

PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

REGULAR MEETING: October 22, 2009

PHA Conference Room 100 Broad Street Providence, RI 02903

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Waldman called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The Executive Director called the roll:

Present Absent

Paul F. Waldman

Dolores Cascella

Dorothy Waters

Nicholas Narducci

Robert Clarkin

Hilary Silver

JT. Taylor

Roger Giraud

Venez Madrid John Igliazzi

Barbara Fields (Excused)

Nine members were present, constituting a quorum.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (September 24, 2009)

Chairman Waldman called for approval of the September 24th meeting minutes. Commissioner Cascella moved approval of the minutes. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. A vote was taken. There being no opposition, Chairman Waldman declared the minutes approved.

RESIDENTS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Cascella stated that the cultural event at Dominica Manor on October 21 was a great success. A large group of residents attended to share food and information about their cultures. Commissioner Cascella stated that Resident Services Coordinator, Leslie Price, did a wonderful job of organizing the event.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

New Board Members

Chairman Waldman welcomed Venuz Madrid and Roger Giraud to their first board meeting and asked them to give a brief introduction about themselves. Commissioner Madrid stated she is employed in the code enforcement for Central Falls. She said her experience with housing, including new construction and older buildings should prove helpful in her role as Commissioner.

Commissioner Giraud stated that he is a long term resident of Providence and worked in city planning both as a city employee and as a consultant. He is now an investment advisor with Wells Fargo.

Chairman Waldman appointed Commissioner Madrid to the Capitol Improvement Committee, and Commissioner Giraud as chairman of the Finance and Audit Committee.

NAHRO Conference

Chairman Waldman stated that he attended the NAHRO (National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials) Conference in Washington, DC last month with the Executive Director, Human Resources Manager Kimberly Dawley, and Special Projects Manager Talitha VanDenBurghe. Commissioner Waldman was appointed to the national NAHRO Commissioners' Committee, which consists of a group of housing authority board chairmen that deal with issues affecting commissioners. He stated that he looks forward to assisting NAHRO with its mission.

Annual PHA Meeting

Chairman Waldman stated that the Annual Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 19th; a week earlier than the usual schedule due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Some type of an event will be planned for after the meeting.

70th Anniversary Event

Chairman Waldman reminded the commissioners that the PHA 70th Anniversary event will be held next Wednesday, October 28th at the Westin Hotel in Providence. There will be a cocktail hour, a full, sit

down dinner and a band. The PHA will recognize Mayor David Cicilline and Senator Jack Reed for their contribution to public housing. The PHA will also recognize three “community partners” at the event. It should be an eventful evening.

Board Retreat

Chairman Waldman stated that the location, time and topics for the 2010 Board of Commissioners Retreat are still being decided. He asked that the commissioners let him know about their preferences. The Executive Director stated that a list of topics will be presented at the next meeting for discussion. One topic that may be part of the retreat is an exercise with a public policy software application using the Prisoner Re-entry Program as an example.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Asset Management/Capital Improvements Committee

The report was presented by Commissioner Cascella to be entered into the record. [See the attached report.]

Budget, Finance & Audit Committee

Commissioner Giraud presented the report to be entered into the record. [See the attached report.]

Resident Services Committee

The report was presented to be entered into the record. [See the attached report.]

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Monthly Management Report Highlights

The Executive Director stated that the Monthly Management Report covers all functions of the housing authority and is organized by department. This month the Finance section is not up-to-date due to the transition from the old software application to the new; it will be up to date by the December meeting. The information on grants and expenditures is up to date and is very important because most grants include dates by which the funds must be expended. He urged the Commissioners to look over the reports and speak with him at any time if they have questions.

Attention to Items in Board Packet

Each month one or more articles related to public housing are included in each Commissioner's packet in order to provide Commissioners with information on housing issues. This month's packet includes the following:

- A press release from HUD about their campaign to increase the hiring of low income individuals and public housing residents by state and local agencies. The Executive Director stated that a program is in place with the PHA and Groundworks to train residents for landscaping jobs. Talitha VanDenBurghe, Special Projects Manager, and Paul Campbell are also working with Mike Van Leeston and Ali Cabral of the Van Leeston Group to set up a program to train residents for jobs in the healthcare field. Commissioner Narducci**

stated that he would like to be notified of any training opportunities available to residents of Chad Brown.

- An article from Cincinnati.com about how the new spending rules are slowing the use of the stimulus funds.**
- An article from Forbes.com about current public housing issues, using the New York City and London, England housing authorities as examples.**
- An article from ChicagoNow.com about what has gone wrong with public housing in Chicago.**
- An article from the New York Times about 6 women who forged documents and posed as victims of abuse to get subsidized rent.**
- An article from Multi-Housing News about the future of GSEs such as Freddie Mac and Fannie May.**

70th Anniversary Event

The Executive Director stated that there will not be a long speaking program at the 70th Anniversary event. Only the Executive Director and Chairman will speak, and then awards will be handed out to organizations and individuals who have assisted the housing authority in its mission. The awards will be given to Providence Community Action Program for replacing windows and helping with weatherization; Comprehensive Community Action Program for providing counseling services at some PHA developments; Family Services of Rhode Island who also provide counseling at some PHA sites and are working to set up a children's zone at Chad Brown; and to Senator Jack Reed and Mayor Cicilline.

Annual Board Meeting

The Executive Director stated that the Annual Board Meeting will probably be scheduled for the third week in November. There will be a slide presentation of significant events that took place at the PHA during fiscal year 2009. The Annual Report that includes all of the financial information for the fiscal year will be presented in December.

Prisoner Re-Entry Program

The Executive Director stated that the Prisoner Re-Entry Program did not receive funding in the first round, but they will apply again in December.

Development Opportunities (RHF Funds)

The Executive Director stated that the PHA has received about \$54,000 per year for the last several years as compensation for four row houses (32 units) at Hartford Park that were torn down. The funds are to be used to develop more affordable housing. We were hoping to build a row house in the Silver Lake/Olneyville area, but the tax credits are not favorable at this time. We are now doing a review on purchasing and refurbishing one or two foreclosed properties adjacent to our existing developments for project-based Section 8 vouchers.

Commissioner Silver asked if this related to the Neighborhood

Stabilization Program that HUD is including in the 2010 budget. The Executive Director stated that it is not related but that the housing authority will also look at options for using Neighborhood Stabilization Funds, possibly at Manton Heights or Hartford Park, as a joint venture with the local planning department and the state housing finance agency, if the program is approved by congress.

Commissioner Silver also asked how the PHA will identify foreclosed properties given that the Realty Track and Warren Group information is generally not up to date. The Executive Director stated that the PHA would work with local banks to identify properties that are in pre-foreclosure and work to make a deal with them before they foreclose.

US Inspection Group Results

The Executive Director stated that the PHA is required by HUD to have all of its 2,606 units inspected annually. The PHA contracts with US Inspection Group (USIG) to conduct the inspections of our housing portfolio. We time their inspections in order to identify any potential problems before the HUD inspections. The USIG inspections were completed last month. A report is attached detailing the USIG scores, as compared to the HUD passing scores, and our own PHA standards. All PHA properties had a passing score. The HUD REAC inspections have just begun this week. The physical inspection accounts for 30% of the total HUD REAC score. [See the attached report].

Status of Competitive CFP Grants

The Executive Director stated that HUD is still saying that they did not receive the \$7.3 million in competitive grant proposals from the PHA despite the fact that we have evidence to prove that they were submitted correctly. Senator Reed's office intervened, but was also unable to convince them to accept the proposals. Commissioner Fields is currently attending a presentation by HUD Secretary Donovan at Harvard. She will speak to the Secretary personally about the situation, if an opportunity arises. We are also continuing to work with the partners who assisted in putting together the original grant proposals, and are looking for other funding, in particular for the energy conservation measures.

Waiting List Purge

The Executive Director stated that the Resident Selection Office has completed a purge of the wait list over the last several months. They sent out over 300 inquiries to people who have been on the waiting list for a long period of time. 289 responded and will stay on the list, 68 did not respond and will be removed from the list, and 23 were returned to us with incorrect addresses and will also be removed from the list. [See the attached report].

Capital Fund Program/CFFP Status Report

The Executive Director presented a slide show of photos, including both the Stimulus Fund projects and the Capital Fund projects. [See

the attached printout.]

Commissioner Silver asked if we have received feedback from the residents about the current projects. The Executive Director stated that the managers and foremen have received a lot of very positive comments.

Energy Performance Contract

The Executive Director stated that the Energy Performance Contract is 95% complete. The new heating systems have been tested by the recent cold weather, and although there were a few problems, they have been corrected and, overall, everything is working well. Commissioner Cascella stated that the crews who worked at Dominica Manor were fantastic. The last project is the co-generation plant at Chad Brown; we will be working on an agreement with National Grid to sell extra power back to them.

Codding Court/Roger Williams/Scattered Sites Presentation

Emmy Kmet, the manager of Codding Court, Roger Williams and the Scattered Sites presented a slide show detailing the history, resident characteristics, physical needs, and plans for AMP 2. [See the attached printout.]

RESOLUTION(S)

There were no resolutions.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Waldman accepted a motion from Commissioner Clarkin which was seconded by Commissioner Taylor, to adjourn the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

Submitted by: Approved by:

Beth Herosy Stephen J. O'Rourke

Recording Secretary Executive Director