

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COMMISSIONERS OF THE
CITY OF ROANOKE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Commissioners of the City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority met for a regular session on Monday, February 26, 2018, in the offices of the City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority, 2624 Salem Turnpike, NW, in the City of Roanoke, Virginia.

I. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

Chair Burruss called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and declared that a quorum was present.

PRESENT: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Karnes, Kepley, and Witten

ABSENT: Commissioner Smith

OFFICER PRESENT: Mrs. Glenda Edwards Goh, Secretary-Treasurer

ALSO PRESENT: Jackie Austin, VP of Finance/CFO; Kathy Beveridge, Housing Choice Voucher Director; David Bustamante, VP of Housing; Stephanie Cooperstein, Section 3 Coordinator; Betsy Crow, VP of Human Resources and Administration; Frederick Gusler, Director of Redevelopment and Revitalization; Crystal Hall, Community Support Services Director; Mark Loftis, Legal Counsel; Joel Shank, VP of Operations; Lindsey Brallier, Executive Assistant; Kelly Martin, Senior Executive Assistant

Chair Burruss welcomed everyone to today's meeting.

II. REPORTS

1. Financial Report

Chair Burruss stated that Mrs. Austin provided a Financial Narrative along with a Financial Report.

Chair Burruss asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

2. Executive Director's Report

Chair Burruss asked for the Executive Director's report.

Mrs. Goh informed the Board that the President has released his FY 2019 budget proposal. She said that, as of today, which is nearly halfway through the fiscal year, Congress still has not finalized HUD appropriations for the current fiscal year; therefore RRHA is continuing to operate based on budget estimates. Mrs. Goh stated that she is hopeful that the final funding will not be dramatically different than last year because there is only half a year left to absorb any full year reductions in funding. She pointed out that, although the President's budget proposal for FY 2019 contains some drastic cuts, including no funding for the Capital Fund Program (CFP), there is a long way to go before funding is known. Congress is unlikely to begin working on FY 2019 appropriations until FY 2018 appropriations are finalized.

Mrs. Goh said that RRHA submitted a letter of interest for the EnVision Centers Demonstrations Initiative. She explained that the latest word from HUD is that they will announce selections shortly after March 5, 2018.

Mrs. Goh shared with the Board that RRHA was notified by HUD that the final Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) score for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017 is 100%, resulting in High Performer designation for RRHA.

Mrs. Goh reported that RRHA received a grant from Virginia Municipal League

(VML) Insurance Programs to purchase five gas detectors for RRHA housing sites.

She explained that the gas detectors will allow the maintenance staff to check for multiple types of gas leaks. Mrs. Goh stated that RRHA appreciates the grant and the ability to purchase additional safety enhancement equipment.

Mrs. Goh said that the annual community meetings for the 2018 Annual Plan and the CFP 5-Year Action Plan started last week at all of the public housing sites. She noted that the implementation of smoke-free housing is the topic most addressed in comments at meetings. In addition, RRHA is also collecting a sizable list of items that residents would like RRHA to know about or address. Mrs. Goh explained that the primary purpose of the meetings is sharing information and gathering resident input. RRHA has meetings scheduled Tuesday through Thursday night this week. She stated that she appreciates attendance by several Commissioners at this year's meetings.

Vice Chair Garner congratulated RRHA on zero job injuries since the beginning of the new fiscal year and inquired as to what might be contributing to this success. Mrs. Goh pointed out that the report was located in the Human Resources section and asked Ms. Crow to respond to Vice Chair Garner's question. Ms. Crow stated she was not aware of one specific thing; however, Mr. Shank has been working on a safety plan and employees are being more careful. Mrs. Goh said that the RRHA Safety Committee is contributing positively to the results. Mr. Shank added that RRHA has monthly safety committee meetings. The committee tries to reinforce that employees should be aware of ways to stay safe, and they also hand out OSHA flyers and reminders. Mr. Shank went on to explain that the committee talks about situations that have happened in the past and ways that employees can avoid similar accidents in the

future. Ms. Crow mentioned that RRHA also held driver improvement training. RRHA would like to complement the three employees who trained other RRHA employees before the end of the year on driver safety. Vice Chair Garner congratulated RRHA on this accomplishment. Chair Burress said that it seems like RRHA emphasizes ongoing training and treats it as a necessity rather than a luxury, which she views as beneficial.

Commissioner Anguiano inquired as to what type of changes will flow from RRHA no longer being under shortfall restrictions for the HCV program. Mrs. Goh said that RRHA is currently issuing vouchers to those on the waiting list; however, due to the Continuing Resolution, HUD is providing funding based on estimates. RRHA may have to stop issuing vouchers once final funding is known, if there is a reduction of funding for the year. She said that, because RRHA received shortfall funding from HUD at the end of 2017, RRHA essentially ended the year with a zero balance and did not begin 2018 in shortfall. She explained that historically, a shortfall is created for RRHA when the current situation, operating on funding estimates well into the year, has occurred. If funding is reduced for 2018, but that amount is not known to HUD or RRHA until June, it will likely result in a shortfall situation because RRHA has a short period of time remaining in the year to align expenses with actual funding. Mrs. Goh added that RRHA was just awarded an additional five HUD Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers for this year.

Commissioner Anguiano asked for clarification and a copy of the pet policy. He said that residents had some concerns at the community meetings about residents having animals in violation of the policy. He would like to understand the policy better, how RRHA is enforcing it, and if it is a safety or liability issue. Mrs. Goh stated that she

would send out the pet policy by email to Commissioners after the Board Meeting. She also explained that part of the issue that was mentioned at Villages of Lincoln has to do with the type of animal. RRHA's pet policy is not applicable to service animals, including emotional support animals. She explained that an individual may bring a letter from their doctor saying that a Pitbull is their emotional support animal, which means that RRHA's pet policy would not apply; however, their neighbors may be uncomfortable having a Pitbull near them. Mr. Bustamante added that a lot of the emotional support animals coming in are Pitbulls and Rottweilers, which are on the list of animals RRHA does not accept under the pet policy. He went on to say that if RRHA explains the pet policy to an individual, stressing that they cannot have these specific animals but then someone else has that type of animal, it creates some animosity. He explained that RRHA is not free to discuss the person's reason for having the animal due to confidentiality. There are also individuals who may have animals in violation of RRHA's policy. Mr. Bustamante said that RRHA can address these situations as lease violations if they are reported. He stated, for example, if someone comes in the office and explains that their neighbor has a dog, all RRHA can say is that the dog is allowed or send a letter stating that the dog needs to be removed immediately. Mrs. Goh added that the policy is for pets and when RRHA staff has fair housing training it is emphasized that assistance animals and support animals are not pets and, therefore, RRHA cannot restrict them under a pet policy. Anguiano complimented Mrs. Goh and Mr. Bustamante on doing a very good job letting the residents know that there is a process that can be followed that will address their concerns.

Commissioner Kepley asked how airlines are restricting emotional support

animals that are exotic or outside of the norm. Commissioner Witten explained that the Department of Transportation (DOT) provides specific guidelines for airlines which are more likely to focus on security issues. Commissioner Witten does not believe that any other department has moved on this issue to the same degree as DOT. Mrs. Goh mentioned that the fair housing rules provide a lot of room for people to operate outside of established policies.

Vice Chair Garner asked what is being done from a legislative or advocacy standpoint concerning the proposed budget and the items that are being suggested to reduce or eliminate funding, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDGB) and the Public Housing Capital Fund. Chair Burruss stated that committee reports are listed on the agenda and the Board will hold this question until that time.

Chair Burruss asked if there were any other comments or questions. There were none.

3. Staff Reports

Chair Burruss asked if there were any other staff reports, comments or questions. There were none.

4. Committee Reports

Commissioner Witten stated that the Legislative Committee met and the next topic for the quarterly letter will be economic impact. Mr. Shank assisted the committee by providing samples of economic models and a process sheet that included acronyms and formulas. Commissioner Witten explained that he will work with Commissioner Anguiano, assemble the information, draft a letter and bring it before the Board. He explained that the economic impact of reducing RRHA's funding

as proposed in the President's budget proposal, would be a reduction of approximately \$18 million. That is a huge impact and it does not affect only the City, but the full Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Legislative Committee will explain in the draft letter what RRHA does for the community and then describe the impact of the FY 2019 budget proposal.

Mrs. Goh responded to Vice Chair Garner's question regarding how the Public Housing Capital Fund funding could be replaced. She stated that there is a proposed funding increase for the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program (RAD) which essentially converts public housing to Section 8 project-based vouchers. The RAD program does not include capital improvement funding. She stated that, when units are converted under RAD, the housing authority sets aside reserve funds from the contract rent. She stated that RAD is a demonstration program and currently has a cap on the number of units; however, the President's budget proposal would eliminate the cap. Mrs. Goh reiterated that the additional funding proposed for RAD would not be sufficient to convert all public housing units. Commissioner Witten said that it appears that costs are being shifted to localities. Mrs. Goh mentioned that the budget proposal also includes additional funding for demolition of obsolete public housing units. She added that obsolescence can be speeded up by a lack of funding for capital improvements.

Chair Burruss recalled that when she and Ms. Crow were at the NAHRO conference last year and they met with Congressman Goodlatte, his only question was to ask how much the localities contributed toward public housing. That was indicative to her at the time, that this is a trend in the way of thinking. She said these

were all launched as federal programs and now, at least on some level, the federal government is asking why the localities are not taking care of their own issues, needs, problems and so forth.

Vice Chair Garner asked if this was being worked on before now because it seems like a pretty radical change. Mrs. Goh responded that the RAD program, and the concept of converting public housing units to project-based Section 8, was an initiative of the Obama administration. Housing authorities also received significant reductions in the Capital Fund in the previous administration. She added that the previous administration also published new guidance for housing authorities that stated that operating reserves could not be used for capital improvements. Chair Burruss said that with aging inventory, the need for funding for capital improvements should be quite obvious.

Commissioner Witten asked if other housing authorities are older than Roanoke or are they about the same. Mrs. Goh said that she believes they are about the same. She explained that public housing authorities across the country were established in the late 1940s and early 1950s. There may be some housing authorities where they have already demolished stock as old as Lansdowne but many have housing stock that is equally old. There was a building boom for public housing in the 1970s, nationally and at RRHA. She said RRHA is not outside the norm.

Mrs. Goh responded to Vice Chair Garner's question about the percentage of housing stock that is from the 1940s or 1950s by stating that Lansdowne Park and Villages at Lincoln, which constitute about thirty percent of RRHA's public housing, are the oldest sites, and they were built in 1950 and 1951. Chair Burruss stated that

the buildings are approximately seventy years old. Mrs. Goh stated that Villages at Lincoln had substantial renovation in the Hope VI project, but Lansdowne Park has not undergone renovation. Chair Burruss commented that a little artifact of history was that one property was built for African American residents and one was built for white residents. Mrs. Goh confirmed that Villages at Lincoln was built for the African American residents, and Lansdowne Park was built for the white residents. Chair Burruss said that at least in that respect RRHA has come a long way.

Chair Burruss asked if there were any other committee reports, comments or questions. There were none.

5. Commissioner Comments

Chair Burruss asked if there were any Commissioner comments. There were none.

6. City Council Liaison Comments or Discussion

Chair Burruss asked if there were any City Council comments. There were none.

7. Residents or other community members to address the Board

Chair Burruss asked if there were any residents or community members who would like to address the Board. There were none.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

C-1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held Monday, January 22, 2018.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Dispense with the reading thereof and approve as recorded.

C-2 Monthly Operations Report for the month of January 2018.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: File as submitted

Vice Chair Garner introduced a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Karnes and upon roll call the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Karnes, Kepley, and Witten

NAYS: None

Chair Burruss thereupon declared said motion carried as introduced.

IV. REGULAR AGENDA

1. Resolution No. 3946

Mr. Bustamante introduced Resolution No. 3946, requesting the Board's approval to modify the contract with Convergint for surveillance camera system maintenance and repair, in the amount of \$86,810.63. He stated, as the Board is aware, in 2017 RRHA received an Emergency Safety and Security Grant from HUD in the amount of \$250,000 to improve the lighting in some of the RRHA communities and install additional cameras. The proposal received from RRHA's contracted provider is to add an additional thirty-two cameras at eight of RRHA sites for \$86,810.63. Mr. Bustamante requested to modify the existing contract in order to have RRHA's provider install the cameras. He stated that RRHA's contract ends in November 2018, so he anticipates that this will be the last contract modification. Commissioner Witten asked if RRHA intended to do a joint procurement with Virginia Tech. Mr. Bustamante replied that, hopefully, Virginia Tech will do a procurement, and RRHA can join the agreement; however, he said

that his contact at Virginia Tech has indicated that they are likely to do a contract extension. If that is the case then RRHA will have to find someone else or go through procurement, because RRHA will have been on the contract for the allowable maximum of 5 years. Mr. Bustamante stated that RRHA's current contract amount is \$809,564.84, and he is requesting approval for an increase of \$86,810.63, bringing the total to \$896,375.47.

Vice Chair Garner asked if this was also to extend the contract until November 2018 since the Virginia Tech contract is until April 17, 2018. Mr. Bustamante explained that technically, RRHA relied on Virginia Tech's competitive procurement, but RRHA has a separate contract with the camera company. Virginia Tech's contract date is April 17, 2018; however, RRHA's contract will expire five years from the date RRHA entered the agreement, which will be in November 2018.

Vice Chair Garner asked for clarification as to why the pricing is different for different cameras, such as thirty-two cameras for \$86,000 and eleven for \$17,000. Mr. Bustamante stated that, for example, sometimes the camera company will recommend four cameras; however, when they look at the infrastructure an antenna is needed to relay the signal, which will increase the cost. Mrs. Goh added that RRHA also has different types of cameras, there are fixed cameras and pan-tilt-zoom cameras, and each type of camera has different pricing. Commissioner Witten stated that the eleven cameras were actually a bargain because they were all interior cameras. Mr. Bustamante said that those specific cameras were installed in stairwells on every other floor at Melrose Towers when

an investigation of fires in the stairwells was underway. Mr. Shank added that there is a list of equipment that is part of the contract and the pricing has been set from the start. There is no difference in the cost of items, but it is a matter of what equipment is needed to do the job.

Commissioner Witten introduced a motion to approve Resolution No. 3946. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Garner and upon roll call the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Karnes, Kepley, and Witten

NAYS: None

Chair Burruss thereupon declared said motion carried as introduced.

2. Executive Session

Vice Chair Garner moved that the Commissioners enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of specific personnel matters of the RRHA in accordance with Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1).

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Anguiano and upon roll call the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Karnes, Kepley, and Witten

NAYS: None

The Board of Commissioners entered into Executive Session at 3:39 p.m.

The Board reconvened into open session at 4:21 p.m.

Vice Chair Garner introduced a motion stating that the members of the Board of Commissioners hereby certify to the best of their knowledge that only public business

matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered by the Board in the immediately preceding Executive Session.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Karnes and upon roll call the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Karnes, Kepley, and Witten

NAYS: None

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Witten moved that the meeting be adjourned.

The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Garner and upon roll call the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Karnes, Kepley, and Witten

NAYS: None

Chair Burruss declared the meeting adjourned at 4:21 p.m.



Gail Burruss, Chair



Glenda Edwards Goh, Secretary-Treasurer

