

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, June 25, 2015; 5:00 p.m.**

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**100 Broad Street**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room**

**Providence, RI 02903**

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**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  
Ricardo Patino  
Gilberta 'JT' Taylor

**Absent:**

Mary Kay Harris  
John Iglizzi  
Kevin Jackson  
Hilary Silver  
Dorothy Waters

Six members were present, sufficient to commence an informational meeting, but not a sufficient number for a quorum.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Retsinas recognized only six members were present and asked for the minutes of May 28, 2015 are tabled until the next board meeting on July 25, 2015.

**RESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

None

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

None

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Paul Tavares stated we have completed the selection process for the Associated Director of Resident Services and have selected and appointed Cheryl Tondreau. Ms. Tondreau has 15 years of related service most recently with Workforce Solutions and the RI Department of Labor and Training. Additionally, Resident Services had a successful open house on May 29, at the Adult Education and Training Center where partners and residents participated.

In relation to the sprinkler system financing, direct financing will be a better way to go because of the high cost of bonding for financing. We can only use one-third of our capital funds program for debt service and we would only be able to refinance \$4.5-5 million dollars.

Whereas the project could run as high as \$7 million dollars, we may need to go to HUD and ask if they can release some of our operation reserves in order to meet the difference. The initial estimate was \$5.7 million yet came back at \$6.3. We are in the process of preparing the final documents to go out for an RFP. We need to perform a physical needs assessment for the duration of the borrowing for 17-20 years, which then needs to be presented to the lender. We are in the process of preparing an RFQ.

Finally, Director Tavares stated union negotiations would be commencing shortly.

Commissioner Giraud questioned the increase in workmen's compensation costs. Director Tavares stated he is concerned with the short notice received from the State and the initial

increase of 64% or approximately \$145,000. Policy changes take effect July 1, and we did not receive notification until sometime in June. With a cancellation fee of \$50,000, we will be conducting an RFP to solicit various companies for quotes.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

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

**Budget & Finance:** Commissioner Giraud indicated the summary through the end of May had positive trends and no anticipated year-end adjustments ending the year with a significant surplus. Contributions to the surplus were costs controls, improved rental receipts, hired administrative reimbursements from HUD in the Section 8 program. The proposal for the Resolution for the Capitalization of Fixed Assets will be introduced for consideration. Commissioner Giraud commended Linda Poole, Director of Finance and Doug Walker, Associate Director of Finance for their work in updating systems and procedures in the finance department. A punch list has been submitted to the finance committee summarizing upcoming changes from the audit to be made over time.

**Resident Services:** Sorrel Devine, Director of Resident Services noted the training partnerships are being finalized. Stepping-up Health Care Careers Pathways training is starting in September and will continue for three sessions through next year. Back to school events will be at every development and the adult education program open house will take place in July. Chairman Retsinas asked Sorrel for an update of how the programs were attended for the July meeting.

Melissa Sanzaro, Deputy Executive Director added there is information of all the programs on the PHA website and looping videos. Additionally, the PHA submitted to the City Council a community development block grant (CDBG) specific to Dexter Manor providing grant funding for capital improvements such as boiler, cameras, and security. The PHA Employee Appreciation Day is September 18, 2015 from 1-4 at 12 Acres. More information will be submitted as the committee meets. The RI Public Health Institute, part of Brown University, will bring the mobile market to all six high-rise developments starting in August. The resident presentation nomination process has ended and residents have been nominated for the RAB and other planning committees as well as the Board of Commissioners, which the Mayor will receive a list of those nominated residents.

Vice Chair Ryan requested an update on the CNI Grant. Director Tavares explained the City indicated they had HUD 108 loan funds that would need to be paid back. Trinity is exploring if it is feasible. Additionally, RI Housing has an open QAP and we are requesting them to consider an allocation of 9% tax credits for CNI projects. Trinity will be moving forward as far as rehabbing the old Imperial Knights site to Rochambeau Mills without any use of CNI grant participation. Olneyville Housing received tax credits from RI Housing to do their scattered site component of the project. Chairman Retsinas stated the US House of Representatives passed a HUD budget with a severe reduction in CNI funds, which will make it very competitive, going forward.

**Capital Improvements:** Commissioner Patino reported a contract was signed with National Grid to replace all incandescent light fixtures in the linen closets at Carroll Towers and Parenti Villa; this eliminates a fire hazard identified by the City Fire Inspector. Plans are being explored through National Grid to replace four hot water boilers at Manton Heights. Construction is ongoing at the Chad Brown Basketball court; completion is scheduled for late June. Advanced Telesystems has installed a security camera in the parking lot at Carroll Towers; this was funded through a legislative grant.

Director Tavares commented that Councilman Narducci suggested a ribbon cutting take place when the new basketball court is complete and all commissioners will be invited.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**#4234 – Resolution to Amend Fiscal Policy Concerning Capitalization of Fixed Assets**

Commissioner Giraud briefly explained the resolution stating a recommendation was made during the audit: Historically purchases have been amortized and depreciated over a schedule for all purchases \$500 and up, which has not been revised in 25 years. In the past, there was a depreciation schedule for items that should have been considered consumable items that would be expensed during the fiscal year. This resolution changes the schedule; only items in excess of \$5,000 will be put into inventory, and depreciated, according to the schedule, and will lead to a more accurate depreciation expense item, and better inventory control system. The finance committee recommends that the board approve Resolution #4234.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

There was no Presentation due to a commitment out of the control of the presenter. The presentation is delayed until the July board meeting.

**Executive Session**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

**Minutes Submitted and Approved By:**

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Lisa Cancelliere  
Recording Secretary

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Paul Tavares  
Executive Director