

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 22, 2021, via electronic communication through live video conference and telephone conference due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**I. CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL**

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Chair Smith, Vice Chair Kepley, Walker

ABSENT: None

OFFICER PRESENT: Mr. David Bustamante, Secretary-Treasurer

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Loftis, Legal Counsel; Evangeline Richie, VP of Housing; Joel Shank, VP of Operations; Jackie Austin, VP of Finance; Rachel Tobin, VP of Human Resources; Frederick Gusler, Director of Redevelopment and Revitalization; Stephanie Moon Reynolds, City Council Liaison

Chair Smith welcomed everyone to today's meeting.

**II. REPORTS**

1. Financial Report

Chair Smith asked if there were any questions regarding the financial reports.

Commissioner Anguiano asked about Section 8 positive cash flow and asked if

that was money from relief funds. Ms. Austin responded there is a separate report that shows the Cares Act Funds for Section 8 which is further back and close to the end of the report on page 61. She pointed out that the funds in question are the funds received for Section 8 and mainstream vouchers. Ms. Austin stated that Cares Act Funds were used to reduce expenses and it was started in October Board report. Chair Smith asked if there were any other questions for Ms. Austin. There were none.

2. Executive Director's Report.

Chair Smith asked for the Executive Director's Report.

Mr. Bustamante answered in addition to his written report, in February he was able to meet with Liaison Council Woman Stephanie Moon Reynolds. He stated it was a very good meeting and he is glad that she is RRHA's Liaison. Mr. Bustamante went on to say he believes Ms. Reynolds is a true advocate for affordable housing and will be an asset to RRHA. He added that RRHA is working with the city to obtain a portion of funding and he believes it will happen as soon as stimulus money is released from the Biden Administration sometime in mid-March. Mr. Bustamante stated he met with Senator Kaine a couple of weeks ago and it was a good meeting that flowed well. Important topics were discussed and Senator Kaine toured the facility as well as the EnVision Center and also participated in RRHA's first vaccine clinic. He added the vaccine clinic was a big success not only to residents at Melrose Towers and Morningside Manor but also employees who participated. Senator Kaine will be invited back as soon as the EnVision Center is moved across the street to the library and hopefully when some pending grants are funded. Mr. Bustamante stated he would be happy to answer any questions. Chair Smith asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Bustamante. There were none.

### 3. Staff Reports

Chair Smith asked if there were any Staff Reports. There were none.

### 4. Committee Reports

Chair Smith asked if there were any committee reports, comments or questions. Commissioner Garner advised that the personnel committee met today and reviewed evaluation procedures for annual raises in relation to performance evaluations. Equitable issues were discussed in making sure that compensation is equitable for positions and responsibilities of said positions. Commissioner Garner went on to say that RRHA has been fortunate to be able to provide raises on an annual basis for a number of years. RRHA is also looking at procuring a market survey to look at positions and ensure that the pay scale is comparable with prevailing scales for similar positions.

### 5. Commissioner Comments

Chair Smith asked if there were any Commissioner Comments.

Commissioner Burruss responded with a comment for Ms. Tobin recollecting about 100 employees at RRHA give or take a few and mostly in the high 90's. She stated the census says 72 with 6 open positions that would equal 78 and asked Ms. Tobin if we have decreased positions. Ms. Tobin responded that RRHA has not been near 100 positions since she has been with the agency. Ms. Tobin stated that the vacancies were 12 maintenance staff that were hired in October and November and 6 other positions and the number of positions has been 65 to 70 since she has been with RRHA. Ms. Tobin added that she could look at a position list from a year ago to evaluate if there has been any downsizing. Commissioner Burruss stated her recollection could be wrong and asked Ms. Tobin if RRHA has reduced positions. Ms. Tobin replied that she is not aware of a

reduction in positions. Ms. Richie added that some vacancies may be related to the Resident Services Grant Fund and that RRHA no longer has the Jobs Plus Grant and positions in that department had some resignations. The grant was fully exhausted in December. Ms. Tobin stated in February 2018 there were a total of 83 employees it could be as Ms. Richie mentioned as grant specific. Commissioner Burruss thanked Ms. Tobin for her response.

Chair Smith commended the agency for bringing the vaccine clinic to the residents and stated the residents were afraid in the beginning because of the vaccine being new. He went on to say at this point there have been no negative results and is going well so far. Commissioner Garner followed up with what Mr. Bustamante said about the meeting with Senator Kaine and commended the staff for the preparation of the meeting and the vaccine clinic.

#### 6. City Council Liaison Comments or Discussion

Commissioner Garner asked if there were any City Council Liaison comments or discussion. Ms. Reynolds thanked the Board for inviting her into the meeting. Ms. Reynolds stated that after her meeting with Mr. Bustamante she went about the business of trying to find rent relief for residents. She stated that on February 16<sup>th</sup> Governor Northam announced there was Federal Money, about 524 million, that will be available to help families stay in their homes. Ms. Reynolds added the Virginia Rent Relief Program is being funded through the Emergency Rental Assistance and this will include the recent Federal Stimulus Package that will assist households and landlords with rent payments to avoid eviction. She went on to say Virginia has put 160 million dollars into the Rental Relief Program to increase housing stability and that the Emergency Rental Assistance

Funding will not include mortgage relief. Tenants will have to check their eligibility by completing an assessment on ([dhcd.virginia.gov/eligibility](http://dhcd.virginia.gov/eligibility)) and for those with no computer access they can call the 211 number. Ms. Reynolds stated the tenants may be eligible for rent arrears payments which date back to April 1<sup>st</sup> and up to 3 months of payments in the future. Total payments may not exceed 15 months of rental assistance per household. She announced that the city is now accepting online applications on their website for the next round of Cares Act Funding for 2021. Funds may be used to address homelessness, human services and economic development initiatives which are associated with the prevention, preparation and response to COVID 19. The application process started on February 19<sup>th</sup> and will continue through March 1<sup>st</sup>. Chair Smith asked if there were any other discussion or comments. There were none.

7. Residents or other community members to address the Board

Chair Smith asked if there were any Residents or other community members to address the Board. There were none.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

C-1 Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held Monday, February 22, 2021.

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

C-2 Monthly Operations Report for the month of February 2021.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: File as submitted.

Commissioner Garner introduced a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Anguiano and upon roll call the following vote

was recorded:

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Walker, Vice Chair Kepley, Chair Smith

NAYS: None

**REGULAR AGENDA**

1. Resolution No. 4071

Ms. Tobin presented Resolution No. 4071, requesting the Board's approval for changes to its employee handbook.

Commissioner Garner introduced Resolution No. 4071 and moved its adoption as introduced.

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY TO APPROVE CHANGES TO ITS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

WHEREAS, the City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) has undertaken a review of its Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual (Policies) and its Employee Handbook (handbook) to ensure they are relevant, meet the needs of RRHA and are legally compliant, particularly as it relates to the new Laws passed in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the year 2020; and

WHEREAS, RRHA has revised the Handbook and Policies with legal counsel to update and streamline the document for better understanding, specifically to add new laws effective in 2020; and

WHEREAS, legal counsel has recommended based on current legal and industry best practice trends to combine RRHA's current Policies into the Handbook; and

WHEREAS, these changes to the Handbook, which include the addition of new and current policies, will hereby supersede and render obsolete all such previous RRHA policies and procedures documents combined into the Handbook; and

WHEREAS, RRHA is proposing approval of these revisions to the Handbook; and

WHEREAS, the Personnel Committee of the RRHA Board of Commissioners supports and recommends approval of this revised and updated Handbook.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority that the attached revised RRHA Employee Handbook is approved effective March 1, 2021.

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

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Walker, Vice Chair  
Kepley, Chair Smith

NAYS: None

Commissioner Garner thereupon declared said motion carried and Resolution No. 4071 adopted as introduced.

2. Resolution No. 4072

Mr. Gusler presented Resolution 4072, requesting the Board's approval to authorize the execution of documents necessary to consummate the sale of property located at 501 21<sup>st</sup> Street, NW bearing City of Roanoke tax map number 2322510, to Jazmine C. Rhett. Mr. Gusler stated this is the sale of a single family home to a low to moderate income first time buyer. It is part of RRHA's section 32 program where the agency was approved to sell five houses through the program in 2015. All five properties are public housing and one was sold in October. The program requires buyers to be first time home buyers per HUD's definition and be low to moderate income. RRHA does not finance the main loan but makes a second loan of 20% of the value which is forgivable after ten years. Numerous improvements are being made to the property to prepare it for sale. Final sale price will be based on appraisal and closing should take place early next month. Mr. Gusler welcomed any questions. There were none.

Commissioner Garner introduced Resolution No. 4072 and moved its adoption

as introduced.

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ROANOKE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO CONSUMMATE THE SALE OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 501 21<sup>st</sup>, Street, NW BEARING CITY OF ROANOKE TAX MAP NUMBER 2322510, TO JAZMINE C. RHETT

WHEREAS, the City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) applied to the Special Applications Center of the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2015 to authorize RRHA to sell five (5) scattered-site public housing units per the Section 32 program; and

WHEREAS, RRHA's Section 32 plan was approved by HUD per an Implementing Agreement that was executed in 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Section 32 program allows RRHA to sell each of the five (5) properties to qualified low to moderate income first-time homebuyers per HUD definitions and regulations; and

WHEREAS, the existing tenants of these units at the time of the application's approval were notified that they would have the first right of refusal to purchase the housing unit they were currently leasing; and

WHEREAS, the previous tenant of this property was not interested or able to purchase this property and has since been relocated by RRHA to a comparable public housing unit; and

WHEREAS, Jazmine C. Rhett has complied with all requirements of the Section 32 program to date and has provided evidence of financing with Truist Bank (formerly BB&T and Sun Trust) and made the required down payment on the mortgage in an escrow account; and

WHEREAS, Jazmine C. Rhett has entered into a contract with RRHA to purchase the property with the purchase price tentatively set at the City assessment value of \$68,300, with the final sales price to be based on an appraisal subsequent to improvements being made to the property; and

WHEREAS, prior to closing, RRHA will account for 20% of the purchase price in the form of seller financing through a forgivable second mortgage; and

WHEREAS, RRHA desires to sell the property to Jazmine C. Rhett.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the City of Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority that the Executive Director is hereby authorized and directed to execute documents necessary to consummate the sale of

property at 501 21st, NW, bearing City of Roanoke Tax Map Number 2322510, to Jazmine C. Rhett with the final price to be based on an appraisal per the terms noted above.

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

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Walker, Vice Chair Kepley, Chair Smith

NAYS: None

Commissioner Garner thereupon declared said motion carried and Resolution No. 4072 adopted as introduced.

### III. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Garner, Walker, Vice Chair Kepley, Chair Smith

NAYS: None

Commissioner Garner declared the meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

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Duane Smith, Chair

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David Bustamante, Secretary-Treasurer

Exhibits from February 22, 2021 Minutes previously circulated