

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

May 23, 2011

The Board of Commissioners of the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (hereinafter "CRHA" or the "Housing Authority") met in Regular Session at 7:00 PM on May 23, 2011 in Council Chambers at City Hall.

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Bob Stevens called the meeting of the Board to order at 7:00 PM on May 23, 2011.

II. **ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS**

Present:

Ms. Sherri Clarke, Commissioner
Mr. Jason Halbert, Commissioner
Ms. Joy Johnson, Commissioner
Mr. Hosea Mitchell, Commissioner
Mr. Dave Norris, Commissioner
Mr. Bob Stevens, Chair

Absent:

Mr. Keith Woodard, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Mr. Randy Bickers, Executive Director
Ms. Robin Munson, Finance Director
Ms. Amy Kilroy, Redevelopment Director
Ms. Deetra West, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Allyson Manson-Davies, Legal Attorney

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 APRIL 5, 2011.**

Commissioner Halbert made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Johnson. The minutes were approved.

Commissioner Stevens recognized some of CRHA's recent graduates. He congratulated CRHA resident Christine Ohse who graduated from Piedmont Virginia Community College with a Political Science Degree and will further her education at Old Dominion University. Ms. Ohse recently married and is also involved in two internship programs, OAR and PHAR.

Commissioner Stevens congratulated PHAR graduates Bonnie Breeden, Angela Johnson, Ericka Jones, Whitney Banks, and Christine Ohse and thanked them for their hard work.

V. **RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Mr. Bickers stated replacement parts for the Crescent Halls elevators were ordered and received but were not installed last week as scheduled. Calls have been placed to Thyssenkrupp, the vendor, but staff has not received any return calls. Staff will continue to stay on top of the vendor and Mr. Bickers will send updates to the Board as he receives them.

VI. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Paul Vaughn, PHAR, thanked the CRHA staff for providing tables and chairs for the internship graduation ceremony. He also stated that PHAR and South First Street residents have been asking for a meeting with CRHA staff to discuss the computer lab at South First Street. He is hoping the meeting will take place soon.

Deirdre Gilmore, 613 Hinton Avenue, stated she appreciated Mr. Bickers for attending the PHAR graduation ceremony and appreciated staff bringing tables and chairs for the event. She stated it was a great evening and thanked everyone that attended.

VII. **REPORTS**

A. **Police Report**

The police were not present.

B. **Action Items**

1. **Resolution #1289-SEMAP**

Mr. Bickers presented the Board with Resolution # 1289 to approve the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Certification for fiscal year ending March 31, 2011. SEMAP is the monitoring system used by HUD to determine agency compliance with Section 8 HCV Program regulations. SEMAP data is primarily derived from internal audit of Section 8 files performed by Ms. Weybright, CRHA Housing Manager. Mr. Bickers stated he was not required to perform the review; however, he has to officially submit the scores as the Executive Director of the agency. He stated HUD audits can reveal false scoring reports which would lead to a much lower PHA scores and could move that PHA into a "troubled" status which has happened in the past with CRHA. Mr. Bickers reported staff feels that the agency is in compliance with all of the indicators contained in this year's certification.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve Resolution #1289 Approving SEMAP Certification based on the Executive Director's account, seconded by Commissioner Halbert.

Further discussion ensued as some commissioners raised concerns regarding the checks and balances system that CRHA has in place to ensure the agency is reporting correct information. Mr. Bickers stated there have been discussions between staff members regarding a third party or person to review files to ensure they are kept in compliance. Commissioner Stevens called for the vote.

The vote was recorded as:

AYES

NAYES

ABSTAIN

Commissioner Clarke
Commissioner Halbert
Commissioner Johnson
Commissioner Mitchell
Commissioner Stevens

Resolution #1289 passes.

2. Resolution #1290-TAR Write Offs FY11

Mr. Bickers stated CRHA annually evaluates the public housing list of inactive tenant accounts receivable (TAR) for write-off. TAR consists of charges for rents, excess utilities, late charges, maintenance charges, damages etc. from tenants that have left public housing. The evaluation is based on the attempts to collect through letters and the length of time the account is outstanding which is usually 6 months. Mr. Bickers stated that having high active accounts receivables will yield a lowered REAC score under the financial indicator. Mr. Bickers stated staff is proposing to write off twenty-five tenant accounts for a total of \$38,277.45.

Mr. Bickers stated the Finance Committee recommended the full board pass Resolution #1290 Writing off Uncollectible Tenant Accounts Receivable for Public Housing. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion.

Commissioner Halbert stated the write-off amount is extremely high but in the best interest of the agency he will vote in favor of the write-off. Commissioner Johnson stated write-off amounts include damages made to an apartment by the former resident and not just unpaid rents. Commissioner Stevens added that in his line of work he has found it very difficult for the agency to try to collect these monies since many of these residents are probably without jobs and garnishments could not be issued to collect. Typically CRHA collects some of these monies as former residents have tried to move to another apartment complex and must satisfy the debt they have with CRHA before being accepted.

Commissioner Stevens called for the vote.

AYES

NAYES

ABSTAIN

Commissioner Clarke
Commissioner Halbert
Commissioner Johnson
Commissioner Mitchell
Commissioner Stevens

Resolution #1290 passes.

C. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Bickers stated reporting rates continue to be good for the month. The vacant unit number has held steady at 14. Staff made many transfers which do not lower the vacancy rate. This represents a vacancy rate of 3.72%. He stated the rent receivables amount is \$12,785.85 which represents the dollar amount owed by active tenants' receivables.

Mr. Bickers stated bathroom procurement work at Crescent Halls is proceeding at an acceptable pace. This is a CDBG procurement project which CRHA has had some troubles spending CDBG funds in a timely basis; however, all work is scheduled to be completed by the deadline of June 30th. He reported that the procurement work being performed is to address Section 504 issues or upcoming REAC work. EMG is currently finishing their 504 needs assessment report. Preliminary indications are that there are significant issues that will need to be addressed in order for all of the accessible units to be considered fully compliant. Mr. Bickers stated staff will make any changes that the agency can financially support in order to comply and will ask HUD for permission to address significant structural changes during the redevelopment process.

Mr. Bickers stated S.H.I Group won the bid to conduct REAC inspections. This is the same company that performed the inspections last year. HUD has changed its scoring system and will inspect all housing authorities as part of the transition. The schedule is Crescent Halls –July 18th; Westhaven – July 19th; South 1st/6th Street–July 20th; Riverside/Madison/Michie and single family homes – June 21st. Mr. Bickers stated follow-up UPCS inspections have been performed and while previous issues were corrected new issues were discovered by the inspector. Staff will continue to address issues in preparation for the July REAC inspections. Commissioner Clarke asked if the shortage of maintenance workers will be an issue for the agency while addressing the REAC issues and capital improvement needs. Mr. Bickers stated that while the agency is down a few workers, staff is in the process of hiring some skilled workers that will start working soon and will be in full swing by the first week of June to prepare for REAC.

D. Committee Reports

1. Finance Committee

Mr. Bickers stated April, the first month of the fiscal year, always shows fewer expenses because most of the bills that come in are related to the prior fiscal year and need to be recorded in that year for auditing purposes. He stated the flip side of that is that March expenses are usually higher. He reported the committee discussed repayment agreements regarding write offs and the success the agency has with residents paying those debts. He added that once an account is considered a write-off the debt does not go away it is just simply written off of the books. CRHA and HUD still keep a record of those balances and the account holders are not able to receive public housing assistance with other agencies until the debt is settled.

2. Resident Services Committee

Commissioner Clarke stated the committee met with a great turnout with 16 people in attendance. She stated the residents would like to see other commissioners attend the committee meetings since residents aren't always able to come to the Board meetings. She stated the committee also discussed the strained relationship between CRHA staff and residents. Residents would like to have a workshop with staff on better

communication. The rest of the time was spent with residents meeting with Ms. Mason, CRHA Prevention Coordinator, to discuss individual situations.

3. Redevelopment Committee

Ms. Kilroy reported the committee met briefly on May 19, 2011. The committee reviewed the MOU between the City and CRHA. A work plan has been created with two top priorities which are relocation and financing options for the first few phases of the Master Plan. City employees, Kathy McHugh and Melissa Thackston, will be working with Ms. Kilroy 2-3 days of the week and will report to City Council, CRHA Board, Redevelopment Committee, and to the Housing Advisory Committee.

Ms. Kilroy stated information was presented to the Board regarding the trip to visit the Washington, DC Housing Authority (DCHA). In April, several staff members from the City and CRHA were invited to join PHA for a day trip to visit DCHA. DCHA has several successful redevelopment projects that have already been completed. During the visit, both staffs were able to tour the Capper/Carrollsborg project currently under construction in Southeast DC near the Washington Nationals stadium. Questions that were generated from the Redevelopment Committee meeting were sent to the DC Housing Authority and once those answers are received, Ms. Kilroy will pass those answers on to the Board and the committees.

The committee discussed the difference between the Choice Neighborhoods grant and the Promise Neighborhoods grant. Both grants were not funded by HUD this year but will be pursued in future funding years. A suggestion was made to have both grant writing teams work together in submitting future grant applications.

Commissioner Johnson asked Ms. Kilroy and Mr. Bickers to update the Board and the public on the differences between the two grants. Mr. Bickers stated the Promise Neighborhood Grant specifically focuses on the youth and educational outcomes. The grant is designed to bridge the achievement gaps low income children face in Charlottesville communities. Last year's grant application that was submitted targeted the city as a whole. Based on the feedback the team received, this year's application was narrowed down to focus a smaller neighborhood with the mind set of expanding it. The City did not receive the grant award but will reapply. Commissioners shared their thoughts that the Promise Neighborhood grant needs to address issues in the neighborhood or it will be another failed service program.

Ms. Kilroy stated the Choice Neighborhood grant focuses on development and construction to make improvements to buildings and neighborhoods. The grant application focused on the neighborhoods surrounding the Levy Avenue site and the adjacent communities such as Sixth Street, Crescent Hall, South First Street, Friendship Court, and Clark Elementary School.

The grant writing team decided to apply for funding for a planning phase since CRHA is not ready to start site construction. The agency did not receive funding for the grant but plans to reapply and is looking into other community resource funding to continue the work.

Commissioner Clarke thanked Ms. Kilroy and the grant writing teams for their hard work and appreciates their effort to make a change in the communities.

Commissioner Norris stated he is very weary of social engineers trying to improve a neighborhood without consulting the residents in those neighborhoods first but he trusts that the teams will practice more outreach. Mr. Bickers stated the teams are very aware that community outreach is needed and residents need to be a part of the process in order for it to work.

The committee requested that committee meetings be held every other month until the MOU work plan gets up and running. The next committee meeting will be Wednesday, July 13th at 10:00am in the South First Street Community Center.

VIII. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Clarke stated that PHAR interns would like to see more PHAR information reported either on the website or in the CRHA newsletter. Commissioner Mitchell suggested PHAR have the interns to give a brief monthly report at the Board meeting.

Commissioner Halbert suggested staff update the website to give it a more refreshed look and to update any out of date information.

Commissioner Stevens stated there will be a Board work session on Tuesday, June 7, 2011 between 4-6pm in the Basement Conference room to discuss some changes and restructuring.

Commissioner Johnson asked for the minutes from the last Board retreat so commissioners can move to the next phase. Mr. Bickers stated he would follow up with the facilitator, Ms. Christenson.

IX. **COMMITTEE MEETING DATE CHECK-IN**

Redevelopment Committee Meeting – meets 2nd Wednesday of the month
***July 13, 2011 at 10:00am in the South First Street Community Center

Resident Services Committee Meeting- meets 2nd Thursday of the month
Next meeting will be June 9, 2011 at 12:00pm in the Crescent Hall Community Room.

Finance Committee Meeting – meets 3rd Wednesday of the month
Next meeting will be June 22, 2011 at 4:30pm, in 2nd Floor Conference Room in City Hall.

Regular Board Meeting – meets 4th Monday of the month
Next meeting June 27, 2011 at 7pm, in Council Chambers

X. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Edith Goode, 305 2nd Street, stated she attends the Reentry Action committee meetings and would like to invite all residents to attend the next meeting in June in the Basement Conference Room to discuss the issues ex-offenders face when coming out of prison.

Annette Wilcox, 1400 Monticello Road, stated she has listened carefully on new developments that are taking place on Carlton Avenue and would like to know if it is connected to public housing or the Section 8 programs. Mr. Bickers stated the new development she is speaking of is owned by Habitat for Humanity.

Paul Vaughn, PHAR, stated there was a suggestion made at the Resident Services Committee that PHAR would give a report at the meetings about PHAR Board meetings. He stated there was a lot of discussion regarding commissioner attendance at the Resident Services Committee compared to commissioner attendance at other CRHA committee meetings. Residents would like to see more commissioners be a part of this committee as well.

XI. **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Mitchell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Halbert. The meeting adjourned at 8:28pm.