

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
HOUSING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, March 4, 2026

MEETING LOCATION: Council Chambers, City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:32 p.m., Chairperson Fernandez Sykes called an on-site meeting of the Highland Park Housing Commission, Peers Housing Association, Ravinia Housing Association, and the Sunset Woods Association to order. Each of the Commissioners also serves as Directors of each of the Housing Associations. Public comments may be emailed to city@hpil.com or phoned into at 847.432.0867. The City web site is www.cityhpil.com. Staff was asked to call the roll.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Commissioners Absent: Commissioners Rachman, Rosen, & Shapiro Kopin

Councilmember Absent: Tapia

Student Council Present: Rylee Sullivan

Student Council Absent: Mitchell Posner

Staff declared that a quorum was present.

Staff Present: Coleman

Guests Present: Irina Leykin, Regional Property Manager/ERES
Amy Kaufman, Vice President/CPAH
Richard Koenig, Executive Director/HODC

Others Present: Gale Cerabona, Recorder

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no Business from the Public.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the Housing Commission – January 7, 2026

Commissioner Farris moved to approve the January 7, 2026, regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Adland seconded the motion.

On a voice vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

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Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

SCHEDULED BUSINESS

1. Items for Omnibus Vote Consideration

- Payment of Invoices

Senior Planner Coleman advised there is nothing outstanding.

- Ratification of Payments

Senior Planner Coleman advised Peers' annual State filing was due at the beginning of February. He distributed copies of checks.

2. Peers, Ravinia, Sunset Woods Associations, & Housing Trust Fund

- Consideration of ERES Management Report and Financials

Peers

Ms. Leykin said the project for the sewer pipeline is on hold, as permanent repairs need to occur. She noted the contractor has reported same to the insurance company.

Ms. Leykin advised all light fixtures were replaced to LED lights.

Some HC comments are.....

- Commissioner Adland asked if everyone has electricity. Ms. Leykin said yes, but it's a temporary fix. She noted it would be fully repaired. The insurance company was brought in and acknowledged the issue.
- Chairperson Fernandez Sykes asked how long this would take. Ms. Leykin advised it may be awhile. The concrete floor has to be repaired. Options are being considered.
- Commissioner Adland asked if anyone would be displaced. Ms. Leykin said it depends on how the floor is opened. She noted those costs would possibly be absorbed.

Ravinia

Ms. Leykin shared Ravinia received a REAC (Real Estate Assessment Center) score of 98.

- Sunset Woods Financials

Ms. Leykin advised everything looks good.

- Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Financials

Senior Planner Coleman advised there is nothing outstanding.

- Other Association Business

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Senior Planner Coleman advised there is nothing outstanding.

He stated Mr. Koenig is present tonight if there are any questions. There were none.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Peers – House Rule Change to Consider No-Smoking Policy Change (tabled from December HC Meeting)

Senior Planner Coleman reminded everyone of the issue from November, 2025 and explained same. The change would involve no smoking permitted inside the property. The motion previously failed to change the house rules, and the topic was tabled. He advised the properties Evergreen manages have a no-smoking policy with no real issues.

Some HC comments are.....

- Commissioner Beasley said she doesn't see a point in having the rule, as it can't be enforced; unnecessary. There is an issue with having residents going outside away from the front door. There is no plan on where snow would be placed, etc.
- Commissioner Adland asked, and Senior Planner Coleman said it would eventually weed out those people who would be unhappy with the change, as new residents move in.
- Commissioner Farris asked, and Senior Planner Coleman shared issues at other properties.
- Commissioner Adland offered an example of an item smelling of smoke; could be degradation of the property. He is in favor of the rule change.
- Commissioner Beasley said, regarding affordable housing, some may not move in due to these limitations.
- Chairperson Fernandez Sykes asked, and Senior Planner Coleman said he would check about Sunset Woods' policy. He indicated Walnut Place has a no-smoking policy.
- Commissioner Beasley shared this was posed at an HC meeting years ago, and the HC voted against it. Senior Planner Coleman confirmed that was in 2019.
- Commissioner Farris understands both sides.
- Commissioner Beasley said residents can move out if they don't like the rules. She expressed this is one's home. She understands other residents' discomfort.
- Commissioner Farris said there is an onus on the HC to see what the best choice is for residents.

A brief discussion took place about pets.

Senior Planner Coleman reminded there is a 90-day period before a rule changes. Residents can come to an HC meeting and express their opinions. He advised the HC can also reverse a rule change.

More HC comments are.....

- Commissioner Beasley would be in favor if it occurs at the end of the year – with a one-year notice – or grandfather people in. She also understands both points of view. Senior Planner Coleman doesn't believe residents would be evicted for smoking in a non-smoking building. This proposal would eliminate smoking in one's dwelling. It is already in place to not smoke in common areas. He explained an area 15' away would be designated.
- Chairperson Fernandez Sykes said more questions need to be answered.
- Commissioner Farris said the notice period of 90 days is not the issue. It's when it's implemented.
- Commissioner Adland said federal housing is smoke-free.

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- Chairperson Fernandez Sykes would like to have more information presented.
- Commissioner Adland would like to discuss this next month. He noted this isn't urgent.

Commissioner Beasley moved to table this until the May HC meeting. Commissioner Adland seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

Senior Planner Coleman declared that the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution Approving 2026 CPAH Scattered-Site Grant Agreement

2. Resolution Approving 2026 CPAH Operating Grant Agreement

Senior Planner Coleman explained the annual operating and scattered-site grants and process. He noted these are typically approved in February. The scattered site grant will now be \$100,000 for 3 homes.

Senior Planner Coleman introduced Amy Kaufman, Vice President of CPAH, who expounded on same.

Commissioner Farris moved to approve the CPAH Scattered Site Agreement. Commissioner Beasley seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Beasley moved to approve the CPAH Operating Grant Agreement. Commissioner Farris seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

3. Resolution Approving CCHI Grant Agreement Draw Request 1 for Affordable Housing

4. Resolution Approving CCHI Grant Agreement Draw Request 2 for Affordable Housing

5. Resolution Approving CCHI Grant Agreement Draw Request 3 for Affordable Housing

6. Resolution Approving CCHI Grant Agreement Draw Request 4 for Affordable Housing

Senior Planner Coleman reminded that CCHI partnered with HODC for a 47-unit disabled affordable-housing development at 1651 Richfield Road. He expounded. Restrictive covenants have been signed. They will be recorded with the County.

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Commissioner Farris asked and Richard Koenig said all 47 units have been sold. The end target is August.

Commissioner Beasley moved to approve the CCHI Grant Agreement Draw Requests 1-4 for Affordable Housing. Commissioner Farris seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

7. Ravinia Housing Association Fund Account Management

Senior Planner Coleman reminded about Ravinia and Peers' accounts to attain higher interest (on CD, money market accounts, etc.). He explained the process that includes improvement plans, capital expenditures, etc. After discussion with bankers, Staff recommends a 23-month CD account that takes advantage of a fixed interest rate of 3.25%.

Some HC comments are.....

- Commissioner Adland:
 - asked about the emergency clause; more concrete language. Senior Planner Coleman discussed early withdrawals, etc.
 - said, based on the bank's reputation, he believes this would be okay.
- Commissioner Farris said this is a better option to get more for the money.

Commissioner Adland moved to approve the Ravinia account into a CD. Commissioner Farris seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

8. Sunset Woods Mortgage Loan Options

Senior Planner Coleman explained the current mortgage with the First Bank of Highland Park. He noted the loan matures in April, 2027. Options are to renew, discuss different terms, or go out to bid with a new bank. This has been renewed twice.

Some HC comments are.....

- Commissioner Farris asked, and Senior Planner Coleman said the bid process takes awhile. A renewal is simple. The same terms would apply.
- Commissioner Adland:
 - said it sounds reasonable. He asked if it is principal and interest. Senior Planner Coleman will check.
 - asked, and Senior Planner Coleman stated he would review the loan to value, etc.

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- Commissioner Adland asked about informal discounts with other banks. Senior Planner Coleman said the process needs to be fair and transparent.
- Chairperson Fernandez Sykes asked what the harm is in going out to bid. Discussion took place.

Senior Planner Coleman asked that further questions be emailed to him so he can discuss same with the bank representative.

Commissioner Beasley moved to table the loan renewal until the April HC meeting. Commissioner Farris seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Next Housing Commission Meeting, Monday, April 6, 2026

The next HC Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 6, 2026.

2. Introduction – New Student Representative, Rylee Sullivan

Senior Planner Coleman introduced new Student Representative, Rylee Sullivan, who offered a brief background. She is a Junior at Highland Park High School and shared, this opportunity made her very excited, as she wants to know more about government and affordable housing. Everyone welcomed her.

Senior Planner Coleman reminded the other Student Representative, Mitchell Posner, will be with the HC until May, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Beasley moved to adjourn at 7:29 p.m. Commissioner Farris seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Adland, Beasley, & Farris

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gale Cerabona
Recorder

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING ON JANUARY 7, 2026, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS.