

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF COLUMBIA, SC  
March 15, 2018

The Board of Commissioners of The Housing Authority of the City of Columbia, SC convened on Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 4:50 p.m in the CHA Board Room.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order and upon roll call, those present and absent for the Housing Authority of the City of Columbia were as follows:

PRESENT: Bobby D. Gist, Chairperson  
Ernest Cromartie, III, Commissioner  
Alexena Furgess, Commissioner  
George Green, Commissioner  
Selena Pickens, Commissioner  
Jennifer Rubin, Commissioner  
Bessie Watson, Commissioner (via phone)  
Gilbert Walker, Executive Director  
Tim Rogers, Legal Counsel

STAFF: Howard Thomas, Melanie Baker, Donna Gilbert, Ramonda Pollard, Lee McRoberts, Nancy Stoudenmire

Mr. Gist called the meeting to order at 4:40 pm and Mr. Green opened with a prayer.

Upon motion of Mr. Green, seconded by Mrs. Rubin, the minutes of the February 15, 2018 meeting were unanimously approved as amended.

Mr. Walker gave an update on the Commercial Site. The roof leaks previously reported at the February meeting have been repaired. All spaces are occupied and the businesses are doing well. The Food Share program began its first series of healthy cooking classes this week for CHA seniors.

Mr. Walker reported on TS Martin. The 15 year tax credit period ended and CHAD is now sole owner. The community will remain as affordable housing and staff is looking at possibly raising rents as they have not been increased since the community was built. The units stay occupied and are profitable. Mr. Walker said that he will keep the Board updated with any changes or developments.

Mr. Walker gave an update on Gonzales Gardens. Interest has been high for all 12 homeownership units that have been built in the Lyons Street area. Staff is working to identify and qualify potential buyers at 50% and 80% of the median income to fulfill requirements for the funds used to construct the units; credit scores and income have been the biggest obstacles to overcome. Mr. Walker met with the Assistant City Manager recently to discuss options for working around the 50% and 80% buyer requirements. Staff is also looking at options for the homes with income restrictions currently in place. Ms. Pickens expressed concern that changing the arrangement with the City regarding the homes in question could jeopardize future ventures; Mr. Walker said that the Assistant City Manager is currently checking on possible ways around

the requirement but nothing would be done that might negatively impact the Authority's relationship with the City. Mr. Walker said that a similar issue had come up at Rosewood Hills and that plan was restructured.

Mr. Walker reported that demolition is complete and staff is working with the State Housing and Finance Authority to close out the project and begin processing reimbursement requests. A total of \$1.6 million was spent.

Staff is still waiting to hear on the status of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) grant that was submitted in the fall of last year. An announcement of finalists is expected at any time. The 9% tax credit application for St. Ana's Senior Community was submitted to the state and staff is hopeful it will be successful. CHAD will own and manage this project.

Mr. Walker gave a briefing on the proposed 2018 inductees to the CHA Wall of Fame. Dr. Michelle Myer, Mrs. Patricia Prescott, and retired Lt. Col. Mike Williams are being recommended for induction this year. In addition to the 3 nominees, a recommendation was made to recognize Mr. E.W. Cromartie, II for his contributions to the community. Mrs. Furgess agreed that Mr. Cromartie should be recognized but suggested he receive a different award rather than set a precedent of adding non-residents to the wall. Mr. Walker said that all of the nominees were strong members of their communities and would be good additions to the Wall. Upon motion of Mr. Green, seconded by Ms. Pickens, the nominees for induction and the recipient of the special award of recognition were unanimously approved.

Mr. Cromartie joined the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Mr. Walker gave a briefing the previously discussed, potential acquisition of the English Meadows apartment complex from Benedict College. During the due diligence period, staff discovered that the road leading into the complex is owned by a local church. There is no easement in place granting access to the road which could lead to problems in the future. Mr. Walker has been working with the Church to try and resolve the matter. A proposal was submitted to the Church which had to be sent to their Diocese for review and approval. They agreed to grant access but added stipulations that CHA would be responsible for future repairs to the road; Mr. Walker would not agree to that condition. There was a general discussion regarding a potential Road Maintenance Agreement and other possible solutions to the road issue. Mr. Walker said he needs approval for a commitment letter to purchase the property pending an appraisal and suitable resolution to the road issue; the approved commitment letter will guarantee the interest rate. Ms. Pickens said that she feels the acquisition is in the best interest of the Authority and that staff should have an alternate plan to purchase even if an agreement with the Church cannot be reached. Upon motion of Mr. Green, seconded by Mrs. Rubin the commitment letter was unanimously approved.

Mr. Walker stated there was no new business to report for any of the Committees.

Mr. Walker reported on a recent meeting he had with Richland County Council members to update them on progress at Gonzales Gardens. Council was supportive but voiced concerns that low income housing was not going back on the site. Mr. Walker addressed the issue and reassured them that affordable housing would be a part of the revitalized community. Council expressed an interest in partnering with the Authority to add units in area off of Old Percival

Road. Infrastructure is being added to many areas previously not serviced by the County and they are interested in adding affordable housing to the region. Staff will work up several options to propose to Council and report back to the Boards.

Mr. Thomas gave the Operations Report for Public Housing. Security incident reports were flat to last year with a total of 30 reports for the 30 day period. Finances remain strong for public housing with a cash flow of \$635,000 going into the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the fiscal year; Mr. Thomas estimates having a surplus of between \$700,000 and \$1 million dollars by the end of the year.

Mrs. Pollard gave an update on the Section 8 department. The Veteran's Assisted Supportive Housing (VASH) program is 94% leased up. Staff is working closely with the VA to ensure program participants are served quickly. Eighteen vets attended a recent orientation where landlords were present to try and help them locate units quickly.

Mr. Cromartie asked if there have been issues with the KeyBank debit card program and if the Authority is conducting any programs to help residents establish or re-establish banking relationships. Mrs. Rubin agreed that partnering with banks on this kind of program would be beneficial. Mrs. Pollard said she could invite bank representatives to future orientations.

Mr. Thomas gave a briefing on a potential CHAD project. Staff is currently working on an application to project base 20 vouchers for the VASH program that could then be used to leverage financing to construct the units. Staff is proposing that 14 units would be built on land donated to the Authority on Waites Road and 6 would be built on land owned by the Cayce Housing Authority. Rents would service the debt for the construction loans. Mr. Walker said that the project is in the conceptual phase now and a more detailed plan would be presented the Development Committee at the appropriate time. There was a general discussion regarding the process used to develop and present the proposed project to the Board; Mrs. Rubin stated that the Development Committee should be used as a vehicle to discuss concepts and potential projects prior to presentation to the full Board. Mr. Walker said he would convene a Development Committee meeting soon to brief them on several projects in the conceptual phase.

Mrs. Gilbert invited everyone to the Wall of Fame Induction Ceremony being held April 6, 2018 at 11:00 am in the Drew Wellness Center. She announced that the CHAD Golf Tournament to benefit scholarships for CHA youth will be held Friday, May 4, 2018 at Cobblestone Creek. A meeting was held last Sunday for upcoming high school graduates and their families to discuss the scholarship program.

Mrs. Furgess gave a briefing on upcoming changes to the COMET mass transit system. Routes that are primarily used by CHA residents are being cancelled effective May 1/ 2018; Mr. Walker stated that he has asked staff to meet with the COMET team but decisions had already been made regarding the routes to be cut. Mrs. Rubin and Mr. Cromartie encouraged staff to utilize the Board's political force and the politics of people to influence change.

There being no further business, it was unanimously decided to end the meeting at 6:30 pm.



Secretary

APPROVED:

