



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

Board Meeting
McCown Towers Board Room
October 23, 2024
4:30 P.M.

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Ernestine Taylor called the regular meeting of the Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners to order at 4:40 pm.

II. **INVOCATION**

III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

IV. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Chair Ernestine Taylor, Vice Chair John Colón (in at 4:51 pm), Commissioner Jack Meredith, Resident Commissioner Nicole Roman, Commissioner Carolyn Mason and Commissioner David Morgan

Commissioners Not Present: Commissioner Duane Finger

Invited Attendees: Joe Chambers, Vice Mayor Jen Ahearn-Koch, Valerie Buchand, Rich Larsen (Novogradac) and Attorney Ric Gilmore

SHA Personnel: William Russell and Andrea Keddell (Ana Mejia & Andrea Rock-Special Presentation)

The Board welcomed Commissioner Nicole Roman as the new, Resident Commissioner.

V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. SHA Regular Board Meeting – August 28, 2024

- Chair Taylor put up the minutes from the August 28, 2024, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
- Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion.
 - Commissioner Meredith questioned the ad hoc committee meeting to discuss resident interests and the SHAARC budget and whether or not it happened, as the minutes were not included in the packet. Mr. Russell reported that only Chair Taylor was present at the ad hoc committee meeting that was held on 9/10/24 so no real discussion took place on the SHAARC budget. The committee asked that Valerie Buchand repeat the presentation that was given at the committee meeting to the entire board at this meeting. It was found that the minutes from the 9/10 ad hoc meeting were in the 9/24/24 board packet (that was cancelled) and then were inadvertently left out of this meeting's packet. They will be added into the next board packet on 12/11/24.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously. Commissioner Roman voted present.

VI. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A. SHA Regular Board Agenda – August 28, 2024

- Chair Taylor put up the agenda from the August 28, 2024, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
- Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

VII. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

A. Team Member of the Quarter

- Chair Taylor announced Andrea Rock, SHA's HCV Lead Specialist, as SHA's Team Member of the Quarter and provided the background and reason for her selection. Andrea was presented with a plaque and gift card and a commemorative photo was taken.
- Mr. Russell also reported that Ms. Rock recently celebrated her 1-year anniversary, after being rehired following a brief time away and that over the many years, Andrea has grown in her role at the agency and is now in a lead role in SHA's largest program.

B. SHAARC Presentation

- Ms. Buchand provided an overview of the material handed out in the board packet and discussed SHAARC's history, mission, vision and goals. Ms. Buchand also provided information on past endeavors that SHAARC successfully initiated and provided to the residents over the past 14 years, since 2010, when the council was established.
- Ms. Buchand was thanked for the presentation was asked to provide additional information during SHAARC Budget discussion in an upcoming portion of the meeting.

C. 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 3/31/24.
- 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 \$32-33 million of Federal money, necessitating audits in accordance with Government auditing standards and the uniform guidance, a federal law. 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 then reported on the major programs that were tested during this audit, one of which was the HCV Program. This is the housing authority's largest program and accounts for a majority of the federal money. There was an unmodified opinion on the compliance of this major program. There was 1 out of 30 home inspections that was found to be late. A corrective action plan was put in place.

- Mr. Larsen discussed the financial health of a housing authority, highlighting its strong liquidity position with a surplus of \$18 million in working capital, 31-33 months. HUD's recommendation is 4-6 months. The authority's overhead cost is about \$7 million annually, with an operating income of \$2.9 million.
 - Questions were asked and answered. Mr. Larsen also offered to answer questions and address concerns privately should any member desire this. He also gave credit to the Authority staff for their assistance during the audit in providing everything that was requested.
- D. City Commission Liaison Update
- Vice-Mayor Jen Ahearn-Koch reported to the board the personnel changes at the city. Marlon Brown has resigned as City Manager and the Interim City Manager is Douglas Jeffcoat. A national search is being conducted to select the new City Manager. City Attorney changes are also in process and the city will utilize current attorneys on staff to replace the position(s) and then hire to replace those positions.
 - Brief discussion took place about a parcel of land that the city purchased and the possibility of SHA partnering with them to develop the land.

VIII. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

- A. Ms. Joanie O'Haver, Resident Council Member from the Annex, addressed the issue of the need for cigarette butt dispensers on the property where seating is located; garbage cans (with lids) be placed around the property where seating is located; and that they also need seating in the pavilion. She reports the new cleaning service that has been hired seems nice and professional and is doing a good job. Some of these issues are being reported again and she's questioning what is done about them.
- B. Ms. Valerie Buchand, Resident Council Member from Janie's Garden, stated that the SHA Board had instituted a policy of not holding Zoom meetings any longer and feels this is discriminatory if they allow staff and speakers but not residents to participate via Zoom, along with the SHAARC advocate. Ms. Buchand reports that there was a shooting at 1845 23rd Street and the resident has expressed fear and a desire to move to the property manager but is being told the criminal activity will just follow the resident. Ms. Buchand states that the property manager's response was not acceptable.
- Commissioner Mason reports speaking to Mr. Ken Waters and being told that the property manager and SHA are aware of the resident's desire to move (along with other residents in that location) and that there are simply no available units to move them to. These details were communicated to the resident(s) and if units become available, moving the afflicted residents can be considered.
- Ms Buchand commented that it's not always what you say but how you say it and residents need to be treated with respect.
- C. Mr. James Hendrix, Former Waitlist Applicant, reports he's still homeless and trying to get a place to live. He has applied at the new development (Cypress Square) and does not know what's happening with his application.
- Mr. Russell will look into what's happening with this application.

IX. RESOLUTIONS – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

- A. Res 24-16: Approval of Culture Guide Revisions
 - B. Res 24-21: Approval of SHA Agency-Wide Resident Council (SHAARC) MOU & Budget
 - C. Res 24-23: Revision of the Bylaws
 - D. Res 24-24: Approval of PBV Assistance-APP III
 - E. Res 24-25: Utility Allowances
 - F. Res 24-26: HCV Payment Standards
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- Commissioner Meredith pulled A. Resolutions 24-16. Commissioner Morgan pulled B. Resolution 24-21.
- Commissioner Colón made a motion to approve the remaining Consent Agenda, Resolutions C. 24-23, D. 24-24, E. 24-25 & F. 24-26. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

A. Res 24-16: Approval of Culture Guide Revisions

- Commissioner Meredith questions the ad hoc committee that was asked for to discuss this resolution. Mr. Russell explained that the remote work policy addition, that the board had questioned during the last meeting, were removed for consideration and that hybrid work hours are no longer being proposed. The other proposed revisions weren't in question so the ad hoc committee was not held.
- Commissioner Mason stated she needed more clarification before entertaining a motion to approve and made a motion to table Resolution 24-16 until after an ad hoc committee meeting. Commissioner Morgan seconded the motion.
- Commissioner Meredith asked for further discussion and asked Mr. Russell to go over the remaining proposed changes now in an effort to have the resolution approved without the need for an additional meeting. Mr. Russell explained the proposed changes, outlined in the resolution summary sheet:
 - Attendance and Punctuality – Additional language asking team members to notify supervisor 1 hour in advance of being out due to illness.
 - Appearance – Additional language limiting denim blue jeans in the workplace and on annual reimbursement work uniforms pants, in addition to the work boots that are already allowed.
 - Paid Time Off (PTO) – Additional language allowing for PTO payout benefit to long-term (10+ Years of Service) and salaried employees, who earn more PTO per year, allowing them to get 1 week of paid PTO instead of losing the PTO.
- Discussion took place regarding concerns about people using their PTO when their sick. Mr. Russell confirmed that this isn't normally the case and team members do utilize the PTO when they're sick. Commissioner Meredith suggested that the board move forward with approving this resolution based on this explanation.
- Commissioner Mason withdrew her motion and Commissioner Colón withdrew his second.
- Commissioner Meredith made a motion to approve Resolution 24-16. Commissioner Colón seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

- B. Res 24-21: Approval of SHA Agency-Wide Resident Council (SHAARC) MOU & Budget
- Mr. Russell shared Commissioner Finger's comments that he submitted with respect to the SHAARC budget giving his opinions on the direction he'd like to see. He supports allocating the full \$8,050 in Tenant Participation funds to the Resident Council. Currently the Resident Council receives \$15 per unit that is allocated to them under the HUD guidelines. The HUD regulation state the Housing Authority normally would receive the other \$10 of the total \$25 allotted per unit. The breakdown per property is as follows: 100 units at Bertha Mitchell, 100 units at McCown and 47 units at Janie's I & II, and then adding the Annex of 75. This equals 322 units equating to the \$8,050 in Tenant Participation Funds. Mr. Russell stated that adding this \$8,050 to what SHA already provides in annual travel and miscellaneous memberships, web hosting, sponsorships, office supplies, events and sunbiz fees would come to approximately \$20,000 a year.
 - Commissioner Meredith inquired if SHAARC had intentions to reinstitute some of the programs mentioned in the earlier presentation (Nurses Program, Community Breakfasts, OK Check-In Program) should they provide the additional funds in the budget. Ms. Buchand states they'd need more than \$20,000 per year to do what they want to do and only if SHA staff work with SHAARC. She further stated she doesn't know a lot of specifics on cost because of discounts and costs for items and services that fluctuate but confirmed that the listed budget amount of \$45,991 is the estimated need. Commissioner Morgan pointed out that the actual budget amount listed in the Resident Council Annual Budget page equals \$54,231.88, not \$45,991.88.
 - Budget discussion took place, questions were addressed:
 - Commissioner Meredith asked for clarification on the requested \$25,000 for Professional Services & Development listed on the budget and how payment would work?
 - Mr. Russell explained the way the resident council's budget currently works is that the full amount of Tenant Participation Funds that SHAARC receives, \$3,705.00, goes to pay out the stipends to the council members and there has been no additional budget allocated for them to pay for other items directly. SHA has handled all arrangements and payments for conference travel, memberships, web hosting, event sponsorships/refreshments, office supplies and license fees. If the Board decides to approve a blanket budget amount (i.e. \$20,000), then SHAARC would need to account for all the expenditures, where all the funds are being allocated and the account would need to be audited once a year. The council would need to have receipts for payment to show funds were expended according to the budget allocations.
 - Commissioner Morgan commented that the largest amount in the budget (Stipends, Conferences and Professional Services, equaling a total of \$48,400 of the \$54,238 budget figure) are all items for the council and does not go directly to resident activities. Commissioner Meredith added that items under the Professional Services would go to services for the residents. Ms. Buchand responded that the CPA would be there to keep the books balanced for the Resident Council.

* Commissioner Mason made a motion to extend the meeting by 30 minutes. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion. The motion was voted on and passed 4-2 (Commissioners Morgan & Colón Opposed).

- Commissioner Taylor inquired about the \$14,400 figure listed under Stipends and Ms. Buchand confirmed that this is what is requested, \$200 per month for each council member and that there are HUD guidelines that stated a council member can receive up to \$200 per month. Currently they're receiving \$79 per council member per month (the entirety of the council budget).
- Commissioner Taylor further inquired about the professional services for the consultant, how much this particular service costs and how payment for this would work. Ms. Buchand responded that invoices will be used and kept for the audit but that she currently does not have an exact amount of the cost for the services because they haven't been paying her regularly.
- Commissioner Meredith inquired if the Board could approve a budget with the caveat that the Board would need to approve all contractual agreements for professional services?
- In an effort to move forward with getting the MOU approved, Mr. Russell suggested (as an example) using the full amount of the Tenant Participation funds \$8,050.00, which includes the addition 75 units at the Annex, along with the additional \$14,000 or \$15,000 that historically SHA already provides in annual travel and memberships, web hosting, sponsorships, office supplies, events and license fees as a basis for an approximately annual budget figure. Then the Resident Council would need to come back before the board with an Annual Budget of how they would spend the \$8,050. The current amount listed in the board packet is more of a list of funds they'd like to receive and not on actual costs.
- Commissioner Morgan suggested and even \$26,000 a year to start the Resident Council off on building their budget. This figure would need to cover all stipends, travel and miscellaneous expenditures. Commissioner Meredith suggested \$30,000.
- Commissioner Meredith made a motion to allocate an annual \$30,000 to a Resident Council Budget and for the Resident Council to bring the budget back before the board at their December 11th Board Meeting, and annually to be approved each year for 3 years. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Morgan. There was no further discussion.
 - The Motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve Res 24-21: Approval of SHA Agency-Wide Resident Council (SHAARC) MOU. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mason. There was no further discussion.
 - The Motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Development Updates – Joe Chambers

- Amaryllis IV/Cypress Gardens III/Central Gardens – The Florida Housing board has approved funding for this project (100 - 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom units). We are now awaiting any challenges from other applicants. This takes approximately 10 days. Then the project would take about a year to close.

- Hurricane Update – There was solar panel damage at Amarylis (approx. 5% were destroyed). They are in the process of getting a cost to repair.
- The County upheld the \$7 million awarded for Lofts on Lemon II.
- B. Definition of City Commission Liaison Roll
 - Mr. Russell reported that he and Attorney Gilmore worked on the outline of the City Commission Liaison role and also sent it to Vice Mayor Ahearn-Koch to review.
 - Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve the definition. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. None

XII. PROGRAM UPDATES – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

- A. Monthly Financial Statements (Janie’s Garden)
- 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 (Section VII. Presented)

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

XIII. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMENTS

- A. Commissioner Morgan reported that he participated in a HOTMA training that was attended by SHA staff and he was impressed with the level of knowledge they exhibited on the new regulations. Commissioner Morgan was particularly impressed by SHA’s Director of Asset Management, Viktoriya Coblentz, and her knowledge of the new material.
- B. Commissioner Meredith:
 - Made a motion hold an ad hoc committee meeting to discuss development issues. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion. Commissioner Meredith offered to chair the committee and Commissioner Colón offered to sit on the committee.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
 - Commissioner Meredith inquired about the availability of criminal activity incident reports at SHA properties. Mr. Russell stated there use to be but nothing currently in place. Mr. Russell has recently met with the police about the issues at the Bertha Mitchell property and SHA is looking into additional options for security camera systems. One system is currently in use by the Sarasota Police Department.

- Attorney Gilmore added that it could be a good idea, and he's seen it at other authorities, to have a criminal activity report sent out to Commissioners so they're aware of any "news worthy" activity at SHA properties.
- Attorney Gilmore also suggested contacting law enforcement in the instances of shootings and being unable to move residents who don't feel safe so that law enforcement can give them any information they may need to know to try to stay safe.
- Commissioner Meredith also requested a Development report section be added back onto the board agenda in the future.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 6:52 pm.