

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

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Newport, Rhode Island met in regular session at the Florence Gray Center, One York Street, at 5:15 p.m. on September 8, 2005.

PRESENT:	Commissioner	Jan Shapin
	"	Frank Landry
	"	Rodney P. Bowley
	"	John J. Crowley, Jr.
	"	Elizabeth Fuerte
	"	Jade Hall

ALSO PRESENT:	Attorney	Joseph J. Nicholson, Jr.
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ABSENT:	Commissioner	Eric R. Watne
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The Chair announced that in accordance with RIGL §42-46-5 (5), the Commission discussed the terms of land disposition for Phase 4 of Newport Heights in closed session.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte and unanimously carried, the Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of August 11, 2005 were approved by the Commissioners.

The itemized monthly bills report was presented to the Commissioners for review and approval.

Commissioner Crowley indicated that he had anticipated receiving a Request for Proposals for purchasing materials, and questioned when that would be available.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that a proposal package for snow removal is being provided to them this date and recommended that the subcommittee meet next week to discuss.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that a bill for partial payment was received from Architectura, Inc. in accordance with their contract with the Authority for work completed to date in conjunction with a number of capital fund work items, and recommended that this bill be added to the list of bills to be approved.

Following discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Bowley, and unanimously carried, authorizing the Secretary to pay the bill from Architectura, Inc. in the amount of \$30,235.04.

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

The Chair announced that Officer Piermont is not present however he provided a copy of his monthly report for them.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Hall, and unanimously carried, Officer Piermont's monthly report was accepted by the Commission.

The Chair acknowledged correspondence from Commissioner Eric Watne in which he tenders his resignation on the board as he has relocated to Tiverton and is therefore not able to serve on the Commission.

Commissioner Watne indicated his willingness to continue to serve on the board until a replacement is named and the Chair recommended that this be approved and that the board accept his resignation.

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

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

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that the Newport Community School Summer Success Program resulted in twenty-five public housing residents graduating from the program and he would like to invite those students and their parents to the October Commissioners' meeting to receive "Way to Go" awards.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that a Notice was issued by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to all Public Housing Authorities regarding assistance to those participants of public housing and the Section 8 program who have been affected by the Hurricane Katrina disaster.

The Notice indicates that PHAs may amend their Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy and Section 8 Administrative Plan, with board approval, to assist displaced participants affected by a disaster. The Notice further indicates that any amendment must specify that public housing residents or Section 8 voucher holders in another jurisdiction will receive preference over other waiting list applicants.

HUD's Notice also advises that with regard to Section 8 participants, families holding a voucher will receive the amount as per the receiving PHAs payment standard.

The Secretary provided the Commissioners with a copy of the pertinent sections of both the ACOP and Section 8 Administration Plan in which a proposed amendment has been added to each, allowing first preference to public housing and Section 8 program participants who are affected by a federally declared disaster in another jurisdiction.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that HUD's Notice stated that it is their recommendation that the PHAs board not consider the amendment as "significant" to the ACOP or Section 8 Administration Plan, however, if the board does consider the amendment as significant, then a formal notice to the public must be prepared and a public meeting advertised and held.

The Chair suggested that those Commissioners who are attending the NAHRO conference in October, discuss this issue with other conference participants and provide feedback at the next meeting.

The Chair also suggested that there be two conditions, 1) that it be time related and we only amend the preference until the next Annual Plan, and 2) that the number of families be limited.

Following discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Hall, and unanimously carried, that the Commission deems the proposed amendment to be a significant change and that they wait three months to make it part of the next Annual Plan.

The HOPE VI Director provided the Commissioners with a copy of her monthly HOPE VI program report and informed them that there is one vacant market unit in Newport Heights Phase 1 and that an Income Tiering chart was received to track incomes of families who reside in Newport Heights.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that a Certificate of Occupancy was received in August for the first unit in Phase 2 and that almost 30 units are coming on line. All milestones have been met.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that demolition in Phase 3 is underway and the first unit must be available by next September.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that we are still in the preliminary planning stage for Phase 4 and that she and the Executive Director will be meeting with the Beacon Court Homeowners' Association on September 13th for discussions on the homeownership plans.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that with regard to Phase 5 there are no plans yet for demolition of the remaining 125 units. Dates and funding are yet to be determined however, exterior painting of those units has been planned.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that 223 families have been moved to date and that although Phase 4 relocation completion is not required until next June, meetings have already taken place with Phase 4 residents and some relocation has begun in advance of schedule.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that the CSS programs continue. The lead case manager for EBCAP, Kate Clarke, will be leaving on September 16th. Arrangements are actively underway to seek a replacement. An \$800 grant was awarded to a CSS resident to assist with tuition at CCRI. A family Opportunity Fair was held with the On The Move program in conjunction with the Authority's Social Services department and was well attended by service providers and residents.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that a renewal contract was signed with CODAC who will begin offering services effective September 15th for ten hours per week.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that under the Section 3 program, Rhode Island College has started their surveys and have hired four residents.

The HOPE VI Director indicated that a copy of the calendar for the Neighborhood Network Center computer lab is included with her report.

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 provided the Commissioners with a copy of the Section 8 Voucher Program monthly report.

The Director of Finance informed the Commissioners that we have met the obligation date of September 15th for the 2003 Capital Fund Program for \$1.9 million.

The Director of Finance informed the Commissioners that the auditors have completed their annual audit and that they will also be doing an audit of the 11B refinancing program that is required tri-annually.

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

The Director of Maintenance informed the Commissioners that activity on the sprinkler system installation at Donovan Manor has ceased temporarily while waiting for the generator job to catch up before installing the sprinkler pump.

The Director of Maintenance informed the Commissioners that the installation of a generator at Donovan Manor is progressing with the transformer in the possession of the electric corporation and the generator in the possession of the contractor.

The Director of Maintenance informed the Commissioners that the electrical transfer for Newport Heights will take place this weekend.

The Secretary reviewed with the Commissioners the bids received in response to the Authority's Invitation to Bid for Chapel Terrace/Tonomy Hill Exterior Painting and recommended that the contract for both developments be awarded to the low bidder, Freeport General Contracting, for the base bid prices of \$79,888 (plus a unit allowances factor of \$1,000) for Chapel Terrace and \$168,500 (plus a unit allowances factor of \$13,000) for Tonomy Hill.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried, the Secretary was authorized to enter into a contract with Freeport General Contracting for exterior painting of Chapel Terrace/Tonomy Hill for the aforementioned bid prices.

Discussion followed concerning the Snow Removal Specification package that was prepared by the Director of Maintenance.

It was determined that upon approval by Commissioners, the specification package would be hand-delivered to a number of area contractors with a request to provide proposals by September 30th.

The Director of Social Services provided the Commissioners with a copy of her monthly report.

The Director of Social Services informed the Commissioners that the Even Start program received funding that will allow them to provide greater opportunity for more people to attend GED classes as the age to provide child care has been increased to age 12.

The Director of Social Services informed the Commissioners that Wool, Inc., in collaboration with the Rhode Island Food Bank, has donated 125 blankets for our residents.

The Director of Social Services informed the Commissioners that she attended a two-day HUD sponsored seminar on grant writing and informed them that heavy emphasis was placed on faith-based organizations, churches and other non-profit organizations.

The Director of Social Services gave kudos to the Executive Director for his idea of getting staff involved in rallying on the students on their first day back at school.

Commissioner Bowley requested that the Minutes reflect that in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, he and Commissioner Crowley contacted the Executive Director to determine if a contribution could be made from the Authority for the victims.

The Secretary indicated that as a non-profit organization receiving federal subsidy, the Authority is unable to make financial contributions however, he attempted to contact former Newport Housing Authority residents who were affected by the hurricane to offer them assistance. A family member of one of the affected families has been contacted and informed of the Authority's concern for its former residents and willingness to assist them.

The Secretary stated that several organizations and staff members have expressed their wish to make a donation to assist those former Newport Housing Authority residents.

The Commission recognized the new president of the Newport Resident Council, Elizabeth Fuerte, who informed the Commissioners that there is nothing new to report at this time, that the Resident Council is in the process of reorganizing and determining which board members will remain. Once the board members have been established the Resident Council will inform the Authority.

The Chair informed Ms. Fuerte that the Authority will be preparing its Annual Plan in the next few months and it will be important that the Newport Resident Council board members, or Resident Advisory Board, be available for inclusion in the plan.

The Secretary stated that the Big Band concert that was organized by the Newport Resident Council was very successful and requested that it be repeated again next year at the Donovan Manor.

The Chair recognized visitors from the Chapel Street neighboring area and informed them that the Authority has an ongoing productive relationship with the Beacon Court resident organization and stated that she welcomes a similar relationship with their organization.

Ms. Nancy Kougeas, representing residents of the Chapel Street neighboring area, read aloud a letter to the Commissioners in which they expressed their concern about the Authority's proposed plans for additional housing units and parking areas in that area without consulting abutting neighbors.

The letter requested that all proposed planning and work cease until neighbors who will be affected by any changes are involved in the process.

The Chair informed Ms. Kougeas that the Authority is involved in a number of activities at the present time, one of which is the proposed Tews Court plan, however the plan is still conceptual because all efforts are being concentrated on the Phase 4 Newport Heights project.

The Chair emphasized that it is anticipated nothing will be done for the next six to nine months regarding the proposed additional eight units for Chapel Street, however once a decision is made the Authority will notify the neighboring residents.

The Chair stated that despite the fact that the subject of the proposed co-op housing was not placed on the Agenda, she wanted to extend a courtesy to those neighbors present to hear their concerns.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bowley, seconded by Commissioner Fuerte, and unanimously carried the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.