



**SYRACUSE HOUSING AUTHORITY**

*Building Neighborhoods. Growing Dreams.*

## **Board Commissioner's Board Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** March 19, 2026

**Start Time:** 12:02 PM

**Quorum:** 12:02 PM

**Mission:** To provide quality, safe, and affordable housing; to create opportunities for SHA residents' self-sufficiency and economic independence, and to empower individual potential in an environment where people want to live, work, and build communities.

**Commissioner Attendees:** Chair Ryan Benz – RECUSED (East Adams Transformation Project matters), Vice Chair Chris Montgomery, Commissioner Patricia McBride, Commissioner Milton Martinez, Commissioner Rickey Brown, Commissioner Quwanka Ellerby, Commissioner Doug Reicher

**Other:** Counsel Brad Hunt of Mackenzie Hughes, Executive Director William Simmons, SHA Staff Members

**Chairman Ryan Benz reviewed HUD correspondence regarding a potential conflict of interest.**

- HUD confirmed the matter is under review; no determination has been made.
- Legal counsel opinion that no conflict exists under New York law, HUD requirements, or SHA policy.
- Chairman Benz reiterated recusal from all East Adams matters.
- Chairman Benz discussed desire for board to establish an Ethics Review Committee.

**Motion made to go into Executive Session to request legal advice 12:47PM:** Motion made by Quwanka, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Christopher Montgomery, motion failed as Board majority voted no.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**Resolution Authorizing Approval of 02/19/2026 Meeting Minutes:** Motion made by Rickey Brown, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Doug Reicher, no objections or further discussion, motion carried.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Modernization & Development Committee – Melissa Liquori & Christopher Montgomery**

##### **Modernization:**

- Updates on Benderson Heights bathroom renovations and Scattered Sites flooring.
- James Geddes Row Houses siding and window replacements discussed.
- Ross Towers and James Geddes identified as priority projects.
- Elevator modernization ongoing; certifications pending.
- Completed projects include James Geddes community room and Toomey Abbott entrance.

#### **Finance Committee – Chris Montgomery**

- February collections increased to 98.6%.
- Continued challenges with tenant payments across properties (not unique to Freedom Commons).
- Audit near completion; due to HUD by end of March.
- Yardi system conversion progressing; full transition expected May.
- Section 8 costs rising; subsidy per voucher increased.
- Central Village subsidy delay causing \$300K–\$400K cash flow gap.

- Rising utility costs impacting operating cash.

## **Management Reports**

### **Occupancy & Management:**

- Leasing efforts ongoing; occupancy stable.
- Increased coordination with DSS improving rent collection turnaround.

### **Housing Choice Voucher Home Ownership Program:**

- 35 active participants; 3 recent completions.
- Continued outreach through intake and referrals to homebuyer programs.
- Financial Empowerment Center not yet operational.

### **Resident & Support Initiatives:**

- Money Smart financial literacy program launched (14-week flexible format).
- Partnership with Blueprint 15 and Land Bank to promote financial readiness and homeownership.

### **Development Update**

- SHA confirmed in good standing with HUD; no default on CNI grant.
- All deadlines have been met; final deadline remains September 2032.
- Environmental work completed; design phase upcoming with resident input.
- Eastwood Heights rehabilitation underway; residents temporarily relocated.
- Eastwood Homes project under review for self-development potential.

### **Financial Report**

- Cash flow pressures are due to delayed subsidies and increased energy costs.
- Potential need to utilize reserves if delays persist.
- Improved rent collections compared to prior month.

### **Resolutions Approved**

**Resolution to Approve February Financial Report:** Motion made by Patricia McBride, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Milton Martinez, no objections or further discussion, motion carried.

**Resolution to Authorize MDA Amendment for East Adams Redevelopment:** Motion made by Doug Reicher, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rickey Brown, no objections or further discussion, motion carried.

**Resolution to Approve Contract for Development Consulting Services:** Motion made by Patricia McBride, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Quwanka Ellerby, no objections or further discussion, motion carried.

**Motion made to go into Executive Session to obtain advice of counsel at 12:47PM:** Motion made by Christopher Montgomery, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Doug Reicher, no objections or further discussion, motion carried.

No action taken in Executive Session.

**Motion made to exit Executive Session and return to Regular Session at 12:59PM:** Motion made by Rickey Brown, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Doug Reicher, motion carried.

**Regular meeting concluded at 1:01PM:** Motion by Rickey Brown, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Patricia McBride, motion carried.

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**Christopher Montgomery, Acting Chairperson (Vice Chair)**

**ATTESTS:**

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**William Simmons, Secretary**