

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD ON
OCTOBER 28, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority was held on Thursday, October 28, 2021 at 5 p.m. at the James Slade building, 135 Jones Crossing.

Those present were Chairman Amanda Oakes and Commissioners Faye Brown, Vanessa Cain, Pat Daniel, Alonzo Jones, and Larry Toomer. Commissioner Jermaine Parker was unable to attend.

Also present were Mark Loftis, Counsel; Larissa Deedrich, CEO/Executive Director, and Katya Urraco, CFO/Deputy Director.

Chairman Oakes called the meeting to order, and the roll was noted.

There were no matters presented by the general public.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the meeting agenda and the September 23rd Board meeting minutes; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Cain and approved unanimously.

Ms. Urraco presented the financial report. September was a good month for the Authority financially. John Murphy of Nan McKay and Associates provided financial training for Ms. Urraco and Mrs. Deedrich this week. They discussed plans for 2022 and ways to increase profits and administrative fees. The draft of the 2022 operating budget was discussed. It includes funding for two new Maintenance positions and pay increases for some Maintenance staff, and increased funding for tenant services. The draft budget was calculated based on the subsidy received for 2021, as the 2022 subsidy is unknown at this time. Future financial reports will provide more detailed information about the Authority's monthly and yearly financial positions.

Mrs. Deedrich discussed the Housing Choice Voucher and public housing reports. The HCV program's utilization rate and PIC score have gone up, but voucher holders are still having difficulty finding landlords willing to rent to them. Mrs. Deedrich said many landlords are selling their properties to investors who then resell them, and as a result, some tenant leases are not being renewed. Mrs. Deedrich is considering purchasing some of these homes so the tenants can remain in place. In response to a question from Chairman Oakes, Mrs. Deedrich explained how the public housing waiting list works; applicants can complete one application for an individual site or all sites. If an applicant is offered a unit at a site and rejects it, he or she will go to the bottom of that property's waiting list. The applicant will maintain his or her current position on the other sites' waiting lists because each list is handled separately.

Mrs. Deedrich gave the CEO/Executive Director's report. Due to the COVID virus, the DRHA offices are still closed to the public. Resident services, appointments, meetings, etc. are still ongoing with the proper precautions. The Authority received a \$25,000 planning grant from the Danville Regional Foundation to market the Center for Housing Education. This grant may become a three-year implementation grant which would provide about \$50,000 in funding annually. The grant would be used in part to provide financial training for potential homebuyers.

Mrs. Deedrich said the City of Danville wants the Authority to apply for a grant for the Virginia Eviction Reduction Program (VERP). If funded, the program will be run from the Center for Housing Education. Deborah Morton, former Resident Engagement Coordinator, is working with the DRHA again as a contracted employee, and will help with the VERP program. The Authority has received \$20,000 from the Rent Relief program to pay residents' past due rent. The staff is helping the residents submit their applications before the December deadline.

The Commissioners presented their committee reports. Chairman Oakes said the Human Resources committee met in October to discuss policy revisions for the paid time off cash out policy, the payroll change policy, etc. These will be discussed further at the January Board meeting. Salary increases, salary caps, and Christmas bonuses were discussed. They talked about human resources software and job vacancies. They discussed Mrs. Deedrich's list of priorities, which are 1) to get the Authority out of "troubled" status, 2) increase affordable housing in the city, and 3) improve the public housing sites. The committee discussed adding language about diversity and inclusion to the job descriptions. Attendance at Board meetings was discussed; the Commissioners must attend 75% of the Board meetings held each year to remain on the Board. Chairman Oakes and Commissioners Brown, Cain, and Daniel are registered to attend the 2022 Commissioners Conference in San Diego on January 9th-12th. The Chairman asked the Commissioners to attend sessions regarding RAD conversion and neighborhood connection, if possible. The Board talked about restructuring the committees so that the Commissioners would switch (either individually or as a group) and serve on different committees every year or two. Commissioners Brown and Cain thought cross-training between the committees would be very beneficial.

Commissioner Cain gave the HUD Review committee meeting report. The Authority's PHAS score may be re-evaluated by HUD staff in January or February.

The Development committee did not meet because there were no new topics for discussion.

Regarding old business, a new Activities Director has been hired part-time for the Southside Community Learning Center. The director will plan resident activities at the center and will work with residents of all public housing sites to develop programs and activities. Eventually, Mrs. Deedrich hopes to make this position full-time. Fundraising activities are being considered for the sites. Some agencies have shown an interest in renting office space at the SCLC.

Under new business, the Authority's 50 foster care vouchers were discussed. The voucher program will begin on December 1st and the vouchers must be issued in one year. The Danville Social Services staff will make referrals and coordinate the social services needed by the voucher holders.

Because of the Thanksgiving holiday, the Commissioners decided to have their November meeting on Thursday, November 18th at 5 p.m. at the James Slade building.

The Commissioners welcomed Commissioner Daniel, who was attending her first meeting as a Commissioner. Commissioner Daniel said she was looking forward to working with everyone and she appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Board. She mentioned that she has some ideas for the renovation of the Cedar Terrace site.

Commissioner Cain made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Toomer and approved unanimously.

Chairman

Secretary