

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

ANNUAL/REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, December 10, 2015; 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 5:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

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

Absent:

John Iglizzi
Kevin Jackson
Hilary Silver

Seven members were present constituting a quorum to conduct business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Patino seconded by Commissioner Harris to accept and approve the regular meeting minutes of 10/22/15. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

None

Chairman's Report

Chairman Retsinas stated Mayor Elorza is in the process of appointing a new Commissioner in place of Commissioner Jackson.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Paul Tavares introduced a new employee, Karla Crispin of Special Projects.

Director Tavares reported that the Section 8 wait list and the combined central list under consideration by PHARI is stalled due to a \$50,000 legislation grant that may not be forthcoming. The PHA will continue to explore a combined list with RI Housing; however as an interim measure should it be necessary, we may look into a targeted list, such as for homeless, veterans or veterans and their families. Vice Chair Ryan noted, we need to be aware of any requirements, which could add to the time line.

The Director also commented on Barbara Jordan II, a troubled project based development on the south side. There have been meetings with city officials, councilmembers representing the area, the building department, and community agencies in addition to a conference call with HUD and the PHA regarding this property. The primary concern is for the tenants, their safety, and well-being. Secondary concerns are the sub-standard condition of the property and the retaining of affordable housing units in Providence. Councilmembers Harris and Aponte will

have a resident meeting on December 16, at the Davey Lopes Recreational Center to which we will attend.

The Director stated we did not receive a LISC grant renewal due to reduced LISC funding. He credited Resident Services and Special Projects who are aggressively searching other grants that support three positions that could be at jeopardy.

Director Tavares introduced Deputy Executive Director, Melissa Sanzaro who gave a brief update on the process of the Admissions Continuation Occupancy Policy relating to formerly incarcerated individuals. Staff Attorney Michelle Bergin along with Melissa answered questions and some concerns from the board.

Lastly, Director Tavares invited the Board to the PHA Holiday party. He also stated the January 28 board meeting will be dedicated to the presentation of the 2015 Financial Audit.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Budget & Finance: Finance Director, Linda Poole, stated the 2015 Audit would be presented at the January 28 meeting. Linda stated that we have hired a new staff member in the finance department.

Resident Services: Director of Resident Services, Sorrel Devine commented that we received a Resident Self Sufficiency Grant for \$195,000. We are in the process of applying for two United Way RI proposals that sustain the adult education programs, and support and expand the financial center. All toy distributions went well, and all holiday luncheons are coming up and all the commissioners are invited.

Capital Improvements: Commissioner Patino reported Motion sensor LED light fixtures will be installed in the stairways at Parenti Villa and Carroll Towers; these were purchased for \$1 per fixture through a rebate program and will produce a significant energy savings. The GPNA physical and energy needs assessments have been completed at all developments; a draft report is expected in several weeks for review. The vinyl siding, window, and porch replacement project at four Scattered Site buildings has begun; this will take several weeks for completion. The procurement process has begun regarding the exterior light fixture replacement at Dexter Manor and the concrete stair replacement at Chad Brown; both projects are funded through CDBG grant from the City of Providence.

RESOLUTIONS:

#4231 Approval of Providence Housing Authority's Revised Pet Policy

Executive Director Tavares briefly explained the changes in the Pet Policy that was approved by the Resident Advisory Board (RAB). After numerous questions and concerns from the Board, Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to approve Resolution #4231. Chairman Retsinas accepted the motion from Commissioner Cascella seconded by Commissioner Patino; a roll call vote was taken, said motion was unanimously passed 7/0.

#4235 Approval of Providence Housing Authority's Smoke Free Policy into Additional Family Developments

Deputy Executive Director Sanzaro briefly explained the expansion of the Smoke Free Policy. Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to approve Resolution #4235. Chairman Retsinas accepted the motion from Commissioner Patino seconded by Commissioner Waters; a roll call vote was taken, said motion was unanimously passed 7/0.

#4236 Approval of PHA Policy on Firearms and Prohibited Weapons

Staff Attorney Michelle Bergin gave a brief explanation on the Firearms and Prohibited Weapons resolution. Melissa Sanzaro commented the RAB was informed of and voted in favor of the Resolution prior to the board meeting. Chairman Retsinas stated we would be looking into the gun issue further. Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to approve Resolution #4236. Chairman Retsinas accepted the motion from Commissioner Cascella seconded by Commissioner Harris; a roll call vote was taken, said motion was unanimously passed 7/0.

#4237 Approval of PHA Assignment of Phase 1 Development Rights

Executive Director Tavares briefly explained the resolution and introduced James Truslow of Family Housing Development Corp (FHDC) and Carla DeStefano, Executive Director of Stop Wasting Abandoned Property (S.W.A.P.).

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

The Executive Director introduced James Truslow of FHDC and Carla DeStefano of S.W.A.P. to present on Resolution #4237. As part of his introductory remarks, the Executive Director distributed a Memorandum of Law to the Board drafted by General Counsel, Mark Ouellet and dated December 10, 2015. The Memo includes a detailed history of the ownership interests and the development status of the subject property, including the PHA's sister agency's interest in the property held by the Providence Redevelopment Agency. Further, the Memo also includes an opinion that the PHA's designation of the non-profit developer S.W.A.P. as the formal developer of the remaining portion of the parcels, by way of the proposed Resolution, would be in conformity with federal housing law. Mr. Truslow presented the history of this property to the board and asked the board's approval for Executive Director Tavares to have authority to prepare an Assignment for Phase I of the new replacement lots, formerly Roger Williams, in order for FHDC and SWAP to develop the lots jointly. Ms. DeStefano further presented SWAP's proposal for the development of affordable owner occupied two-family houses on these lots. The Chairman requested quarterly updates from Ms. DeStefano. Vice Chairman Ryan thanked the General Counsel for his thoughtful Memorandum and asked that it be formally incorporated into the record of the discussion. After numerous questions and concerns, Chairman Retsinas accepted a motion from Commissioner Patino seconded by Vice Chairman Ryan: a roll call vote was taken; said motion was unanimously passed 7/0.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Lisa Cancelliere
Recording Secretary

Paul J Tavares
Executive Director