

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF
WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND

1. Call to order: 4:00 p.m. Regular Meeting December 16, 2010 at the Woonsocket Housing Authority, 679 Social Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call:

Chairwoman Lucienne L. Cote
Vice-Chairman Charles C. Baldelli
Commissioner David Lahousse
Commissioner Normand Laliberte
Commissioner Janet Lemieux
Commissioner Gerard Remillard

Commissioner Gerard Frappier - absent
Deputy Director, Duncan Speel
Robert Kulik, Executive Director
Attorney Paul Fontaine – arrived 4:03 p.m.

2. Good and Welfare for the Audience - None

3. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of November 18, 2010. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Laliberte.

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

AYES

NAYS

Chairwoman Cote
Vice-Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

4. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to approve the bills paid for the month of November 2010. A motion was made by Commissioner Laliberte and seconded by Vice Chairman Baldelli.

At the Director's request, the Finance Director explained what might have appeared to be a gap in last month's check numbers, but in fact was not.

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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

5. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to accept and place on file the Communications and Interest of the Authority. A motion was made by Commissioner Laliberte 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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

6. Report of the Secretary

Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to receive and place on file, the report of the Secretary, for purposes of discussion. A motion was made by Commissioner Laliberte and seconded by Vice-Chairman Baldelli.

The Director explained that there might be other possibilities for an application to the SAC. A final letter will be sent to SAC soon explaining what the actual cost will be to rehabilitate the units at Veteran's Memorial that the WHA wants to keep; the figure is closer to \$200,000 - \$250,000, not the \$80,000 that the SAC suggested. A presentation will be made to the Board, probably in February. Scattered sites will be sold, probably on January 30, 2011, the 18 units that were held up from last month. That sale will leave us with approximately 18 units and the WHA would like to partner with a non-profit to somehow use those remaining units to house our homeless veterans. We also hope to be presenting a draft of the 2011 operating budget at the January meeting, for your approval. The Director asked the Board for an additional week's vacation in his contract and in light of the excellent standing of the Housing Authority this past year and considering the failure of the façade at the high rises and the fight he put up to obtain \$4.5 million in emergency funding to rectify that problem. The Director did not ask for a monetary raise, just the week's vacation time. In January the WHA will be hosting a procurement training for in and out-of-state housing authorities. Chairwoman Cote invited any commissioners who might be interested and available to attend the training session. The Director praised the Deputy's performance on the radio last week, and reiterated that he feels that he has strengthened every department at the WHA; he also praised the employees for their hard work every day.

Vice-Chairman Baldelli asked if the WHA is working with homeless veterans' groups. The Director stated that he today had discussion with our realtor to work with a prospective buyer to convert the remaining units into housing for homeless vets. The Director also stated that the WHA is looking to go forward with assisted living next year.

Commissioner Lemieux asked the Director how many weeks vacation he had. The Director stated four, looking for a fifth.

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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

6B. Report of the Deputy Director

Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to receive and place on file, the report of the Deputy, for purposes of discussion. A motion was made by Commissioner Laliberte and seconded by Commissioner Lahousse.

The Deputy submitted his report as written, highlighting that the overhead electric bid went up substantially due to some code requirements and police details that are required when the work is performed. There is also a request under new business to donate some old computer equipment to a non-profit.

Commissioner Laliberte asked the Deputy if there was any update on the medical marijuana issue in WHA properties. HUD will only go as far as to say that it is a lease violation and it is a violation of federal law. There was some discussion on the medical marijuana issue and where one with a prescription can obtain the marijuana. The Deputy stated that it is now available in pill form and in a nose spray over-the-counter.

Vice-Chairman Baldelli commended Deputy Speel for a very informative hour on the radio informing the listening audience of the many contributions of the Housing Authority to the City of Woonsocket. Other Commissioners agreed with praise for the Deputy.

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

AYES

Chairwoman Cote
Vice-Chairman Baldelli
Commissioner Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

NAYS

Commissioner Laliberte made a motion to amend the Director's contract to allow an additional week's vacation, for a total of five weeks. Vice-Chairman Baldelli seconded the motion.

Commissioner Lemieux asked if this item needed to be placed on the agenda. The attorney explained that any item on the docket open for review and discussion, is open to a motion. Commissioner Lemieux also asked who signs the Director's contract. The Director stated the Chairman, in this instance former Chairman Albert Brien, signs the contract.

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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux - abstain
Commissioner Remillard

6C. Reports of Direct Staff, Legal and Financial

Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to receive and place on file, the reports of Direct Staff, Legal and Financial, for purposes of discussion. A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Lahousse.

Vice-Chairman Baldelli asked about collection activity for the Section 8 department. The Finance Director explained that when the Section 8 staff discovers fraud, they enter into repayment agreements with the tenants. The reason that the WHA does not attempt to evict is that in situations of eviction, monies owed are not often collected. The attorney stated that the collection activity on repayment agreements is fairly successful. The attorney commended WHA staff efforts to collect rents both in the Public Housing and Section 8 Departments. Commissioner Lemieux followed up on Vice Chairman’s original question about the monies owed. The Finance Director again explained that the amount is monies due as a result of detected fraud on which the WHA Section 8 department has entered into a repayment agreement. He stressed that the majority of the money is owed by current tenants who are making monthly payments on it.

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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

7. Report of Committees

None

8. Unfinished Business

None

9. New Business

- A. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to accept Resolution #1078: Approval to write off uncollectible accounts. A motion was made by Commissioner Laliberte and seconded by Vice Chairman Baldelli.

Commissioner Lemieux asked if the write-offs could be done more frequently than annually. The Director stated that going forward it might be beneficial to do it every six months. It will be discussed.

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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

- B. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to accept Resolution #1079: Approval to name the Executive Director, or his designee, as the official spokesperson for the Woonsocket Housing Authority. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Laliberte.

Commissioner Lemieux asked how this was different from what we have now. The Director responded that it is not different, but before this vote, it has not been in writing. The Deputy stated that the update will be reflected in the codification book on-line and in print.

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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

- C. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to approve of the donation of nine old computers to a non-profit organization, the Kent Center. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Baldelli 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 Lahousse
Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux - abstain
Commissioner Remillard

- D. Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to accept the award of the overhead electrical contract to the low, responsive, responsible bidder, Ryan Electric, in the best interest of the Housing Authority. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Baldelli and seconded by Commissioner Laliberte.

Commissioner Lemieux asked where Ryan Electric was from. The Deputy stated RI.

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 Lahousse

Commissioner Laliberte
Commissioner Lemieux
Commissioner Remillard

10. Adjournment

Chairwoman Cote asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Commissioner Laliberte and seconded by Vice-Chairman Baldelli at 4:46 p.m. Roll call vote was unanimous.

Robert Kulik, Executive Director