

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS
OF RICHMOND REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD IN THE OFFICES OF RRHA
901 CHAMBERLAYNE PARKWAY, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2009

In Attendance:

Board of Commissioners

Elliott M. Harrigan, Chairman
J. Russell Parker, III
Guenet M. N, Beshah, Esq.
Cindy A. Mims

Absent

Marilyn B. Olds, Vice Chairman
James A. Sties

RRHA Staff

Anthony Scott, Executive Director

Chairman Elliott M. Harrigan called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. with *General Counsel M. Maxine Cholmondeley, Esq.* serving as Legal Counsel.

Minutes

The Minutes from the *March 18, 2009 Regular Board Meeting* were presented for approval.

1 Motion: (Mims/Parker) Move to adopt the Minutes from the March 18, 2009 Regular Board Meeting.

Motion Carried - Harrigan Abstained

Citizens Information Period

Ms. Joyce Cheeks, a resident of Gilpin Court, addressed the Board during the Citizens Information Period regarding the same concerns mentioned during the March Board Meeting. Specifically, as it pertains to RRHA's eviction process and the discrepancy in her records vs. RRHA's records for rent owed.

- John Hill, Deputy Executive Director of Affordable Housing, responded that with hardship cases the Authority is able to provide some relief on rent. However, the statutes prohibit RRHA from doing so on utilities. That is the case here – old utility bills are due.
- Chairman Elliott Harrigan tasked Executive Director Anthony Scott and Mr. Hill to confer on this, make sure RRHA has the facts correct, and then follow up with Ms. Cheeks.
- Mr. Scott reported that a letter was sent to Ms. Cheeks dated April 10 in response to the concerns she raised at the March Board meeting.
- Mr. Hill said that RRHA would hold off any eviction proceedings until he has a chance to speak personally with Ms. Cheeks and follow up on the matter. He will then report to the Board.

Committee Reports

Commissioner Harrigan requested that Board Committee Reports be presented.

Acting Deputy Executive Director of Finance Stacey Fayson delivered the *Administration and Finance* report. She reported that the Administration and Finance Committee met on April 9, 2009. There were primarily three items of discussion.

1. The single audit report – it was indicated that there were possible material findings as related to the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP.) However, staff will be meeting with external auditors to go through all the single audit findings early the week of April 20. The final draft of the single audit will be presented at the May 14 meeting of the Finance Committee.
2. The February financial statement projections – the overall projection of deficit is consistent with prior months' projections. The Accounting Department reviewed each program to identify where the deficits were related: Low Income Public Housing (LIPH), Central Office, and the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP). The Department is working through any issues that were addressed and those concerns seen during the 2009 budget process will be incorporated into the 2010 process.
3. The HCVP group made a presentation about the improvements, progress and next steps of the HCVP program.

Deputy Executive Director of Affordable Housing John Hill provided the *Affordable Housing Report*. The Committee met on April 7. The materials sent to the Board were discussion items only as the March meeting was cancelled due to a snowstorm. The report from the April 7 meeting will be included in the Board's May packet and would include the following:

- *HCVP PowerPoint presentation*: Provided information regarding where RRHA is going, how it is doing, what (if any) barriers are there, etc. This came about as a result of concerns over some audit findings. There is a plan in place and meetings are held every Friday to discuss progress.
- *Maintenance Staff Certifications*: Twenty-nine maintenance staff was reallocated throughout the agency as needed. Everyone passed all four of their certifications from the Commonwealth College Workforce Alliance (CCWA). A graduation date will be set to occur in the next few weeks. This is a momentous occasion and sets the tone for the kind of training RRHA is looking to procure for every area of asset management and operations.
- *The Stimulus Public Hearing*: Very positive comments were received.
 - o In response to concerns about energy efficiency raised by Commissioner Parker in March, Mr. Hill contacted HUD and Bob Jennings responded on April 9. Mr. Jennings said he doesn't know of any agencies doing anything other than what was outlined in their five-year plans. However, the ARRA has an additional \$1 billion that is competitive and which has a

lot of energy language in it. This would allow some really large projects to be completed.

- *Rent collections:* Have risen from 85% in March to 92% in April. The outstanding receivables have been reduced from \$525,000 to \$100,000. Plus, collections are at correct rent rate.

Concerning the HCVP program, Commissioner Parker asked if RRHA was measuring the material audit report findings and if RRHA is comfortable that these same findings won't occur next year? Mr. Hill responded that the official report has not come out yet – the draft report was only just received a week ago. Many of the items still showing up were re-exams which have already been corrected. The report has to be examined to ascertain what is really correct. RRHA is issuing corrective actions so these problems don't arise in the future. Mr. Scott reported that RRHA is looking at the practices and procedures being used to make sure the problems are minimized. Items that can be measured will be measured. In addition, RRHA has been focusing on developing a solid process that can be checked from a quality assurance perspective to make sure that the process is being followed.

Commissioner Beshah would like RRHA to have the focus and intention of being able to say that RRHA's goal is to have an unqualified opinion. Once that goal is set, RRHA has a better chance of achieving it. Anything less could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Mr. Hill responded that a Quality Assurance Officer has been added to staff to review 15% of the files. The managers will review 10 – 12% of the files. HUD only requires a 10% review.

Rodney Forte, Deputy Executive Director of Community Revitalization, provided the *Real Estate Committee Report*. The committee met earlier in the day. The following topics were covered.

- Improvements to the appraisal process - recommendations were made.
- Two resolutions – recommend approval by the Board.
- One of the model homes in the HOPE VI program will be featured on the HGTV show "Property Virgins." It will air on April 27 at 8:00 p.m.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Harrigan thanked Commissioners Mims, Sties, and Beshah for attending the Stimulus Hearing at the Calhoun Center. Mr. Hill made a very good presentation. It was a very good meeting which resulted in some great suggestions from the audience. In addition, Chairman Harrigan reported that, with the Board's consent, the May 20 Board meeting will be moved from 5:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Guests in Attendance

Attorney Gerald Carter, from Harrell and Chambliss, introduced the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners Edward Ruhnke and Executive Director Julian Marsh of the Petersburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Executive Director's Comments

Mr. Anthony Scott stated that an Executive Summary had been included in the Board packet highlighting the activities for the past month. He also reported on the following items:

- RRHA's crime statistics have gone up this year – a 50% increase in total crime. The worsening economy may be a factor in this. The RRHA Police Department is continuing to watch this trend and is constantly meeting with the Richmond Police Department to develop strategies to control the problem.
- Recognition of, and congratulations to, some stellar students
 - o Jennifer Tillery, a 17-year old Gilpin Resident, received the \$7,000 Bollinger Memorial Scholarship. She has a Grade Point Average of 3.88 and an SAT score of 1,435.
 - o Fraternal twins Fatimah and Latifah Neblett-Burrell in the Fulton community were honored in the Style Magazine's Annual "16 Under 16" awards program for their outstanding academic achievements as well as their extra-curricular/athletic activities.
- Joan Seldon, RRHA's Assistant Director of Resident Services, was awarded the first "Excellence in Mentoring Award" for her role in mentoring public housing youth through the Youth Sports and Fine Arts Academy.
- Affordable Housing Week is April 19 through 25, 2009. Announcements of activities will be forthcoming.
- Mr. Scott will be joining the City of Richmond Partners for their InterCity Visit with the Chamber of Commerce in Miami, Florida.

RESOLUTIONS

Note: Resolution number 2 was withdrawn. Resolutions number 1 and 3 were recognized.

Agenda Item No. 2 (Withdrawn) - Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Authorizing Acquisition and Financing of Real Estate.

Agenda Item No. 1 – Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Authorizing Acquisition Price for One (1) Parcel in the North Jackson Ward Area – 10 East Charity Street, which was read and considered:

(09-11) BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) that based on full and careful appraisals of the property that the price recommended by the Executive Director for the acquisition of one (1) parcel in the North Jackson Ward Area be and hereby is accepted as the fully established and approved price for the acquisition of such parcel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director, acting on behalf of RRHA, be and hereby is authorized to accept the signed option to purchase 10 East Charity Street, Block N-84, Parcel 17, at the said price.

Agenda Item No. 3 – Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Authorizing the Approval of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board Member, which was read and considered:

(09-12) WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners (the “Board”) of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) agree to appoint Anthony Scott, Executive Director, to serve on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of RRHA that the Executive Director be and hereby approved to accept an appointment to the Housing Trust Fund Board.

This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

Discussion

Commissioner Beshah questioned why RRHA was paying \$9,000 above the appraisal for Agenda Item 1. Lengthy discussion of this issue occurred during the Real Estate Committee meeting and the committee is comfortable with the explanations given. The acquisition is an important area for RRHA’s redevelopment, and it is not a conservation/redevelopment area, so it is a negotiated purchase.

2 Motion: (Mims/Beshah) Move to adopt Resolutions 1 and 3.

Motion Carried

Adjournment

3 Motion: (Mims/Beshah) Move to adjourn.

Motion Carried Unanimously

There being no further business and upon unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Chairman

Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer