



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

Board Meeting
October 25, 2023
4:30 P.M.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Jack Meredith called the meeting of the Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners to order at 4:37 pm.
- II. **INVOCATION**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Chair Jack Meredith, Vice Chair Ernestine Taylor, Commissioner John Colón, Commissioner Deborah Sargent, Commissioner Mark Vengroff, Commissioner Carolyn Mason and Commissioner Duane Finger (Zoom)

Commissioners Not Present: All Present

Zoom Attendees: Elena Andrews and Sue Ladwig

In-Person Attendees: Attorney Ric Gilmore, City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch, Agnes Kirkland, Carolyn Spencer and Valerie Buchand

SHA Personnel: William Russell and Andrea Keddell
- V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. SHA Regular Board Meeting – September 27, 2023
 - Chair Meredith put up the minutes from the September 27, 2023, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner Colón made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Vengroff seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously. Commissioner Mason voted Present.
- VI. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
 - A. SHA Regular Board Meeting – October 25, 2023
 - Chair Meredith put up the agenda from the October 25, 2023, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner Colón made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Finger seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- VII. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**
 - A. SHA Department Introductions/Updates (Property Management)
 - Mr. Russell provided a brief description of the function of the Asset Management Team and introduced Viktoriya Coblentz, SHA's new Director of Asset Management. Ms. Coblentz introduced each team member:

- ✓ Wanda Lopez, Property Manager of Neighborhood Stabilization Properties (NSP), Towers and Annex.
- ✓ Tina Delarosa, Assistant Property Manager for Towers and Annex.
- ✓ Helen Blanc, Property Manager of Bertha Mitchell and the Courts at the OCB Property.
- ✓ Sheila Reine, Receptionist of Bertha Mitchell and the Courts at the OCB Property and assists Ms. Blanc.
- ✓ Paul Halvorsen, Maintenance for Towers and Annex.
- ✓ Carlos Shagun, Maintenance for NSP.
- ✓ Richard Jones, Maintenance Property Inspector.
- ✓ Sterling Saunders, Maintenance
- ✓ Joe Murphy, Maintenance
- ✓ John McNab, Maintenance
- ✓ Joel Harris, Maintenance
- Ms. Coblenz also introduced Arthur Riley, Maintenance for Towers and Annex, who couldn't be there.
- Commissioner Meredith thanked all the staff for attending and for the work they provide SHA.

B. Team Member of the Quarter

- Chair Meredith announced Derrick Kirce, SHA's Landlord Liaison, as SHA's Team Member of the Quarter and provided the background and reason for his selection. Derrick was presented with a plaque and gift card and a commemorative photo was taken.

VIII. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

A. Ms. Valerie Buchand addressed the board:

- Ms. Buchand addressed the board on outstanding issues between SHA and the Resident Council. Ms. Buchand maintains:
 - that lies are being told and proper investigation was not done with regard to Mr. Luther Nix, who was evicted, and that Mr. Nix has not been offered other places to live;
 - that people are still living in mold infested housing at the Courts;
 - that people are being "hell hyped" at Lofts on Lemon who are on disability and health issues but rent has not been adjusted accordingly; and
 - Ms. Buchand is requesting to have SHARC on the agenda so they can be heard.
- Ms. Buchand reported that the Collard Green festival was held, without SHA support, and it was still a successful event.
- Mr. Russell commented that the mold was tested in the unit mentioned above and was detected. A voucher was issued to the family for them to move due to the inability to remediate the mold with the family living in the unit. However, they refused the voucher. So alternative options are being sought for the family to either move to another unit in Bertha Mitchell or accept the voucher to move out of state.

- Mr. Russell requested that Ms. Buchand provide him with the names of the residents having issues at Lofts on Lemon following the meeting so he could investigate the matter.

- B. Ms. Carolyn Spencer reported to the board that she has moved into one of the newly renovated Bertha Michell apartments and continues to have issues with her A/C, electric and rodents. Her electric bill is very high, and her smoke detectors are set off when she cooks. She reports receiving notices of repairs, but that maintenance has not fixed the issues. The apartment looks good but continues to have issues.
- These issues will be investigated and reported back to Ms. Spencer.

IX. RESOLUTIONS – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

- A. Res 23-10: Utility Allowances
- B. Res 23-11: Approval of Amendment to HCV Admin Plan - Addition of Damage Claim Chapter
- C. Res 23-12: Approval of General Contractor/Construction Management Contract Negotiation
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- Commissioner Colón asked to pull all the resolutions.
- Following discussion of resolutions below Commissioner Meredith inquired about the possibility at future meetings of having a brief synopsis on each resolution prior to them being voted on or to have them reported on at the meeting prior to them being voted on. Attorney Gilmore suggested that a workshop could be held as an option. Mr. Russell stated that he can begin providing a brief overview of resolutions prior to them being voted on in lieu of holding additional meetings.

- A. Res 23-10: Utility Allowances

- Mr. Russell reported that Utility Allowances are reviewed and measured by a consultant every year to ensure accuracy of the current rate(s). Utility Allowances are credited to the tenant and included in the housing costs.
- Commissioner Colón made a motion to accept A. Resolutions 23-10. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

- B. Res 23-11: Approval of Amendment to HCV Admin Plan

- Mr. Russell provided information on the new Damage Claim Chapter that is being proposed for addition to the HCV Admin Plan. The policy would cover the landlord in cases where damage to a rental exceeds the security deposit. The policy is an additional security measure to attract landlords into the program and there are checks and balances written into the policy to ensure landlords do not abuse the policy. Mr. Russell added that HCV Administrative fees can be allocated for this purpose. Commissioner Vengroff questioned the need for a photography fee, given today's technology and ability to utilize phones (for free) versus cameras.

- Commissioner Vengroff made a motion to accept Resolutions 23-11 with the correction of removing the photography fee. Commissioner Colón seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

C. Res 23-12: Approval of General Contractor/Construction Management (GCCM) Contract

- Mr. Russell discussed the Request For Proposal (RFP) that was conducted for GCCM services. Four firms submitted proposals and two firms were deemed to be in the competitive range to warrant best and final interviews. Upon completion of the interviews and screening several references, the evaluation panel felt Marmer Construction had a slight edge over ME&S. Both firms are qualified, however, references reported that Marmer has a history for providing cost-saving measures during development and construction and this was an attractive advantage for contracting with Marmer. Their experience with new developments was also a plus. The committee, therefore, is recommending that the board authorized the President and CEO to enter into contract negotiations with Marmer Construction for the Central Gardens/22nd Street development project and that design and pre-construction would be the 1st phase of the contractual agreement.
- Commissioner Finger made a motion to accept Resolutions 23-12. Commissioner Vengroff seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed (5 to 2). Commissioners Colón and Mason opposed.

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. President & CEO Compensation Proposal

- Commissioner Meredith addressed the board and it was discussed that a market benchmark was conducted in Florida for the President & CEO position and, given that positive performance and that a raise hasn't been given in several years to the President & CEO, a 6% raise is being recommended.
- Commissioner Colón made a motion to approve the 6% increase. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed (6 to 1). Commissioners Sargent opposed.
 - Commissioner Sargent added that she's voted against this because they have yet to have the President & CEO's contract provided to them. Mr. Russell stated this can be forwarded to them.

B. Central Gardens Height Discussion

- Mr. Russell reported the current height limit is 35 feet, but the overlay district is being proposed to allow for 45 feet (5 feet higher than Janies). The proposal before the board is to go to 4 stories with a flat roof and add 10 more units to this project (a total of 39 units). The final design from the architect and GCCM would be brought back before the board.

- Commissioner Meredith brought up the issue of parking and how that would need to be addressed with the addition of more units. Best efforts need to be made to stay in budget and allow for enough parking per unit. Mr. Russell responded that the initial design for 3 stories (29 units) provided for 41 parking spaces so even at 39 units there'd be at least 1 to 1 ratio per unit to parking.
- Mr. Russell discussed funding revenue sources that are being researched through the CDBG Disaster Recovery funds for this project and the Courts.
- Commissioner Colón made a motion to approve moving forward with investigating a 4-story design. Commissioner Vengroff seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Courts to Cypress Square Transfer Policy

- Mr. Russell reported this was discussed at the last Development Committee. General discussion is that the committee felt it would be good to offer relocation into the new Cypress development to a percentage of Courts residents who will be asked to relocate in the 1st quarter of next year. The recommendation is to limit the total transfer allowance to 25 units, 30% of the new Cypress Square units once they're completed. This would be done on a first come, first serve basis for residents in good standing on their rent and who do not have any lease violations.
- Commissioner Colón made a motion to approve the 25-unit allocation for the Courts relocation. Commissioner Finger seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

B. Shop with a Cop Event

- Mr. Russell reported that SHA annual Shop with a Cop Event is being held on Saturday, 12/09/23, from 6:00 – 8:00 am, at the Target on Fruitville. The event will be sent out to the board to put on their calendars.

XII. PROGRAM UPDATES – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

- A. Monthly Financial Statements
- B. Board Committee Reports
- C. Housing Choice Voucher Report
- D. Housing Management Reports
- E. Capital Fund Program Report
- F. Resident Services Monthly Report

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- Mr. Russell reported to the board that he's begun addressing an issue with IRM at Janie's Garden regarding failed unit inspections for some of our Section 8 vouchers. The units have been placed in abatement for 30 days to get into compliance prior to cutting off the subsidy. If the issues aren't resolved the family will be provided with a voucher to move.
 - 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 Sargent reported that Janie's has been successful in improving the lighting and the outer property is getting better.
- B. Commissioner Mason addressed the board regarding her experience on serving on this and other boards. She urges the board members to do their homework so that decisions can be made at the meetings so that items aren't put off and "kicked down the road" to future meetings.
- C. Commissioner Finger reported that he'll be returning to the Sarasota area next week and should be attending the next meeting in person.
- D. City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch reported that she does share the relevant items with the other City Commissioners. She also reported that the County may be appointing a liaison to this board as well and states that SHA may want to reach out to see that this is done. Mr. Russell will ask the County Administrator if this could be done.
- E. A list of SHA Employee trainings was handed out to let the board know of trainings that have been provided to staff over the past year(s).

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 6:02 pm.