

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ANNAPOLIS
Morris H. Blum Community Center**

June 5, 2012 4:30p.m.

Roll Call

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

Excused

Commissioner Richard Callahan, Treasurer

Moment of Silent Reflection

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes as written for the May 15, 2012 Board of Commissioners meeting was made by Commissioner Johnson. Commissioner Gibbs seconded the motion. All approved.

New Business:

Chairman Snowden stated that New Business would be heard at this time due to the early departure of a Commissioner.

The Chairman then stated that the July Board of Commissioners Meeting will be held on Thursday, July 19, 2012 at the Elizamae Robinson Community Center in the Newtowne Twenty community. Mr. Snowden stated that a tour of the community will take place at 4 p.m. prior to the meeting. He asked that Mayor Cohen and Alderwoman Sheila Finlayson be invited to the walking tour.

After checking calendars, the Commissioners agreed to hold their Retreat on Friday, August 3 and Saturday, August 4, 2012. The location and the facilitator will be provided to all Commissioners upon confirmation. The facilitator is expected to provide his/her expectations of the Commissioners well ahead of the August 3 date.

An unidentified Morris H. Blum steward asked when the smoking ban will go into effect. Mr. Vincent Leggett stated that the ban on smoking in the Morris H. Blum building will become effective July 1, 2012. The ban will be enforced effective January 1, 2013. It is Mr. Leggett's hope that this additional 6 month period will afford stewards the opportunity to take advantage of the smoking cessation tools HACA is putting in place.

Resident Council Comments

Ms. Jackie Wells, President of the Bloomsbury Square Resident Council acknowledged May events in the community. Ms. Wells stated that a community dinner and flea market is scheduled for June and Unity Day is scheduled for July 14

Commissioner Johnson, the Obery Court Resident Council President stated that a community clean up day is scheduled for June 9. She also stated that several Obery Court residents are working with Ms. Georgia Sherrod to attend Sojourner Douglas College in July.

Ms. Carolyn Keene, President of the Robinwood Resident Counsel stated that the senior programs are working well on Saturdays. A dinner and bake sale was recently held.

Ms. Mae Bridgers-Singleton, a steward in the Newtowne Twenty community said there are many positive things going on in their community. Glenda Smith, President of the Newtowne Twenty Resident Council held a successful food drive and has become a positive role model for all stewards.

Tony Poore, Chairman of the Artists 4 Amy Foundation, thanked the board for their recent sponsorship at the Naptown BarBAYq.

Chairman Snowden stated that he has heard many rumors recently, including one plan to sell the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartments building. Chairman Snowden stated that there are no plans to sell this building. He stated that there is a need for many repairs to many communities, including the Morris H. Blum building.

Chairman Snowden asked Ms. Sandra Chapman, President of the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartments, to remark to her recent requests for assistance. Ms. Chapman stated that she has met with Georgia Sherrod and has been advised that money will be coming to repair the bus. Ms. Chapman stated that Ms. Sherrod is working on an alternate plan that may provide a new bus although nothing has been finalized. Ms. Chapman stated that a grant to repair the elevators in the building has been applied for. Ms. Chapman stated that progress is being made to stop the prostitution in the building. She also stated that there are some other issues plaguing the building including some stewards with serious mental health issues. Ms. Chapman referred to an incident she described as dangerous and has concerns for the welfare and safety of all stewards in the building. She asked for the Board's assistance to get this problem under control before someone gets hurt. Commissioner Johnson stated that the County had a program that could be of assistance and suggested Ms. Chapman contact the County Health Department. Chairman Snowden advised Ms. Chapman to go through the Executive Director and his staff regarding finding a solution to the issue.

Chairman Snowden stated that he met with Kirby McKinney of the Mayor's office earlier in the day and asked Mr. McKinney to set up a retreat for the RAB members. Mr. Snowden stated that an organized resident council is necessary to address funding and other upcoming issues. Mr. Snowden will address the group prior to their retreat.

Rev. Jacquelyn Wells stated her position on Ms. Chapman's address to the Board and stated that the residents need to work together to find solutions to their problems.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Vincent Leggett thanked the Board, staff, and stewards for their thoughts and prayers during his recent bereavement. Mr. Leggett stated that he and the staff are working towards closing the 4 remaining HUD target items, unit turn around, and an energy audit. He stated that the redevelopment at College Creek Terrace remains ahead of schedule. Mr. Leggett also stated that he attended a conference in Montgomery County aimed at identifying new funding sources for public housing redevelopment.

Finance Report

Ms. Sharon Land stated that the agency had a small surplus of \$589 at the end of May 2012 and has a year-to-date surplus of \$27,000+. The Finance Department has been assisting with apply for grants for an HCV and public housing service coordinator. The Department has also begun working on it fiscal year-end close which is June 30, 2012. Commissioner Henderson asked if the Authority is prepared to move into a new fiscal year that will comply with the budget as approved by the Commissioners based on incoming funding and unit count. Ms. Land stated that all initial efforts have been put in place so that the Authority adheres to the new budget. Ms. Land stated that she is working closely with Vincent Leggett and Chief Johnson for administrative changes that will take place. Chairman Snowden asked if notifications to affected staff have been made; Ms. Land stated that a meeting is set so that those staff affected will be notified by COB on Friday.

Occupancy Report

Miranda Wingate stated that the adjusted occupancy rate is 97% and that Authority is on target for 98% occupancy goal. Ms. Wingate stated that she is working with Chief Johnson and the turn-around crew to make certain that HACA meets the requirements. Ms. Wingate stated that HUD inspections are due in July. HUD will remain on site for approximately 2 weeks. Performance status notification from HUD will take about 90-120 days.

Chief Joseph Johnson stated that the Authority is inspecting all units in preparation of HUD's REAC inspection visit. Chief stated that he feels HACA will pass the physical portion of the REAC inspection. In the past, curb appeal has been HACA's downfall. Chief further stated that in the past, the Maintenance Department worked continuously for two months in preparation of the HUD inspection but did not follow up after the inspection. Chief stated that he is working to change the attitude of the Maintenance staff and the property managers so that they do not have to play 'catch up'.

Human Services

Ms. Georgina Noone-Sherrod stated that the front page of the June HACA newsletter announces the June 14 Pathways to Opportunities – Family Self-Sufficiency orientation and interest meeting. Ms. Sherrod and her staff have been working to identify 20 individuals to take advantage of the Fannie Lou Hamer Scholarship at Sojourner Douglas College. Barriers that seem to affect the stewards include transportation and childcare. Ms. Sherrod has worked with the city to provide bus service until 10 p.m. to and from Sojourner Douglas College. Childcare is available at the college at a nominal per semester fee.

Ms. Sherrod has been working with the Healthy Anne Arundel County Coalition to offer mental health and substance abuse counseling to HACA's stewards.

Chairman Snowden stated that the ban on car/vehicle washing using HACA water is now in effect and that he expects the Property Managers to enforce the ban. The Chairman stated that he has been receiving reports that phone calls to the HACA office are not being returned. He noted that HACA has been experiencing repeated telephone breakdown issues but stressed that calls are to be returned within 48 hours. The Chairman asked that an in-house audit be performed to determine which people are responsible for not making return calls. He asked that Chief Johnson set up a test system and reminded staff to document phone calls.

Property Managers Reports

Demetria Hall reported that the Robinwood community has 133 occupied units, 8 units in Repair-Make Ready, and 9 Units in MOD for an adjusted occupancy rate of 94%. Ms. Hall stated that she is working to identify residents who may be interested in attending the Sojourner Douglas College. She is also working on REAC inspection work orders. The Maintenance Department is working on curb appeal. Air conditioning sleeves have been installed in Robinwood units. Ms. Hall stated that HACA's pet policy allows for one dog and one cat not to exceed 40 lbs. Pits Bulls are not permitted to reside in HACA units. Ms. Hall stated that so far, she has not seen any resident violate the car washing ban.

Ms. Hall stated that the Newtowne Twenty community has 67 occupied units with 11 units in MOD for an adjusted occupancy rate of 96%. Ms. Hall has been working with APD and tagging illegal cars. She has been working with the Maintenance Department on curb appeal in preparation for the REAC inspection. She stated that there is some trash dumping from the Woodside Gardens community from time to time. The parking lot has been recently striped and she has been coordinating a community clean up day with Gail Smith of the Mayor's office.

Ms. Veria Horton stated that the Harbour House Community has 265 occupied units, 6 units in Repair-Make Ready and 2 units in MOD. The Rosalie E. Mitchell Community Center held a PTA meeting for the Tyler Heights and turnout was light. Ms. Horton stated that APD has been helpful with safety issues.

Chairman Snowden asked about the emergency situation protocol for notification of Executive Staff and, if necessary, the commissioners. Chief Johnson will draft a policy for all HACA staff.

Ms. Horton stated that the Eastport Terrace community has 78 occupied units with 4 units in MOD. Identification badges are being issued and vehicle parking on Harbour House property is permitted as long as the steward gets a pass.

Corrie Flannigan, Property Manager for Bloomsbury Square and the Morris H. Blum Senior Apartments, stated that Bloomsbury Square community is 100% occupied. Mr. Flannigan has noticed that people are dropping off furniture onto the street and he will send a notice to residents advising when the City offers bulk pick up.

Mr. Flannigan stated that the Blum building is 99% occupied with 2 units in MOD. Chief Simmons of the Annapolis Fire Department will do a disaster exercise and that volunteers will be recruited. Mr. Flannigan stated that the computer room in the building will be open from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. until further notice. This temporary evening closure of the room was necessitated for the safety of the building's residents.

Resident Services report

Mary Ellen Turner reported on the various activities during the month of May, including a successful "food drop". Ms. Turner stated that only 3 parents reported for the Tyler Heights Elementary School PTA meeting which was recently held at the Rosalie E. Mitchell Community Center. She stated that Unity Day for the Harbour House / Eastport Terrace Communities is set for Saturday, June 30.

New Business:

Chairman Snowden stated that the Legal Aid Bureau has requested that the Commissioners hear a grievance in accordance with HACA's Grievance Policy. He stated that any Commissioner who knows or has worked with the steward asking for the grievance hearing recues him/herself from the proceeding. The Commissioners agreed to hear the grievance on Thursday, June 21, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference room of HACA's main office. Chief Johnson is to ask HACA's attorney, Eric Haversack, to join the proceeding.

Commissioner Henderson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The Public Board Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Carl Snowden, Chair