

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, February 26, 2015; 5:00 p.m.**

Carroll Tower

243 Smith Street

Providence, RI 02908

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
Mary Kay Harris
Ricardo Patino
Hilary Silver
JT Taylor

Absent:

John Iglizzi
Kevin Jackson
Dorothy Waters

Seven members were present constituting a quorum to conduct business. Commissioner Harris arrived at 5:25 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 1/29/15. The motion was made by Commissioner Cascella, seconded by Commissioner Patino. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

None

Chairman's Report

The Providence Journal published a commentary the Chairman wrote on the Providence Housing Authority celebrating its 75th Anniversary. He thanked the management team and staff and said he wrote the commentary to shine a brighter light on the PHA and all who help make it what it is.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Tavares commended all PHA staff who worked diligently throughout the snowstorm. He also thanked the tenants for their cooperation. The Director informed the Board of the overtime expense due to the snowstorms for January 1 through February 26 is just shy of \$190,000.00. Secondly, Congressman James Langevin and Senator Sheldon Whitehouse presented the Tax Free Filing event for the residents at Manton Heights. The 75th Anniversary committee is progressing with their plans with the celebration dates commencing in April. Additionally, the Engineer continues preparing the plans to go out to bid for the mandated sprinklers in the high-rises. We are faced with complications from both City and State Fire Inspectors finding areas of concerns within our buildings. The Director spoke with HUD's Capital Fund Program office regarding the financing. We are looking at approximately \$5.7 million in order to accomplish what we need to do. Director Tavares stated the position for the Deputy Director has been posted, and to date, we have received 32 responses. Finally, a release was issued; there was a raid in the City of Providence centered in the Hartford Park area. The Director stated the PHA has been cooperative with the DEA and other Federal and State Law Enforcement.

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 financial activity summary format has been improved for the month of February. The budget for revenues and expenses are on track and ahead of where it should be. The Section 8 Program was a beneficiary of a funds transfer from the central office and an increase in rates, which is a positive. All of the audit materials have been submitted to McGladery who will have a report for the board at the March or April Commissioner's meeting. Finally, the planning for the 2016 budget is underway and we will have a report in the beginning of April or May.

The Chairman questioned the higher than expected vacancy rates on the report and what is the average time when a tenant vacates and the unit becomes available. Commissioner Giraud commented that RI Housing has opened up applications for housing vouchers and tenants are taking the opportunity to move from a PHA unit to the open market, which makes for a higher vacancy rate. The challenge is two-fold, to refurbish the units for new tenants and for new tenants to select and move into the units. Michelle Rocchio, Director of Property Management, stated that for the month of February the turn-around-time was 56.1 days. Allan Pacific, Director of Facilities Management stated the challenge for February was with floor and window replacement and snow removal demands. Director Tavares interjected the target time for turn-around is normally 21 days.

Chairman Retsinas requested Commissioner Giraud to have the audit pre-screened prior to presenting to the Board.

Resident Services: Commissioner Silver stated a number of meetings are being held in preparation for the annual plan. Special events and programs are in the process; 'Give Kids a Smile' for kids to obtain free dental services on April 10, 'Building a Bed' will be held on May 9, where beds will be distributed to children who have no bed, and finally, a screening for vision and hearing for kids at Meeting Street School. The computer centers are being used heavily by the residents and the Digi Club is proven a success. Additionally, Special Projects is working diligently preparing for the 75th Anniversary. Finally, a resident characteristics report has been finalized and is available to view.

Capital Improvements: Commissioner Patino stated a preliminary report was received from Rowse & Assoc. regarding the automatic fire sprinkler system in the high-rises; preliminary cost is approximately \$5.7 million. A pre-bid meeting was held regarding the elevator modernization at Carroll Towers; bids are due 2/26/15. An RFQ will be advertised shortly to perform a Green Physical Needs Assessment that is mandated by HUD; the Authority is still waiting on the HUD final ruling. Vinyl siding installation is currently on going at a Scattered Site duplex. Facilities Management personnel did an outstanding job performing snow removal under extreme circumstances.

RESOLUTIONS

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

In keeping with the monthly presentations, Chairman Retsinas asked Director Tavares to introduce Michelle Rocchio, Director of Property Management, and Tenant Selection. Michelle gave a brief presentation on property management and tenant selection.

Executive Session

None

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Lisa Cancelliere
Recording Secretary

Paul Tavares
Executive Director