making this transition successful, HTFC is requesting a contract amendment to offer more training and support for a few more months.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT WITH EMPHASYS COMPUTER SOLUTIONS, INC.**

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**Item 8 on the agenda was a resolution authorizing a Preventative Troubled Asset Program award for Liberty Affordable Housing for Stoneview Heights.**

Margaret Feml presented.

Ms. Feml stated that she was requesting an award not to exceed \$400,000 for the Stoneview Heights apartments located in Cobleskill, NY. The award will cover the replacement of the boilers, windows, the drainage system, broken water pipes, and the replacement of a deteriorated parking area, all of which have been deemed as exigent health and safety issues.

Ms. Miller asked when the building was constructed. Ms. Feml responded that it was constructed in 2000.

Ms. McKeown asked whether the boilers were being replaced with the same type of boiler. Ms. Feml responded no, that they will be replaced with energy efficient boilers and the scope of work has been reviewed by the A&E department.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING A PREVENTATIVE TROUBLED ASSET PROGRAM AWARD FOR LIBERTY AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR STONEVIEW HEIGHTS.**

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**Chairman Adams stated that item 9 is a resolution authorizing Leading in Lead Prevention Pilot Program awards.**

Rachel Wieder presented.

Ms. Wieder stated that she was requesting authorization to award sixteen local health departments with awards totaling \$18,002,879 for lead remediation in rental buildings. This program will be run through the Office of Community Renewal. Ms. Wieder explained that there was an amendment to the public health law last fiscal year to create a mandatory rental registry in certain zip codes within nineteen counties that the Department of Health has classified as communities of concern. At the same time, HCR received \$20 million to support remediation of lead hazards that have been identified. The rental registry will not be up and running until the fall of 2025, but because HTFC has the money now it is proactively awarding the counties the money to be able to get started on working with landlords on remediation.

Chairman Adams asked whether the funding was for assessment and planning or for actual remediation. Ms. Wieder responded that it was for remediation. She explained that the New York State Health Department has a program called the Childhood Lead Prevention Program (“CLPP”) where they pay counties to do inspections and clearances, so this funding will just do the remediation.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING LEADING IN LEAD PREVENTION PILOT PROGRAM AWARDS.**

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**Item 10 on the agenda was a resolution authorizing Hurricane Ida Resilient Investments through Support and Capital Program awards.**

Ms. Wieder presented.

Ms. Wieder stated that she was requesting authorization to award nineteen localities \$3.8 million total. These are planning dollars for the awardees to do studies of resiliency, drainage, and waterfronts. Each locality was able to apply for three separate projects of up to \$200,000. HTFC is working with the localities to determine exactly how much each study will cost but is requesting authorization to award up to the maximum amount.

Chairman Adams asked Ms. Wieder to confirm that the localities could request up to \$200,000/project. Ms. Wieder responded that was correct, but each would be awarded only the amount that HTFC determines the study needs, but that work is still ongoing.

Ms. McKeown asked who would do the work that is recommended in these studies. Ms. Wieder responded that HTFC would be providing assistance to the localities to apply for federal funds. She explained that there are a lot of federal funds that could pay for the capital work in these

programs. The main federal source is FIMA BRIC, a program that is several years old. Ms. Wieder went on to say that HTFC is considering whether it could provide the local match for that program but that it would not be a part of this initiative. If HTFC has remaining Ida funds they may consider doing that. Ms. McKeown responded that most of the work was likely to be fairly expensive.

Ms. Miller stated that it is interesting that the same problem is being dealt with in such a piecemeal fashion by different programs and different agencies at different levels of government.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING HURRICANE IDA RESILIENT INVESTMENTS THROUGH SUPPORT AND CAPITAL PROGRAM AWARDS.**

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**Item 11 on the agenda was a resolution authorizing an amendment to the contract with Tetra Tech, Inc.**

Ms. Wieder presented.

Ms. Wieder explained that she was requesting authorization to extend the Office of Resilient Homes and Communities' contract with Tetra Tech, Inc. for an additional eighteen months. There are no additional funds needed. Tetra Tech, Inc. is supporting a micro grids project in Schenectady that a local arts center and theater is the subrecipient for and is managing. There have been delays in getting the project completed, but no additional funds are needed, just an extension of time.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT WITH TETRA TECH, INC.**

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**Item 12 on the agenda was a resolution approving the SEQRA classification of the Pitkin Avenue Residences.**

Heather Spitzberg presented.



Ms. Spitzberg stated that she was presenting the Pitkin Avenue Residences which is sponsored by Housing Works, Inc. – they have proposed new construction of an eight-story, 39-unit building at 2605 Pitkin Avenue, New York, NY. There are no unmitigated adverse environmental impacts and Ms. Spitzberg recommended that the project be classified as an unlisted action and a negative SEQRA declaration be made.

Ms. Miller asked if this project was the conversion of a low-level commercial site into a residential building and stated that this was a great use of land.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION APPROVING THE SEQRA CLASSIFICATION OF THE PITKIN AVENUE RESIDENCES.**

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**The next item on the agenda was a resolution authorizing an extension of the contract with Gibney, Anthony and Flaherty LLP.**

Amy Zamenick presented.

Ms. Zamenick explained that HTFC had an RFP for immigration firms – three firms responded. HTFC’s previous non-bound counsel did not have an immigration specialist. HTFC has had an ongoing visa issue that Gibney, Anthony and Flaherty LLP has been handling and HTFC continues to need their services for the next round of visa lotteries. Ms. Zamenick stated that she was requesting a one-year extension of this firm’s contract.

Ms. Neitzel moved for adoption of the resolution transmitted in connection therewith. Considering the first and second previously entered for the HTFC Members, Ms. Neitzel asked all HTFC members voting to approve to signify by saying aye. The motion was carried and the following resolution was adopted unanimously:

**A RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING TRUST FUND CORPORATION AUTHORIZING AN EXTENSION OF THE CONTRACT WITH GIBNEY, ANTHONY AND FLAHERTY LLP.**

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Chairman Adams noted that the remaining items on the agenda are informational items, and that there would be no discussion on these items unless the Members so requested.

**ITEM 13. Review of SEQRA Type II Actions**

**ITEM 14.** Review of the Procurement Internal Audit Report for the Office of Resilient Homes and Communities

**ITEM 15.** Review of Current Agency Procurements/Contracts in the Lobbying Restricted Period

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There being no unfinished business, Mr. Palozzola asked for a motion to adjourn the HTFC Board meeting. Considering the first and second motions previously entered, the motions were carried, and the meetings were adjourned.

Mr. Palozzola informed the Members that the next HTFC Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.



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M. Lauren McGill  
Vice President and Deputy Counsel