



NEWS RELEASE

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Authority unveils new houses, new direction

Officials of the Riviera Beach Housing Authority will begin a bus tour at 3 p.m. on July 12 to show off its four newly renovated single-family homes that the authority bought with federal funds and that represent the first rental property it has had in years.

Indeed, the tour is a long, long way from where the authority had been. From a HUD-takeover in the mid-200's to the near-loss of all of its housing units in the 1995 hurricane season to a shakeup in its executive ranks, this authority has seen its share of troubles.

"But like the Phoenix, we rise," said J. Jerome Taylor, chairman of the authority's board.

He and the other five board members have worked painstakingly, incrementally, to restore the agency.

HUD released it from receivership in 2008. It recently hired John W. Hurt, a nationally known expert in public housing, as its part-time director and Sharon K. Jackson as its part-time deputy director. She had held leadership positions in planning and zoning in Lake Worth and community and economic development in West Palm Beach.

And as the bus tour will show, the authority now has an income stream. The four houses are ready to be rented to any families with Section-8 vouchers. All of the houses had been in foreclosure, as required by the \$500,000 Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP-1) federal grant that was awarded to the authority and are soon to be back on the City's tax rolls.

On the bus with the authority will be City and County officials and former residents of the Ivey-Green complex—the 15-acre public housing development that had to be demolished following the 2004 and 2005 hurricanes. The authority has plans to redevelop the land.

The bus will leave from housing authority offices at 2014 W. 17th Court and visit each house in turn for a short ribbon-cutting event.