

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF  
RICHMOND REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HELD AT ARMSTRONG RENAISSANCE, 1665 NORTH 31<sup>ST</sup> STREET  
IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA  
ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2024

**Board of Commissioners**

**In Attendance:**

Veronica Blount  
Dyanne Broidy  
Charlene Pitchford, Vice Chair  
Kyle R. Elliott  
Barrett Hardiman  
Edward L. Jackson, Jr.  
Gregory Lewis  
Harold Parker

**Absent:**

W. R. "Bill" Johnson, Jr., Chair

**RRHA Staff**

Steven Nesmith, Chief Executive Officer  
Tonise Webb, Chief Compliance Officer and Associate Lead Counsel

**Call to Order**

Vice Chair Charlene Pitchford called the meeting to order at 8:21 a.m. A quorum was established.

**Citizens' Comment Period**

No citizens were signed up to speak.

**Closed Session**

At 8:23 a.m., Commissioner Lewis read the Closed Session motion and asked for a Motion to go into Closed Session.

I move that we go into closed meeting to discuss the performance of an RRHA employee as permitted by Section 2.2-3711(A)1 of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

***Motion: (Lewis/Jackson) Move to go into Closed Session.***

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Absent: Blount, Johnson**

*Note: Commissioner Veronica Blount arrived at the meeting after the Board went into closed session.*

At 10:23 a.m., Commissioner Barrett Hardiman asked to come out of Closed Session.

***Motion: (Hardiman/Parker) Move to come out of Closed Session.***

**Motion Carried Unanimously**

**Absent: Johnson**

***CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING***

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (the "Board") convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712(D) of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, requires a certification by the Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

**VOTE: Yes:** Blount, Broidy, Elliott, Hardiman, Jackson, Johnson,  
Lewis, Parker, Pitchford

**ABSTAIN:** None

**ABSENT:** Johnson

**CEO Top Priorities for 2024 and CEO Agency Updates**

CEO Steven Nesmith provided an update on RRHA's top priorities for 2024. The following items were discussed.

*Resident Initiatives: Reform our Customer Service to Residents.*

- Totally reform RRHA's resident customer service response system and processes to include our call center to ensure that we are more responsive to our residents.
- Address staff shortages in key customer-related divisions like the Housing Choice Voucher Program Office, Tenant Selection Office, Inspection Division, Maintenance and Central Maintenance.

**Action Item(s):**

1. Staff should set up benchmarks/metrics to measure the efficiency of RRHA's goal to reform customer service for residents.
2. Also, look at using software to measure how often we take calls and how we are resolving them.

*Resident Initiatives: Expanding HOPE, Jobs and Security.*

- Implement free job training and jobs program. Provide conflict resolution training to reduce violence in the Big 6 public housing communities.
- Expand healthcare services at RRHA's Big 6 public housing communities.

- Engage RTO and resident leaders to review creative ways for our new security officers to better patrol the Big 6 public housing communities and senior sites.
- Launching RTO youth leader initiative to recruit and mentor young leaders.

*Resident Initiatives: Launch a New Initiative Specifically for our Seniors.*

- Announce a senior citizens initiative that will focus on modernization (interior and exterior) of the six senior site buildings.
- Hire a grant writer to target funding from foundations and philanthropic organizations to provide enhanced healthcare for seniors.

*Launch RRHA's new Homeownership Initiative.*

- Launching the first of its kind homeownership initiative for both public housing and voucher holder recipients.

*Richmond Development Corporation (RDC).*

- Bond financing opportunity to get an investment grade rating to issue a housing revenue bond to finance large scale affordable housing redevelopment.
- Launch private sector initiatives that will generate unrestricted non-federal revenue that will allow RRHA to finance strategic goals/projects.
- Acquire properties and land with investors for the redevelopment of affordable housing.
- Launch regional economic development and workforce/affordable housing initiative.

*Advance Real Estate Priorities.*

- 400 East Grace Street.
- Faye Towers.
- 208-210 Baker Street – possible homeownership sites.
- Gilpin Court – finalize term sheet and request detailed draft development strategy.
- Advance Jackson Place Development.
- Close out on Blackwell Maggie Walker and Blackwell south lots.
- Advance Creighton Court and Mosby Court development.

Action Item(s):

1. Staff should provide Commissioner Harold Parker with a copy of the plans for the Calhoun Center.

*Operations: Finance and Procurement*

- Reform the procurement and purchase order process when reconciling contractor/vendor invoices for payment with a proper purchase order.
- Strengthen the finance department's balance sheet and improve the proper posting and coding of charges to the general ledger.
- Continue with the reorganization of the structure of the finance and accounting department.

## Action Item(s):

1. Mike Kelly and Precious Washington will provide the Board with an update on the new process that the finance department will use to track and code charges to the general ledger.
2. At the next administration and finance committee meeting, staff will provide an update on ensuring that new hires are put in the right positions.
3. Staff should provide the board with a copy of the updated RRHA organizational chart.

*Operations: Public Housing Maintenance.*

- Double the staff and training for maintenance and central maintenance teams.
- Implementation of new HUD NSPIRE national standards to inspect public housing units. The new standards will focus on the interior of the units whereas the old standards focused on the exterior of the units.
- Establish performance indicators to track and improve service delivery times for vacancy turnaround and for work order service delivery.

*Advance Contract Opportunities for Minority and Disadvantaged Businesses.*

- Leverage RRHA's new MBE/MDE policy to advance contract opportunities for minority and disadvantaged businesses.
- Chief Compliance Officer to ensure contract vendors are in compliance with the new MBE/DBE policy.
- CEO to host a breakfast networking session Entitled at the downtown Hilton in February entitled Doing Business with RRHA.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 11:54 a.m.

*Walter R. Ziegler*

Chairman

*[Signature]*

Chief Executive Officer/Secretary