

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, May 22, 2014; 5:00 p.m.**

PHA Conference Room

100 Broad Street

Providence, RI 02903

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nicolas Retsinas called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Nicolas Retsinas
Thomas Ryan
Dolores Cascella
Roger Giraud
John Iglizzi
Nicholas Narducci
Ricardo Patino
JT Taylor
Dorothy Waters

Absent:

Kevin Jackson
Hilary Silver

Eight members were present constituting a quorum to conduct business. Commissioner Iglizzi arrived at 5:10 p.m. bringing the attendance to nine.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to accept and approve the regular meeting minutes of 03/17/14 and 04/24/14. The motion was made by Commissioner Narducci, seconded by Commissioner Waters. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

None

Chairman's Report

The Chairman commented how he enjoyed the 'Get Connected' graduation at Manton Heights. Sorrel Devine, Director of Resident Services gave a brief overview of the event. He also stated he was very impressed with the Resident Advisory Board 'RAB' meeting he attended and thanked Commissioner Taylor for Chairing the meeting and Commissioners Cascella and Waters for their participation. The Chairman suggested the members of the board attend a RAB meeting to hear first-hand what the various association issues are.

INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Tavares introduced a new employee of the PHA, Douglas Walker, Associate Director of Finance. Doug is a Certified Forensic Auditor who comes with extensive experience in dealing with HUD, Public Housing, as well as Section 8.

Secondly, the Director stated starting May 27 the new PHA summer hours would be 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Finally, and sadly, Director Tavares noted the tragic shooting of one of our tenants, 20 year old, Devon Taylor. His 15-year-old sister, Destiny Taylor was wounded and expected to recover from her wounds. The accused shooter was an 18 year-old named Joseph Taylor. The Director assured the board that the PHA is taking necessary precautions and working closely with the police department and other authorities in dealing with this issue.

Chairman Retsinas acknowledged Commissioner Iglizzi.

Commissioner Iglizzi voiced his deep concerns that the violence pertaining to the PHA properties is mostly gang related. He pleaded to the board for additional money in the budget for more presence in security or cameras. He is concerned that residents did not come forward because of fear and feels that more needs to be done to protect our tenants.

Director Tavares stated that after the incident at Hartford a meeting was held with Chairman Retsinas, the Chief of Police, Barbara Fields of HUD in Boston, Teddy Gross and others to identify the violence with gang activity. As to security, we are working on adding more manpower and applying for a federal grant to implement more cameras. In addition, we are continuing to work with the Police Department and HUD. The Director stated the PHA cameras detected the Hartford incident.

Commissioner Narducci commented that the presence of armed force security and security vehicles would have a bigger impact than a security guard patrolling the properties. The Commissioner also stressed the importance of having extended hours at the Boys & Girls Club until 10:00 p.m. to keep the kids off the streets.

Commissioner Cascella is concerned about the boarders and lodgers at Dominica entering the building in the middle of the night after security leaves and staying for days. She stated Management is fully aware of the incidents, yet the situation has not been addressed.

The Chairman said he would like to convene a meeting with the Executive Director, Director of Security, and City officials to explore our options.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Budget and Finance: (Comm. Giraud)
- Resident Services: (Comm. Silver)
- Capital Improvements: (Comm. Cascella)
- Executive Committee: (Chair Retsinas)

Budget & Finance: Commissioner Giraud stated we are ten months into the FY2014 and he is pleased with the numbers. With the selection of an auditor firm underway, three firms have been selected and the Finance Committee will be interviewing two of the finalists. Therefore, the Finance Committee is asking the board to approve the committee's final selection decision for an auditor and allow the Executive Director to work with the finalist on finalizing a contract and report at the next board meeting.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to accept and approve the committee's final selection decision for an auditor firm. The motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

Resident Services: Sorrel Devine, Director of Resident Services stated, with the interest in time, the Commissioners could view the information in their packets.

Capital Improvements: Commissioner Patino noted bids have gone out to install handi-cap push pad door openers for the community rooms at Kilmartin, Dominica and 335 Hartford. Repairs are in the process on the main waste line at Sunset Village; exterior repairs have started at Hanover Street; and, Carlson Corp. was awarded a contract to replace the windows, doors, gutters, and siding at Mitchell Street.

Allan Pacific, Associate Director of Field Operations added the repairs to the main waste line at Sunset Village are complete.

Commissioner Iglizzi would like the residents of Carroll Tower informed that their concerns have been addressed. Chairman Retsinas made note to the commissioner's request and suggested the board revisit all the high-rises again in the future.

RESOLUTIONS

Director Tavares stated that there is a routine resolution #4225 for board consideration, authorizing the submission of the CDBG Grant application to the City of Providence.

Resolutions:

#4225: Approve the PHA's application for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding and directs the Executive Director to submit the application forthwith.

A motion was made by Commissioner Patino and seconded by Commissioner Taylor. A roll call vote was taken, voting in favor: Commissioners Waters, Taylor, Patino, Giraud, Cascella, Vice Chairman Ryan and Chairman Retsinas. Abstaining: Commissioners Iglizzi and Narducci. The vote being 7-2, the resolution was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Director Tavares approached the board with a motion that is annually required by HUD to approval a Schedule for the Flat Rents and Maximum rents.

A motion was made by Commissioner Iglizzi seconded by Commissioner Cascella. A voice vote was taken the motion passed being 9-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Retsinas asked Director Tavares to introduce Trinity Financial. The Director introduced Jim Keefe President of Trinity Financial who gave a brief introduction of what Trinity will be presenting. He then introduced Chris Stanley, Architect and Dan Drazon, Project Manager who provided an overview of the design plan of the Olneyville CNI Project.

Chairman Retsinas addressed the board stating there are two parts to consider this evening. First, to reach an agreement with Trinity Financial allowing PHA to complete the requirements of the planning grant which we are contractually bound to submit. Second, Trinity Financials vision of what the development would look like if we were to apply for an implementation grant.

After the presentation, commissioners addressed their questions and concerns to Trinity. Commissioner Iglizzi would like an agreement stating the PHA will not be liable should the project not be completed in time. Chairman Retsinas gave his perspective, stating that the CNI Project is a unique opportunity for the PHA to enter into a contract with Trinity Financial and urged the board's consideration of the project.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to authorize the Executive Director to finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Trinity Financial, a motion was made by Commissioner Patino, seconded by Vice Chairman Ryan. Said motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Retsinas accepted a motion to adjourn from Commissioner Cascella, seconded by Commissioner Waters. Said motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Lisa Cancelliere
Recording Secretary

Paul Tavares
Interim Executive Director