

THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND  
HELD ON THE TWELFTH DAY OF APRIL, 2007

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, Newport at 4:30 p.m. on April 12, 2007.

Roll call followed the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

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

ABSENT:           Commissioner Elizabeth Fuerte

ALSO PRESENT:    Attorney           Joseph J. Nicholson, Jr.

The Chair referenced the March 8<sup>th</sup> Minutes and stated that with regard to the Park Holm improvement initiative, paragraph seven on page two is vague in its reference to pursue this work until the May meeting. For the record she had anticipated receiving a report for a proposed plan on this work at the April meeting, and a decision made at the May meeting.

The Chair also referenced two paragraphs in the March 8<sup>th</sup> Minutes regarding the commercial building on Beacon Street. The first paragraph states that an RFQ for a developer could be produced within one to two months and the subsequent paragraph states that the Secretary was authorized to develop a plan for discussion within the next sixty days. The paragraphs are inconsistent and the Chair requested clarification of the schedule for this work.

Commissioner Bowley referenced paragraph four on page three of the March 8<sup>th</sup> Minutes and asked the Secretary if an RFQ for Security Services has been issued.

The Secretary responded that a determination must first be made as to the type of security coverage needed. He informed the Commissioners that he had contacted the Department of Elderly Affairs to inquire how to amend their standards for coverage. DEA indicated that a waiver could be submitted at the time of application and that a public meeting with the residents must also be held prior to submission of the application by the June deadline.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Bowley, and unanimously carried, the Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of March 8, 2007 were approved.

The monthly bills report was presented to the Commissioners.

In response to Commissioner Crowley's question regarding the bid process to sell the excess vans formerly used by Maintenance, the Secretary informed the Commissioners that one bid in the amount of \$300.00 was received to purchase all the vans and this was not acceptable to the Authority. We will repeat the advertisement process for the sale of excess vehicles.

Following review, a motion was made by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Landry, and unanimously carried, authorizing payment of the bills.

The Chair recognized correspondence received from the Director of Maintenance, Terrence Gallagher, in which he indicates his intention to retire effective April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Bowley, and unanimously carried, the Commission accepted Mr. Gallagher's letter with regret.

The Chair recognized the monthly report provided by Officer Piermont for the Park Holm and Tonomy Hill developments.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Bowley, and unanimously carried, the monthly report submitted by Officer Piermont was accepted.

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

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

The Secretary provided the Commissioners with a copy of the following Revised Income Limits for FY 2007 recently published by the Department of Housing and Urban Development:

**March 20, 2007**

**March 8, 2006**

	LOW INCOME	VERY LOW INCOME	LOW INCOME	VERY LOW INCOME
1 person	41,300	27,100	41,100	25,700
2 persons	47,200	30,950	46,950	29,350
3 persons	53,100	34,850	52,850	33,050
4 persons	59,000	38,700	58,700	36,700
5 persons	63,700	41,800	63,400	39,650
6 persons	68,450	44,900	68,100	42,550
7 persons	73,150	48,000	72,800	45,500
8 persons	77,900	51,100	77,500	48,450

**Earl Avenue (Project RI 5-8) is restricted to those persons meeting very low income limits only.**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Landry, and unanimously carried, the Revised Income Limits for FY 2007 were approved.

The Secretary presented a Resolution recognizing Terry Gallagher for his thirty years of service to the Authority.

Resolution No. 1022 was introduced and read aloud by Commissioner Crowley and considered by the Commissioners.

Commissioner Crowley moved that the Resolution be adopted as introduced and read, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Hall, and unanimously carried.

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

The Secretary provided the Commissioners with a progress report on the Park Holm exterior painting project and informed them that he met with a group of Park Holm residents for their input on this project. He also met with the architect and instructed him to inspect all the buildings in Park Holm, identify and make recommendations for necessary repairs to the exterior, and suggest an alternative method such as vinyl siding.

The Secretary requested that the architect prepare a cost estimate for a budget along with a preliminary bid package. He reviewed with the Commissioners a spreadsheet categorizing the buildings and their various stages of condition. Fifty-eight buildings identified in red are in poor condition, twenty buildings identified in green are in fair condition and seventeen buildings identified in blue are in good condition. The budget expectation for work to repair and paint these buildings is in the area of \$1.2 million.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that he also met with local HUD personnel to inform them of the renovation plans for Park Holm in response to the REAC inspections and inquired if there was funding available from HUD. HUD staff suggested that the Authority consider going out for bonds and he has made inquiries regarding this option.

Following discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Crowley, and unanimously carried, authorizing the Secretary to go out to bid for exterior painting of the Park Holm development.

Commissioner Bowley suggested that in addition to advertising with local media, the advertisement to solicit bids also be placed with Dodge Construction for greater exposure.

The HOPE VI Director reviewed with the Commissioners her monthly report and informed them that Phases 1, 2 and 3 of Newport Heights are at 98% occupancy.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that the Authority's Phase 4 development partner, Peter Bouchard of Valley Affordable Housing, recently suffered a stroke. This will result in some delays however VAH has appointed another staff member in order to keep the process moving.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that VAH is negotiating with an environmental consultant to get the required remedial action work plan to the Department of Environmental Management which will then enable the developer to proceed with the demolition plan.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that regarding Phase 4 financing, we have received some HOME funds for a rental application but not for homeownership. Rhode Island Housing asked that we increase our funding request on the housing bond application to make up the gap on the HOME funds.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners that there are only twenty-three households in Phase 5 awaiting relocation. A request was received from Bayside Village for nine to twelve additional project-based vouchers to go toward our replacement housing requirement. There are ninety-three units to replace in Phase 5.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners of a number of programs that are ongoing under the CSS program that include an office skills administration program, computer education course, Workplace Spanish for residents, and summer youth employment.

The HOPE VI Director informed the Commissioners of a request from Trinity Financial for a maintenance garage.

At the request of the Chair, the Secretary informed the Commissioners that Trinity has asked that they be allowed to build their maintenance garage by the retention pond as approved in an earlier version of the master plan.

In response to the Commission's request last month, the Secretary indicated that he met with Trinity staff to offer them leased space at the Authority's maintenance building. After reviewing the proposed leased area, Trinity staff deemed it would not be as suitable as their original plan for the maintenance garage location, which is in Phase 5 at the retention pond, due to additional cost implications, time delays and space needs.

The Secretary stated that our development team is seeking an alternate location for the maintenance garage because Trinity's proposed location may limit the Authority to build on that land and restrict the use of a road for access to their proposed building.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that he asked Trinity to consider building the maintenance garage on the southwest end of the parcel on Hillside Avenue. They indicated that to do so may involve a change to the master plan and require Planning Board approval. They also have tax credit funds from Phase 3 that must be expended or risk being penalized if they do not meet imposed deadlines.

The Chair instructed the Secretary to keep the Commission informed on this issue as they may be required to make decisions in a short timeframe.

The Director of Finance provided the Commissioners with his monthly reports.

The Director of Finance reviewed with the Commissioners financial documents for the 11B program and informed them that this program will be terminated on August 31<sup>st</sup> when administration will be transferred to Rhode Island Housing.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Landry, seconded by Commissioner Hall and unanimously carried, the financial documents for the 11B program were approved.

The Secretary acknowledged the monthly reports submitted by the Director of Maintenance which included a narrative and monthly maintenance activity report. There is no report on purchases.

Commissioner Bowley noted that in the Director's Summary Report it showed that overtime was worked to prepare units for the Tonomy Hill relocation process and indicated Commissioners should have been aware of this scheduled overtime.

Following discussion, the Chair requested that in future reports, the Commission be notified when scheduled overtime work is anticipated.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Crowley, seconded by Commissioner Hall, and unanimously carried, the reports submitted by the Director of Maintenance were accepted.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that in response to the Authority's solicitation for exterior painting at Pond Avenue and Edgar Court, only one bid was received, from Freeport Contracting, in the amount of \$73,000.

Following discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Bowley, seconded by Commissioner Crowley, and unanimously carried, authorizing the Secretary to re-bid the exterior painting work at Pond Avenue and Edgar Court.

The Secretary informed the Commissioners that in response to the Authority's solicitation for interior painting of hallways at Pond Avenue and Edgar Court, one bid was received, from Freeport Contracting, in the amount of \$37,000.

Following discussion a motion was made by Commissioner Bowley, seconded by Commissioner Hall, and unanimously carried, authorizing the Secretary to award the contract to Freeport Contracting to paint a total of fifty-two hallways at Pond Avenue and Edgar Court for their bid price of \$37,000, provided they are willing to do the interior work with the understanding that the exterior painting will be re-bid.

Discussion followed regarding the possibility of providing training programs to residents that would enable them to obtain employment with contractors, or hiring the residents to do the work as was done previously with the Tonomy Hill unit turnovers.

The Director of Social Services presented to the Commissioners her monthly report.

The Director of Social Services provided the Commissioners with an article regarding the Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Poverty and informed them that there were three conferences held in Rhode Island. The Newport Daily News supported the conference and it was very successful.

The Director of Social Services informed the Commissioners that she made inquiries regarding the Peapod Program for senior citizens. She met with residents at the Donovan Manor and Park Holm to provide them with information regarding this program, however since the program can only be accessed online, and with the use of a credit or debit card, the information was received with limited interest.

The Director of Social Services informed the Commissioners that Newport Hospital is holding a health fair at the weekend that includes a walking program and they have introduced this program to seniors at the Park Holm Senior Center.

The Director of Social Services informed the Commissioners that she met with the Resident Services Coordinators and Housing Managers to establish a housekeeping program. The program is currently underway and Housing Authority staff is in the process of identifying units that have issues needing to be addressed.

Commissioner Bowley expressed his appreciation and thanks to Rhonda Mitchell, Pauline Moyer and Jim Reed for their efforts with the Lyme Disease Prevention Program. He informed those present that there will be a free community dinner at the Florence Gray Center on April 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. Information will be provided on Lyme disease awareness and prevention and all who attend will receive a free tick removal kit.

The Chair acknowledged the monthly report submitted by the Newport Resident Council.

In the absence of a member of the Newport Resident Council, Commissioner Hall addressed the Commission and informed them that Elizabeth Fuerte has moved to a Section 8 residence and in accordance with the Newport Resident Council bylaws she is no longer eligible to serve on that board.

Commissioner Hall asked attorneys Nicholson, and Sabel of Rhode Island Legal Services, to review this matter.

Commissioner Crowley requested that the Authority's attorney, Mr. Nicholson, look into this issue with respect to Ms. Fuerte's eligibility to continue to serve on the Authority's Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Sabel indicated that he would look into the matter of Ms. Fuerte's eligibility to continue to serve on the Newport Resident Council board upon request of the Newport Resident Council.

Under Commissioners' Requests, the Chair stated that she has two issues she would like to address, the Hillside commercial building Request for Qualifications for a Developer, and the elderly security plan which has a June application deadline and requires a public hearing.

With regard to the Hillside commercial building the Secretary indicated that he will arrange a meeting with Paige Bronk of the city's Planning Department to determine if there are any setback requirements or zoning problems with the area in question as this information is needed prior to developing an RFQ.

The Chair requested that subsequent to the meeting with Paige Bronk an RFQ be prepared for the Commission's review at the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Discussion followed concerning possibilities for resident-owned businesses to lease the commercial building.

With regard to the elderly security program the Chair suggested that staff provide a recommendation for a plan at the May meeting, that a public hearing be scheduled between May and June, that the Commission make a decision at the June meeting and an application and waiver, if required, be prepared before the end of June.

Commissioner Bowley stated that he has received a number of calls from residents at Donovan Manor who are concerned about the possibility of losing security services and he requested that residents be reassured that security services are not going to be discontinued.

Commissioner Bowley stated that he has also received calls from residents regarding the elevators at Donovan Manor. He indicated that he would like the problem to be identified and the cost to fix it.

The Secretary informed Commissioner Bowley that he has the maintenance records for the elevators and he will prepare a report in response to his inquiry.

Commissioner Landry requested that the Luna Market be placed on the May Agenda for discussion.

The Commission received comment from Robert Sabel of Rhode Island Legal Services with regard to the resident-owned security company at the Authority's elderly sites.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bowley, seconded by Commissioner Landry, and unanimously carried the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.