



**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONER
REGULAR MEETING: January 27, 2005**

PHA Conference Room

100 Broad Street

Providence, RI 02903

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Low called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Executive Director called the roll:

Present

Theodore Low
Paul Waldman
Rita Williams
Jaime Castillo
Dolores Cascella
Dorothy Waters

Absent

Dr. Thomas J. Anton (Excused)
Raymond F. Murphy, Jr. (Excused)
Paul Lewis (Excused)
Balbina Young

Six members were present and a quorum was declared.

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

There were no resident comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (December 9, 2004)

Vice Chairman Low called for approval of the December 9th meeting minutes. Commissioner Waldman motioned for approval. Commissioner Castillo seconded the motion. A vote was taken. There being no opposition, Vice Chairman Low declared the minutes approved.

VICE CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

General Remarks

The Vice Chairman stated that he met with the Executive Director prior to the meeting in was informed that things are going well – that Housing Authority personnel work hard getting through the blizzard and the clean up afterward.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

▪ ***Budget & Finance Committee***

Commissioner Castillo stated that the committee met and were provided with updated information from HUD in the following areas:

- New Operating Fund Subsidy
- Project Based Accounting
- Voucher Program

The committee was also briefed on the income and expense summary for the first six months of FY05. (See attached detailed meeting summary.)

▪ ***Asset Management/Capital Improvements Committee***

Commissioner Williams stated that the committee met and discussed the five storms we have had since November stating that during a typical storm, five to six employees can handle the clean up but during last week's blizzard, employees were working 16-18 hour shifts to deal with the snow and we have incurred a lot of overtime. Commissioner Williams also updated the Board on the status of several contracts and the Capital and Five-Year Plan. (See attached detailed meeting summary.)

▪ Resident Services Committee

Commissioner Waldman stated that the committee met and were briefed on events that occurred over Christmas and other winter holidays noting especially that the Resident Association at Parenti Villa collected \$200 in donations for the Tsunami efforts. These funds were matched by CVS and donated to the Red Cross. (See attached detailed meeting summary.)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**Snow Storm/Thanks to Staff**

Mr. O'Rourke added his special appreciation to the Facilities Management Department for their outstanding efforts during the recent blizzard. He further stated that a pizza party will be scheduled in the future to express the Housing Authority's appreciation for their effort.

Annual Board Training & Development Retreat

The Executive Director stated that the Board of Commissioners Annual Training and Development Retreat has been scheduled for April 22nd through the 24th, 2005 at the Chatham Bars Conference Center where there will be a large concentration on strategic planning.

Monthly Management Report Highlights

The Executive Director reported the following highlights in December's Monthly Management Report:

- Occupancy is at 98.2%
- Rent collections are at 93.5% - down slightly but normal for December
- 216 cars were tagged and 71 were towed
- There are 1,003 people on the pre-application list and 3,700+ on the regular waiting list
- Finance is projecting a 900k deficit for the fiscal year but at the six month mark we have a surplus
- 5,042 work orders have been completed
- 36 units turned around for the month

He stated that more detailed information could be found in each Commissioner's copy of the Monthly Management Report.

Section 8 Funding Status

The Executive Director stated that there have been dramatic cutbacks in the Section 8 Voucher Program. The impact on the Housing Authority is substantial and will result in far fewer Section 8 Vouchers being available for lease. In FY05, the number of units allocated is unchanged from the previous year, however, the average Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) has gone from an average of \$542-\$614 in FY04 to a HUD allowed \$497 in FY05. The renewal amount based on the current HAP would have been \$14,074,656 under the old renewal system; however, the actual renewal will be \$12,463,537, a loss of \$1.6 million. The Housing Authority will do everything it can not to take vouchers away from those already holding them and we will not be issuing any new vouchers. HUD has not deregulated the program as promised, which would have allowed us to target higher income Section 8 participants-thus allowing for smaller HAP payments. (See attached summary report.)

Public Housing Assessment System Score and Appeal

The Housing Authority received a preliminary score of 88 out of a total possible score of 100 on our FY2004 PHAS score. We analyzed the initial score and determined HUD had not given us three points for our resident survey follow-up plan. The initial appeal was denied because HUD claims we did not submit a follow-up plan. A follow-up appeal was submitted providing a downloaded copy of the page submitted with the follow-up plan dates. HUD still denied the appeal because they claim it did not register on their electronic site. As a result of this, we will be scored a "Standard Performer" with a rating of 88. This is unfortunate because we take PHAS very seriously and actually do much more for a follow-up plan than just adding dates on our resident surveys. Unfortunately, it's indicative of HUD's lack of flexibility and understanding how operations work. Their website that receives the PHAS information has been problematic for years. The PHA uses the PHAS score as an incentive for the staff to earn an additional day-off (R.I. Independence Day). If we achieved High-Performer, we gave the staff the day off. Because, we believe, it is HUD's error, we are awarding the day to the staff for their achievement anyway.

Development Status

- Williams Woods Place

RI Department of Environmental Management is still requiring additional work to be done before they approve our plan at Williams-Woods. Their additional requirements will be added to our costs. The architectural drawings for the project are 99% complete and Winn Development will be going out to bid soon. The project remains over cost on paper. We can only hope that there are contractors that bid that are "hungry" enough to provide a low bid. If not, we may need to request a higher rent structure for the project. We are currently at 82% of allowable rents, but RI Housing requested we not ask for the maximum.

PHA Annual Community Service Awards

The Executive Director explained that Annual Awards are presented to individuals or organizations who provide services to the PHA. This year's Annual Community Awards were presented to:

Providence Police Department

This award was presented to Colonel Dean Esserman chief of the Providence Police Department for the department's assistance in providing a safer environment for residents. The chief was personally thanked for increasing the number of officers assigned to the PHU and the integrity he has restored to the Police Department.

Chief Esserman thanked the Board of Commissioners and PHA Staff for this award stating that he is most proud that the award is inscribed with "Providence Police Department" and not his name. Chief Esserman met with the Executive Director when he first took the job as Police Chief and asked for trust and patience while re-organizing the Department. He stated that the smartest thing you can do is work for a man you believe in, work for a Mayor who has given the police department back to the people and surround yourself with the best you can find, most notably Major Paul Fitzgerald. He accepts this award on behalf of the Providence Police Department and hopes that they are giving the community the Police Department they want.

Girl Scouts of RI

This award was presented to Jeannette Thomas and Kate Pickle from the Girls Scouts of RI for their tremendous assistance to PHA residents. There are currently fifty young ladies participating in the Girl Scout program. This program supports leadership and reliance.

Jeannette Thomas thanked the Board of Commissioners and PHA Staff for this award stated that they are very honored and appreciative. They have completed two very successful years and have just received notification from HUD for a third year of funding. They receive great support from management and staff.

Katie Pickle added her thanks for our cooperation and support throughout the years in carrying out this program.

Russell Krapf (Providence Fire Department)

Russell Krapf of the Providence Fire Department was recognized for his efforts in providing fire safety training to PHA residents. The Executive Director stated the Housing Authority has an in-house safety committee headed by Domenic V. Schiano, Deputy Director and Risk Manager. This committee works together reviewing all types of accidents to determine how best to avoid them in the future. When a number of needless fires occurred, the committee decided to provide fire safety training to its residents. Since June of 2004, Russell Krapf has held 6 training sessions at our elderly developments in conjunction with hot dog roasts and 4 on Saturdays at our family developments in conjunction with pizza parties. The feedback we have received has been outstanding.

Russell Krapf thanked the Board of Commissioners and PHA Staff for considering him for this award. He looks upon this as "just doing his job". He further stated that these training sessions could not be done without the support of the Providence Fire Department and Marshall Farrell. He thanked us for providing the hot dogs and pizza.

Fire Marshall George Farrell, on behalf of Chief Costa, thanked the Housing Authority for our assistance. He stated that Russell has done an outstanding job re-focusing efforts and concentrating on areas where fires have occurred. The number of fires and injuries has decreased. He stated that the Chief does hold the Department accountable and he is proud to work with people like Russell.

Mike Kelly (Papa Gino's)

The fourth award was to be presented to Mike Kelly of Papa Gino's Restaurant, for donating 122 boxes of pizza for the fire safety training sessions at the family developments. Mike was unable to attend the meeting and his award will be given to him during the next week.

RESOLUTION(S)

There were no resolutions.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Chairman Low accepted a motion to adjourn from Commissioner Cascella which was seconded by Commissioner Waldman to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Kimberly Dawley
Recording Secretary

Stephen J. O'Rourke
Executive Director