

**NORTH CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY
Board of Commissioners**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
March 25, 2026**

The Regular Board Meeting of the Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of North Chicago was held March 25, 2026 at Kukla Towers: 1440 Jackson Street, North Chicago, IL 60064.

Present: Leisa Mitchell, Chairperson
Hornsby Kneeland, Vice Chairman
Stephanie Duty, Commissioner
Donald Craft, Commissioner

Absent: Kajuan Hodge, Commissioner

NCHA Staff: Lorraine Hocker, Interim Executive Director/CEO
Gilma Valdez, Deputy Director

Posting of the notice of this meeting and agenda complied with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2.02(a)). The notice and agenda were posted prior to 5:30 PM on Monday, March 23, 2026, at the principal office: 1440 Jackson Street, North Chicago, IL 60064 and on the organization's website: <https://northchicagohousing.org>.

ROLL CALL

Noting that a quorum of Commissioners was present, Chairperson Mitchell called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM. Roll call was taken, and the following Commissioners were present: Mitchell, Kneeland, Duty, and Craft, as well as NCHA staff members Hocker and Valdez. Absent: Commissioner Hodge.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Mitchell opened the floor for public comment. Rayon Edwards spoke regarding concerns about operational changes and the departure of the former Executive Director, Nina Chalmers, after 24 years of service. Mr. Edwards expressed dissatisfaction with the board and raised concerns about resident and employee feedback regarding recent changes.

FINANCE REPORT & APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Executive Director Hocker presented financial matters, including account balances, payables, and an assessment by BDO highlighting an outstanding debt of approximately

\$313,000 from the HCV program to public housing since 2022. Executive Director Hocker explained the financial structure, including cost centers, asset management programs, and how funding is determined by voucher utilization. The discussion also addressed challenges with underutilization, increased expenses in 2024, and the need for cost saving measures, including rent reasonableness certifications.

After discussion, Commissioner Craft moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kneeland, to approve the finance reports and payables. The board voted as follows: Ayes: Mitchell, Kneeland, Duty, Craft. Abstain: none. Nays: none. Absent and Not Voting: Hodge. Motion carries.

PROGRAM & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS

The following reports for March 2026 were provided:

Public Housing Reports:

- Kukla Towers NSPIRE Report
- Thompson Manor NSPIRE Report

Executive Director Report:

- Executive Director, Hocker, spoke on the following topics:
 - Employee Handbook
 - HCV Administrative Plan & Public Housing ACOP Plan
 - PHA Annual Plan & PHA 5-Year Plan
 - NCHA to LCHA transition timeline
 - Audit review

NEW BUSINESS

A. AMENDMENT to RESOLUTION 2026-02 Appointment of Interim Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer and Authorization of Temporary Deputy Director Signing Authority

Chairperson Mitchell introduced the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 2026-02 (Amended)

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND AUTHORIZATION OF TEMPORARY DEPUTY DIRECTOR SIGNING AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the North Chicago Housing Authority (“NCHA” or “the Authority”) is in a period of administrative transition and requires stable leadership to ensure the effective management of Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV), and all associated HUD programs; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners recognizes the need for consistent oversight, strategic assessment, and organizational realignment to ensure compliance with HUD regulations, financial integrity, and operational performance; and

WHEREAS, the Board hereby appoints Lorraine Hocker as the Interim Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer (ED/CEO) of the North Chicago Housing Authority until the end of the fiscal year (9/30/2026), until administrative transfer is complete, or the Board takes further action; and

WHEREAS, NCHA has hired a Deputy Director, Gilma Valdez, who shall support day-to-day operations and provide administrative continuity; and

WHEREAS, in order to maintain operational efficiency and avoid interruption of Authority business, the Board finds it necessary to authorize the Temporary Deputy Director to exercise limited signing authority in the absence of the Interim Executive Director/CEO.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners hereby formally appoints Lorraine Hocker as the *Interim Executive Director/CEO* until the end of the fiscal year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes the Interim ED/CEO to undertake a comprehensive strategic and operational assessment of the Authority, including but not limited to:

1. File reviews for both the Public Housing Program and the Housing Choice Voucher Program.
2. A full financial assessment of all programs and departments.
3. Oversight and coordination of the Pre-REAC/NSPIRE inspection for AMP 1 is currently in progress.
4. Completion of an organizational and staffing assessment, including the review of roles, responsibilities, and compensation structures.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board grants the Deputy Director, Gilma Valdez, *signing authority in the absence or unavailability of the Interim Executive Director/CEO*, limited to:

- Routine operational documents,
- Program certifications, Terminations, Grievances,
- Vendor invoices and payments within established thresholds,
- Personnel documentation as approved by policy or as delegated in writing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Interim ED/CEO is authorized to issue written operational directives necessary to carry out this resolution and stabilize Authority operations.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

After discussion, Commissioner Craft moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kneeland, to adopt Resolution 2026-02.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Craft, Duty, Kneeland, Mitchell

Nays: none

Absent: Hodge

Abstain: none

Motion: carries

Adopted and passed by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of North Chicago, Illinois on March 25, 2026.

B. AMENDMENT to RESOLUTION 2026-03 Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement with the Lake County Housing Authority

Chairperson Mitchell introduced the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 2026-03 (Amended)

APPROVAL OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT (IGA) WITH THE LAKE COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, the North Chicago Housing Authority (NCHA) and Lake County Housing Authority (LCHA) has set forth an intergovernmental agreement (IGA), administered by HUD, to share resources through service requests; and

WHEREAS, NCHA desires to approve and obtain an authorizing signature on the IGA in **Exhibit A** to help supplement our smaller agency's operational needs; and

WHEREAS, the cost of all services rendered through the IGA is fixed at \$17,958.08 per month until the end of the fiscal year (9/30/2026); in addition to any reimbursable cost incurred on behalf of North Chicago Housing Authority.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of North Chicago, approves the consolidation as demonstrated in Exhibit A;

Exhibit A

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF LAKE, IL AND THE HOUSING
AUTHORITY OF NORTH CHICAGO, IL**

This Intergovernmental Agreement (hereinafter "Agreement") is made and entered into as of October 21st, 2025, by and between the Housing Authority of the County of Lake, 33928 North US Highway 45, Grayslake, IL 60030, and the Housing Authority of North Chicago, 1440 Jackson St., North Chicago, IL 60064.

WHEREAS, Illinois Housing Authorities may enter into Interagency Agreements with each other as provided by 310 ILCS 8.5, 2 CFR 200.317-326 and HUD Procurement Handbook 7460.8; and,

WHEREAS, this Interagency Agreement is made for reasons of economy and efficiency and since each Housing Authority has specific expertise and experience required by the other Housing Authority,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Housing Authority of the County of Lake and the Housing Authority of North Chicago hereby agree to the following:

1. The Housing Authority of the County of Lake may provide services with which it has expertise and experience to the Housing Authority of North Chicago on a task order basis.
 - HCV and Public Housing Operations Assistance
 - Procurement and Technical Assistance
 - Program Compliance Assistance
 - Financial Technical Assistance and Oversight
 - Budget Analysis & Guidance
2. The process for issuing a task order is as follows:
 - The Housing Authority of North Chicago may issue a request for a possible task order. The request will specify the services required and the timetable for completion.
 - Once the Housing Authority of the County of Lake Executive Director accepts the proposed task order, services will be scheduled.
 - Nothing in this agreement shall prevent either Housing Authority from awarding contract(s) for services within the scope of this Agreement to other procured parties.
3. Both Housing Authorities hereby agree to the following clause:

To indemnify and hold harmless either Housing Authority or its employees who assist at the other agency from all claims and causes of action arising out of their performance of any of the services provided hereunder.

4. Services will be provided by the Housing Authority of the County of Lake per the following terms
 - Only qualified staff will perform services. As required, training certifications are to be provided to the Housing Authority of North Chicago prior to providing any services.
 - The actual monthly rate plus travel at the same rate.
Executive Director/CEO & qualified staff \$17,958.08
 - Plus, other reimbursable costs incurred on behalf of the Housing Authority of North Chicago

Either party may provide services with which it has expertise and experience to the other party on a task order basis. Such services may include, but are not limited to:

- Property management
 - Property maintenance
 - Building renovation
 - Property development
 - Residence services
 - Financial services including but not limited to:
 - Contract administration
 - Development Activities i.e., Section 18, RAD, Streamlined Voluntary Conversion
 - Section 8 program administration
 - Administrative hearings
5. The initial term of this Interagency Agreement is through the fiscal year. This Agreement may be extended by mutual written agreement. The term of the contract cannot exceed five (5) years. Either party may terminate this agreement at any time by giving sixty (60) days written notice. Any hours provided by The HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF LAKE, IL will be billed for payment as listed.
 6. Invoices will be issued monthly for services provided; payment will be due within thirty (30) days of the date of the invoice.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Intergovernmental Agreement to be executed on the date first above written.

After discussion, Commissioner Craft moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kneeland, to adopt Resolution 2026-02.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Craft, Duty, Kneeland, Mitchell

Nays: none

Absent: Hodge

Abstain: none

Motion: carries

Adopted and passed by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of North Chicago, Illinois on March 25, 2026.

C. RESOLUTION 2026-05 Authorization for the Transfer of the IL107 North Chicago Housing Authority (NCHA) ACC Units to the IL056 Lake County Housing Authority (LCHA)

Chairperson Mitchell introduced the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 2026-05

AUTHORIZATION FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE IL107 NORTH CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY (NCHA) ACC UNITS TO LAKE COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY (LCHA)

WHEREAS, the North Chicago Housing Authority, IL107, is a public housing agency organized under Illinois law and administers Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) programs pursuant to Annual Contributions Contracts (ACCs) with HUD; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the County of Lake, IL056, is a public body corporate and politic organized under the laws of the State of Illinois and is designated as a Moving to Work (MTW) agency pursuant to its MTW Agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and

WHEREAS, HUD Notice PIH 2018-12 permits voluntary transfer of HCV Annual Contributions Contract authority, the Annual Budget Authority, Administrative Fees, and FSS Escrow; and

WHEREAS, NCHA administers 476 HCV, seventy (70) Veterans Administration Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers, and five (5) Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers; and

WHEREAS, LCHA has the administrative capacity and jurisdiction to receive and operate the program;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Commissioners of the North Chicago Housing Authority (NCHA) authorizes the transfer of HCV ACC authority from NCHA, contingent upon LCHA Board approval and HUD approval, including 476 HCV, seventy (70) VASH vouchers, five (5) FUP vouchers, the Annual Budget Authority, Administrative Fees, and FSS Escrow.

After discussion, Commissioner Craft moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kneeland, to adopt Resolution 2026-02.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Craft, Duty, Kneeland, Mitchell

Nays: none

Absent: Hodge

Abstain: none

Motion: carries

Adopted and passed by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of North Chicago, Illinois on March 25, 2026.

D. Commissioner Roundtable

No comments were offered during the Commissioner Roundtable.

E. Executive Session – Personnel Matters and Litigation

At 6:42 PM Commissioner Craft moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kneeland to go into Executive Session to discuss:

(5 ILCS 120/2) Sec. 2(c)(1) The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees.

(5 ILCS 120/2) Sec. 2(c)(11)

Litigation, when an action, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court... or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent.

The board voted as follows: Ayes: Mitchell, Kneeland, Duty, Craft. Abstain: none. Nays: none. Absent and Not Voting: Hodge. Motion carries.

Commissioner Craft exited prior to Executive Session at 6:46 p.m. Executive Session began at 6:47 p.m.

The Board returned to open session at 7:20 PM and roll call was taken. Present: Mitchell, Kneeland, and Duty, as well as NCHA staff members Hocker and Valdez. Absent: Commissioner Hodge and Craft.

Chairperson Mitchell stated the board discussed personnel matters. No action was taken during the Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Duty moved, seconded by Vice Chair Kneeland to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted unanimously in favor of adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 p.m.