

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, October 23, 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 5:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

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

Absent:

John Iglizzi
Kevin Jackson
Hilary Silver

Seven members were present constituting a quorum to conduct business. Commissioner Patino arrived at 5:29 p.m. bringing the attendance to eight.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to accept and approve the regular meeting minutes of 09/25/14. The motion was made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Waters. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

None

Chairman's Report

None

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Tavares stated recent departures from Resident Services and IT has brought some challenges. We are taking a hard look at the operations to see how we can become more efficient and we are moving forward with some interviews. Another challenge is with Unit turnovers in the high rises and family units. We are required to paint and make necessary repairs within a certain amount of time staying within HUD guild lines. We have offered overtime to employees in order to meet these demands. The Director commended Allan Pacific and his team for the progress they are making.

In addition, on the management side, Michelle Rocchio and her team are preparing the waiting list, Donna De La Rosa and her team in Section 8 department, are accelerating the issuance of vouchers, which in turn enhances our administrative fees. He also thanked Special Projects and Human Resources who continue to operate at peak performance.

Lastly, Director Tavares commented he met very briefly with the new Secretary of HUD. The Secretary reaffirmed his professional and personal commitment to public housing. He offered a willingness to work with housing authorities identifying what our concerns

were and optimistically HUD would be receptive to those who are in the field and those who are delivering the services.

Chairman Retsinas enquired about the series of fire safety training. Melissa Sanzaro remarked the training series were successful and attendance has been excellent. At the suggestion of Commissioner Narducci, an additional training was held at Chad Brown, which houses Sunset Village, a 24 unit building for elderly and disabled.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Budget & Finance: Commissioner Giraud stated the Finance Committee met and was given an update on the audit and the effort that has been required to work with McGladrey in reconciling the books. Linda Poole and Doug Walker gave an overview of how the audit is moving along and the necessary changes implemented in the department going forward. Year to date numbers are in order.

Chairman Retsinas received a call from Dan Bissonnette of McGladrey stating the Finance department is doing an outstanding job in working with his auditors.

Director Tavares received important information from NAHRO stating Congress passed a Continuing Resolution as opposed to an actual budget. Traditionally, HUD will use the more conservative numbers as they fund us throughout the year. Although, we have received additional funds since sequester, we are still below 2010 levels of funding. Last year on the public housing side, we received .89 cents on the dollar of what we would be if we were fully funded. NAHRO has advised us that we should be looking at under the continuing resolution numbers .83 to .84 cents on the dollar, which could have a negative impact on us. On the Section 8 side, we were at .79 cents on the dollar and we are being advised that we should be looking at .73 cents or less. The worse scenario is the House Budget actually had administrative fees at .66 cents on the dollar. Going forward we will need to monitor and be cognizant of this as we negotiate contracts.

Resident Services: Sorrel Devine, Director of Resident Services remarked we received the Family Self Sufficiency Grant. Melissa Sanzaro, Director of Special Projects commented the trainings are taking place with Groundwork Providence and Sherwin Williams Painting Program. Department of Elderly Affairs (EDA) released a grant for security personnel.

Capital Improvements: Commissioner Narducci spoke on behalf of Commissioner Cascella, noting two exterior spot light fixtures are being installed near 34 and 39 Block at Chad Brown, which will increase the lighting in the area. Edward Rowse Architects is in the process of working with the City Fire Inspectors regarding the automatic fire sprinkler systems. They are also preparing a report concerning upgrades to the existing fire alarms in order to be compatible with the new fire sprinklers. Exterior repairs and painting is currently ongoing at 33-35 Hollis Street, and exterior repairs and vinyl siding installation is ongoing at 188-190 Hanover Street; Union Hall Carpenters and Painters are performing this project. The parking sticker-scanning program should be operational soon; all scan stickers have been issued to all developments and the scanning tablets are in the process of being issued to the Management offices. The HVAC Department is currently in the process of making modifications to the solar domestic hot water system at Sunset Village to produce heat in addition to hot water. Complete information is provided in the Monthly Management Report.

RESOLUTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Retsinas reflected on the fatal shooting at Chad Brown. He invited our security team, including Sargent Hull, to discuss the incident and questioned what are we doing now and what can we do going forward to prevent these incidents from continuing. The Chairman asked the Executive Director to introduce the members of our security team. Director Tavares briefly explained the mission of our security team who work closely with the Providence Police Department. He stated we have twelve security officers that work directory for the PHA who are assigned to the high-rises. In addition, the other facet of the team is the Providence Police Department that patrols the family units in trying to keep our facilities and residents safe. The Director made note that although the shooting was tragic, the victims were not PHA residents. Director Tavares introduced Jack Costa, Head of Security, Paul O'Rourke, and Sargent Ray Hull of the Providence Police Department. Vice Chairman Ryan introduced a guest, Susan DeRita, President of Elmhurst Crime Watch.

Sargent Hull reported the Chief of the Providence Police has assigned additional Police Officers to the PHA family units immediately. He wanted to assure the board the Police Department is going to be diligent with manning the family units. The officers will be knocking on doors and meeting the residents to reassure them. New recruits will be assigned to Chad Brown along with the Housing Unit as additional security.

Commissioner Narducci questioned whether we received the security grant from HUD. The Director stated that we were not successful with that grant request. Commissioner Narducci stated that he would request additional money through CDBG Funds for security cameras for \$30,000-\$40,000.

The Director stated that an email would be sent to Chad Brown Management office and to the residents through the RAB Association regarding the increased coverage in security.

Vice Chairman Ryan recognized Attorney Michelle Bergin for her efforts and staying diligent with the evictions of drug and crime issues. Additionally, the Director commended the efforts of our Section 8 Fraud Investigator who also investigates Public Housing concerns.

In keeping with the monthly presentations, Director Tavares introduced Kimberly Dawley, Director of Human Resources, who presented a slide show with an overview of Section 3. Director Tavares noted the PHA's percentages of 30-60% of hiring residents who later become part-time and full-time employees are very impressive.

After the presentation, commissioners addressed their questions and concerns.

Vice Chairman Ryan requested an update at the next monthly meeting regarding the Institute for the Study and Practice of Nonviolence and the Modernization Rehab property with no heat.

The Chairman reminded the board that there is no meeting in November due to the holiday. However, there is a combined November/December meeting on December 11th.

Executive Session

None

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Lisa Cancelliere
Recording Secretary

Paul Tavares
Executive Director