

THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
HELD ON THE ELEVENTH DAY OF AUGUST, 2005

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Newport, Rhode Island met in regular session at the Donovan Manor, 19 Chapel Street, at 4:30 p.m. on August 11, 2005.

PRESENT:	Commissioner	Jan Shapin
	"	Frank Landry
	"	John J. Crowley, Jr.
	"	Elizabeth Fuerte
	"	Jade Hall
	"	Eric R. Watne
ALSO PRESENT:	Attorney	Joseph J. Nicholson, Jr.
ABSENT:	Commissioner	Rodney P. Bowley

Upon a motion by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Crowley, and unanimously carried, the Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of July 14, 2005, as amended to reflect Change Order No. 1 instead of Change Order No. 2 from Robert F. Audet, Inc. for the generator work at Donovan Manor, were approved by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Hall expressed concern that the Minutes of the July 14th meeting indicated that a Big Band concert is being planned for residents however, approval was not obtained by the Resident Council's Board of Directors, and that if any money for this event is being contributed from the Resident Council then the matter should go before the board for a vote.

Commissioner Fuerte informed the Commissioners that there is no cost involved to the Resident Council for this upcoming event.

The itemized monthly bills reports were presented to the Commissioners for review and approval.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Landry, and unanimously carried, payment of the bills was approved.

The Chair announced that Officer Piermont is on vacation but he had provided a copy of his monthly report for them.

Officer Piermont's monthly report was accepted by the Commission.

The Chair acknowledged and accepted correspondence from Vincent DeSanctis of the Community College of Rhode Island, in which he thanked Commissioners and staff for the provision of temporary space at the Florence Gray Center and for all the assistance they received, along with the Executive Director's response.

The Secretary reviewed with the Commissioners the Consent Calendar items which included the Occupancy, Applications and July Collection Loss Reports.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried, the Consent Calendar items were approved.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that the Authority was notified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development of an amendment to the FY2005 Capital Fund Program ACC in the amount of \$266,993 for replacement housing.

Resolution No. 998 to approve the FY 2005 Capital Fund Program ACC in the amount of \$266,993 for replacement housing was introduced and read aloud by Commissioner Crowley.

Commissioner Crowley moved that Resolution No. 998 be adopted as introduced and read, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried.

The Chairwoman thereupon declared said motion carried and said Resolution adopted.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that the Authority was also notified by the Department of Housing and Urban Development of an amendment to the FY2005 Capital Fund Program ACC in the amount of \$1,823,206 for operating expenses.

Resolution No. 999 to approve the FY 2005 Capital Fund Program ACC in the amount of \$1,823,206 for operating expenses was introduced and read aloud by Commissioner Crowley.

Commissioner Crowley moved that Resolution No. 999 be adopted as introduced and read, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried.

The Chairwoman thereupon declared said motion carried and said Resolution adopted.

Attorney Nicholson left the meeting to allow for discussion of proposals received for legal services.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that the Authority has procured legal services annually however, HUD has authorized that procurement of legal services may be extended to a two-year contract.

The Secretary provided the Commissioners with an evaluation summary of proposals that were received in response to the Authority's Request for Proposals for Legal Services, and recommended that the two-year contract for legal services be awarded to the Law Offices of Joseph J. Nicholson for their proposed fee of \$105.00 per hour, with a not-to-exceed annual fee of \$65,000.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Hall, and unanimously carried, the two-year contract for legal services was awarded to the Law Offices of Joseph J. Nicholson.

Attorney Nicholson was requested to return to the meeting.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that as a follow-up to their recent strategic planning workshop, the Authority held its first Staff Development Day on July 28th presented by Leo Dauwer of Dower and Associates, and Sue Johnson of The Success Group, and the event was extremely successful.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that he has received a request from management for an appeal hearing to a Board of Tenant Affairs decision and requested authorization to set up a schedule for this hearing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried, the Secretary was authorized to make arrangements for an appeal hearing to a BOTA decision concerning a specific case.

The HOPE VI Director provided the Commissioners with a copy of her monthly HOPE VI program report and informed them that the Newport Heights management report was not provided in time for this meeting however, Newport Heights is at full occupancy with the exception of one vacant unit.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that all twenty-three HUD milestones have been met successfully and that the next milestone for HUD is the first unit available for occupancy in Phase 2 which is expected in September.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that demolition and construction activities have begun in Phase 3 and that Sims Street has been demolished.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that preliminary planning has begun with regard to Phase 4 and that the closing is scheduled for May, 2006. Development meetings have begun internally and contact has been with families in this phase to determine their relocation needs.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that with respect to the CSS program, although there are 400 HOPE VI households, the program is voluntary and there are 110 actively involved.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that the CCRI Composite Training Program has seen a decline in numbers mostly because participants need income from employment rather than attend a full-time training program. Efforts are underway to address this issue.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that other programs underway include a customer service job training with NTTI with efforts being made to bring this program on-site, and an informational session for residents interested in starting their own business is planned by Denise Barge of the Rhode Island Coalition for Minority Investments.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that as new subcontractors are hired by Dimeo Construction, they are contacted in an effort to continue to provide employment opportunities for residents under the Section 3 program. There are twenty-five Section 3 hires to date.

The Director of Finance provided the Commissioners with copies of the following monthly reports: Investment, Budget, Rental Income, Grant Fund Expenditure, HOPE VI Spending Summary, and the Medical Trust Investment Report.

The Director of Finance informed the Commissioners that revenues are on budget, expenses are under budget, and he anticipates that the year-end deficit will be lower than originally calculated. He will be meeting with the Executive Director to provide the Commissioners with updated budget figures.

The Director of Finance informed the Commissioners that the Authority is on schedule to meet the obligation and expenditure date on each of the grant funds.

The Director of Finance informed the Commissioners that the Retiree Medical Trust Fund has earned 5 – 6% so far this year.

The Director of Finance provided a report to the Commissioners detailing the status of HOPE VI funds. The report disclosed \$763,326 is the balance of HOPE VI funds designated for construction of units in Phase 4 rental and Phase 4 homeownership.

The Director of Finance informed the Commissioners that there are no changes to the Section 8 Voucher Program. Following discussion and at the request of the Commission, the Section 8 report will be modified to include the number of vouchers the Authority has in addition to how many have been used.

The Director of Finance provided the Commissioners with a list of obsolete computers totaling \$3,304.68 and requested permission to remove them from the Authority's inventory.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Landry, and unanimously carried, the Director of Finance was authorized to remove the obsolete computers from the Authority's inventory.

The Director of Maintenance provided the Commissioners with a copy of the Maintenance Department monthly report.

The Chair commented on the improved appearance at the Donovan Manor between the flowers that were planted and the dumpsters not overflowing any more.

The Director of Maintenance provided the Commissioners with a progress report on the installation of the sprinkler system at Donovan Manor and informed them that the work is 90% complete with only the pump and transfer switch left to do.

The Director of Maintenance presented to the Commissioners Requisition No. 4 in the amount of \$56,977.74 from Fire Suppression Systems in accordance with their contract to install the sprinkler system at Donovan Manor, and informed them that the architect, Edward Rowse, has reviewed the requisition and recommends payment be approved.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried, the Secretary was authorized to pay Requisition No. 4 from Fire Suppression Systems in the amount of \$56,977.74.

The Director of Maintenance informed the Commissioners that regarding the installation of a generator at Donovan Manor, a meeting was held with the architect, electrical engineer and contractor to finalize outstanding issues. The physical work is scheduled to begin the first week in September.

The Director of Maintenance provided the Commissioners with a report on the various stages of construction progress in Newport Heights Phase 2 and informed them that grading for sidewalks and the parking lot is underway, exterior work is progressing, and the closing and completion will be ready for the September 1st Certificate of Occupancy with the entire first quad being turned over at the end of September for October occupancy.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that a notice has been distributed to families who expressed an interest in living at Newport Heights advising them of an informational meeting that will be held at the Authority to address any questions or concerns.

The Director of Maintenance informed the Commissioners that quad two sidewalks and roads are being done and various work is ongoing at the other quads.

The Director of Maintenance informed the Commissioners that the gas company is in the process of transferring the gas main and meter at the Florence Gray Center and that the new utilities at the Center will be completed within the next two weeks.

The Director of Maintenance provided the Commissioners with an update on his efforts to develop a procedure for the procurement of materials.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that the Maintenance Procurement Committee will be meeting within the next few weeks to continue this effort.

The Director of Maintenance provided the Commissioners with a copy of correspondence from the Authority's Workers' Compensation carrier, Beacon Mutual, in which they commend the Authority for all of the safety procedures in place.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that the Director of Social Services is unable to attend this month's meeting however she has provided a copy of the Social Services monthly report.

The Commission recognized Susan Long of the Newport Resident Council who informed the Commissioners that Elizabeth Fuerte is now the new President of the Newport Resident Council and that she will continue to assist Elizabeth at the Newport Resident Council office.

Ms. Long provided the Commissioners with information regarding the Big Band concert and requested their permission to hold the event behind the Building of Hope on September 2, 2005 from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Hall expressed objection to decisions being made by the Newport Resident Council without prior board approval, and that as Vice President of the board she is being excluded from participating in any decision-making, and is concerned that procedures are not being followed.

The Chair requested that the Secretary continue.

The Secretary indicated that the Newport Resident Council has requested permission to hold an event that will take place in September, that they have met all the conditions that were required, and recommended that the Authority support the event.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Landry, and carried on a 3 to 2 vote with Commissioner Fuerte abstaining and Commissioner Hall opposed because of her concern that the Newport Resident Council board has not formally approved this event, the Newport Resident Council was authorized to hold the Big Band event on September 2, from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. in the area behind the Building of Hope.

Commissioner Hall addressed the Commission regarding a letter that was sent to them by the Newport Resident Council informing them of new office hours for the Building of Hope.

Commissioner Hall indicated that she takes personal offense to the new office hours because the building will be closed on Tuesday and Thursdays, the only two days when she is available.

Commissioner Hall stated that the decision to change the Newport Resident Council's office hours was not approved by their board and she made a motion that the Commission direct the Newport Resident Council to reopen the Building of Hope on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The motion failed to pass for lack of a second.

The Chair requested that Susan Long come before the Commission in order that they might acknowledge and thank her for her efforts in the past year on behalf of the Newport Resident Council.

The Commission presented Ms. Long with a bouquet of flowers and congratulated her on a job well done.

Ms. Long thanked the Commission and indicated that the past year was one in which she learned a great deal from a number of different sources.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried, the Commission moved to closed session in accordance with RIGL §42-46-5 (5) to discuss land disposition for Newport Heights Phase 4.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried, the Commission return to open session and the Chair announced that extensive discussions were held regarding the terms under which the Authority is going to negotiate the disposition of land for Phase 4 and related issues, and that the board has given guidance to the HOPE VI development committee.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried the meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.