



**Peoria Housing Authority
Board of Commissioners
Regular Board Meeting**

Monday, May 18, 2015

MINUTES

OPENING: At 4:45 p.m., Chair Zika opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence and roll call.

ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present: Chairman Zika, Commissioners Fassino

COMMISSIONER LATE ARRIVAL: Commissioner Perkins, Commissioner Cannon, and Commissioner Brown

ATTENDING PHA STAFF: Brenda Coates, Yvonne Long, Elizabeth Lewis, Timm Krueger, Robin Redding, Theresa Switzer

PRESENTATION:

Y. Long commented on how fortunate Peoria Housing authority is to have the support of the Girl Scouts once again this year. Long announced that Girl Scout Troop 4197 received a Bronze award for a donation of butterfly houses for the residents of Sterling Towers. Lynn Bivens and her daughter Alyssa gave a brief presentation about how the houses were constructed and answered questions regarding the houses from the Sterling Tower residents.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the April 27, 2015 meeting – Chair Zika asked if there were any comments, corrections, or changes to the minutes. Commissioner Fassino commented on pg. 5 identifying him as Chairman, and asked that to be corrected to commissioner. There were also concerns from Commissioner Fassino about action items not being listed. Chair Zika stated that the items in question were listed on the open items list provided in the board packet. Chair Zika commented on pg. 2 regarding the Life Skills presentation. He would like it to be noted in the April 27, 2015 minutes the importance of residents spreading the word about the programs available through PHA. He stated that sometimes our residents are our best ambassadors. On pg. 3, the paragraph referencing the financial report needs to clarify a per unit, per month basis. Chair Zika asked if there were any comments, corrections, or changes to the minutes. Hearing no further comments, Chair Zika asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve moved by Commissioner Cannon, seconded by Commissioner Fassino. Roll call.

Ayes: Commissioner's Fassino, Perkins, Cannon and Chair Zika.
Nay: None, motion carried.

Financial Report:

Commissioner Fassino commented about a discussion in the previous meeting regarding a financials meeting being held prior to the board meeting. It was decided to have the Chairman and the Treasurer, instead of the finance committee meet with the CEO, the interim CFO, and an accountant. Commissioner Fassino stated that this meeting allows a review of questions we have identified in order to perhaps reduce the amount of time spent during the board meetings. He believed the first pre-meeting involved good discussion which raised a number of issues. Commissioner Fassino confirmed that additions and corrections were made and will be distributed as handouts with the financial information for today's board meeting. Chair Zika wanted to bring to attention the PHAS indicator #3 in the board packet is wrong. Pg. 54 in the packet will be replaced with the corrected handouts.

Chair Zika asked if there were any comments, corrections, or changes to the Financials. Hearing no further comments, Chair Zika asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve moved by Commissioner Fassino, seconded by Commissioner Cannon. Roll call.

Ayes: Commissioner's Fassino, Perkins, Cannon and Chair Zika
Nay: None, motion carried.

Section 8 Reports:

Commissioner Fassino expressed his pleasure to see the increase of 20 units from the March time frame. Chair Zika asked if there were any comments, corrections, or changes to the Section 8 Reports. Hearing no further comments, Chair Zika asked for a motion to approve. Motion to approve moved by Commissioner Fassino, seconded by Commissioner Perkins. Roll call.

Ayes: Commissioner's Fassino, Perkins, Cannon and Chair Zika
Nay: None, motion carried.

Asset Management:

Commissioner Fassino questioned pg. 65 regarding the time frame to hear back from the modernization review on the 9 units that are listed. Y. Long stated that we have initially accepted them into modernization. Once the scope work is done, they will go out for bid. The priority given to them first is for Scattered Sites. Scattered Sites will be worked first, then Harrison, and finally Taft. All units have been inspected and A & E is working on the scope of work pending a profitable cost. Commissioner Fassino asked what explains the move out date of July 10th, 2014 on the first unit on the list. E. Lewis explained that basically the crew had been working on other units, and nobody was working on Harrison units in July. Chair Zika questioned pg. 63 and the adverse affect on public housing residents moving to Section 8. E. Lewis explained that the public housing residents were breaking their 12 month lease to move to Section 8, and this practice is no longer in effect. Any resident who receives a Section 8 voucher and currently in their original 12 month public housing lease, will not be able to utilize that voucher's. Previously, we had been allowing them to leave after giving a 30 day notice. E. Lewis stated that by allowing them to break the lease, we are losing money and also it's impacting the public housing occupancy and the turnover. Commissioner Cannon questioned

the fact that by moving a resident to Section 8 opens up a unit for another resident on the public housing waiting list. Chair Zika stated that our goal is to house people and whatever we can do to optimize that, we should be doing it. B. Coates explained that with limited resources and maintenance staff along with the number of vacant units that we already have, we can't afford to do that because of the turnover expense involved. Commissioner Perkins asked if not having the units ready is still the main reason for the high number of vacancies. E. Lewis explained when an individual receives a Section 8 voucher; it's becoming difficult to find someone that qualifies to fill those units. Commissioner Cannon asked for a working policy session to be held regarding this change. Chair Zika noted that we do have a working policy session scheduled focusing on the application process and this topic could be added. Chair Zika questioned pg. 63 the paragraph dealing with TARs. (Tenant Accounts Receivables) He asked if the problem was because of the cut-off date or the time. E. Lewis explained that it was both the date and time. Also, because of Finance still having to use the old software it seems to delay the process as well. T. Switzer, the PHA accountant agreed to look into the cut-off date change suggestions, and discuss with E. Lewis.

Chair Zika stated that occupancy overall had made minimal progress since the 1st of the year and happens to be one of our top goals. B. Coates commented that there are many challenges holding us back. In addition to the repair problems, there is the criminal activity occurring on site that is impacting our ability to lease apartments. Chair Zika mentioned Scattered Sites being at 78% occupancy. B. Coates mentioned that Y. Long stated earlier that Scattered Sites is on the top of the list, and once the scope work is done, they will go out for bid. There are 6 Scattered Sites units currently in Modernization. Chair Zika asked if there were any comments, corrections, or changes to the Asset Management Reports. Hearing no further comments, Chair Zika asked for a motion to approve the Asset Management reports. Motion to approve moved by Commissioner Cannon, seconded by Commissioner Perkins. Roll call.

Ayes: Commissioner's Fassino, Perkins, Cannon, Brown and Chair Zika

Nay: None, motion carried.

Operations Report:

Commissioner Cannon asked if the victims who were involved in the shooting the previous weekend were PHA residents. Officer J. Mckean stated that one was a resident and one was not. They were caught in the middle of two rival gangs shooting at each other. Chair Zika asked if there are known gang members living at Harrison, and Officer Mckean answered no. However, there is gang activity around the Harrison housing units. Chair Zika mentioned the meeting held at PHA with the Chief of Police Jerry Mitchell on May 15, 2015. Chair Zika stated that the Peoria police department is willing to work with us. B. Coates also commented that our onsite staff is doing everything they can to assist the police department. B. Coates mentioned that suggestions of a hotline being used for reporting, but the residents were afraid of retaliation. In addition to the hotline, E. Lewis is looking into a no loitering sample policy to implement. A curfew policy is also being looked into as another solution. Once E. Lewis has drafted such policies, they will be reviewed by our attorneys for approval. Chair Zika asked about the status of insurance/legal issues from the pipe break at Sterling Towers? B. Coates stated that B. Mooty was to follow up with a letter to the contractor's attorney this week. Progress is moving slow, and the expenditure deadline is June. According to Y. Long, follow up as been made. Chair Zika asked if there were any comments, corrections, or changes to the Operations Report. Hearing no further comments, Chair Zika asked for a motion to approve the Operations reports. Motion to approve moved by Commissioner Perkins, seconded by Commissioner Fassino. Roll call.

Ayes: Commissioner's Fassino, Perkins, Cannon, Brown and Chair Zika
Nay: None, motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS:

#AR051815-01 – Collection Loss Write-Offs

Chair Zika asked if there were expectations of this getting better any time soon and if not, why. E. Lewis replied if the eviction process is sped up, yes. Chair Zika asked what the bottleneck in the legal process was. E. Lewis explained that several first appearances slow the process. Chair Zika asked what can be done to expedite the first appearance process and E. Lewis explained that she was unable to answer because of not knowing the attorney's procedure. Commissioner Fassino asked if we could expect to hear something back from counsel next month concerning the bottleneck. Ann Pieper, the attorney stepping in for B. Mooty this month stated that the court scheduling being slow could be a cause, and stated she does not see the lag time on their end. Ann suggested providing a spreadsheet to help explain some of the lag time. Commissioner Fassino asked if there were other leading indicators besides evictions that are impacting the write-offs. B. Coates explained that once a tenant is behind, our staff assists them with rental assistance options. Commissioner Fassino asked B. Coates if she knew how our peers were doing in this category, and are there things we might learn from them to do better. B. Coates stated that after contacting a number of housing authorities to look at their collection write-offs, their information was similar to Peoria Housing Authority. E. Lewis also stated that in comparison to other local housing agencies, Peoria Housing Authorities eviction process was indeed longer. Commissioner Fassino stated that until we can figure out the solution for the number of units that are not rented and the units that we are unable to collect rent from, we are going to continue to lose money. This has to be a high priority of management, and the board does not sense that it is. Commissioner Fassino commented that pointing out problems is not a solution. Chair Zika asked for any additional information related to the resolution being submitted. Hearing none, Chair Zika called for a motion to approve resolution #AR051815-01 – Collection Loss Write-Offs

Motion to approve moved by Commissioner Fassino, seconded by Commissioner Perkins. Roll call:

Ayes: Commissioner's Fassino, Perkins, Cannon, Brown and Chair Zika
Nay: None, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Taft Redevelopment Update

B. Coates stated that there was nothing new to add, however Taft and Harrison redevelopment will be added to the working policy session scheduled for June 9, 2015.

LISC Americorps Initiatives

B. Coates stated we do expect to have volunteers for the summer food program, and the location would be changed to the Carver Center.

New Business:

B. Coates thanked the board members who took the time to visit the vacant units at Harrison Homes. B. Coates stated that she does have a revised vacancy plan. She has been in touch with HUD about the problems, and they are aware of the problems in the units. Inquiries have been made on obtaining technical assistance from HUD as well. A phased demolition plan for taking a couple of buildings down per year was also discussed. Chair Zika asked what technical assistance involved. B. Coates explained it provides options based on limited resources and what would be acceptable for requesting units to be taken off-line for proposed demolition.

- Chair Zika suggests that a discussion of alternatives to be financially viable be added to the working policy session.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Chair Zika asked for a date when there would be a staff report on goals. B. Coates stated that the report update was due May 8, 2015 however; with two key positions being vacant, it has been delayed. Per the request of the board from the last meeting, a completion column has been added and the team will be providing the dates by the end of the week.

BOARD COMMENTS:

- Chair Zika requested that he would like to cover the open items list at the next board meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Chair Zika called for a motion to move into Executive Session for the purpose of Personnel issues. A. Pieper, attorney reminded Chair Zika that due to the early dismissal of Commissioner Cannon, and Commissioner Perkins, there could not be any items discussed during the executive session. Therefore, there is no need to call for a motion/vote to move to executive session.

ADJOURNMENT of the REGULAR BOARD MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Arthur Perkins
Board Secretary

/nk