



Sarasota Housing Authority  
269 South Osprey Avenue  
Sarasota, Florida 34236

Special Board Meeting  
January 13, 2017  
12:00 P.M.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair John Colón called the regular meeting of the Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners to order at 12:10 pm.
- II. **INVOCATION**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**  
Commissioners Present: Chair John Colón, Commissioners David Morgan, Jack Meredith, Valerie Buchand, Pastor Peter Greenidge, Duane Finger and Inez Hunter (via telephone)  
Commissioners Not Present: N/A  
Attendees: Attorney Ricardo Gilmore  
SHA Personnel: William Russell, Paula Scruggs, John Hawthorne and Andrea Keddell
- V. **RESOLUTIONS**
  - A. Res 17-01: Approval of Leave of Absence Policy

- 
- Mr. Russell explained the resolution and that he's been invited/appointed to serve temporarily on the Beachhead Team at HUD in Washington. He would start next Friday to set up and assist in managing the department until the normal political appointees are put in place. Mr. Russell confirmed that a person is only able to hold a temporary position at a Federal agency for no more than 120 days. This is a legal deadline. Mr. Russell reports he would go on an unpaid leave of absence and believes it to be a positive situation for SHA and will lift its national profile. It will be good, as he'll be able to renew his contacts at HUD as well as on Capitol Hill. This resolution has 2 purposes. The first is to grant Mr. Russell's leave of absence to enable him to take this temporary position. The second would be to approve appointing Paula Scruggs to act as the Interim CEO in his absence. If Mr. Russell returns earlier than 120 days then he would resume in his role of President and CEO and Ms. Scruggs would transition back to her position as COO/Deputy Director.

**Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve Resolution 17-01. Commissioner Buchand seconded the motion.**

- Discussion took place on Dr. Ben Carson's appointment and how the future appointments would work.

- Commissioner Finger and Commissioner Morgan commented that they believe this to be a positive move and that it will be good for SHA and will help SHA in the future as an agency. Commissioner Meredith agreed that this will benefit Mr. Russell and SHA. Commissioner Greenidge also added that he agrees and that he believes Attorney Gilmore and Paula Scruggs will be good leadership while Mr. Russell is away.
  - Commissioner Buchand expressed that she will support this decision and that they will be left in good hands. Commissioner Morgan added that it will be a good experience for Ms. Scruggs and that he's looking forward to working with Ms. Scruggs. Mr. Russell added that he's asked Mr. Hawthorne to represent SHA at community meetings and to assist Ms. Scruggs with Board communications and meetings.
  - Discussion took place on major issues and/or decisions that need to be made or will take place while Mr. Russell is away:
    - Mr. Russell responded that there is a 40 Unit, HUD assisted property, Beneva Oaks, that SHA is interested in acquiring. It is currently owned by Goodwill and there is a mortgage on the property. There are 20 one-bedroom units and 20 two-bedroom units that are in great condition. This is slated to be on the board agenda this month and a \*Development Committee meeting was discussed to take place Tuesday, 1/17/17. (\*This meeting did not take place.)
    - The 2018 Fiscal Year Budget is being presented in February and will need to be approved by the end of March.
    - A Master Development Agreement (MDA) for the Gardner Group and Duvernay + Brooks will be brought to the board for approval to develop Orange Avenue. SHA's attorney is reviewing this document for board approval this month. SHA will have the option to take over as managing General Partner.
  - Commissioner Finger inquired if there were any conflicts of interest for SHA that would arise with Mr. Russell being at HUD Washington if HUD approval is needed on a SHA project. Mr. Russell responded that he will be vigilant not to be put in that situation and will seek council if something should arise.
  - Commissioner Colón commented that he believes this is a positive move for the agency and that it will improve SHA's stature in the community. He stated that he will work closely with Ms. Scruggs and Mr. Hawthorne and they will do well.
- The earlier motion was voted on and passed unanimously.**
- Commissioner Buchand stated that she will be finalizing a few items with Mr. Russell before he leaves and that she looks forward to working with Ms. Scruggs.
  - Attorney Gilmore will work on the leave documents with the Board Chair and provide copies of the leave documents to the Commissioners.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

The Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners special meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.