

THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OF THE CITY OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND  
HELD ON THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF MAY, 2009

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Newport, Rhode Island met in regular session at the Newport Housing Authority Administration Office, Newport, Rhode Island at 4:30 p.m. on May 14, 2009.

Roll call followed the Pledge of Allegiance:

PRESENT:           Chairperson   Jan Shapin  
                  Vice Chair    Rodney Bowley  
                  Commissioner Frank Coleman  
                  "           Frank McCauley  
                  "           Constance Vergowven  
                  "           Cheryl Abney

ABSENT:           Commissioner Frank Landry

ALSO PRESENT:    Attorney Joseph J. Nicholson, Jr.

The meeting began with Commissioner Bowley announcing the yellow ribbon display in the Board Room in honor of Commissioner Abney's son, Lt. Christian Abney, who has been called to duty in Iraq. On behalf of the Board of Commissioner's of the Housing Authority of the City of Newport, we would like to extend our prayers to Christian wishing him and all of our troops a safe return home.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Coleman, seconded by Commissioner Vergowven, and unanimously carried the minutes of the regular monthly meeting held on April 9, 2009 were approved.

The monthly bills report was presented to the Commissioners.

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

The Secretary requested approval for payment to the following contractors:

- Trac Builders - \$1,335.40 – Change Order #3  
Donovan Manor Addition & Circle Driveway – Adjustments in elevations for handicap accessibility.
- Trac Builders - \$1,632.00 - Change Order #4  
Newport Fire Department requested items.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Coleman, seconded by Commissioner Bowley, and unanimously carried, the request for payment for the above contractor was approved.

- Trac Builders - \$39,952.50 –Payment #8
- Pezzuco Construction, Inc. - \$28,239.00 – Payment #5
- Innovative Construction, Inc. - \$53,831.00 – Payment #3

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bowley, seconded by Commissioner Vergowven, and unanimously carried, the request for payment for the above contractors was approved.

The following Resolution was introduced by Commissioner Vergowven, it being Resolution No. 1043. Same was read aloud and in full by Commissioner Bowley and considered by the Commissioners.

**RESOLUTION No. 1043**

**Section 8 Homeownership Vouchers in Newport Heights Phase 4-Homeownership Units**

**WHEREAS:** Rhode Island Law states that no Public Housing Authority (PHA) may operate in any area in which a PHA is already established without the consent by resolution of the PHA in that operating area; and

**WHEREAS,** the HOPE VI Revitalization Program will consist of seven (7) homeownership units on site in the revitalized community known as Newport Heights and homebuyers may have Section 8 vouchers to use toward the purchase of one of these homes; and

**WHEREAS,** the Housing Authority of the City of Newport does not presently administer a Section 8 Homeownership Program, it is the desire of the Authority to authorize one or more other Housing Authorities in Rhode Island to administer up to seven (7) Section 8 Homeownership Vouchers toward the purchase of these Phase 4 homes.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that one or more Rhode Island Housing Authorities shall be permitted to operate up seven (7) Section 8 homeownership vouchers in the Phase 4 Homeownership Program of Newport Heights located in the city of Newport, Rhode Island.

Commissioner Vergowven moved that the foregoing Resolution be adopted as introduced and read, which motion was seconded by Commissioner Bowley, and upon roll call the “Ayes” and “Nays” were as follows:

| AYES                | NAYS |
|---------------------|------|
| Commissioner Shapin | None |
| “ Bowley            |      |
| “ Coleman           |      |
| “ Abney             |      |
| “ Vergowven         |      |
| “ McCauley          |      |
| Absent “ Landry     |      |

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

The following Resolution was introduced by Commissioner Vergowven, it being Resolution No. 1044. Same was read aloud and in full by Commissioner McCauley and considered by the Commissioners.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1044**

**WHEREAS,** the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandated that the Housing Authority of the City of Newport (HACN) regularly conduct a study to update the flat rents (market based rent) it charges in its public housing program in accordance with HUD regulations; and

**WHEREAS,** flat rents provide an opportunity for higher income households to pay less than the standard 30% of income toward rent and utilities that most public housing residents pay by offering residents a choice to pay a flat rent or an income based rent; and

**WHEREAS,** HACN hired an independent appraiser to conduct a flat rent study to determine the market rent of the Authority’s public housing units and the results of that flat rent study, which was completed in April, revealed that the existing flat rents are substantially below the market rents that could be charged for the Authority’s public housing units (see existing flat rents and proposed new flat rents attached); and

**WHEREAS,** HACN has conducted an assessment of the residents of the Authority who currently pay a flat rent for their unit and the assessment revealed that the proposed increase in the flat rents would have an impact on a minimal number of existing flat rent payers, and as already known, 100% of households paying the flat rent are paying less than 30% of their income toward rent;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that all households will be provided an opportunity to pay the lower of the new flat rent or 30% of their income toward rent; and

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that because HACN has been mandated by HUD to increase its flat rents, it shall do so, and because HACN is very sympathetic to the needs of its residents, HACN will therefore request permission from HUD to provide a 120 day notice of the flat rent increase to residents as opposed to the standard 30 day notice HUD stipulates and in addition, HACN will request permission from HUD to phase the increase in over a two year period (50% of the flat rent increase taking effect in October 2009 and the other 50% increase in the new flat rent taking effect in 2010 at the time of annual recertification).

| AYES                |  | NAYS |
|---------------------|--|------|
| Commissioner Shapin |  | None |
| “ Bowley            |  |      |
| “ Coleman           |  |      |
| “ Abney             |  |      |
| “ Vergowven         |  |      |
| “ McCauley          |  |      |
| Absent “ Landry     |  |      |

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

The Secretary requested approval for the Earl Avenue Property Improvements Budget. The Board Sub-Committee met with the Earl Avenue residents recommending physical improvements of the property. The Secretary is seeking approval of two items 1). Tub cuts in 17 units with a total cost not to exceed \$20,400.00. 2). Health and safety improvements to circuit panels in the apartments. The Secretary is seeking approval to issue a purchase order to proceed with a bid award to Coastal Electric not to exceed \$14,200. Total property improvements in the amount of \$34,600.00.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Coleman, seconded by Commissioner McCauley and unanimously carried, the Earl Avenue budget was approved.

The Secretary requested approval of the Section 8 Administrative Plan Updates. 1) Add a priority for special admissions for Park Holm relocates. 2) Add a priority for special admissions to the Section 8 program for public housing administrative transfers for public housing residents of the HACN. 3). Expand the condition of eligibility for a Section 8 voucher to include that a household must be in good standing with any previous or current subsidized housing program (public housing or Section 8), including a condition that a household may not currently be in an eviction process.

Upon a motion by Commissioner McCauley, seconded by Commissioner Vergowven and unanimously carried, the Section 8 Administrative Plan Updates were approved.

The Secretary requested the Job Postings and Church Community Housing Corporation correspondence be received by the Board.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bowley, seconded by Commissioner McCauley and unanimously carried, the correspondence was received.

The Secretary submitted to the Commissioners the Consent Calendar items which included the Finance Reports, C.O.P. Report, Applications, Occupancy, April Collection/Loss Reports, Section 8 Report, HOPE VI & Development Report, and Resident Services.

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

Commissioner's Requests:

- Commissioner Bowley informed the Board of a presentation at the Newport Public Library for "Beth's Quest" to be held tonight at 7:00 p.m.
- A request to change the time of the meeting from 4:30 to 4:00 p.m. beginning in June. The Secretary will review the By-Laws on changing the time and/or day of the meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday). The By-Laws can be revised to meet the needs of all the Board members.

Upon a motion by Commissioner Bowley, seconded by Commissioner Coleman, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the regular monthly meeting at 5:30 p.m.