



Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA)  
269 South Osprey Avenue  
Sarasota, Florida 34236

Regular Board Meeting  
McCown Towers Board Room  
October 22, 2025  
4:30 P.M.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Taylor called the annual meeting of the Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners to order at 4:30 pm.
- II. **INVOCATION**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Chair Ernestine Taylor, Vice Chair John Colón (in at 5:15 pm), Commissioner Jack Meredith, Commissioner Carolyn Mason and Commissioner David Morgan  
Commissioners Not Present: Commissioners Nicole Roman and Philip DiMaria Jr.  
Invited Attendees: City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch, Attorney Ric Gilmore, Joe Chambers, Jake Zunamon, Rich Larsen (Novogradac), Dennis DiBello (American Property Consultants, Inc.) and County Commissioner Mark Smith  
SHA Personnel: William Russell, Viktoriya Coblentz and Andrea Keddell
- V. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
  - A. SHA Regular Board Meeting – September 24, 2025
    - Chair Taylor put up the minutes from the September 24, 2025, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
    - Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion.
      - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- VI. **ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**
  - A. SHA Board Agenda – October 22, 2025
    - Chair Taylor put up the agenda for the October 22, 2025, Board Meeting for approval.
    - Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
      - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- VII. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**
  - A. Team Member of the Quarter
    - Chair Taylor announced Lakeshia Tart, SHA’s Youth Academic & Attendance Coach for the Youth Thrive Program, as SHA’s Team Member of the Quarter and provided the background and work details responsible for her selection. Lakeshia was present via Zoom and thanked everyone for the recognition.
    - A framed certificate and gift certificate will be presented to Ms. Tart at an upcoming SHA All Team Meeting.

B. Annual Audit (Rich Larsen, Novogradac)

- Mr. Larsen presented, via Zoom presentation, the role of the auditor, key points of the audit and provided a brief overview of the processes of the audit FY Ending 3/31/25.
- Mr. Larsen reported an unmodified opinion on the financial condition of the authority, the highest level of assurance an auditor can provide. He explained that the authority spent over \$37 million of Federal money, necessitating audits in accordance with Government auditing standards and the uniform guidance, a federal law.
- Mr. Larsen reported that 5 major programs that were tested during this audit. Out of hundreds of compliance tests, there was 1 discrepancy with a Notes Payable on the Amaryllis project. Mr. Larsen highlighted that the audit team found no significant deficiencies in the authority's internal control and that general guidelines are being followed and there are no instances of non-compliance.
- Mr. Larsen discussed the financial health of a housing authority, highlighting its strong liquidity position with a surplus of \$18.4 million in working capital, over 2 years of reserves. HUD's recommendation is 4-6 months. Mr. Larsen further explained that a majority of the reserves, however, are designated for certain programs and cannot be utilized for other ventures. The authority has operating revenues of \$42.2 million, operating expenses of \$38.5 million, leaving an operating profit of \$3.8 million.
- Mr. Larsen also offered to answer questions and address concerns privately should any board member desire this. He also gave credit to the Authority staff for their assistance during the audit in providing everything that was requested.
- Commissioner Morgan commented that when the housing authority was in receivership, prior to the current administration, it was insolvent. So, after twenty years, it is in a much better financial position to have 2 years of reserves.
- Discussion took place regarding the importance of having unrestricted cash. Mr. Larson reported that SHA has six tax-credit entities. This would allow the authority to buy the credits back to increase their unrestricted cash. However, this requires unrestricted cash to purchase them. He confirmed that he advises authorities to get out of the public housing program and into Section 8 and/or RAD.
- Commissioner Morgan commended SHA staff stating that, after testing 32 files, having only one error of \$50 is impressive.

C. City Commission Liaison Update

- None.

D. County Commission Liaison Update

- Commissioner Mark Smith passed out a packet to the board to review regarding his concern about the maintenance of SHA units, based on reports from a recently terminated (disgruntled) employee. He also commented on the Audit that was just presented questioning SHA's request for funding from the County, given their positive cash position.
  - Commissioner Smith requested that SHA email him a written statement of its cash position statement, showing what the unrestricted reserves are for and how they're to be spent, as well as a policy/process for the restricted funds.

- Commissioner Smith clarified the reason for wanting SHA's cash statements is to ensure that maintenance to the SHA units is being completed, given the \$5.9 million of unrestricted cash available to the Authority. He's had reports from residents regarding their current living conditions and Commissioner Smith provided information on his questions regarding work orders, inspections and the current NSPIRE report.
  - Commissioner Smith went on to question the HUD reports provided to him by SHA and how deficiencies are documented, counted, tracked and corrected using work orders. He stated that he plans to address his questions about the duplicate entries directly with HUD. He expressed concern that there are no specific work orders tied to each deficiency to ensure they are corrected. He wants to verify that the funds that the County awards to the Authority are put to good use and that units are safe and maintained properly.
  - Commissioner Smith further reported that he's been invited to visit some of the resident units and that he's invited SHA Commissioner DiMaria to join him.
    - Commissioner Smith requested that SHA email him its relocation plan for rehousing residents (i.e. in the case of Cypress Square) using vouchers for those residents that are displaced due to redevelopment of public housing properties.
- E. NSPIRE Inspections (Dennis DiBello, American Property Consultants, Inc.)
- Mr. Russell introduced Dennis DiBello of American Property Consultants, Inc, who is regarded as an expert on the NSPIRE inspection process and recently conducted a training in the area on behalf of The Florida Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (FAHRO), the state housing agency.
  - Mr. DiBello addressed the board and went over a brief, online presentation that touched on the scoring that is done for the NSPIRE inspections and the complexity of that scoring system.
  - He reported that, having visited many authorities across the United States, and SHA is doing a great job based on his travels.

## **VIII. PUBLIC PRESENTATION**

- A. Ms. Valerie Buchand, Resident Council Member from Janie's Garden, reported that residents on the voucher program received notices in the middle of October that were dated in August and that the notices did not provide the proper 30-day amount of time for a rent increase notice. She also received a late fee due to the untimely notice, and she feels SHA should have to pay that fee.
- Ms. Buchand also added that this past Saturday was the Big Mamma's Collard Green Festival. The Newtown Farmer's Market recognized the City of Sarasota Housing Authority as one of the area's oldest businesses and no one from SHA was there. So, she delivered the plaque to the board at this meeting.
- B. Melissa Furman, a Sarasota resident who lives in the Rosemary District, reported on the proposed parking garage. She expressed concern about the new tower taking away the current residents' views, the increased noise, crime and the loss of the green area in front of the current McCown Tower. She feels the new tower will be to the detriment of the current community.

- C. David Lough, a Sarasota resident who lives in the Rosemary District and a member of the Rosemary District Associations, reported on the plans for the new McCown Tower development. He states the neighborhood is transforming and he reports there are 500 units being built in the Rosemary Neighborhood and he expressed support for the public parking component being added as a part of the new McCown Tower development. He also presented slides to the City at their commission board meeting.
- D. Melissa Laughlin, a Sarasota resident who is the President of the Rosemary District Association, congratulated SHA on all the work they've done in the Rosemary District in bringing more housing to the area. She reported on the opportunities and tradeoffs of the proposed parking garage and need for public parking. She states that in order for there to be economic development, there needs to be parking. Without parking, the area can't grow. She recognizes that the residents have noise, safety, security, and accessibility concerns with including public parking. These are all valid concerns and can be mitigated if dealt with upfront.
- E. Anand Pallegar, a Sarasota resident who lives in the Rosemary District, reported on the proposed parking garage and expressed support for the new tower and public parking options being included in the project. The area has been transforming positively, but people will leave the area if visitors can't find parking. He's hoping there's a way to achieve the public parking component while keeping the needs of the current residents in mind.
- F. Ms. Pamela Runyon, a resident from the McCown Towers/Annex, thanked the board for getting the fence and lights fixed and inquired if the gym could be reopened. The equipment is already in the room.
  - Mr. Russell responded during the meeting that it's in the works and close to being open again.

**IX. RESOLUTIONS – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT**

- A. Res 25-18: HCV Admin Plan Amendment
- B. Res 25-19: HCV Payment Standards

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- Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion.
    - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

**X. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Development Updates / Redevelopment Report  
McCown North Tower Design Options

- Mr. Russell presented the 3 posterboard unit designs (A1A, A1B and A1C) to the board for the proposed layouts for the East and West sides of the new Tower. Following discussion, the board decided they were in favor of a blend of unit designs A1A (on West side) and A1B (on East side). It was also discussed implementing a half wall or block window option to the A1B design to allow for light to enter the bedroom. Commissioner Meredith commented on this option and that this would need to be researched from a design perspective, taking into consideration room height and noise transference.

- Commissioner Morgan made a motion to include a combination of unit designs A1A and A1B. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion.
  - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

#### McCown North Tower Parking Garage / Public Parking Option

- Mr. Russell reported a decision that needs to be made on whether the board wants to entertain the public parking option for this project. The original design for the project was for a 160-unit, 5 story building and 5 levels of a parking deck within the development. The current plan is for 96 units on 4 levels. SHA needs 3 levels of the parking decks for residents, staff, visitors and retail. So, if public parking is desired, the question is if there is a way to maintain the 4 level design to save on cost or if funding can be found for an additional level.
- Mr. Zunamon reported that the current design is a result of all the resident meetings and design feedback they've received. It allows for less obstructed views for current residents and allows the garage to be built ahead of the units to allow current residents access to parking sooner. The residents have expressed concern about security, noise and elevator access. There is also the question of funding and how to move forward without a commitment from the City and/or the County. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor has 74 parking spaces and additional levels of 80 parking spaces. The cost per parking space is approximately \$50K plus the maintenance of the parking levels.
- Commissioner Meredith mentioned there are other garages in the area that have combinations of resident and public parking and he's in favor of moving forward with a level of parking for the City if SHA is able to buffer/mitigate any sound and safety issues for the residents. He'd also want to see if the City is offering to assist financially for construction and maintenance. Commissioner Colón would also be in favor of moving forward with these options in mind. Commissioner Taylor expressed continued concern for securing funding and maintaining safety for the residents. Commissioner Morgan inquired about the funding issue and if it will be a revenue generating source for SHA, as well as who will manage it.
- Mr. Chambers reminded all that a decision needs to be made before the end of the year.
- Commissioner Meredith made a motion to proceed with the added level for the parking garage if a financial arrangements can be made, including funding from the City for one level of public parking by the end of the year. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion. Commissioner Morgan asked to receive a proforma for the parking plan and a benefit for SHA. Mr. Chambers responded that a parking study is being conducted but that there's no proforma available yet of any formal commitment.
  - The motion was voted on and passed 4 to 1 (Commissioner Taylor Opposed).

#### Lofts on Lemon (Phase II)

- Mr. Zunamon reported that the Owner, Architect and Contractor (OAC) meetings continue. Wiseman Construction is well underway on the site, and they should be going vertical soon. FPL power lines are down. Anticipated end date is approximately Q3 or Q4 of 2026.

Cypress (Phase II)/ Amaryllis III / Courts II

- Mr. Zunamon reported the Marmer Construction team is moving along with construction and this development has gone vertical.

Cypress III / Amaryllis IV & Central Gardens (22nd St.)

- Mr. Zunamon reported that the development is in permitting and underwriting with Bank of America. They are looking to have the financial closing and begin construction by the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2026.

**Commissioner Morgan made a motion to extend the meeting by 10 minutes. Commissioner Colón seconded the motion. *The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.***

B. President/CEO Evaluation Results-Compensation Determination

- Item was tabled, to be put on the next agenda for discussion, since time was running out for this meeting.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

A. None

**XII. PROGRAM UPDATES – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT**

- A. Monthly Financial Statements
- B. Board Committee Meeting Minutes
- C. Housing Choice Voucher Report
- D. Housing Management Reports
- E. Capital Improvement Report
- F. Resident Services Monthly Report
- G. Resident Advisory Board/Sarasota Housing Authority Agency-Wide Resident Council (SHAARC) Board Report *(if Submitted)*

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- Commissioner Colón made a motion to accept the Program Updates Consent Agenda. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
    - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

**XIII. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMENTS**

- A. Commissioner Meredith thanked County Commissioner Smith for all the due diligence he’s performed on the NSPIRE reports.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

The Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.