

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND
HOUSING AUTHORITY**

October 25, 2010

The Board of Commissioners of the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (hereinafter "CRHA" or the "Housing Authority") met in Regular Session at 7:04 PM on October 25, 2010 in Council Chambers at City Hall.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Bob Stevens called the meeting of the Board to order at 7:04 PM on October 25, 2010.

II. ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS

Present:

Ms. Sherri Clarke, Commissioner
Ms. Holly Edwards, Vice Chair
Mr. Jason Halbert, Commissioner
Mr. Hosea Mitchell, Commissioner
Mr. Bob Stevens, Chair
Mr. Keith Woodard, Commissioner

Absent:

Ms. Joy Johnson, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Mr. Randy Bickers, Executive Director
Ms. Robin Munson, Finance Director
Ms. Amy Kilroy, Redevelopment Director
Ms. Jewel Mason, Prevention Coordinator
Ms. Becky Weybright, Housing Manager
Ms. Allyson Manson-Davies, Legal Attorney
Ms. Deetra West, Administrative Assistant

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE

Commissioner Stevens opened the meeting with a moment of silence.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD SEPTEMBER 27, 2010.**

Commissioner Clarke made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Commissioner Edwards. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.

V. RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

There were no questions from the previous meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Paul Vaughan, PHAR representative, stated PHAR thanks Commissioner Stevens and Mr. Bickers for bringing forth their comments regarding PHAR's draft barment policy to the Finance Committee meeting. He stated that PHAR would like to set up a meeting with Commissioners, Mr. Bickers, CRHA staff, and Ms. Davies to discuss the differences seen by both sides and to come to a mutual agreement.

VII. REPORTS

A. **Police Report – Sgt. Tom McKean**

Sgt. McKean introduced Officer Collier, who works the 10th Street, Page Street and Westhaven area. He then thanked Commissioner Stevens for attending the Citizen's Police Academy. He stated he did not think it was beneficial to reiterate the same information found in the board packages and asked the Board to contact him if specific reports are desired at future board meetings. Commissioner Stevens noticed a decrease in calls for service to CRHA properties. Sgt. McKean reported that during this time of year, there tends to be a noticeable decrease of violent crimes and property crimes not just at CRHA sites but city wide. Commissioner Halbert found the reports given by foot patrol officers valuable to the Board and he expressed that he would like to see that continued at each Board meeting.

Commissioner Halbert stated the crime statistic report that was generated by the police department showed a decrease in calls for service around much of CRHA sites but that it had increased at Crescent Halls. He asked if the increase was attributed to calls made by security guards and residents and not actual criminal activity. Sgt. McKean concurred that the increase of calls is from residents that are feeling more trusting of the police department, security guards, and the property manager to react to issues.

Commissioner Edwards said she would like Sgt McKean to demonstrate the use of the new website at a Board meeting along with providing some safety and prevention tips to educate the residents and the community. Sgt. McKean stated he would be more than happy to do that once he checks his schedule for an available date. He stated the department's crime prevention specialists attend many community events that are open to the public throughout the year. The patrol officers that are assigned to public housing sites have crime prevention materials to distribute but officers have not specifically targeted public housing neighborhoods since the summer. Commissioner Woodard suggested the police department and the housing authority look into planning safety events at CRHA sites.

Officer Collier stated he works closely with the Hope Center's after-school program called "Hope for Kids". He picks up kids from Venable School Monday through Friday and then brings them back to the center where they receive help with their homework from Madison House and UVA volunteers. Commissioner Edwards suggested the same type of model be used for the Westhaven community children as many of them do not attend Venable School. She thanked Officer Collier and Sgt. McKean for the crime reports and also for sharing some positive information as well. She added that Board would love to hear more about the positive things that are going on around sites.

B. **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Bickers stated the vacancy number went down one unit to a total of 19 vacant units. He gave a procurement update reporting that the interior lighting improvement project is the only remaining stimulus project needing to be completed. CRHA is well ahead of schedule as all other stimulus projects are completed with just a few punch list items that need to be done. Exterior painting and pressure washing is underway around public housing sites and work is proceeding on schedule. The entry doors at Crescent Halls are being replaced. Staff decided to replace the doors after seeing frequent breakdowns and parts that were unavailable. The doors are up and operating but trim work and final adjustments still need to be completed. Mr. Bickers stated rent receivables is up from September due to several pending evictions. Those rent balances continue to accumulate without a repayment agreement in place.

Mr. Bickers presented the Board with the draft annual plan. The only significant changes from last year's annual plan are the addition of new capital projects and a recommended change to the waiting list preference system. The new capital projects that are recommended include bed bug treatment equipment, door closers for exterior doors at Crescent Hall, plumbing replacements at Crescent Halls, and speed humps at Westhaven. Mr. Bickers stated these and existing capital priorities will be further discussed during a Board work session to be scheduled for early November.

Mr. Bickers stated the other significant change to the annual plan is a proposed change to the waiting list preference system in the public housing and section 8 programs. The Board subcommittee that examined CRHA's turnover process has recommended that CRHA eliminate all of its waiting list preferences with the exception of the residency preference. The preference change was recommended in the hopes of speeding up the eligibility process as all preferences must be verified; to eliminate waiting list confusion as positions currently change based on new applicants and their preferences; eliminating valuing certain individuals or families higher than others in determining housing priority; and to continue to serve residents of Charlottesville. The proposed change would place an individual on the waiting list according to the time and date they submitted an application. Those without the residency preference would also be sorted by date and time of application but would all be ranked lower than the individuals with a residency preference. The draft annual plan and the preference changes will go out for a 45 day public comment period with a series of hearings for public feedback and then back to the Board for final approval at the December Board meeting. Commissioner Stevens thanked Commissioner Johnson, former commissioner Rick Jones, and Howard Evergreen for their assistance in coming up with the proposed changes.

Mr. Bickers presented the Board with a proposed Barment Policy Addendum that was drafted by Legal Aid and PHAR. The addendum focuses primarily on the process of being removed from the list of barred individuals. The City of Charlottesville Police Department is reviewing the proposed addendum and CRHA is awaiting their comments. Mr. Bickers stated he and Ms. Davies do not support the proposed addendum but have discussed possible compromises. Once comments are received from the Charlottesville Police Department, CRHA will further evaluate possible alternative language.

Mr. Bickers reported he is currently working on modifying Crescent Halls' Evacuation Plan. CRHA currently has an emergency plan in place but the new plan will enhance the existing plan and discuss additional steps to be taken in case of a long term evacuation. He is working with the Charlottesville/Albemarle Emergency Management Coordinator to identify an alternative location for residents during an evacuation and to identify proper means of transportation to the new location. CRHA is currently coordinating a fire drill at Crescent Halls with the Charlottesville Fire Department for the use of assessing areas of improvement. Mr. Bickers is planning to present a draft of the new plan at the November board meeting.

Mr. Bickers presented the Board with a revised draft of the Annual Calendar drafted by Commissioner Halbert. The calendar contains preset committee meetings and board meetings along with important HUD deadlines. Mr. Bickers stated he set aside the first Tuesday of every month for a work session as needed by the Board. He noted the calendar is a working calendar and additions and changes are welcomed. He also stated that he used the 2010 calendar template that was created by Commissioner Halbert.

Mr. Bickers presented the Board with a copy of the Crescent Halls Assessment Report performed by DJG. DJG found that the overall building structure appears to be in sound condition and that the planned renovations, based on the WRT concepts, will not require significant repairs or changes to the building structure. Mr. Bickers stated that pursuing others changes, such as adding assisted living to floors, would require additional structural analysis and major capital investments. Some of DJG recommendations, such as removing existing damaged floor tile on the second floor, can be addressed and have been incorporated in the annual plan. The report is presented for review and comments. DJG will be at the November Board meeting to formally present the report and to answer questions.

Ms. Weybright, CRHA Housing Manager, gave an update on the progress of the Housing Choice Voucher Family Self Sufficiency Program (HCV FSS Program). She stated since the start of employment 7 months ago Brooke Willard, CRHA's FSS Coordinator, has had three participants that have signed contracts with the program and a fourth participant is expected later in the week. She has done quite a bit of outreach that included a mass mailing to all CRHA Section 8 recipients and she has attended a few trainings. This past June she held an initial meeting of the planning coordinating committee to come up with the services CRHA would like to have for its FSS participants. The committee consists of representative from Albemarle Social Services, Charlottesville Social Services, PVCC, United Way, Workforce, Department of Rehabilitative Services, and MACAA. Ms. Weybright reported that another committee meeting is being planned around the first of the year. Ms. Willard has targeted a couple of different mailings to HCV clients that receive utility allowances since these are clients earning the least amount of income if any at all. Ms. Willard has had 19 one on one appointments and is attending family briefings of new section 8 clients to make contact with potential program enrollees. She has visited the Waynesboro Housing Authority and Harrisonburg Housing Authority to talk with their FSS Coordinators. In both cases, the housing authorities had similar problems of struggles during the first year of starting up the program before picking up momentum the second and third year. Lastly, Ms. Willard has contacted apartment

complexes that house large numbers of section 8 tenants to inquire about holding some outreach sessions there. Ms. Weybright noted the goal of the program is to help each participant work towards achieving a five year goal while creating opportunities for them to increase their income. When the participant gains employment and their portion of the rent increases, the amount of the increase is matched by HUD and set aside in an escrow fund to be distributed to the participant at the completion of the program. Members of the Board inquired about the status of the Public Housing FSS Program. Ms. Weybright stated it is would not be hard to add a public housing component to the FSS Program as long as CRHA were to find other funding options for that component.

Mr. Bickers stated the City Manager has granted two additional flexible leave days to be used between November 1, 2010 and January 31, 2011. It has been CRHA practice to operate under the same schedule as the City of Charlottesville and the agency has granted additional days during the holidays to coincide with those granted by the City. The Finance Committee recommends that the full Board grant staff the two additional days. Commissioner Stevens called for the vote. The recommendation was approved.

AYES

NAYES

ABSTAIN

Commissioner Clarke
Commissioner Edwards
Commissioner Halbert
Commissioner Mitchell
Commissioner Stevens
Commissioner Woodard

C. Committee Reports

1. Finance Report

Mr. Bickers stated the rent and operating subsidy continue to be above budget. Most of the expense lines are at or below budget with a few exceptions. One of the exceptions is the significant repairs to Crescent Halls' plumbing and HVAC system. He stated that the Capital Plan will be modified to address some of those issues. In the last few months CRHA has had some big water leaks at Westhaven that lead to some big plumbing expenses but overall CRHA is well ahead of budget in total. Mr. Bickers reported the books are officially closed although not in time to get the audit report to the October Finance Committee meeting. He stated the auditor will present the report at the November committee meeting. Some great news to report is that HUD funded the operating subsidy at over 100% which in the past has been funding at less than 90%.

2. Resident Services

Commissioner Clarke stated Seshi Campbell, Youth Educator with ASG, was a guest speaker at the committee meeting. Ms. Campbell spoke to the committee about her program to educate the youth about sex and the prevention of STDs. During the meeting, residents stated they would like for ASG to use Crescent Halls as a testing site. She reported that Commissioner Edwards asked residents if they would serve as hall monitors and if they would hang door hangers to improve communication in the building. Residents agreed to become volunteers and they liked the idea of door hangers.

3. Redevelopment Committee

Commissioner Mitchell stated the committee focused on the oversight of redevelopment. The committee discussed the creation of the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) between the CRHA and the City. The MOU discussion turned into a larger discussion about the governing body of the redevelopment project going forward. Some ideas that were discussed included using the CDC (Charlottesville Development Corporation) as an umbrella organization or the possibility of moving redevelopment out of CRHA and creating a separate redevelopment organization. Before the committee can make any recommendations to bring before the Board, the committee needs to understand what legal issues the agency would be facing. The committee also needs to know if there is state legislation preventing CRHA from separating the redevelopment process from normal operations. Mr. Bickers and Ms. Kilroy are looking to contact two other housing authorities (Alexandria, VA and Boulder, CO) that have officially separated the redevelopment function.

Mr. Bickers stated a question was raised at the committee that if the CDC was under total control of the CRHA Board, would the other partnering agencies feel fully represented or fully invested in the process if they have no board representation. Thus sparking the debate of whether or not the CDC is the correct entity to use or should there be another entity. Commissioner Clarke stated while having an umbrella corporation would get people involved and also have many benefits, she is concerned that CRHA will lose control in the decision making process.

Ms. Davies stated that the City Attorney's office has created shared employee agreements with the City in the past and is experienced in doing so. She added that CRHA would face some legal issues with transferring land between legal entities to do the development process. However, after speaking with Mr. Evergreen and Mr. Bickers she has some theories on how it could be done legally and effectively. She stated this would call for a full meeting of the Board to sketch a plan. She suggested the committee call a special meeting to have her attend since committee meetings fall on a day of the week in which she is in court.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bickers stated CRHA currently has a Resident Apprenticeship Program vacancy. Flyers have gone out and applications can be picked up all CRHA offices. The position is open to CRHA residents only and he encouraged all residents to apply.

Commissioner Edwards suggested a Board Retreat to meet as a group to get to know one another better and to discuss the Board's common vision, take a look at policies, learn how to better support staff, and to take a look at the priorities in the year ahead.

Commissioner Halbert recommended the capital meeting to be the first discussion meeting to be scheduled in November followed by a redevelopment discussion meeting in December. He also suggested the Board Retreat have a very specific agenda to follow otherwise the Board would fall off track very quickly. Mr. Bickers suggested a half day or whole day to spend on the retreat with Becky Clay Christensen facilitating the

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meeting. She specializes in internal organizational structure and team building and is also great with keeping groups on track. The Board agreed to have the retreat sometime after Thanksgiving.

IX. COMMITTEE MEETING DATE CHECK-IN

Redevelopment Committee Meeting – meets 2nd Wednesday of the month
Next meeting will be November 10, 2010 at 10:00am in the South First Street Community Center.

Resident Services Committee Meeting- meets 2nd Thursday of the month
Next meeting will be November 11, 2010 at 12:00pm in the Crescent Hall Community Room.

Finance Committee Meeting – meets 3rd Wednesday of the month
Next meeting will be November 17, 2010 at 4:30pm, in Basement Conference Room in City Hall

Regular Board Meeting – meets 4th Monday of the month
Next meeting November 22, 2010 at 7pm, Council Chambers

X. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Annette Wilcox, 1400 Monticello Road, stated she reviewed the CRHA Annual Draft Plan. She would like to see new apartments redeveloped on Hinton Avenue, Levy Avenue, and around the city.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Clarke. By a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.