

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF MORRIS
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
September 11, 2025

TIME: 6:00 P.M.

PLACE: Morris Mews Senior Citizen Complex, 99 Ketch Road, Morris Township, NJ
Zoom Meeting, Meeting ID: 865 0868 6059, Passcode: 377057

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Meringolo called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. The meeting began with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence in remembrance of the victims of the September 11th attacks.

ROLL CALL: Executive Director Kelly Stephens called roll.

PRESENT

Commissioner Poli
Commissioner Somma
Commissioner Zaccone
Vice Chairwoman Ullah
Chairman Meringolo

ABSENT

Commissioner Oliver

Also attending meeting:

Erin Hodgson, Day Pitney
Kelly Stephens, Executive Director
Gina Bozzi, Finance Director
Gregory Brown, Deputy Executive Director
Patricia Maurice, Community Member
Barbara Anderson, IBV Tenant

Greg Brown read adequate notice to the public.

I hereby announce and state that adequate notice of this hybrid meeting being held on this the eleventh day of September 2025 provided by the Executive Director of the Housing Authority County of Morris by preparing a notice specifying the time, date, and place of this meeting. The electronic notice has been posted on the Authority's website and the notice mailed to the Daily Record for inclusion in the minutes of this meeting, all the above in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et.Seq. "Open Public Meetings Act."

Meeting open to the public: Public portion opened at 6:03PM. Patricia Maurice of Parsippany, NJ, addressed the Board regarding her ongoing housing situation. She shared that she has been on the Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list for five years. While currently residing in an affordable unit, she stated that it is still financially burdensome. Ms. Maurice expressed understanding about the limited funding available for the program but requested clarification on the preference system used to prioritize applicants.

Executive Director Stephens provided an overview of the three-tier preference system used for the Housing Choice Voucher waiting list:

1. Elderly / Disabled / Working
2. Residency Preference – Live or work in Morris County
3. Veteran Status

Applicants with all three preference points are prioritized at the top of the list, followed by those with two, then one, and finally sorted by date and time of application. The current wait time is approximately three to four years.

Director Stephens noted that staff must carefully monitor voucher utilization to remain within budget. The Housing Authority is projected to exhaust 100% of its budget and therefore is unable to issue any additional vouchers through the end of the year.

Additional Notes:

- The Housing Authority of the County of Morris has worked diligently to increase payment standards in recent years to better align with the private rental market.
- Landlords were recently notified that the Housing Authority will not be awarding significant rent increases this year.
- The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs has already sent similar notifications to their landlords, stating no increases will be made in the coming year.

Chairman Meringolo emphasized that the Housing Authority should pursue all possible avenues to increase program funding. Public session closed at 6:07 PM

Correspondence: Executive Director Stephens reviewed correspondence with the County Administrator regarding the Board's concerns about the cost of health insurance. Deena Leary clarified that the County works with a healthcare broker who secures competitive pricing from multiple healthcare providers.

The Housing Authority also received a thank you from Assemblywoman Aura Dunn's office for the invitation to the picnic.

Committee Report: The Finance Committee will be meeting on September 30, 2025 at 4PM. The budget will be sent out the Friday before for their review.

Chairman Report: Chairman Meringolo attended the Senior Picnic and noted that it was a great event. He encouraged all Commissioners to attend in the future.

Executive Director Report: Executive Director Stephens reported that regular activities for residents included chair exercise, the food pantry, quarters, bingo, blood pressure screenings, and Bible study. Special events included the annual picnic, and The Golden Years group from Calvary Baptist Church will be hosting a games and lunch event for seniors at Morris Mews.

Additionally, Legal Aid of Northwest NJ gave a presentation to senior residents and will be conducting two upcoming clinics to assist those in need of a Power of Attorney and/or Living Will.

The Housing Authority's article about the Community Health Outreach event was featured in the NJ/NAHRO Newsletter, along with articles highlighting our recent scholarship winners, who were recognized at the last meeting.

Pleasant View Village has experienced ongoing issues with its elevator over the past few weeks. In response, the Housing Authority will be reprioritizing its Capital Fund projects to include the modernization of the elevator cabs at our senior housing sites.

There are a total of three elevator cabs, and the estimated cost for modernization is \$150,000 to \$200,000 per cab. This investment is necessary to ensure the continued safety, accessibility, and reliability of these essential systems for our residents. The HVAC system at the Housing Authority's administrative office also requires replacement. The existing system relies on a type of coolant that is now outdated and increasingly difficult to source, as it has been officially phased out. This will have to be added to the budget.

Regular Minutes: Chairman Meringolo made a motion to accept the Regular Minutes from the August 14, 2025 meeting. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

Schedule of Payments: A motion was made by Commissioner Poli and seconded by Vice Chairwoman Ullah Approving the Schedule of Payments for September 11, 2025. The following votes were cast:

AYES

ABSTAIN

NAYS

Commissioner Poli
Commissioner Somma
Commissioner Zaccone
Vice Chairwoman Ullah
Chairman Meringolo

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Resolution 2025-18 – A motion was made by Chairman Meringolo and seconded by Commissioner Somma Approving the Membership Renewal in the New Jersey Public Housing Joint Insurance Fund. The following votes were cast:

AYES

ABSTAIN

NAYS

Commissioner Poli
Commissioner Somma
Commissioner Zaccone
Vice Chairwoman Ullah
Chairman Meringolo

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Resolution 2025–19 – A motion was made by Commissioner Zaccone and seconded by Commissioner Poli Approving Change Order No. GC-02. The following votes were cast:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>NAYS</u>
Commissioner Poli		
Commissioner Somma		
Commissioner Zaccone		
Vice Chairwoman Ullah		
Chairman Meringolo		

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Resolution 2025–20 – A motion was made by Chairman Meringolo and seconded by Commissioner Poli Accepting the Withdrawal of Bid and Control for Pest Control Services. The following votes were cast:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>NAYS</u>
Commissioner Poli		
Commissioner Somma		
Commissioner Zaccone		
Vice Chairwoman Ullah		
Chairman Meringolo		

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Resolution 2025–21 – A motion was made by Vice Chairwoman Ullah and seconded by Commissioner Somma Awarding the Extermination Service Contract. The following votes were cast:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>	<u>NAYS</u>
Commissioner Poli		
Commissioner Somma		
Commissioner Zaccone		
Vice Chairwoman Ullah		
Chairman Meringolo		

Chairman Meringolo declared said motion carried.

Legal Update – Day Pitney Update

Presented by Attorney Erin Hodgson

1. Pest Control Bid Issue
Day Pitney has provided legal assistance regarding concerns with the pest control bid process.

2. Subordination of Mortgage – For Sale Property
Day Pitney investigated the subordination of a mortgage related to a property for sale. However, the matter must ultimately be completed by the Affordable Housing Corporation.
3. Retiree Divorce Status Investigation
The firm continues to follow up on the divorce status of a retiree. Confidentiality barriers have hindered progress. Executive Director Stephens noted that confirmation of a 2008 divorce could potentially save the Housing Authority approximately \$1,900 per month.
4. Contractor Litigation Matters
 - Project Not Built to Specifications:
Legal assistance has been provided regarding a completed contract where it was later discovered that the work was not performed according to specifications.
 - A response has been received from the Architect/Project Manager.
 - The responsible contractor appears to be out of business.
 - The board agreed the Housing Authority should proceed with necessary repairs and pursue reimbursement at a later date.
5. Eviction Proceedings
There are currently two open eviction complaints.
 - Non-payment cases are temporarily paused due to recent HUD changes requiring 30-day notices instead of the previous 14-day timeframe.
 - Day Pitney is reviewing and updating the notice forms to comply with the new HUD regulations.

New Business: None

Old Business: Chairman Meringolo emphasized the importance of preparing for the upcoming winter season. He requested that efforts begin to secure volunteers who can assist senior residents with clearing snow from their vehicles. This initiative should be in place prior to the first snowfall, as snow removal bids will be going out soon.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:40PM.

October 9, 2025

Kelly A. Stephens (original on file)

Date Adopted

Kelly A. Stephens, Board Secretary