

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, July 25, 2016, 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

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Karnes, Witten

ABSENT: Commissioner Butler, Garner, Smith

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

ALSO PRESENT: Jackie Austin, VP of Finance/CFO; Kathy Beveridge, Compliance and Quality Assurance Manager; Sarah Bridgman, Jobs-Plus Case Manager; David Bustamante, VP of Housing; Antwyne Calloway, Blue Ridge Independent Living Center ; 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; Marlene Starkey, Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator ; Yvonne Thomas, Jobs-Plus Program Manager ; Melissa Wills, Executive Assistant

Vice-Chair Karnes welcomed everyone to today's meeting.

II. REPORTS

1. Financial Report

Vice-Chair Karnes stated that Mrs. Austin provided a Financial Narrative along with a Financial Report.

Vice-Chair Karnes asked if there were any comments or questions. There were none.

2. Executive Director's Report

Vice-Chair Karnes asked for the Executive Director's report.

Mrs. Goh showed the Commissioners the plaque that RRHA received for the Joint Resident Council's (JRC) Denture and Eyeglass Program at the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) 2016 summer conference that was held in Portland, Oregon, July 15 through 17, 2016. She also distributed some photographs taken at the conference and the awards booklet NAHRO provided that highlighted all of the award recipients. Commissioner Duane Smith and Jamice Rudd, who are both JRC officers, attended the conference with Mrs. Goh to receive this award in person. They also hosted a table on Saturday morning and received a high level of interest about the program. Mrs. Goh stated that she hopes this exposure will lead to similar programs being established in other parts of the country. Mrs. Goh stated that she nominated this program to NAHRO because it is a program that is worthy of replication due to the straightforward way it provides critical services to the community.

Mrs. Goh also updated the Board on the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (H.R. 3700). At the request of the Virginia Association of Housing and Community Development Officials (VAHCDO), letters signed by the RRHA Board of Commissioners in May were sent to Senators Tim Kaine and Mark

Warner requesting them to support H.R. 3700. The bill has passed both the House and the Senate and is currently waiting to be signed by the President. Mrs. Goh distributed a summary of the components of the bill for the Commissioners to review. The first few pages of the summary relate to the Public Housing and Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher programs that RRHA administers.

Mrs. Goh informed the Board that the logo for RRHA has recently been updated. The substance of the logo, the graphic and tag line, was not changed, but the logo was given a fresh look. Mrs. Goh stated that the quality of the old logo was very poor and did not work well for printed materials. The new one, which highlights the letters RRHA, makes it easily recognizable since most people refer to the Housing Authority as RRHA. The new logo also provides a higher resolution in several different formats. Mrs. Goh distributed a sheet showing the three different versions of the logo that were received. The updated logo will be phased in so that supplies that have already been printed, including letterhead, envelopes and business cards, can be used first.

Commissioner Burruss commented that she wished Commissioner Smith was at the meeting so the Board could commend him in person on the award for the Denture and Eyeglass Program and asked that the commendation be conveyed to him. Commissioners agreed that the program is quite an initiative and very impressive. Mrs. Goh shared that the reason Commissioner Smith was not at the meeting was because there was a group of nine people that the JRC was taking to Charlottesville for dentures. One of the JRC members who was scheduled to go with the group was ill and unable to travel with the group. Commissioner Smith filled in so

that the individuals scheduled for dentures were able to keep their appointment.

Vice-Chair Karnes asked if there were any other comments or questions.

There were none.

3. Staff Reports

Mrs. Goh asked Ms. Thomas to provide the Board with an update on the youth services that are being offered in conjunction with the RRHA Jobs-Plus Program. Ms. Thomas shared with the Board that, in November 2015, Jobs-Plus staff and community partners began to think about what could be offered for the youth during the summer months. Historically, there are not a lot of activities taking place in the summer. One of the goals of Jobs-Plus is to bring the community together, and providing youth opportunities was a viable way to further this goal. Ms. Thomas stated that RRHA also wanted to include a component of partnering with parents to offer children a fun, safe environment where they can participate in enrichment activities. There has been an overwhelming amount of support from community partners in providing these opportunities.

Ms. Thomas stated that the Roanoke Police Department (RPD) was one of the first groups that came forward to help. They participate in reading to youth in the community rooms in the afternoons. The children enjoy interacting with the police officers. RPD officers have also grilled food at several different activities throughout the year, even in poor weather conditions. They also partner with Feeding America to provide food.

Ms. Thomas reported that another program is the Roanoke City Public School (RCPS) Plus program for children ages five through thirteen. Jobs-Plus staff went

door-to-door to enroll many residents in the program. The theme for this year was the Olympics and participants were able to see water polo, fencing and other enrichment activities that they may not have seen otherwise.

Ms. Thomas stated that Apple Ridge Farm offered a summer camp for youth. Jobs-Plus staff helped with the enrollment for the program, and it was very successful. Having all of the information on hand to share with families made it easier to make them aware of the opportunity. Ms. Thomas noted that Apple Ridge Farm is also offering a five-week academic summer camp for which they received a grant. Lansdowne Park is at the center of this program. Jobs-Plus staff again went door-to-door to help distribute information about the program and get children registered. This program runs from July 5 through August 5, and is for children ages ten through twelve. A health camp was also offered.

Ms. Thomas reported that the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) has been providing sports activities for the youth such as basic soccer, extreme Frisbee and tag football.

Ms. Thomas stated that, Goodwill Good Guides, a national mentoring program for youth between the ages of 12 and 17, provides arts and crafts for children in the community room on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They also have reading activities available for the children.

Ms. Thomas noted that ResCare has been doing a summer employment program with youth ages 16 through 24. There is also a youth component ResCare has helped with for Jobs-Plus.

Ms. Thomas reported that Junior Achievement (JA) is doing a financial program

with the youth and hosting classes on different topics. Ms. Thomas sat in on one of these classes and found it very informational. She stated that the kids were really interested in what was being taught. They used Monopoly money to teach kids how to save and spend wisely. Ms. Thomas said that one boy went home and told his mother that he had a lot of money in savings. His mother became interested in what her son was telling her and attended the next class where JA used the game to teach the same lessons to her and other parents.

Ms. Thomas stated that the Young Adult Life Enrichment (YALE) program through Total Action for Progress (TAP) has three young adults who they have been sending to help with the children's programs this summer. Each worker needs to complete 300 hours to finish the program. They have been distributing flyers, working with the kids and helping the partners with whatever is needed for their events. Ms. Thomas noted that they have been a great addition to the summer programs. While serving, they are learning work habits, job skills and how to work with the community.

Ms. Thomas stated that the staff from Teen Outreach Program (TOP) with Family Service of Roanoke Valley (FSRV) comes to RRHA on Monday afternoons. They promote knowledge and life enrichment through various activities and games.

Ms. Thomas shared that the Roanoke Public Libraries have a wealth of programs during the summer for youth. Many children from Lansdowne have taken advantage of going to the Melrose branch to participate.

Ms. Thomas stated that Cox Communications donated two gently used bookcases to Jobs-Plus and has also committed to coordinate volunteers who will come and read to the children through the end of 2016. Ms. Thomas said that Cox is

also interested in doing some back to school events and a coat drive in the winter with their employees.

Ms. Thomas stated that the Bring a Book Campaign through Jobs-Plus is an effort to have RRHA employees donate new or gently used books to fill the bookshelves donated by Cox Communications for the reading program. Jobs-Plus would like to have age-appropriate books available for all children who participate. Ms. Thomas stated that the ultimate goal is to have enough books on hand to be able to provide a book to take home for any child that wants one. Ms. Thomas said that, while this may be an aggressive goal, she believes it is attainable.

Ms. Thomas said that financial classes are also offered by America Saves and Freedom First Credit Union, and these classes have been going very well.

Participants were also served ice cream after the class.

Ms. Thomas stated that the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offered DMV2Go services at Lansdowne recently and, while this service was greatly needed for the adults, parents were also able to bring their 18-year-old children with them to get identification cards. Many of them were getting ready to start their first jobs and needed the identification cards for their employers.

Ms. Thomas shared that Project Discovery, coordinated by TAP in conjunction with FSRV, provides college tours to youth and has been extremely successful. Ten tours have been scheduled, and one has been completed at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (A&T). Ms. Thomas stated that additional tours are scheduled for James Madison University, University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, and all local colleges. These tours will take place every

week in August until school begins.

Ms. Thomas stated that the “Jumping June” event was planned by the Jobs-Plus Ambassadors. The JRC provided games, soccer balls, footballs, and hula hoops for children to use. This was a very successful family event to get people out of their houses to interact with each other. There were many fun games, a cookout, and information available about the Jobs-Plus program.

Ms. Thomas shared that Fun Fest was a health and wellness event held in partnership with INTotal Health. This event included an inflatable for the children, a popcorn machine and healthy snacks. The event was well attended and many people received information on health and wellness as well as diseases such as diabetes. Children received toothbrushes and instruction on good oral hygiene.

Ms. Thomas stated that the biggest event this summer has been the Summer Lunch Program at several of the public housing sites. Based on unofficial numbers, 486 meals have been provided since June 6. Many volunteers from the community have helped with this program that benefits local children. Ms. Thomas thanked Commissioner Karnes for coming and helping to serve lunch to the children.

Ms. Thomas stated that there will also be some back to school events in August as kids prepare to return to school. There are also some ideas that are being considered such as a proposed chess club on Saturdays.

Commissioner Burruss thanked Ms. Thomas for her presentation and the work that Jobs-Plus has done to orchestrate the long list of events. She inquired about the total number of children who have been impacted through these programs and events this summer. Ms. Thomas stated that, while she could not provide from memory a

total number for all events, she could share numbers from some events. There were 51 children and adults who participated in the Fun Fest. The Sundae Smash, the FSRV summer kickoff event, had 49 children that attended. The college tours have had 21 participants with more interested in future tours. On average, there are between 70 and 80 people that attend each scheduled event. This is an unduplicated number. The number for the Summer Lunch program is not an unduplicated number as some children attend each day. Ms. Thomas stated that, overall numbers have been very good, aside from one week early in the summer when a local church was holding a day camp that decreased the number of kids coming for lunch. In response to a statement from Commissioner Burruss that she was not necessarily looking for precise data but an overall idea of numbers, Ms. Thomas confirmed that they do keep a precise count for each event. She stated that she will provide additional information to the Board.

Commissioner Anguiano asked Ms. Thomas if there was anything that Jobs-Plus had on their wish list for next year or lessons that were learned this summer. Ms. Thomas said that there were many ideas and things that Jobs-Plus would like to see happen for next year. Regarding lessons learned, Ms. Thomas shared that it takes a lot of planning and coordination to make these events successful. The support from community partners has been instrumental this summer. Ms. Thomas said that she was not aware of how many people wanted to help. Once information was shared about what the need was and the number of kids at the housing locations, the partners began coming up with ideas of ways to reach out. Next year there will be more planning of activities involving local agencies. Right now the goal is to focus on

back to school and getting needed supplies for the children, along with getting warm clothing for the children for the winter. There are also plans underway for a movie night in coordination with United Way of Roanoke Valley. Ms. Thomas shared that there is always a need for volunteers at their events and all are welcome to help.

Vice-Chair Karnes asked if there were any other comments or questions.

There were none.

4. Committee Reports

Vice-Chair Karnes stated that the Personnel Committee met prior to the Board meeting to review and discuss several policies that will be presented to the Board for approval at next month's meeting.

Vice-Chair Karnes asked if there were any other Committee reports, comments or questions. There were none.

5. Commissioner Comments

Vice-Chair Karnes asked if there were any Commissioner comments. There were none.

6. Residents or other community members to address the Board

Vice-Chair Karnes 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, June 27, 2016.

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

C-2 Monthly Operations Report for the month of June 2016.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: File as submitted

Commissioner Anguiano introduced a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

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

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Karnes, Witten

NAYS: None

Vice-Chair Karnes thereupon declared said motion carried as introduced.

IV. REGULAR AGENDA

1. Board Committees – Discussion

Vice-Chair Karnes stated that there would be discussion regarding current RRHA Board committees and a possible need for others. There are currently active Audit and Personnel Committees. Committees were established in 2007, and some changes were made in 2010. Mrs. Goh stated that, at the time that the committees were established in 2007, there was not a structure for review of assignments or the viability and need for various committees. There was originally an Affiliates Committee but it has not met since October 2013 and is essentially dormant at this time.

Mrs. Goh said that there is not anything in the bylaws that requires or prohibits committees. The decision of how they are structured, how long people serve, and changing or rotating assignments is left to the Board's discretion.

Mrs. Goh stated that, since three Board members are absent, the discussion can be postponed and any related decisions can be made at a later date. With the election of officers coming up in August and it being a topic that the Board had not

discussed in a while, it seemed like a good time to introduce the topic for consideration.

Commissioner Anguiano stated that with the limited number of Commissioners at the meeting, it might be better to address it at another time. In response to a question from Commissioner Burruss, Mrs. Goh confirmed that a quorum was present at today's meeting.

Commissioner Witten raised a question about what other housing authority boards are doing regarding committees and if there are areas that RRHA should be looking into more carefully. As a member of the Audit Committee, he did not feel that it was an added burden as they only meet approximately four times per year. In response to his question, Mrs. Goh stated that across housing authorities there really is not a typical number or kind of committees. For example, some housing authorities have an Executive Committee, but this would likely be more useful for larger boards; however it is at the Board's discretion.

She clarified that the way the Board and the bylaws are currently structured, committees do not have any authority to take action. The full Board makes all of the decisions and takes action, while the committees support, do in-depth analysis, make recommendations and give input to the Board.

There is a wide variation of housing authority committees depending on the community that is being served. Eighty percent of housing authorities have 250 units or less and are much smaller than RRHA. Of the remaining twenty percent, a limited number are much larger, having as many as 35,000 units and, while some serve one jurisdiction as RRHA does, others are multi-jurisdictional or regional. Mrs. Goh said

that she would be happy to provide the Board with information on committee structures used by some comparable sized housing authorities.

Commissioner Burruss stated that since RRHA is a policy Board, any committees would need to reflect the Board's functions. While many things are very interesting, such as the update given by Ms. Thomas, it does not reflect the adoption of policy and would not constitute need for a committee. Mrs. Goh agreed.

Commissioner Anguiano also agreed that it was not the Board's role to get into the details of every decision made at RRHA.

In response to a question by Commissioner Anguiano regarding the Affiliates Committee, Mrs. Goh explained that it was intended to serve as a liaison between the Board of Commissioners and limited partnerships that owned the tax credit properties. At the time of its formation, Eight Jefferson Place was also being managed by RRHA. That property was sold approximately three years ago. Mrs. Goh stated that there were a lot of challenges with managing that particular property, and it was often the focus of the committee's discussions. The other tax credit properties that remain are standard properties that present fewer management challenges. RRHA does not own those properties as they are owned by limited partnerships, but RRHA is the management entity which is why the management reports are included each month in Board reports. In response to a comment from Commissioner Burruss stating that she recalled that Eight Jefferson Place was a large factor in the original establishment of the committee, Mrs. Goh agreed.

Commissioner Anguiano reiterated that it would be most beneficial to the Board to revisit the topic when a full Board was present and discuss if there is any utility in

other committees. Mrs. Goh stated that, if the Board was in agreement, she could send an email to the entire Board summarizing the introductory discussion and informing Commissioners that the decision was made to add this item to the agenda for next month when more members would be present. Mrs. Goh said that she will also include relevant information regarding committees of other housing authorities that are comparable to RRHA. Commissioners expressed agreement with this approach.

V. 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 Witten and upon roll call the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Commissioners Anguiano, Burruss, Karnes, Witten

NAYS: None

Vice-Chair Karnes declared the meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m.



Glenda Edwards Goh, Secretary-Treasurer



Gilbert Butler, Chair

