



HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Transforming Lives & Communities

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MINUTES OF THE HOUSTON HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 15, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

A Meeting of the Board of Commissioners ("Board") of the Houston Housing Authority ("HHA") was held on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at the Houston Housing Authority Central Office, 2640 Fountain View Drive, Houston, Texas 77057. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

LIVE STREAM STATISTICS

March 18, 2025: ● Live Stream Views 118 ● Average view duration 31:47 ● Peak concurrent viewers 40
April 15, 2025: ● Live Stream Views 67 ● Average view duration 27:36 ● Peak concurrent viewers 18

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

- Joseph "Jody" Proler, Chairman
- Alton Smith, Vice Chairman
- Cynthia Aceves-Lewis, Commissioner
- Stephanie A.G. Ballard, Commissioner
- Eric G. Carter, Commissioner
- Kristy Kirkendoll, Commissioner
- Kenneth C. Li, Commissioner
- Jamie Bryant, Secretary

Absent: None

III. INTRODUCTION OF THE INTERPRETERS

Chairman Proler offered the use of interpreters to be available to Spanish, Mandarin and Vietnamese speakers who may need assistance for public comments only.

IV. CEO OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Secretary Bryant: Good afternoon, everyone. I wanted to take this opportunity to make a few announcements on some things that are going on at the Houston Housing Authority. You'll see an announcement on this; it will go out probably later today, Riz, if I'm correct, but I wanted to tell you a few things about our voucher program. One of them, as I mentioned in the last board meeting, was an update on our voucher waitlist. So, for those of you who are tuning in, on May 1st, we're going to be opening up our new Rent Cafe Portal, and we ask that you go in and save your spot. This is for **existing people** who were on the choice voucher waitlist. We need you to go into our system, make sure your contact information is up to date, and that you want to remain on the waitlist. We occasionally need to go through these waitlists and update them to make sure we have the proper contact information and to make sure the people who are on the waitlist still want to be on the waitlist and have not moved or found other housing, etc. So, this is critical, please, on May 1st, the portal will be open through June 2nd. We just need you to go there and make sure you update your information and affirm that you want to stay on the waitlist.

Also, on May 1, we will be opening up a select number of project-based voucher waitlists. These are vouchers that are tied to specific properties throughout Houston. We have a little over 20 project-based opportunities here. That waitlist will open up on May 1st at 9:00 AM. If we have any applicants or residents who are interested in those opportunities, just stay tuned and check our website on May 1st. I also mentioned this last time, we do have some special programs outside of our choice voucher system. Our VASH program, for example, is our voucher program type for veterans, and it does have capacity in it. Do not reach out to the Housing Authority on this program. You need to go through the VA. The VA needs to vet you out and refer you to our agency, but we do have availability if there are any veterans who are looking. The same goes for our Mobility program grant. We have a Mobility grant that can help current voucher holders move into high-opportunity areas if they so choose to. We have information about this on our website as well. The Mobility grant will help our voucher holders and residents with deposits and moving expenses, and other resources to help them if they want to take advantage of this program, so please check that out.

I also want to make two other updates on some events that have occurred at the Housing Authority since our last meeting. One was last week, we were at the ribbon cutting and opened up Rosemary's Place. Rosemary's Place is a 149-unit permanent supportive housing project in Midtown. This was a partnership between the Housing Authority, NHP Foundation, Magnificat, Harris County, and the City of Houston to provide 149 units for folks who are homeless or on the edge of becoming homeless. The HHA was able to make the commitment of a little over \$2,000,000 a year in vouchers over the next 15 years to support this critically important project, and I am so extremely thankful for everyone on our team and everyone with the partnership for making that happen.

We also had an incredible event about two weeks ago, at Oxford Place, with our Women's Empowerment Summit. This is a part of our Jobs Plus program that we have been working on for a couple of years. Big thanks to our team as we were out there with dozens and dozens of women who have been working in this program, and I'm excited to say, it was such a wonderful event. They're so thankful for the work that's being done, and we're thankful just to be able to come alongside them and their journeys to finding better jobs, higher wage employment, and increasing those economic outcomes. We look forward to that program moving forward and expanding that program into other areas of the city as well.

And one last thing, Chairman, if you'll allow me, I got an e-mail from a resident of ours who wanted to thank me for two of our staff members for just providing outstanding service. I'm going to paraphrase this. "Hi Jamie, I'm writing to express my sincere gratitude for the outstanding customer service I received from both Ms Latonya Rogers and Ms Melissa Sanders Edwards. Their dedication and exceptional support were beyond my expectations, and I believe they truly deserve recognition for their efforts. Thank you for building a team of such dedicated professionals. There are just no words to fully describe how awesome these ladies are. Please feel free to contact me if you need anything else. Thank you so much." I just wanted to read that out loud publicly and say thank you to our team and ladies. With that, I'll turn it back to you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Proler: Great report. Now we'll open it up for Public Comments.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Speaker Keni Thibeaux: I've been a landlord since 2018, and I've always had a pleasant experience like the one you described there, but recently, there have been some changes that concern me, specifically, advocacy for landlords. I feel like that is not in existence right now. I'm here to advocate for myself and other landlords. The property address is 15039 Arizona Sky Court. I have a tenant that has done damage to the property, and she knew she caused it. She refused to repair it, but she wanted to relocate, so I informed housing. She and I discussed that she needed to repair it before relocating, and housing told her she didn't

have to do that. That she could just relocate, and for me to just sue her. In the past, when there was an issue, housing would actually follow up and ensure that those repairs were made before she could port her voucher, so that there has been a breakdown in the process. Even when I try to reach out to my landlord liaisons, no response. I call, I e-mail, and there's no response. So that's why I'm here to ask for, to just advocate, and to ask for some type of communication or some accountability. Just to abbreviate things, I don't want to go into the full story, but I feel like this situation could have been handled a lot better than it was, so that's why I'm bringing it to your attention. Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Secretary Bryant: If you don't mind, leave us your information. Joanne can get it so that we can follow up.

VI. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Board Meeting Minutes: March 18, 2025

On motion by Commissioner Kirkendoll and seconded by Commissioner Li; the Board unanimously approved the March 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Resolution No. 3890:** Consideration and/or to take action to authorize the President & CEO or their designee to amend Resolution No. 3834, changing times and dates for 2025 Board of Commissioners meetings.

PRESENTED BY: Donna Dixon, Director of Community Affairs and Customer Services

We are recommending that the time of the meetings for the remainder of 2025 be changed from 3:00 to 2:00, and moving the July meeting from the third week in July to July 24th. All other Board meetings and special board meetings will be posted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Chairman Proler asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. 3890.

On motion by Commissioner Ballard and seconded by Commissioner Kirkendoll.

Chairman Proler asked if there was any discussion regarding this resolution. Hearing none, Chairman Proler called for a vote.

The Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 3890.

- b. Resolution No. 3891:** Consideration and/or to take action to authorize the President & CEO or designee to write off vacant tenant accounts for October 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024.

PRESENTED BY: Ricardo Harris, Director of Asset Management & Development

Ricardo Harris: This resolution is submitted to the board to write off the fourth quarter vacated tenant accounts in the amount of \$46,870.91. These vacated accounts have been deemed uncollectible and will be written off appropriately. Write-offs are typically the result of tenants with balances owed to the HHA, as a result of voluntary and involuntary move-outs. So this is just to write those amounts off of our records, then to be moved over to a collection account. Staff requests the board approve this resolution.

Chairman Proler: Thank you, Ricardo. I'd like to stand up for you because if you look at these numbers, these numbers are less than they've been in more than three years. And I congratulate you and your department on really incredible work. This is impressive in the times we live in right now to see that a

\$46,000 write-off as compared to in the first quarter of last year \$194,000. So I, on behalf of this Board, and I hope on behalf of all the employees at this agency and the taxpayers, I really thank you. With that, I'll call for a motion to approve the this Resolution.

Commissioner Aceves-Lewis: I just wanted to commend you again for the thorough information that you've given us, the context and the history. I agree with Commissioner Proler; we're excited to see that those numbers continue to go down. And I think there were just a couple of properties, Cuney and Kelly, that we can continue to drive those numbers down. Also, just be mindful that there aren't any residents who have a big balance anymore. So I'm looking forward to those controls going in place to bring that down and to capture them sooner.

Secretary Bryant: Yes, absolutely.

Chairman Proler asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. 3891.

On motion by Commissioner Ballard and seconded by Commissioner Li.

Chairman Proler asked if there was any discussion regarding this resolution. Hearing none, Chairman Proler called for a vote.

The Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 3891.

- c. Resolution No. 3892:** Consideration and/or to take action to authorize the President & CEO or designee to enter into Insurance Contracts for the Policy Year 2025/2026 with Housing Authority Insurance Group.

PRESENTED BY: Mike Roges, Vice President of Fiscal and Business Operations

This resolution seeks approval of an amount not to exceed \$1.9 million for the renewal of a number of policies that are associated with some of our tax credit deals, and also includes some other insurance, the directors' and officers' insurance on some of the affiliate boards, and everything along those lines. The resolution was put together earlier this month using last year's cost, adding a 10% estimated increase and then kind of rounded it up to the \$1.9 million and I'm very happy to report today, that as of the most recent spreadsheet I've received from Housing Authority Insurance Group, it appears that as far as the property coverage goes, we're going to be coming in several hundred thousand below what we estimated. I wish I could take credit for that. I mean that that's just a reflection of the market.

Chairman Proler: Several hundred thousand below the \$1.9 million?

Mike Rogers: Yes, right now, we're looking at somewhere for the property insurance alone, somewhere in the \$1.2 million range, \$1.2 to \$1.3. There are still some quotes to come in, so there are some holes in those numbers, but what's left, there's no way it can actually get up to that level. This is a long time coming because it seems like every resolution that I bring to the board is bad things about the insurance. So this one's actually for the first time in a long, long time, the insurance market seems to be moving in our general direction. I did want to point out that when we presented the budget to you at the end of December of last year, this cost was part of the number for insurance that was in there. Not only would we come in well under what was budgeted, but we have room in the budget for the full \$1.9 million, but we're going to come in way below that.

Chairman Proler: I had two questions and that was one of them. The other is a couple of points. Would you inquire to see if we can renew these policies, the property casualty policies, possibly in December of each year? I have had some experience, from the finance side, where insurance companies typically will

charge a higher premium when you renew your policies in the May, June, July period, because that's the hurricane season, if you will. Generally, if you make sure that your policy renews every November or December, the rates are slightly less. I don't know if we have that ability, but we're on a calendar year...

Mike Rogers: We've been able to move the renewal dates a little bit from time to time because we've worked to try to sync them up so that these all renew at the same time, and then we have the other batch that we renew in December. But yes, I will ask that question.

Commissioner Aceves-Lewis: Mike, could you give us an update next month, or just update the board members with the final number?

Mike Rogers: Yes.

Chairman Proler asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. 3892.

On motion by Commissioner Kirkendoll and seconded by Commissioner Ballard.

Chairman Proler asked if there is any discussion regarding this resolution. Hearing none, Chairman Proler called for a vote.

The Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 3892.

d. Resolution No. 3893: Consideration and/or to take action to authorize the President & CEO or designee to conditionally award Project-Based Vouchers to Independence Heights II.

PRESENTED BY: Jay Mason, Director of REID

Resolution No. 3893, as you mentioned, applies 131 project-based vouchers to the Independence Heights II property. This development has come to the board multiple times for approval for different considerations, and this one is specifically to submit a substitution review to HUD so that we can apply 131 vouchers again to the Independence Heights II project. Staff recommends approval of this resolution.

Secretary Bryant: I'll make one comment, that 131 project-based balance, which has always been contemplated. It was in MOUs, and if you recall, there was an RFP about this. So this is not a new concept, we're just at the point where we need to formally submit it.

Chairman Proler: Is this being submitted to HUD for approval?

Secretary Bryant/Jay Mason. Yes, that's correct. That's correct.

Chairman Proler: Was the underwriting for this project done with the intent that the cash flow of 131 units would be project-based vouchers?

Secretary Bryant: Yes, that is correct.

Chairman Proler: Very good. Good. Any other questions, Comments? May I get a motion to adopt Resolution No. 3893.

On motion by Commissioner Carter and seconded by Commissioner Kirkendoll.

Chairman Proler asked if there is any discussion regarding this resolution. Hearing none, Chairman Proler called for a vote.

The Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 3893.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Proler suspended the Public Session on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at 3:20 p.m. to convene an Executive Session to discuss personnel, legal, and real estate issues in accordance with Sections 551.074, 551.071, and 551.072, respectively, of the Texas Government Code.

IX. RECONVENE PUBLIC SESSION

Chairman Proler reconvened the Public Session at 4:16 p.m.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Proler stated this concludes the items on today's agenda and asked for a motion to adjourn.

On motion by Commissioner Carter and seconded by Commissioner Li.

Chairman Proler declared the meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.