

**MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ANNAPOLIS
Elizamae Robinson Community Center**

July 19, 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 June 5, 2012 Board of Commissioners meeting was made by Commissioner Henderson. Commissioner Carter seconded the motion. All approved.

Elected Officials' Comments:

Mayor Joshua Cohen thanked the Commissioners for the invitation to join them on their tour of the Newtowne Twenty community and for their investment of time as a HACA Commissioner.

Alderwoman Sheila Finlayson also thanked the Commissioners for coming to her Ward for their meeting and for the tour invitation.

Chairman Snowden stated that Executive Director Leggett would be provided an overview of a June 29, 2012 letter the Commissioners received from HUD. He stated that the tour of the community was to provide a glimpse of the challenges that HACA is facing with its aging properties.

Mr. Leggett stated that each year, HUD visits our properties and develops a 'score card' on the physical conditions. The report dated June 2011 reveals HACA's score was below standard, with the aging of properties a major cause of the below standard score. The Newtowne Twenty tour held earlier this day was to bring forth an awareness of HACA's aging properties to stewards, elected officials, and the general public. Mr. Leggett stated HUD's letter has asked him to work with the staff and elected officials to develop a plan to turn around the situation. Mr. Leggett stated that he has to respond to HUD with his plan by the end of July and that the plan must address such items as unit turn-around time, work order response time, and emergency work order response time, among other items. Mr. Leggett stated that an assessment of all staff and their skills will be performed. Mr. Leggett stated that the Finance Department consistently scores above average and that it is the physical condition of the properties that brings about low scores. Mr. Leggett stressed that the overall

HUD rating for 2011 places HACA as a “standard performer” which allows HACA to apply for grant funding. It is the physical condition of the properties that needs to improve. HUD has stated their willingness to work with HACA and HACA will be required to show how the agency will sustain the improved conditions.

Chairman Snowden asked that a copy of Mr. Leggett’s response be forwarded to the Commissioners, the Mayor, and the City Council.

Chairman Snowden introduced Ms. Ivy Carter-Dench of Penrose Properties. Ms. Dench introduced Mr. Jerald Bowman, the property manager at Obery Court, Carl Ruff, Regional Vice President. Ms. Dench stated that 35 of the 63 units in Phase II of the Obery Court Redevelopment will be ready by August 30. Penrose and HACA are working to contact the former residents to ascertain their desire to return to the community. Ms. Dench also stated that due to a surplus of construction funds, solar panels and upgraded insulation are being added to the Phase II units.

Ms. Dench stated that a planning session for Phase II will be offered to gather input from residents on future needs. Current plans call for 61 additional units to be built during this final phase.

Commissioner Henderson stated that the elevation of some units places windows in direct sight of other homes and that some residents are seriously offended. Ms. Dench indicated that she will help those residents as she can with the purchase of blinds and curtains.

Commissioner Johnson stated that the Head Start room within the Community Center leaves little room for other recreational activities, including a much needed homework club for neighborhood youth. She asked if the Head Start program could be moved elsewhere. Ms. Dench stated that the room was a requirement in Phase I of the redevelopment. Ms. Dench stated that the residents and management can work together to discuss how to better use the current facilities and the Phase III planning session can help identify future needs.

Commissioner Carter said she has concerns about additional families moving in and not being able to accommodate family needs in the current community center. She stated that a larger facility is much needed.

Chairman Snowden stated that a decision on the Commissioner’s Retreat date will be made this evening and that the retreat will address the aging properties. He stated that 11 units in the 42 year old Newtowne Twenty Community are uninhabitable. He further stated that Mark Ford, HACA’s Project Manager, stated that community was not well built. The retreat will help define funding sources and how we can preserve public housing. Chairman Snowden stated that those stewards who have an interest in attending the retreat should contact Ms. Georgia Sherrod at 410-267-8000.

Resident Council Comments

Ms. Jackie Wells, President of the BBS Resident Council acknowledged the recent robbery and assault of a pizza delivery worker. As a result of this crime, several pizza companies will no longer deliver to the community. She asked for help from all to curb crime and install better lighting. She stated that the APD representatives will be coming to the August Resident Council meeting. Ms. Wells further stated that their Unity Day is planned for July 28 from noon - 4 p.m. The public is invited. Commissioner Henderson agreed that the lighting in the Bloomsbury Square community is inadequate.

Ms. Deborah Odum, President of the Resident Advisory Board, stated that the RAB will be holding a retreat on July 21 from 10 a.m. – 2 pm at the Pip Moyer Center. All resident council members are invited to attend.

Sandra Chapman, President of the Morris H. Blum Resident Council stated that there is apparent drug traffic in the building again, especially on the floor where she now lives. Ms. Chapman stated that people are propping open the back stair well and that the lock on the back door has been broken for over a month. Ms. Chapman feels the building is unsafe.

Ms. Glenda Smith, President of the Newtowne Twenty Resident Council stated that a clean-up day was held in the community on June 23. She thanked HACA for the supplies and the volunteers who participated. She stated that a Community Unity Day will be held on Aug. 18.

Ms. Geraldine Moulden of 821A Betsy Court stated that the air conditioning sleeve isn't working properly and that her son is sick. He stated that the matter has not been addressed by maintenance. Ms. Nicole Downs of 809B Betsy Court agreed that the sleeves are not adequately working. Mr. Tommie Green of 806A Brooke Court state the sleeve draws heat. He also stated that cars are driving far too fast for the small community. Ms. Tyniece Holliday agreed as did Ms. Jerrie Lightner of 802A Betsy Court. Ms. Jarneika Collison of 809A Brooke Court stated the sleeve is allowing spiders to crawl through into her unit and are biting her son. Ms. Lianna Brown, 807C Betsy, stated that she has been waiting for over a year for the handicap ramp to be replaced at her unit. She also said her shower is not equipped for a wheelchair and that it is very dark in her unit's area. Another resident at 812 Brooke Court stated that there are drain flies coming into her unit and her refrigerator and that Terminex has been unable to eradicate the problem. Chairman Snowden stated that Ms. Demetria Hall will follow up with these issues. He suggested that stewards attend their local Resident Council meetings to see if there is a way to solve some of these issues internally.

Mr. George Butler of the Bloomsbury Square community complained that the grass cutters are cutting flowers and messing up the air conditioning units. Chairman Snowden asked that he take up this matter with Chief Johnson.

Commissioner Deborah Johnson asked Ivy Dench-Carter if the trash cans could be replaced with dumpsters. Ms. Dench-Carter stated that this issue can be addressed when the Phase III discussions begin. Robert Eades asked how many of the units will be public housing units. Ms. Dench-Carter stated that all of the units are owned by HACA and Pennrose. Mr. Eades also stated that there is a need for additional space for area youth clubs. He suggested that the Obery Court / College Creek Terrace residents were "bamboozled" and advised Newtowne Twenty stewards to stay involved in their community's redevelopment. Commissioner Henderson took exception with Mr. Eades statement on the Stanton Center and stated that the center is under used due to a shortage of staff per the number of children.

Chairman Snowden thanked everyone for their input and comments. He stated that Pennroe has agreed to have planning sessions to address the issues.

Resolutions

Resolution No. Admin 071912-08, A Resolution approving the naming of a street in the newly redeveloped College Creek Terrace Community as "Abney Lane".

Action: Commissioner Gibbs motioned to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Carter Seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. Admin 071912-09, A Resolution Approving the HCV Payment Standards effective 10/12012.

Action: Commissioner Henderson motioned to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. Admin 071912-10, A Resolution approving the Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Certification and Submission.

Action: Commissioner Henderson moved to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. FIN 071912-11, A Resolution approving the award of a Contract for Inspection Services.

Action: Commissioner Henderson moved to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Gibbs seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. MOD 071912-12, A Resolution to award a contract to repair 5 units in the Robinwood Community.

Action: Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Carter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. FIN 071912-13, A Resolution to award a contract for a Physical Needs Assessment/Energy and Water Audit.

Action: Commissioner Gibbs moved to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution No. FIN 071912-14, A Resolution to award a Not-to-Exceed Contract to ASG Security to replace the Emergency Fire Alarm Panel at the Morris H. Blum Senior Building.

Action: Commissioner Carter moved to approve the Resolution; Commissioner Gibbs seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Vincent Leggett gave a few highlights of his report which can be found in the board packet. He thanked those who accompanied him on the tour of the Newtowne Twenty community so that they could see the conditions firsthand. Mr. Leggett stated that physical conditions of HACA property affect the scoring by HUD and asked for any suggestions or inquiries from the commissioners.

Chairman Snowden stated that he received a written report from Commissioners Carter and Johnson after they toured the Harbour House community. Commissioner Carter stated that the buildings are neglected and that the stewards, property managers, and the maintenance department are not interested in taking care of the property. Commissioner Johnson stated that the maintenance ground workers are not doing their jobs and that she feels the neglect didn't happen overnight. She asked if HACA could make the stewards responsible for keeping clean the hallways of their buildings. Chairman Snowden stated that the cleaning of the hallways is not a steward issue but a management issue and that the property managers are responsible. Chairman Snowden instructed Mr. Leggett to take the necessary steps to rectify this problem.

Mr. Leggett stated that HUD scores on such things as unit turn-around time, sidewalks, trip hazards, and housekeeping. Mr. Leggett believes 90% of our stewards are good quality people who want the best for their family. He further stated that letters were sent to some stewards today and that he will develop a policy to protect all of HACA's assets. He thanked Commissioners Carter and Johnson for taking the time to tour the property. He stated that he will make sure that all maintenance personnel have the skills to handle their job. Commissioner Johnson stated that stewards are not picking up after their pets and asked if the Maintenance Department has adequate staff. She also questioned the capabilities of the staff. Mr. Leggett stated that the maintenance staff's skills and performance levels will be evaluated. He stated that he must provide a comprehensive response to HUD within 30 days.

Commissioner Henderson stated that HUD's report indicates someone has been seriously derelict in their duties. He asked for a summary report so that the Commissioners can chart a course of action. He further stated that there are personnel issues that need to be addressed. Mr. Leggett stated that this is a good start to the conversation but not the place to end it. He stated that the public hearing is not the forum for personnel discussion. Chairman Snowden stated that the written report submitted by Commissioners Johnson and Carter must be addressed. He stated that the Board will review Mr. Leggett's response to HUD. The Chairman stated that the Board of Commissioners sets policy and the staff implements the policies and that something is awry. He instructed Mr. Leggett to meet with the appropriate staff.

Chairman Snowden told the audience that the Board takes seriously all issues and those issues which were discussed this evening will be addressed by the appropriate staff.

The Board then set their retreat date for August 24 and 25 and asked that Commissioner Callahan be notified of this date. Chairman Snowden stated that the retreat is very important and that the Commissioners will hold their August Board of Commissioners' meeting on Friday or Saturday of the retreat. The board meeting will be brief, lasting for approximately 45 minutes, to receive a report on all issues addressed at this meeting. The stewards are invited to attend the retreat and should contact the main office to RSVP. Mr. Paul Rowe will lead a discussion on redevelopment funding and the Mission Hill project. Mr. Leggett stated that since the response to HUD's letter is due by the end of July that it will require the Commissioners to meet for a work session.

Occupancy Report

Miranda Wingate stated that Corrie Flannigan has been working as the IT coordinator as well as a property manager and that a new IT coordinator will be hired soon. She stated that she will talk with Mr. Flannigan about the traffic on the 5th and 7th floors of the Blum building as well as the lock on the back door. She stated that she will bring all residents of the 7th floor in for a conference to advise what is unacceptable. She stated that property managers have responsibilities but they do not have authorization.

Human Services Report

Ms. Georgia Noone-Sherrod stated that three bids for the bus have been received. Some work will be done gratis but there is a great deal of work that needs to be done, such as adding seat belts. She is doing her best to pull resources together. She further stated that the elevator grant request is still under review by HUD and that HACA may receive a response in August.

New Business:

A presentation on EarnBenefits was scheduled; however, a representative did not show. The presentation will be rescheduled.

Chairman Snowden asked all HACA staff to remain after the conclusion of the Board meeting for a discussion.

Commissioner Johnson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Carter seconded the motion. The Public Board Meeting adjourned at 6:41 p.m.

Carl Snowden, Chair