

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE  
DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD ON  
JULY 1, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority was held on Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 6 p.m. at the James Slade building, 135 Jones Crossing.

Those present were Constance Covington, Chairperson; Amanda Oakes, Vice-Chairperson; and Vanessa Cain, Geary Davis, Alonzo Jones, Jermaine Parker, and Larry Toomer, Commissioners.

Also present were Mark Loftis, Counsel; Larissa Deedrich, CEO/Executive Director; and Dennis Carter, Director of Accounting.

The Chairperson called the meeting to order and the roll was noted.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the Board meeting agenda, the May 28<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes, Resolution 2662 authorizing Larissa Deedrich, CEO/Executive Director, to execute documents as required for the Upper Street project, and Resolution 2663 approving the write-off of \$6,062.63 in uncollectable tenant accounts receivables from the Authority's books and records; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Davis and approved unanimously.

Mr. Carter presented the financial report. As of the month of May, all programs are doing well and producing income. No COVID-19 funding has been utilized at this time. Mr. Carter expects HUD funding to increase during the latter part of the fiscal year.

In reporting on the Housing Choice Voucher program, Mrs. Deedrich said Terry Ferguson, HCV Program Director, will retire on December 31, 2020. An in-house job notice has been posted at all sites.

The public housing program was discussed. Mrs. Deedrich talked about overdue rent balances. The Authority's rent collection policy has not been enforced, resulting in large overdue balances. The policy has been amended to require more realistic deposits from tenants. Mrs. Deedrich wants to upgrade the public housing sites to make them more attractive to renters and decrease leasing time. Unit preparation times have improved because the maintenance staff is not doing regular work orders at this time.

Mrs. Deedrich presented her report. One maintenance position is now open, and a job announcement has been posted in-house. Once software is received, the public housing waiting list will go online. Mrs. Deedrich prepared a COVID-19 reopening policy for the Board's review. The Authority received a \$150,000 anonymous donation for programs and equipment for the new Southside Community Learning Center. Another anonymous donor will furnish the library at the Learning Center, and donate bookshelves and a new rug. Another donor will purchase 10 to 15 new computers for the computer lab. Funding from the Community Foundation will be released once a spending plan is submitted. The City of Danville applied for a National Parks Service grant to renovate 407 Holbrook Street into a community resource center to house an NAACP office and two apartments for new police recruits. The Board's committee reports were discussed. Vice-Chairman Oakes and Commissioner Jones met on June 30<sup>th</sup> to discuss tasks for the Human Resources Policies and Procedures Committee. They talked about

the Mission and Vision statements, strategic planning, the Authority's by-laws, DRHA policies, succession training for the staff, and the organizational structure. The creation of a Deputy Executive Director's position will be discussed at the August 27<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. The committee discussed human resources responsibilities. They will review job descriptions, and they discussed training for staff and Commissioners. The staff chain of command and penalties for violating it were discussed. Chairman Covington reported on the HUD Review Committee. She and Commissioner Cain will meet to discuss ways to improve the PHAS score and determine what action should be taken prior to the next PHAS review. The Development Committee, composed of Commissioners Davis and Toomer, will meet shortly to discuss the Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Danville governing the acquisition of properties for the City's rehabilitation efforts. Commissioner Parker and Mrs. Deedrich will meet to discuss strategic planning and other topics.

Mrs. Deedrich said a Certificate of Occupancy has been issued for the new Upper Street apartment complex, and a VHDA inspection is tentatively planned for July 21<sup>st</sup>. Some punch list items remain to be completed. She will discuss plans for a grand opening with former Mayor Sherman Saunders, for whom the building will be named. Dennis Carter and Gary Wasson, former CEO/Executive Director, are working with Mrs. Deedrich to close out the project.

Mrs. Deedrich discussed Community Investment Act opportunities in Danville. First State Bank wants to work with the City of Danville and the Authority to renovate two duplexes that were originally part of the Upper Street redevelopment project, but were excluded to reduce costs. Bibleway Church plans to construct a 48 unit senior apartment complex on Grant Street. Mr. Wasson assisted with this project while he was Executive Director and prepared a tax credit application, but the application failed because a developer could not be found. He asked Mrs. Deedrich if she would be willing to work with Bibleway on this project. Because it was unclear exactly what the project entailed, Mrs. Deedrich will ask Mr. Wasson to explain it at a future Board meeting.

The creation of a fraud investigation unit was discussed. In Racine, Wisconsin, and in Illinois where Mrs. Deedrich worked previously, fraud investigation units collected money from residents who had under-reported income and her employers kept 50% of the money collected. She would like to create a new Fraud Investigator position. Initially, this would be a part-time position which may eventually become full-time. Often, when tenants learn fraud investigations are being done, they voluntarily admit they under-reported income and set up a repayment agreement in order to remain in the public housing or Section 8 program. In Virginia, money owed can be collected through tax refunds and paychecks. First Defense Security and Investigations, the Authority's security service company, has a private investigation division.

All the Commissioners indicated they could attend the August 27<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to be held at 6 p.m. at the Slade building.

Commissioner Toomer asked how the security service operates at the sites. The security officers patrol the sites, check IDs, check to see if visitors are on the banned list, and make sure they aren't causing problems. The security service provides peace of mind for the residents.

Commissioner Parker congratulated Commissioner Jones, who was reappointed to another two-year term as Mayor.

The Board considered whether to hold National Night Out events this year. The Danville Police Department has changed the date from August 4<sup>th</sup> to October 6<sup>th</sup> due to the coronavirus. Because the Cardinal Village event is attended by 800-1,000 people annually, Chairperson Covington questioned whether it should be held this year. Commissioner Jones thought the police department should make the decision, and the event should be cancelled if the Chairperson has reservations. Residents could attend National Night Out celebrations at other sites.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Toomer and approved unanimously.

---

Chairperson

---

Secretary