

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE  
DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD ON  
MARCH 25, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority was held on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 5 p.m. at the James Slade building, 135 Jones Crossing.

Those present were Constance Covington, Chairman; Amanda Oakes, Vice-Chairman; and Commissioners Faye Brown, Vanessa Cain, Alonzo Jones, Jermaine Parker, and Larry Toomer.

Also present were Mark Loftis, Counsel, and Larissa Deedrich, CEO/Executive Director.

The Chair called the meeting to order and the roll was noted. There were no public comments requiring discussion.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve Agenda Item 3a (approval of the agenda), Agenda Item 3b (approval of the February 25<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes), Agenda Item 4a (the financial report), Agenda Item 4b (the Housing Choice Voucher report) and Agenda Item 4c (the Public Housing reports). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cain and approved unanimously.

Mrs. Deedrich gave the CEO/Executive Director's report. One DRHA employee is hospitalized with the COVID virus. The DRHA's new website should be completed in 6-8 weeks. Ron Collier, the Authority's grant writer, submitted a grant application for housing vouchers for youth who are aging out of foster care. If selected for funding, the Authority could receive up to 50 vouchers to help these youth.

The Commissioners gave their committee reports. The Human Resources Committee met to discuss Mrs. Deedrich's employment contract and salary for the period of April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. They also discussed the hiring process for the new CFO/Deputy Executive Director.

The HUD Review Committee met. The DRHA's Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) score remains unchanged, but Commissioner Cain feels the Authority is making good progress in addressing the issues that need corrective action.

The Development Committee met last week. The committee discussed the façade study that was done by Jeff Bond, architect with Solex Architecture. Mr. Bond's report offers recommendations for façade and interior upgrades to make the public housing sites more attractive and marketable. The committee and staff will review the budget to determine if the work should be done concurrently or in phases. The report will be emailed to all the Commissioners.

The Commissioners discussed the first Choice Housing modular home that was set up on Franklin Street. The house costs \$147,000 and an offer has been made. Several potential buyers

had difficulty getting financing. The Authority received approval from Virginia Community Capital to construct houses on the Franklin Turnpike property that was purchased recently for \$55,000. Commissioner Brown thought modular homes might be a good choice for this property.

Under old business, construction on the Southside Community Learning Center is progressing well and should be finished by the April deadline. The Chairman and Mrs. Deedrich will discuss how to spend funding for the new center.

At the February 25<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, the Commissioners approved the creation of a 501c3 nonprofit corporation for resident services. The next step is to present an approving resolution to City Council. Mrs. Deedrich would like some Commissioners to attend the City Council meeting to show their support. City Council's approval of the 501c3 would help the Authority to continue its resident programs.

The Commissioners will meet on Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 5 p.m. at the James Slade building. Two Commissioners indicated they would be unable to attend.

Comments from the Commissioners were considered. Chairman Covington said God's Pit Crew donated Easter eggs, baskets, candy and other items for all the sites. The Danville Youth Based Tutorial Program will hold a reading enrichment program beginning next week for 6-8 weeks. A reading assessment test will be given to the children, and gift cards and prizes will be awarded based on attendance. The Southside Area Tennis Association is offering two hour tennis classes for the residents. Commissioner Brown asked if the Authority offered programs for adults. Driving classes, CNA classes, and other programs have been offered that were funded from Resident Opportunities and Supportive Services (ROSS) grants, but the DRHA's grants are now almost completely expended. Reasons for nonpayment of rent were discussed. The DRHA has an eviction prevention program to help residents who are unable to pay their rent. The Family Self-Sufficiency program enables residents to develop a plan with educational and employment goals to help them find employment and move out of public housing. Mrs. Deedrich said that because the ROSS grants are ending, the resident services staff can be retained only through April 15<sup>th</sup>. If possible, the budget will be restructured in order to keep the employees, and more ROSS grant applications will be submitted.

Vice-Chairman Oakes made a motion to enter executive, closed session for the purpose of discussion concerning the performance and compensation of the Authority's CEO/Executive Director. She amended the motion to include one additional item for discussion. Vice-Chairman Oakes moved that the meeting of the Board of Commissioners be recessed and that the Board immediately reconvene in executive, closed meeting for the purpose of discussion of the performance and compensation of the DRHA's CEO/Executive Director, which discussion is exempt under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711(A)(1); and, discussion concerning the Authority's

ROSS grant funding. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jones and approved unanimously.

Vice-Chairman Oakes made the following motion, which was seconded by Commissioner Jones and approved unanimously: BE IT RESOLVED that during the immediately preceding closed meeting, to the best of the Commissioners' knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and (ii) only such public business as was identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve an "Addendum No. 1 to Employment Agreement" approving the renewal of the CEO/Executive Director's contract for an additional one-year term beginning April 1, 2021 and ending March 31, 2022; and, that the salary of the CEO/Executive Director be increased to \$117,000.00. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Parker and approved unanimously.

Commissioner Jones announced that the City of Danville will have at least 50 job openings for youth who want to work in the City's summer programs. Applications can be submitted in the principal's office in the public schools from April 16<sup>th</sup> until the programs begin.

Commissioner Jones made a motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Commissioner Cain and approved unanimously.

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Chairman

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Secretary