

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF
WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND

1. Call to order: 5:00 P.M. Regular Meeting August 20, 2009 at the Woonsocket Housing Authority, 679 Social Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895

Roll Call:

Chairwoman Lucienne L. Cote
Vice Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Albert Brien
Commissioner Gerard Frappier
Commissioner David Lahousse
Commissioner Normand Laliberte
Commissioner Gerard Remillard

Robert Kulik, Executive Director
Deputy Director, Duncan Speel
Attorney Howard Croll
Commissioner Normand Laliberte - Absent

- 1B. Good and Welfare for the Audience

A resident of St. Germain Manor stated to the Board that there were some security issues that needed to be addressed at the high rise. The resident was well assured that the issues were known to the WHA and every measure was being taken by the WHA and their Security Administrator to address these issues.

Several residents from Veteran's Memorial Family Complex addressed the Board with their concerns regarding the notices they received that the WHA was contemplating the elimination of Veteran's housing stock. The frequent questions that were asked were when this would happen, where would they go and what kind of help they would receive from the WHA.

The Executive Director explained that the WHA would work very closely with every family for their individual needs for relocation every step of the way. The WHA will pay for all moving expenses, provide them with another unit or Section 8 voucher if they prefer. The Director also added that this was not going to happen right away.

One of the residents suggested that there be a meeting with all of the 300 families at Veteran's Memorial to explain the situation so the rumors would come to an end.

Commissioner Frappier suggested that Permission to file application to SAC (Special Application Center) in Chicago for disposition of Veteran's Memorial Family Complex that is under new business be tabled pending a meeting with all of the residents and answer all pertinent questions.

Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to take New Business A out of order. A motion was made by Commissioner Frappier and seconded by Commissioner Lahousse.

A roll call vote was taken; the following were the "Ayes" and "Nays".

AYES

NAYS

Vice Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Cote
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to table New Business Item A pending an informational meeting with all of the Veteran's Memorial residents at a place to be announced. A motion was made to table by Commissioner Lahousse and seconded by Commissioner Remillard.

A. Permission to file application to SAC (Special Application Center) in Chicago for disposition of Veteran's Memorial Family Complex (tabled).

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the "Ayes" and "Nays".

AYES

NAYS

Vice Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Cote
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

2. Good and Welfare for Commissioners

Commissioner Brien stated that he finds it very interesting that there are third generation families that he was not aware of until just tonight. He went on to state that we need to proceed very cautiously and at all times be aware that these units mean a whole lot to the recipients and be more careful and softer with our communications.

3. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 18, 2009 and special meeting of July 16, 2009. A motion was made by Commissioner Brien and seconded by Commissioner Lahousse.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the "Ayes" and "Nays":

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice-Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

4. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to approve the bills paid for the months of June and July, 2009. A motion was made by Commissioner Frappier and seconded by Vice Chairman Baldelli.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the "Ayes" and "Nays".

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

5. Communications and Interest of the Authority.

Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to receive and place on file communication

items A-B. Vice Chairman Baldelli made the motion and was seconded by Commissioner Frappier.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”:

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice-Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

6. Report of the Secretary

- A. The Executive Director’s Report was received and placed on file upon motion of Vice Chairman Baldelli, seconded by Commissioner Frappier.

The Director submitted his report as written only adding that Asia Stambler, HUD Engineer, came back out for a procurement follow-up review and we passed with flying colors.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice-Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

- B. The Deputy Director’s report was received and place on file upon motion of Commissioner Brien and seconded by Commissioner Frappier.

Deputy Director Speel submitted his report as written mentioning that the Haven of Grace has submitted a new proposal and is on the Director’s desk for signature. This was not mentioned in his report but wanted the Board to be aware of this. Vice Chairman Baldelli asked if he felt if this is a productive program and Deputy Speel answered that it is very well received.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken as amended; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice-Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

- C. The reports of the Direct Staff, Legal and Financial were received and placed on file upon motion of Commissioner Brien seconded by Vice Chairman Baldelli.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

7. Report of Committees
None

8. Unfinished Business
None

9. New Business

- A. Permission to file application to SAC (Special Application Center) in Chicago for disposition of Veteran’s Memorial Family Complex.

Taken out of order following Good and Welfare for Audience.

- B. Permission to post position of Procurement Officer. A motion was made by Commissioner Frappier and seconded by Commissioner Lahousse.

Commissioner Frappier asked if this was going to be advertised in the papers and the Director stated no it was being posted in-house.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

- C. Approval to Award Contract for Rubbish Removal to Waste Haulers in the amount of \$21,576 per year. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Frappier.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

- D. Approval to Award Contract for Recycling to Waste Haulers in the amount of \$19, 987 per year. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Frappier.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the “Ayes” and “Nays”.

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice Chairman Baldelli

Commissioner Brien
Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

E. The Chairwoman called for a motion to go into Executive Session. A motion was made by Commissioner Lahousse and seconded by Vice Chairman Baldelli.

Commissioner Brien objected because he felt it did not meet the standards for a closed session. There was discussion as to what was to be brought up in Executive Session and it was decided by the attorney that it met the criteria.

There was no further discussion. A roll call vote was taken; the following were the "Ayes" and "Nays".

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice Chairman Baldelli

Commissioner Brien

Commissioner Frappier
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Remillard

Presentation by Andrew Daniels of Mapplan Associates, Inc. on draft of Management Needs Assessment he completed and will formalize in a written report for October.

Mr. Daniels outlined the need for performance and compliance by HUD standards e.g. SEMAP, PHAS, REAC, and a review of documents such as but not limited to our ACOP and Section 8 Administrative Plan.

Mr. Daniels discussed organizational capacity vrs. Mission managing rental subsidies, tenant based section 8 and Public Housing subsidies. He further stated this can be fungible e.g. 150 units of public housing can turned into 150 units of section 8 HCV, thus increasing the section 8 program and decreasing the public housing program. The implications impact the organization as we go forward.

Project based accounting changes the structure of the organization and complexity with cost allocation and AMPS with fixed central office limits. HUD is driving public housing towards a more privet sector model with each property having it's

own standalone budget. Management has gotten much more sophisticated. A proposed organizational realignment was presented with no Deputy Director with the organization moving to a corporate model having five branches of senior staff reporting to the Executive Director. New skill sets will require critical thinking of a staff that is competent but not problem solvers. The section 8 program used to be about leasing up and managing landlords. Now it is about managing budget authority, forecasting financial needs and paying attention to HUD regulatory requirements.

We need to establish property level budgets and manage them completely. Issues currently tend to come to the Deputy Directors office for resolution; Mapplan is recommending resolution at the property Managers level. Properties will be managed on income streams from project based budgeting.

Mapplan recommends a System Administrator to free up the CFO and assist the WHA departments with issues. HUD will be issuing substantial changes to the section 8 program and the current staff is going to have to adapt.

Mr. Daniels discussed the need for a Procurement Officer along with a reduction of Central Supply warehouse inventory. The recommendation was to pull under finance a procurement/Contracting officer. The WHA already has someone who has been doing some of this and we can build on this position, however again will need to get the union to agree to the change including modernization work responsibilities.

Due to the size of our organization we do not need the current HR position but should consider moving the person that heads up this department over to the Executive Directors office for a confidential Administrative Assistant, a non-union position with responsibilities over insurance. We would not be creating another position for salary and benefits but moving existing staff better utilizing their skills. The current executive assistant is a union position and is not in the best interest of the WHA. The shift proposed would be non-union for confidentiality. Discussion over current Executive Assistant going to Procurement/Contracting position having sufficient skills.

Discussion over future staffing needs and size along with responsibilities for Senior Housing Manager leading to Asset Manager and potential assistant for 631 units.

We need to attract, hire, train and promote people with integrity, people skills and problem solving skills but do it in a model with the people that are here. Work with their strong points and deal with the weak points.

Currently the WHA is still a central command type of organization rather than a distributed type of command organization. We will require a different skill set

doing more with less. Positions will get redefined and people given the chance to succeed or fail.

Discussed the existing Property Managers and their future roll as Asset Managers along with the loss of units and impact on the budget for economic viability of organization with the need to plan streams of subsidy.

The presentation wrapped up with Mr. Daniels recommending the Board let management do the planning and report back to the board for decisions on portfolio repositioning.

10. The public meeting ended at 6:10 p.m.. The Board of Commissioners went into Executive Session.

Robert Kulik, Executive Director