



National Association of
Housing & Redevelopment Officials

Housing Committee Meeting
Wednesday, April 30, 2025 – 10:30 AM
via Zoom

Representing MassNAHRO Housing Committee: Chair Colleen Doherty, Candace Avery, Diane Cohen, Caileen Foley, Gina Govoni, Cathy Hoog, David Hedison, Jack Nagle, Paul Nowicki, Jackie Sullivan.

MassNAHRO staff: Donna Brown-Rego, Cylas Martell-Crawford.

Representing EOHLC: Fatima Razzaq, Greg Abbe, Andrew Clinton, Courtney Curran, Avalon McLaren, Sarah O'Leary, Jason Wright.

Preview of Vacancy Initiative: EOHLC is continuing to get PR requests from different publications regarding vacancies in public housing, and they're looking at renewing the vacancy initiative implemented last fall. The Vacancy Task Force contract recipients have been selected; contracts are currently being reviewed by the Governor's office. The revised vacancy initiative could include incentives for LHAs through an award system, potentially an increase to ANUEL or formula funding bumps. More information is coming in a few weeks.

RCAT Guidelines: Still waiting for these to come out – they're in line with what was provided in the Bond Bill, just awaiting the Secretary's approval and they'll be published.

Preventative Maintenance: A PHN is in the drafting stage and likely coming later this week. Moving into a pilot year, the rating will be unpublished starting with the 6/30/25 LHAs. MassNAHRO (Colleen Doherty) noted that we want to see what this looks like, specifically how it rolls out, as it's getting back into the weeds, and we should keep open dialogue throughout the process.

Self-Sufficiency Program Awards: EOHLC announced a list of new awardees: Arlington/Waltham, Gloucester, Salem/Marblehead, Taunton, Watertown, Wayfinders, Neighborworks, Somerville, Chelsea/Everett, Lowell, and Brookline. These should be coming soon.

Chief Administrative Financial Officer (CAFO): Ch. 235 provided for the appointment of a CAFO for chronically poor-performing LHAs. PHNs have updated the scoring criteria and how "strikes" are administered, but there is no guidance on who will be designated as the CAFO when needed and what their specific duties would be. EOHLC wants to create a working group with two tracks – procurement of CAFO (looking for LHAs, retired regional attorneys, retired EDs), and guidelines – how is the CAFO supposed to interact with staff? What are they doing there? How far can they go? Anyone looking to serve on the working group should contact MassNAHRO.

MassNAHRO (Colleen Doherty) asked if there a need for a CAFO. EOHLC responded that there are "bunch" of LHAs with two strikes. No current need, but it's likely coming. MassNAHRO asked if it would be similar to HUD going into a troubled agency to determine if a consultant or other plan is needed. EOHLC is thinking about modeling it after AUP auditors procurement where it's a Request for Information and prequalifying a list of people. EOHLC would then use that list to appoint the CAFO to

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the LHA. MassNAHRO (Colleen Doherty) also asked for those agencies on two strikes, is anyone working with them? EOHLC responded that they have provided more technical assistance after the first strike, ramped up after the second, but it's tailored to what the LHA needs.

PowerOptions & Net Metering: EOHLC and PowerOptions met earlier this week on a new initiative – a net metering marketplace. EOHLC has heard that there are some LHAs with some big negative balances, but utility companies won't cut a check, and existing contracts are very complicated. Through this marketplace, members could offload/sell credits to other interested agencies. They're still trying to work out final logistics. This will not be included in membership with PowerOptions, but an additional fee. PowerOptions has done significant research, and its fees will be much lower than if LHA hired its own attorney to figure out the contractual and legal issues. Another option for an agency with a huge credit that heats with gas is to shift over to electric to use the credits.

EOHLC Staff Updates: There have been a few changes. Chad Howard is new Director of Procurement – doing double duty still out on PMRs – hoping to backfill this role. FMS Supervisor position filled, will be joining June 2nd and they're looking to hire two new FMS people. New hire of Program Operations Supervisor Charmaine Massey. New architect, Andrew Benson and new full time data analyst, Tricia Thompson. For now, Fatima remains as Acting Undersecretary for the foreseeable future and will continue pulling double duty.

Guidance on Visits from Law Enforcement: Since we last met, EOHLC has developed guidance, "Best Practices for Law Enforcement Requests" and will be issuing shortly. Housing authority staff should have a clear plan and designate who (i.e. Executive Director, supervisor) should be called in this situation. Some law enforcement requests should be acted upon ASAP; others may come with less legal authority. For example, if a tenant calls law enforcement, the LHA should immediately assist with access. But if law enforcement shows up looking to ID or find info on a tenant, the guidance speaks to the issue of who has what authority in certain situations. Reminder to LHA staff of the importance of preserving personally identifying data. The guidance explains the difference between judicial warrant versus immigration warrant. It will also touch on law enforcement access to public/private areas. Overall, if a staff member feels unsafe, they should do what makes them feel safe. Sarah O'Leary is the EOHLC contact for questions.

No-Fault Eviction Documentation: Based on initial conversation at a previous meeting, members asked for relief from the requirement to go to court. Getting a lot of local calls, and many of this is around our elders and disabled who are too frail or scared to go through the court process to get the required documentation to qualify for the priority. Additionally, what can be done when there is no housing court document such as a divorce decree that renders a person homeless? All understand that streamlining the review of priority documentation is the goal, but this is also adding to the workload of the court system. EOHLC asked how this documented on the federal side. MassNAHRO explained that federal agencies can set their own priorities and what to accept as documentation.