

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ANNAPOLIS
April 10, 2012 4:30p.m.**

Roll Call

Commissioner Carl O. Snowden, Chair
Commissioner Cynthia Carter, Vice Chair
Commissioner Elizamae Robinson
Commissioner Deborah A. Johnson
Commissioner Jeffrey Henderson

Excused

Commissioner Richard Callahan, Treasurer
Commissioner Phylliss Gibbs

Moment of Silent Reflection

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes as written for the March 1, 2012 Board of Commissioners meeting was made by Commissioner Henderson. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All approved.

Resolutions

Resolution No. Admin 030112-04: A Resolution to approve or disapprove of a HACA Section 8 participant serving as President of the HACA RAB.

Action: The Resolution did not pass. The vote was two (2) aye, one (1) nay, and two (2) abstentions. The Chairman stated that the document will be forwarded to HACA counsel for their review and ruling.

Resolution Admin 041012-06: A Resolution Authoring the Executive Director to Submit the 2012 Annual & Five Year Plan to HUD.

Action: Commissioner Henderson motioned to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All approved.

Resolution Admin 041012-07: A Resolution Banning Car/Vehicle washing on HACA property using HACA water resources to be effective June 1, 2012.

Action: Commissioner Johnson motioned to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Carter seconded the motion. All approved.

Resident Council Comments

Ms. Jackie Wells, President of the Bloomsbury Square Resident Council stated that fundraising dinner held in April was a success and that another is planned for May. The funds are used for the "Let's Talk" sessions and senior activities. Ms. Wells indicated that the Bloomsbury Square "Let's Talk" sessions with young people aged 4 to 18 are going well.

The group of adults and 18 children from the Bloomsbury Square community meets at the Elsie Virginia Clark Community Center on Saturdays. The next session is scheduled for Saturday, April 21.

The Resident Council has been working with the City of Annapolis on parking issues and received a letter from the City on April 3. Ms. Wells stated that some residents believe the cost of the parking stickers is too high. A neighborhood watch sign has been posted by the City and Ms. Wells thanked Ms. Gail Smith and the City for their assistance.

Ms. Sandra Chapman, President of the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartments distributed photos of the interior of the senior bus. She asked that if HACA can not provide a new bus could the seats be replaced as all seats in the bus are torn. Chief Joseph Johnson stated that there has been discussion on what to do but nothing definitive. Chairman Snowden stated that HACA and its stewards must face the reality of less funding from the federal government and that HACA must look to more creative ways to find funds. The Chairman stressed more civic engagement from those people with needs so that they are in the right place to make their needs known.

Ms. Chapman stated that a pre-Mother's Day jazz & blues dinner will be held on May 12 from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m. in the Multi-purpose room. Tickets are \$25 per person and include a buffet dinner.

Deborah Odum, President of the current RAB stated that the RAB met on six occasions and that their next meeting will be held on May 25, 2:30 p.m. at the Roger Pip Moyer Recreation Center. Ms. Odum indicated that the RAB adopted bylaws and stated the RAB feels there is inadequate training for people entering public housing. The RAB would like to be affiliated with the process. Chairman Snowden suggested that Ms. Odum talk with Gail Smith of the Mayor's office regarding the April 30 budget hearing.

General Comments

Mr. James Womack, a resident of the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartments stated that city streets at Glenwood and Clay are becoming a raceway. There are no speed signs and no police to enforce lower speed. Chairman Snowden suggested that he talk with Sandra Chapman so that she can bring the information to APD. Mr. Womack further stated that the elevators in the Morris H. Blum Senior Building are in need of repair. Chairman Snowden stated that the elevators will be discussed later in the evening's agenda.

Ms. Keva Henderson, a Bowman Court resident, indicated she has received a 30-day notice to move. Chairman Snowden suggested she contact the Legal Aid Bureau for assistance.

Executive Director's Report

Vincent O. Leggett stated he and his staff have been working with HUD on the MOU and that only four target items remain.

Mr. Leggett stated that the Martha Wood Leadership Award committee nominated the two founding members of the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartment's Sewing Club, Ms. Laura Collins and Janice Adams. Mr. Leggett further stated that construction at Obery Court, Phase II continues and that the contractor is ahead of schedule. Ms. Sharon Brown of Pennrose then gave a brief update on the construction.

Ms. Sharon Brown, the Pennrose Property Manager at College Creek Terrace/Obery Court, confirmed that construction is ahead of schedule and that 39 units will be ready for occupancy in July. New tenants will be selected from the original HACA relocation list. Ms. Brown stated that the units must be leased by December 31, 2012. Ms. Brown stated that she will contact people on the original relocation list to see if they have an interest in returning to the community.

Mr. Leggett continued his report by stating that HACA is still working on the proposed policy to eliminate smoking within the units at the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartment building. HACA is looking into smoking cessation products and programs for those stewards who may require/request such assistance. HACA's legal counsel is looking into possible penalties for those stewards who violate the new no-smoking policy and such infractions could include lease violation.

Mr. Leggett stated that the Public Hearing held March 1, 2012 garnered more participation than ever before. He also stated that a Memorandum of Understanding is being drafted between HACA and Sojourner Douglass College. Twenty (20) full-ride scholarships will be offered to HACA stewards beginning this summer. HACA and Sojourner Douglass College are also looking at a plan for HACA staff.

The Commissioners decided to hold their annual retreat beginning Friday, June 1 through Saturday, June 2. A venue will be decided and stakeholders and residents will be invited to join in as necessary.

Property Manager Reports

Corrie Flannigan, Property Manager for the Bloomsbury Square and Morris H. Blum Senior Apartments stated that the Blum building is 97 occupied. Two units are in MOD and 3 units are in Repair-Make Ready. Two units will be leased this week. Mr. Flannigan stated that the Annapolis Drum & Bugle Corps held a fish fry recently. John Wade and the Annapolis Fire Department offered training to residents on using oxygen safely. Mr. Flannigan stated that the prostitution problem that plagued the building has been eliminated.

Commissioner Henderson stated that the elevator issue in the Blum building is really a safety issue. Chairman Snowden stated that it is a money issue as well. Sharon Land, Director of Finance & Administration, stated that she met with HUD officials about an emergency funding grant to replace the two elevators. Mr. Bill Tamburrino will provide additional information.

Mr. Flannigan stated that the Bloomsbury Square community is 100% occupied and that the community has been quiet.

Ms. Demetria Hall stated that the Newtowne Twenty community is 96% occupied with 11 units in MOD and 2 in Repair-Make Ready. Ms. Hall met with APD on safety issues.

Ms. Veria Horton stated that the Harbor House community has 6 units in Repair-Make Ready and 2 units in MOD. The community recently held a block party, an Easter egg hunt, and a Money Managing workshop. Ms. Horton stated that she has been knocking on doors to introduce herself to the stewards.

Ms. Horton stated that the Eastport Terrace Community has one unit in Repair-Make Ready and 6 in MOD. The community has an adjusted lease rate of 99%.

Finance Report

Ms. Sharon Land stated that the Accounting Department is working on the FY 2013 budget in preparation of a Commissioners' work session. A new Ross Grant application has been submitted for a Family Self-Sufficiency coordinator for the HCV program. Ms. Land stated that HACA has secured a new website developer. A committee will be formed to work on the website. Members include Commissioner Johnson, Georgia Noon-Sherrod, Corrie Flannigan and a new IT Manager. Chairman Snowden asked that Janice Hayes-Williams be appointed to the committee.

Safety Report

Chief Joseph Johnson congratulated Ms. Wells and Corrie Flannigan for bringing in APD safety resources to their stewards. Chairman Snowden commended Ms. Wells and asked for a resolution to formally recognize Ms. Wells for her leadership.

Human Services

Ms. Georgina Noone-Sherrod stated that she met with Ms. Alice Johnson of the Bloomsbury Square community and that she has arranged with the City to provide transportation for her grandson. Ms. Noone-Sherrod also met with the Annapolis Community Foundation and meets daily with other HACA partners and stakeholders.

Mary Ellen Turner, Resident Services Manager, stated that Ms. Yvonne Baskerville took 4 Robinwood children to the White House Easter Egg Roll. A senior focus group is underway and AAMC will provide talks. Ms. Turner stated that a new volunteer has come forward to teach computer skills beyond the initial training currently being offered. A food drop is being planned for May 19 and the Tyler Heights Elementary School PTA will hold a meeting at the Rosalie E. Mitchell Community Center on May 10.

New Business:

Mr. Archie Trader discussed a committee formed to look at the disproportionate number of minorities in the juvenile justice system and possible alternatives to that system. Mr. Trader provided statistics on the number of young people in the juvenile justice system and stated that there are two programs currently being offered as alternatives. One is the JOINS program which is available to first time offenders only, and the second is an independent program. Mr. Trader provided a few pamphlets for distribution and stated that he would like to have a HACA staff person join the committee. Meetings are held monthly at the Circuit Court.

The May Board of Commissioners meeting will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 15 at the David J. Harris Community Center in the Robinwood Community, 1469 Tyler Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403.

Mr. Paul Rowe discussed possible plans for the Newtowne Twenty Community. Chairman Snowden stated that HACA has some difficult decisions to make concerning most of their communities which are aging and in need of costly repairs. Chairman Snowden stated that all public housing agencies are faced with problem of aging buildings and fewer dollars to keep those communities running. Chairman Snowden stated that the 78 Newtowne Twenty units were not well built in 1971 and have structural problems requiring substantial repairs. Annapolis Gardens and Obery Court/College Creek Terrace Communities were HACA's first foray into public-private partnerships. Now faced with substantial issues at Newtowne Twenty, HACA and its limited resources must look at options for the property.

Mr. Paul Rowe addressed the audience and stated that HACA has taken the first step by acknowledging what needs to be done with its public housing communities. He stated that in HACA's opinion, the Newtowne Twenty community was in the worst condition. Newtowne Twenty sits on 5 acres of land and has 78 units. Mr. Rowe stated that through redevelopment, an additional 60 units could be added to the site. Mr. Rowe stated that the second step is to perform a "physical needs assessment" over the next 90 days to decide if redevelopment or rehabbing of existing units is best.

The Woodside Gardens community sits next to the Newtowne Twenty community and is a Section 8 project-based property. Mr. Rowe indicated that HUD will be helpful with talking to the owner to partner or could simply foreclose on the property.

Chairman Snowden stated that he wants steward to be aware of what may be coming and that he wants transparency with the dealings that may occur. There is less help from the government. Robert Eades asked if the Newtowne Twenty community will be privately owned, like Obery Court and Annapolis Gardens. Chairman Snowden stated that there are few options available when you don't have the resources and that privatization could be a potential strategy. Patricia Holliday stated that bringing in more units and having a mix of incomes in a community is a good thing. She stated that HACA would lose additional public housing units but that she sees a bigger, better, and more viable community coming.

Chairman Snowden stated that what happens in the communities depends on the stewards. Stewards must understand that these decisions affect their lives. Stewards and resident councils need to pay attention and become involved. Chairman urged the audience to attend the City Council budget hearing on April 30 at City Hall as funding for a bus route to Edgewater and the Sojourner Douglass College will be discussed.

Mr. Rowe stated that HACA has limited options. Its \$1.1 million budget is less than requested and that HACA must look at outside funding sources. HACA can talk and negotiate with developers. Chairman Snowden asked if the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartment building could be sold and the proceeds used to build units elsewhere. Mr. Rowe stated that could be an option. Chairman Snowden stated that HACA will have the opportunity to buy back the Annapolis Gardens and Obery Court properties and would like to think ahead so that this could be done. He stated that it may make sense to sell some properties in order to acquire other properties for HACA investment. More discussion on this topic will take place at the Commissioners' retreat to be held in June.

Chief Joseph Johnson asked for approval of a donation to the Artists 4 Amy Foundation. A motion was made by Commissioner Henderson and seconded by Commissioner Johnson. Chief Johnson stated that the amount of the donation will be in keeping with HACA's budget.

The Public Board Meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Carl Snowden, Chair