

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD ON
MARCH 18, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority was held on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 at 6 p.m. at the James Slade building, 135 Jones Crossing.

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

Also present were Mark Loftis, Counsel, who attended via conference call; Gary Wasson, CEO/Executive Director; and Dennis Carter, Director of Accounting.

There were no questions concerning the public housing site reports.

Vice-Chairperson Oakes made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 27th Board meeting; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Parker and approved unanimously.

There were no matters presented by the general public.

Mr. Wasson gave his report. The Authority was not awarded a \$230,000 three-year ROSS grant for Cedar Terrace. The DRHA's three existing ROSS grants will end on April 15, 2021. Five employees who are paid through those grants will be retained and more grant applications will be submitted this summer. Vice-Chairperson Oakes said federal funding is available for mentoring programs, teen pregnancy prevention, etc., and she thought the Authority shouldn't rely so heavily on ROSS grants. Many DRHA employees are close to retirement age, and Commissioner Jones thought a staff development program would be helpful. Debra Hairston, the Resident Services Coordinator for Cardinal Village, resigned recently. Mr. Wasson was unable to submit a tax credit application for Bibleway Church's Almagro Town senior apartment complex. Because a developer could not be found, too few points were generated to continue with the application. It is hoped the application can be submitted in 2021. DRHA offices will close to the public starting March 20th due to the coronavirus. The staff will continue to report to work. While the offices are closed, the residents must pay their rent by the due date, but evictions will be suspended. Residents who participate in the Youth Center feeding programs can pick up bagged meals at their sites. The Authority will not provide transportation for the tenants while the offices are closed. The Commissioners discussed whether the Authority should routinely provide residents with transportation as has been done in the past, and the difference between "empowering" and "enabling" them was discussed. Commissioner Jones thought more security patrols may be needed while the offices are closed. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Commissioner Jones have spoken with HUD staff regarding the Authority's low PHAS score.

Mr. Wasson discussed the Housing Choice Voucher program report. Applicant briefings will be restricted to small groups. Leasing may fall behind, since the HCV program typically loses 15-25 tenants each month.

Mr. Carter presented the financial report. At this time, the public housing operations category is over-budget. HUD subsidies are about \$40,000 less than expected. For the first few months of

the fiscal year, the DRHA's funding is based on estimates. After that, funding is expected to increase, and the financial outlook should improve. The Section 8 administrative program is doing well, and the Central Office Cost Center is close to budget projections. The Authority may receive relief funding from the government due to the impact of the coronavirus.

Chairman Covington, Vice-Chairman Oakes, and Commissioner Jones talked about their discussions with HUD staff regarding the Authority's low PHAS score and its designation as a "troubled" authority. Vacancy rates, collections, and inspection scores were the main reasons for the low scores. Ned Epps of HUD was impressed that Pleasant View raised its score by 27 points. Site manager Terry Riggins and her staff went through each apartment unit to identify work that needed to be done, and all the work was completed prior to the REAC inspections. Mr. Epps said that although improvements have been made, there is still much to be done. He suggested the implementation of new strategies and stressed the importance of monitoring to avoid reverting back to old practices. He suggested that the Board create a subcommittee to review rent collections, occupancy, finances, and the physical condition of the sites, and strongly encouraged the Commissioners to complete the "Lead the Way" modules on the HUD website. Regarding Board meetings, he recommended separating action items, informational items, and discussion items on the Board meeting agendas, and suggested that departmental reports be sent separately to the Board. Staff accountability was discussed. Any employee who is under-performing should be advised of what he or she is doing wrong and given time to correct it before further action is taken.

All the Commissioners indicated they could attend the April 23rd Board meeting at 6 p.m. at the Slade building.

Regarding questions and comments from the Board, Commissioner Jones thought a Human Relations ad hoc committee should be formed so the staff can express their concerns to the Commissioners. Commissioner Cain was impressed with the new model home that was set up at the corner of Franklin and Beauregard Streets as part of the manufactured home project. She commended Mr. Wasson and Kim Walker, Homeownership Coordinator, for their work on the project.

Vice-Chairman Oakes made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Jones and approved unanimously.

Chairman

Secretary