

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
DANVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD ON
SEPTEMBER 23, 2021**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Danville Redevelopment and Housing Authority was held on Thursday, September 23, 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, Alonzo Jones, and Larry Toomer. Commissioner Jermaine Parker was absent.

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

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

There were no matters presented by the general public.

Commissioner Cain made a motion to approve the meeting agenda, which was seconded by Commissioner Jones and approved unanimously. Commissioner Cain made a motion to approve the August 26th Board meeting minutes; Commissioner Toomer seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. Commissioner Toomer made a motion to adopt Resolution 2690 approving changes to the 2022 Annual Plan; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown and approved unanimously.

Commissioner Toomer made a motion to adopt Resolution 2691 approving Landmark Development of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and Silver Street Development Corporation of Warrenton, Virginia to serve as the Authority's development partners for future rehabilitation projects and the possible conversion of public housing units under the RAD program. Four firms submitted proposals. Landmark Development was selected in part because of their experience with local rehabilitation projects. Silver Street was chosen because of their experience with major development and tax credit projects.

The financial report was presented. Ms. Urraco can now access the ELOCCS system and funding was downloaded for July and August. As of August, revenues were \$42,530 over-budget, and tenant services were 24.5% over-budget because of an increase in personnel and activity costs. Due to fraud, the General Fund checking account was closed and reopened. Positive Pay has been set up at the bank and this will help protect the Authority's accounts from fraudulent transactions. Regarding the new leave time cash out policy, one employee has requested payment for 40 hours of leave time.

The Housing Choice Voucher report was discussed. The staff is still working with HUD staff to increase the PIC score; PIC information was reported incorrectly for years due to a problem with the Authority's computer system. The staff is working to improve the utilization rate which now stands at 95%. The staff has issued as many vouchers as possible at this time, but some landlords will not rent to an HCV tenant, and some properties are substandard and don't comply with housing quality standards regulations. Many voucher holders have been unable to find a home by their deadline. The Board discussed the negative impressions many people have of HCV tenants and ways to change them. Mrs. Deedrich has created a Neighborhood Connection program to help address this issue. If funded, the program will also help pay security deposits and pay for some property damages caused by residents. She is also working with the City of Danville's Virginia Eviction Reduction Pilot (VERP) program to address reasons for evictions and ways to reduce them. Commissioner Brown said the staff needs to work one-on-one with the residents to encourage them to take care of their homes and explain the consequences of failing to do so. With regards to the ARS grant, Mrs. Deedrich plans to use profits from the sale of renovated homes to fund the rehabilitation of more houses.

The public housing program is doing well. The HUD staff is pleased that occupancy rates are improving. The staff is helping the residents apply for payment of their rent balances through the Rent Relief program. Residents who apply for assistance and participate in the eviction prevention program will not be evicted. Tenants who fail to do this will be taken to court. Approximately \$30,000 in back rent is still owed.

Due to the increase in COVID cases, DRHA offices are now closed to the public, but appointments can be made as needed. The Authority will receive 50 foster care vouchers for individuals who are aging out of the foster care system. Social Services of Danville and Pittsylvania County will refer qualified clients to the DRHA. The vouchers are for 36 months, and the voucher holders are required to follow a service plan to keep their vouchers. After 36 months, they will become eligible for a regular HCV voucher. Mrs. Deedrich hopes the program will start in November or December. She applied for a \$25,000 planning grant to help market the Southside Community Learning Center. The Authority has started receiving funds from the Rent Relief program. The DRHA will receive enough funding from the ARS grant to develop 10-12 properties.

There were no reports from the Commissioners' committees. The Southside Community Learning Center was discussed. Mrs. Deedrich wants to rent the office spaces as soon as possible. A job ad has been listed on Indeed for an Activities Director to plan and monitor activities at the center.

There was no new business for discussion.

All the Commissioners indicated they could attend the next Board meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 28th, at 5 p.m. at the James Slade building.

Commissioner Jones said that City Council is expected to reappoint Amanda Oakes and himself to the Board in October, and appoint Pat Daniel as the new resident Commissioner replacing Constance Covington. The new DRHA website should be ready in the next two weeks. Pictures and bios of the Commissioners and staff will be on the website.

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

Chairman

Secretary