

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

August 25, 2014

The Board of Commissioners of the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority, (hereinafter “CRHA” or the “Housing Authority”) held the Annual Meeting at 7:00 PM on August 25, 2014, in City Council Chambers at City Hall.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Woodard called the meeting of the Board to order at 7:10 PM on August 25, 2014.

II. ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS

Present:

Mr. Keith O. Woodard, Chair
Mayor Satyendra Huja, Commissioner
Ms. LaTita Talbert, Vice-Chair
Ms. Lauren Curley, Commissioner
Ms. Audrey Oliver, Commissioner
Ms. Sabrina Allen, Commissioner

Absent:

Ms. Julie Jones, Treasurer

Staff Present:

Ms. Constance Dunn, Executive Director
Ms. Robin Munson, Finance Director
Ms. Allyson Manson-Davies, Deputy City Attorney
Ms. Amy Nofziger, Executive Administrator
Ms. Heather Jeffries, Asset Manager

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE

Commissioner Woodard called for a moment of silence.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS HELD July 28, 2014

The approval has been moved to the next meeting.

V. Report From Parks And Recreation on Playground Improvements

Ms. Dunn: Good Evening, I would like to introduce Doug Ehman with Charlottesville Department of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Ehman was instrumental in helping the Housing Authority improve our playgrounds using funding graciously provided by the City of Charlottesville. He is here tonight to provide a summary of the work that was provided to CRHA with City Funds and then answer any questions from the Board.

Doug Ehman from Parks and Recreation stated that on September 6 of 2013, the City Parks and Recreation Department entered in to an understanding with the Housing Authority to define the scope of work that would be done as it would be related to the

playgrounds. There were four general areas of improvement, the replacement of a substandard noncompliant two to five-year-old structure at Westhaven, next were the repairs to varying degrees of all the playgrounds under the control of the Housing Authority, the relocation of fences in order to open them up and make them safe and a little more inviting, and the actual surfacing. Work has been complete for about 4 to 6 weeks now. There is a balance left over in the money that was allocated to this project. We are currently in the process of bidding out an annual inspection program to be done by a third-party vendor and that will consume the balance of those funds, and when that funding has expired. It will be the decision of the Housing Authority, whether or not to continue to use the program.

Commissioner Oliver commented that what was promised from Parks and Recreation was not delivered.

Doug Ehman stated that they did do what was agreed upon at Westhaven, and the other locations were just basic repair, and also, on a monthly basis the playgrounds will be fully inspected.

Commissioner Talbert mentioned that she was told the cemented border around the playground was unsafe.

Doug Ehman said that the border is safe. None of the structure surrounding the playgrounds was included in the scope of work, and they just started the bidding for the inspections that are necessary and the leftover funds should last two years.

Commissioner Talbert asked about the attendance of the meetings for the discussion of the park improvements.

Doug Ehman said that the agreement with the Housing Authority was for one meeting, they conducted that meeting set up a second meeting and no one attended. He broke down how the funds were spent, of the total \$250,510 of that amount, \$31,000 was spent on playground repairs, \$17,342 was spent on the two to five piece of equipment that went in to Westhaven, the playground fencing reconfiguration cost \$11,352, the playground surfacing cost \$189,000. The remainder will be used for the inspections.

Commissioner Curley asked for a copy of the initial assessment of the playgrounds and Ms. Dunn stated she would obtain this.

VI. Executive Director's Response From Previous Meeting

For the past two years CRHA has requested Board training from the HUD Richmond Field Office and this training has finally materialized under the direction of Interim Director Catherine Lamberg to occur during September. The full training will occur on three separate days in September, the 9th, the 16th, and the 25th. Hours will be from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. These sessions are particularly important in that they will benefit the Board and staff to better understand our obligations under the Annual Contributions Contract with HUD. This Contract determines the conditions under which CRHA can

continue to stay in compliance with HUD and provide housing for our low income families. These trainings are open to the public and the location to be announced will either be City Hall Chambers or the City Hall Basement Conference Room. Notices will go out providing plenty of notice prior to trainings.

CRHA has provided a letter of support for the PHAR ROSS GRANT APPLICATION which was referenced in the last Regular Meeting. The Housing Authority supports The ROSS program which will provide Residents with resources to facilitate self-sufficiency, employment and education.

Landscaping continues to be an ongoing concern for CRHA's Residents and Management and we are continuing to evaluate and work towards improving the community appearance and curb appeal. Change is time consuming and HUD's process to solicit, select and contract with any new service provider is a lengthy process taking as long as 3-4 months. As noted in the last Regular Meeting the Housing Authority is monitoring the current contractor's progress for correction.

Public Comments offered at the last meeting referenced concerns about Community Safety and employee morale. CRHA is working with the City Human Resources Department to enroll employees in trainings that will enhance teamwork and better working relationships between staff. Available to all employees is the Employee Assistance Program, a benefit that helps individual employees with their individual challenges and counseling needs.

One of the comments from the last Regular Meeting related to the possible eviction of a public housing resident. I have met with this Resident and CRHA is making every effort to work with this resident and has established a regular payment schedule.

Eviction has been a high level topic for CRHA since I began as Director in 2012 so I'd like to take a moment to review the statistics. To provide the public with a historical perspective: Prior to 2010 - CRHA had at least 15 or more evictions per year, there were 23 evictions in 2011, 10 evictions in 2012, 6 evictions in 2013 and there have been no Evictions to date in 2014.

I would like to send our prayers and thoughts to the family of Ms. Jewel Mason who has been working with CRHA since 2008 and recently lost her husband.

VII. Public Comments

Annette Wilcox, 1400 Monticello Rd., commented that the shooting in the neighborhoods needs to stop.

Brandon Collins, 418 Fairway Ave., PHAR employee, commented that the board packets need to be prepared sooner, so we can prepared to discuss the topics. He also mentioned that we need to discuss the issue with the community centers and the eviction prevention position.

Commissioner Woodard closed Public Comments. A meeting will be held about the community centers on October 7, 2014, at 4:30 p.m. at the Basement Conference Room, City Hall.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Housing Authority has recently established a FACEBOOK Page where residents may access announcements, general information, and policy clarifications. The page can be found under the abbreviation CRHA or under our complete organizational listing as the Housing Authority.

CRHA continues to distribute our monthly newsletter offering helpful information tips to residents regarding Community Service, general policies, job opportunities. Copies of the newsletter are available this evening on the front desk. If you have announcements or accomplishments that you wish to highlight within your community please do not hesitate to contact the Central Office.

As a reminder CRHA accepts rental payments at the Central Office City Hall and at Crescent Halls. We are in the process of establishing an additional rent collection box at the front of the Housing Choice Voucher office to offer additional residents this convenience.

The Housing Authority is in the process of filling several recently vacated positions, the Maintenance Tech II position, the Resident Apprentice position and a support position entitled General Clerk. The staffing cutbacks implemented earlier this year in response to our budget shortfall required the addition of support personnel at lower rates of pay to allow for continued operations. The addition of the Clerk position was included with regard to the overall goal of balancing our budget and our progress in meeting this goal is evident in the reduced overall salary costs.

Due to the extensive number of meetings planned during the month of September, HUD's required Annual Plan process, originally slated to begin in September, will begin in October, still providing ample time for Resident Engagement, Public Hearings and Planning. Dates will be announced at the September regular meeting.

I am pleased to announce that CRHA will once again begin Housing Choice Voucher Lease Up to serve the 900 plus families on our HCV waitlist. Efforts to reduce our per unit Housing Assistance payment costs are gradually working and HUD has announced a "USE It Or Lose It" approach when determining allotted vouchers and spending for the four remaining months of 2014 in respect to our total allotted budget authority. The Bottom line is that the more we lower our per unit Landlord payments or HAP cost, the more families we can serve. CRHA is currently allocated 533 total vouchers but has only issued 391 at this time. As an annual exercise the Housing Authority evaluates our Voucher Payment Standard as it relates to HUD's Published Fair Market rents.

Commissioner Talbert wanted clarification on a job posting for a property manager that was made public, but not sent to the residence specifically.

Executive Director Dunn stated that the job was taken down because the property manager changed her date of departure. She also stated that the previous board voted that they did not have the resources to send flyers to the residents, and the television and the newspaper would be sufficient advertise for the position. All postings are also added to CRHA's new Facebook page.

Commissioner Curley suggested that they put down in writing the procedure of letting the residents know about the positions that are open for Section 3.

Mayor Huja said that the positions were in the monthly flyer so we did do what we were supposed to.

IX. Declaration of Trust Filing

Ms. Davis stated that we approve the resolution authorizing an adoption of a Declaration of Trust to be filed in respect of the Housing Authority properties and that resolution was passed on June 23, 2014. HUD is requiring that this is to be filed or the Housing Authority could be subject to penalties from HUD such as discontinuation of funding. When the projects were originally developed there was a deed of trust that was put in place and it has expired, and CRHA is putting a new one in place now. HUD would find us in violation if we don't have a Declaration of Trust in place.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Resident Services

Commissioner Talbert reported that the resident services meeting was at the Crescent Halls Community Center. The residents raise concerns about the safety of the properties. The residents asked about the police substation in Crescent Halls not being used. David Ellis, Assistant City Manager, said that he would keep communication lines open and would commit to coming to the resident services meetings from now on. The residents also were concerned about the activities on Run Street. The residents would also like to see the barred list and have the police check people's names to see if there on the list. The residents also are concerned about the appearance of the community.

B. Finance Committee

Ms. Munson presented that July 31, was the fourth month of our fiscal year. Public Housing still had a net gain of \$8,200. Section 8 had a net loss of \$130,000 of because of the method of disbursement of the HUD funds. The Net Restricted assets balance at 7/31 is \$440,341. That's the amount of money that we are holding in our bank account. That is over two months of HAP Payments. The Admin portion of Section 8 has a net gain of \$17,064. HUD had originally prorated the Admin portion of the amount that you're eligible for at 75% of what you're eligible for and they have now gone over their numbers for the past year and now the carryover is 79%, which is based on a calendar year. That's roughly \$12,066 extra for CRHA. At this time there is no need to transfer any funds from our unrestricted money to cover any losses, but we have in total for this

year transferred \$14,496. Central Office also had a small net gain of \$4,401, our income is on target and most of our expenses are under budget. CRHA had eight units vacant at 7/31, with a 97% occupancy rate. Rent receivables are at \$5391. Crescent halls owed \$401, scattered sites owed \$1641, S. 1st St. owed \$125 and Westhaven \$3024. There were 20 residents owing more than \$50 and that totaled \$4923. There was a court case on July 22. There was nine households, judgment of possessions was granted on one household in the other eight cases were dismissed because they were paid in full.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Curley commented about the status of the personnel committee and proposed a meeting schedule be established for that committee.

Ms. Davies said the Board needs to determine the scope of the Personnel Committee and then make elections as to which Board members will be on the Committee. Commissioner Woodard said that he would recommend waiting until after the Board training in September before making final decisions.

Commissioner Oliver wanted to know where we were with the topics that were discussed at the town hall meeting.

Executive Director Dunn stated that the lack of the enforcement of barment in the communities has increased the number and frequency of the safety issues facing residents and this will continue until the Barment Policy is enforced again. The discussion of termination by race is something the board can discuss in private, and there is counseling available for employees to deal with the low morale. CRHA is also working on the transfer list to move tenants rents the appropriate sized apartments.

Commissioner Curley stated that an addition with the minutes, an action list should be attached so we can see what we've accomplished and what we need to do.

XII. COMMITTEE CHECK IN

Resident Services Meeting Thursday, September 11, 2014 @ 1:00 p.m. South 1st St.

Finance Committee Meeting Wednesday, September 24, 2014 @ 4:30 p.m. City Hall Basement Conference Room.

Regular Meeting CRHA Board of Commissioners Monday, September 29, 2014 @ 7:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

Community Center meeting October 7, 2014, at 4:30 in the City Hall Basement Conference Room

XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brandon Collins, 418 Fairway Ave., PHAR employee, commented that the community center meeting is a form of negotiation and he hopes attendance will be strong. He stated that he felt that the barment list should have been taken care of long ago and that it was

the Police Department and the Housing Authorities fault. He also stated that the history of redevelopment in Charlottesville is terrible and that the board should consider this.

Nicholas Yates, 814 Hardy Dr., asked for clarification on how child support is calculated in terms of the amount of rent the resident pays.

Executive Director Dunn stated that she will respond fully at the next meeting.

Rosia Parker, 817 Hardy Dr., stated that the electricity bills are going up, and is concerned.

Karen Shepard voiced some questions regarding HAP payments and how the program works.

Ms. Dunn explained on how the HAP payments work. The resident pays a portion of the rent based on their income and the Housing Authority pays the balance.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Woodard adjourned the meeting.