



PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:
 Thursday, June 24, 2021; 5:30 p.m.

Dominica Manor Community Room

100 Atwells Avenue, Providence RI 02903

In accordance with Executive Order 20-46, the meeting was held in person but with an option for commissioners and the public to attend via video and telephone conference call. Members and anyone else speaking identified themselves when speaking. Commissioner Lonzie Doggett participated by Zoom on the phone, all other commissioners were in person.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nicolas Retsinas called the meeting to order at 5:40p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:	Absent:
Nicolas Retsinas	John Iglizzi
Thomas Ryan	Mary Kay Harris
Vivian Medina	
Jessica Cigna	
Marcela Betancur	
Rochelle Lee	
Siri Colom	
Lawrence D'Alfonso	
Lonzie Doggett	

Nine members were present, constituting a quorum to conduct business.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Retsinas called for a motion to accept and approve the minutes of the May 27, 2021 meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Cigna and was seconded by Commissioner D'Alfonso. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

RESIDENT COMMENTS:

None

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE:

Commissioner D'Alfonso provided the following summary of Capital Improvements Projects:

- Construction on the Pavilion behind 50 Laurel Hill Avenue is expected to be completed as of June 18, 2021. This summer we will be adding a roofing structure to the seating area to provide shelter from the elements.
- Manton Heights Bike Path / Greenway project has broken ground. This project will create a connection from Manton Heights to the Woonasquatucket River Greenway. Expected completion date is September 2021.
- ATG has completed the Security Camera and infrastructure upgrade project at Chad Brown; Work will begin shortly at Manton Heights.
- Dexter Manor Elevator Modernization Project is ongoing. Car 1 at Dexter 1 has been completed; work has begun on Car 2 at Dexter 1.

- Scattered Sites roof evaluation project has begun. Aerial Insight will be conducting the evaluations 100 percent from the outside of the units and will not inconvenience the residents by entering their homes.
- Chad Brown roofing project has been completed after a small delay due to COVID.
- Retubing of the boiler at Hartford Park has begun; this will be completed by August 2021. The last time this boiler was retubed was more than twenty years ago.
- Further information is available in the monthly management report.

BUDGET & FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE:

Commissioner Cigna updated the board on the following:

Financial Overview

- AMPS: @May 31 bottom line reflects a YTD operating surplus of **\$4,071,233**
- COCC: showing an operating surplus of **\$42,730**
- Section 8 Admin: showing an operating surplus of approximately **\$1,295,249**
- Section 8 HAP: has booked **\$184,553** as overspent for FY 2021 YTD.

New Funding Sources

- \$2.54 M CARES Act for Operating Funds- **\$115,000 remaining**
- \$35,000 One Neighborhood HEZ for Economic Self Sufficiency at Hartford Park
- \$40,000 Food Program Grant from RI Foundation - **\$18,351 Remaining**
- \$6,819,448 FY21 Capital Fund
- \$132,370 RI Housing Forgivable loan for the Manton Heights Bike Path Access
- \$25,000 One Neighborhood Builders HEZ for Community Health Worker
- \$60,000 Blue Cross grant for Section 8 Landlord Incentives and Information
- \$101,748 RI Dept of Human Services for AC units
- \$478,500 HUD ROSS Service Coordinator Grant

Contract Updates

- Delta Mechanical – Fire Protection System @ Hartford Tower – 335 Hartford Ave - \$1,653,900. CO for \$15,279 for Total of \$1,707,579. Funding Source is the 2017 Bond Proceeds. **Payments processed: \$1,537,289.99 to date.**
- Delta Mechanical – Fire Protection System @ PV, DX, and CT - \$4,824,300. Funding Source is the 2017 Bond Proceeds. **Payments processed: \$3,391,776.00 to date.**
- Otis Elevator – Elevator Modernization @ Kilmartin Plaza. Funding Source is Bond. Contract total: \$485,000 plus Change Order \$120,025.25 – CO **\$96,020** + CO \$3,209.28 + CO \$120,025.25- **CO \$106,191.50** = \$523212.83. **Payments processed: \$360,530.40 total to date**
- Otis Elevator – Elevator Modernization @ Dexter Manor. Funding Source is Bond. Contract total: \$831,000. **Payments processed: \$340,963.00 total to date**
- Otis Elevators – Elevator Modernization@ HP. Funding Source is CFP 19. Contract total is \$661,098. **Payments processed: \$0 total to date**
- Martone Construction – Scattered Sites Exterior Renovations – Funding Source CFP 50118. Contract total is \$364,570 plus CO for \$11065 = \$375635. **Payments processed: \$324,499.85 total to date**
- Martone Construction – Roof and gutter replacement at Chad Brown. Funding source CFP 19. Contract total is \$1,089,460 plus CO for \$477,518. The new contract total is \$1,566,978. **Payments processed: \$1,333,008.00 total to date**
- Focus Technology – Managed IT Services – Funding Source is OPS/COCC. Contract total is \$143,964 plus CO for \$143,964 TOTAL \$287,928.00 **Payments processed: \$179,955 total to date**
- Sole Source Construction – Scattered Sites Porch Rebuilt @ 3 Duplexes. Funding source is CFP 50118. Contract total is \$144,400. Change order for \$97,220. New Contract total is \$241,620. **Payments processed: \$241,620.00 total to date. COMPLETED**
- Commercial Roofing - Remove and Replace Roof Hartford Park Tower. Funding Source is CFP 50118. Contract total is \$523,000. Change order for \$75,412.75. New total \$598,412.75 **Payments processed: \$533,171.47 total to date**

- Energy One – HVAC for Elevator Modernization. Funding source is CFP. Contract total is for \$127,500. **Payments processed: \$0.00 total to date**
- NESCTC – Security Detail for DX, CT, and PV sprinkler projects. Funding source is Ops. Contract Total is for \$107,502. **Payments processed: \$72,100.06 total to date**
- MTG Disposal- Disposal Contract all AMPS. Funding is OPs. Start date 5/1/21. Contract total for \$405,810. **Payments processed: \$33,817.50 total to date**
- BeauSoleil Brothers – Manton Heights Greenway Bike Path Access. Funding Source is a RI Housing forgivable loan for \$132,370 and CFP for \$96,130. Contract total is for \$228,500. **Payments processed: \$0 total to date**

Commissioner Cigna noted that in the finance committee meeting, Lindsay Francoeur from the executive office had presented to the committee on all the proposed insurance renewals for the agency, and the committee recommends full board approval

CONTRACT APPROVAL:

AUTO INSURANCE RENEWAL – HAI GROUP AND TRAVELERS - \$169,070:

Status: Commissioner Cigna made a motion and Commissioner Lee seconded the motion.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

PROPERTY INSURANCE – ALL AMPS – HAI GROUP - \$543,545:

Status: Commissioner Cigna made a motion and Commissioner Lee seconded the motion.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

GENERAL LIABILITY – HAI GROUP - \$160,492:

Status: Commissioner Cigna made a motion and Commissioner Lee seconded the motion.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

WORKERS COMPENSATION – BEACON - \$523,883:

Status: Commissioner Cigna made a motion and Commissioner Lee seconded the motion.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:

Director Sanzaro updated the Board on the following items:

1. PUBLIC RELATIONS:

The PHA team has been very busy with a series of public relation events which highlighted the PHA's work. These are a reflection of the strategic planning efforts, COVID response, and the hard work of the PHA employees.

2. FIRST EVENT; ON JUNE 4TH, CROSSROADS CELEBRATED THE COMPLETION OF THEIR FAMILY HOUSING:

- a) The PHA's January 2020 project-based voucher awards included 21 Project Based Vouchers to Crossroads as they had plans to do major renovations to 30 family housing units in 14 locations across the City.
- b) The PHA's Project Based Vouchers supported the continued affordability of those family units in the City, provided Crossroads financial opportunities with other

funding to make improvements to the 30 apartments, & successfully relocated families who returned to their new homes.

3. **SECOND EVENT; ON JUNE 14TH, SENATOR REED'S ANNOUNCED NEW FEDERAL DOLLARS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2.5M FOR 159 EMERGENCY HOUSING VOUCHERS:**
 - a) With the federal eviction moratorium ending soon on July 31st and the looming risk that more RI's will be at risk of becoming homeless or lose their homes, Senator Jack Reed's office asked the PHA to do a press event with questions and answers from members of the press. The \$2.5M is only a small portion of the \$5 billion of the American Rescue Act that are allocated for the Emergency Housing Voucher program nationally. Senator Reed's committee work will add an additional 70,000 housing choice vouchers into local public housing authorities. That is quite the news there.
4. **THIRD EVENT: ON JUNE 18TH, RIH HELD A PRESS EVENT TO HIGHLIGHT RENT RELIEF RI FOR THE PUBLIC:**
 - a) Community leaders were brought together to stress the importance of affordable housing and strengthening communities. On the national level, Reed's leadership included \$25 billion dollars for the Emergency Rental assistance program in the Consolidated Appropriations Act and then an additional \$21.5 billion in Emergency Rental assistance from the American Rescue Plan Act.
 - b) The State of Rhode Island received \$200 million dollars of this federal money and is working with community partners to launch. Rhode Island Housing is administering of the Emergency Rental assistance program.
 - c) Jackie Martinez, Associate Director of Property Management, spoke about the PHA's Housing Preservation Program and how the PHA will connect the residents with the Rhode Island Rent Relief funding and social supports toward a better future.
5. **HUD NEWS:**
 - a) HUD has officially approved the PHA's FY2021 Annual Plan.
 - b) On June 16, the PHA met with HUD representatives in two forums:
 - One was a national forum conducted by a HUD consulting company to gather information and feedback about Homeownership in the Housing Choice Voucher program.
 - The second was a panel discussion, requested by PHA, to discuss both Emergency Housing Vouchers/Mainstream utilization.
 - The Eviction Moratorium is ending on July 31st.
 - Anticipating the ending of the federal Eviction Moratorium June 30th, HUD released an Eviction Prevention and Stability Toolkit, FAQs, and is offering two Eviction Prevention webinars this month.
 - PHAs were asked to send the tenant brochure is provided to all Housing Choice Voucher, Public Housing, and Moderate Rehabilitation Program residents.
 - c) U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia L. Fudge announced that HUD published an interim final rule on Thursday to restore the implementation of the Fair Housing Act's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing requirement and is soliciting public comment. HUD will take comments for 30 days after publication and may act on them prior to the effective date of the rule.
 - d) Using Emergency Housing Choice Vouchers to address homelessness with returning citizens referring to those leaving prison. HUD is committed to taking a comprehensive approach to addressing the housing needs of returning citizens and people with criminal records, and by doing so, increasing public safety within our communities.
6. **PROJECT BASED VOUCHERS, REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL UPDATE:**
 - a) On June 14th, the PHA held a webinar for interested responders could review the Request for Proposal and ask questions. The PHA developed a FAQs from that webinar, and any received up until 6/21 and posted to the PHA's website for reference. Proposals are due mid-July.

- b) The PHA team will then review proposals, summarize, and meet back with the Project Based Voucher Committee in August to do the following:
 - Have a refresher presentation on Project Based Vouchers from the PHA
 - Review proposals and set interviews
 - Selection in September
 - c) The PHA plans to present and approve said awards in the October board meeting.
7. **PROJECT BASED VOUCHERS & KING STREET COMMONS:**
- a) In Project Based Voucher news, from the PHA's 2020 award of 7 Project Based Vouchers to ONE Neighborhood Builders which were slated for new construction at the time, are finally ready for occupancy on July 1st. This means at this time there are 4 Project Based Vouchers and 3 Housing Choice Vouchers.
8. **LEASED HOUSING/Section 8:**
- a) The PHA's evaluation of the Section 8 program is still underway and is a very systematic process. The Section 8 program is being engaged as well to streamline and create uniformity. As part of that evaluation, the PHA will form a pilot Admissions Department that would be the entry point for all public housing and Section 8 applicants, special programs and potentially the 504/Reasonable Accommodation repository.
9. **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS:**
- a) Housing Preservation:
In June, the PHA team developed Standard Operating Procedures for Property Management/Section 8 and Resident Services Department as well as effective communications with those the PHA serves. The PHA is now testing the program and the supporting internal network, the resident experience, documents needed and external processes and experiences with landlords who support the PHA's section 8 program. The PHA is working very closely with Rhode Island Housing This system will connect residents to financial resources and counseling to sustain housing for those struggling with rent.
 - b) Special Task Force was designed to handle the back log of Work Orders:
There was an excessive amount of unattended work orders due to the pandemic. The PHA has created a team of leaders who are working together to try different approaches to address them quickly and systematically. The back log of work orders right now represents 30% of the total work orders open. The team has already reduced the backlog of work orders by about 60%.

PRESENTATIONS:

PHA's FY2022 OPERATING BUDGET

presented by Linda Poole, Director of Finance & Accounting and Lee Lamothe, Associate Director of Finance & Accounting. Linda and Lee gave a brief overview of the budget, noting that all commissioners had been invited to a prior more in-depth overview during the Finance Committee meeting.

Vote to Approve PHA's FY2022 OPERATING BUDGET:

Status: Commissioner Cigna made a motion and Commissioner Lee seconded the motion.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to enter a private Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining agreement/s and negotiations.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Ryan and seconded by Commissioner Colom.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to return to open meeting from Executive Session. The motion was made by Vice Chairman Ryan and seconded by Commissioner Lee.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to accept Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Laborers Union as discussed during Executive Session.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Ryan and seconded by Commissioner Betancur.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to extend authority to the Executive Director to have discretion to complete labor Negotiations with the PHA's other collective bargaining units, with the Director charged to seek agreements that are in alignment with the Laborers' contract.

The motion was made by Vice Chairman Ryan and seconded by Commissioner Colom.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

Vice Chairman Ryan motioned to seal the minutes of Executive Session. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Lee.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Medina, Lee, Colom, D'alfonso, Betancur, Doggett (9)

Votes opposed: none

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Cigna made a motion that the meeting be adjourned at 6:38pm, seconded by Commissioner D'Alfonso. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Taisha Capo
Recording Secretary

Melissa Sanzaro
Executive Director