

**REGULAR MEETING  
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TRENTON  
HELD WED. JUNE 14, 2017 12:00 PM  
ADM. BLDG., 875 NEW WILLOW STREET**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, John Raines, who announced it was to be noted in the Book of Minutes that the required 48 hours notice of this meeting was mailed to the offices of *The Times*, the *Trentonian* and the Clerk of the City of Trenton, as well as, having been posted in the main entrance of the Housing Authority in accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law also known as the Sunshine Law.

**ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Gary Gentry, Shenette Gray, Kim Taylor, and Jessie Tossie, Commissioners; Darlene Weldon-Gordon, Vice Chair; John Raines, Chairman; and Jelani B. Garrett, Secretary/ Interim Executive Director

**ABSENT:** Commissioner William Fitzgerald

**ALSO**

**PRESENT:** Rocky Peterson, Legal Counsel to the Board, Clifford Godfrey, Interim Deputy Executive Director, Latrice Leggett, Acting Director of Finance, Kenneth King, Acting Asset Manager, Vance Thompson, Acting Chief of Security, Audrey Walker, Manager of Admissions & Occupancy, Pamela Brooks, Director of Resident and Community Services and Francine Nalbone, Human Resources.

Chairman Raines stated that we have a quorum. Chairman Raines then asked for a motion for the adoption of the agenda.

Commissioner Gray moved that the agenda for June 14, 2017 be approved; the motion was seconded by Vice Chair Weldon-Gordon and upon a voice vote, as follows, the motion carried:

	<b><u>AYES</u></b>	<b><u>NAYS</u></b>	<b><u>ABSTAINS</u></b>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		
Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
Total	6	0	0

Chairman Raines stated the agenda has been adopted.

Chairman Raines stated next is approval of the minutes from our regular meeting the executive session held on May 10, 2017. Chairman Raines then asked for a motion to move the minutes. Commissioner Gentry moved that the minutes be approved; the motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Weldon-Gordon. Chairman Raines asked if there were any questions. Seeing there are none Chairman Raines asked for the roll call. Upon roll call the motion carried as follows:

	<u><b>AYES</b></u>	<u><b>NAYS</b></u>	<u><b>ABSTAINS</b></u>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		
Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Jelani Garrett, Secretary/Interim Executive Director said that before he goes onto the resolutions there are just a few things that I wanted to point out. In the reports that the commissioners asked me for previously in the financial reports you have a statement of revenue and expenses not only THA wide but also by central office and by AMP so all physical properties and that is one of the things that HUD asked us for in their review. We also have a projected cash receipts and disbursements which is the cash flow statement projecting through the end of the year what our cash is now and what it is going to look like through the end of the year. There is also a capital fund summary which is a summary of our capital fund grants and what we have in the different categories of capital fund grants. All of those things were request that commissioners asked us for previously and we provided. We just want to note that in your Housing Operations report another one of the critical operating performance metric that we were looking at is vacancies and as you can see it is moving in the right direction. I have actually provided today as additional information and you can see that even by mid-month we have reduced vacancies. Vacancies are coming down, our move ins for the month were greater than our move outs and that is going in the right direction. Also in your additional information, there were a few items that came up, resident issues that came up at the last Board meeting; you have a memorandum in your package that details how we addressed that particular issue and a status of that particular resident issue. Additionally, you have a letter, certified mail, from the Office of General Counsel Departmental Enforcement Center from HUD requesting a remote review of the Housing Authority and this has to do with what was in your package from the last Board meeting with respect to the Housing Authority's recent PHAS score and the designation of as a sub-standard management performer in that one category so they are looking for information for review from us on those particular things. Additionally, to point out in

the new information we are trying to be as accurate as possible on the revenue and expense statements; in the annual budget, we saw one small mistake on the bottom line so we provided a new report and corrected that mistake. And just real quickly with respect to our development of Page Homes Development, right now we are in the process, actually of Chrysti is scrubbing the Section 3 business list, we have tentatively set a meeting with the developer to try to get ahead of the local participation. We want to make sure that we do everything we can to ensure that we are getting the appropriate local participation on this development so we are trying to start early and hold their feet to the fire so hopefully we will have more conversations with the Board about that and even identifying local contractors and different folks. I think that actually becomes more of a community effort in terms of people being able to identify folks that are out there that can thoroughly participate. We are 100% committed to that and we are trying to begin the process early on that.

Jelani B. Garrett, Secretary/Interim Executive Director introduced Resolution 17-22 authorizing disbursements for the month of May in the amount of \$469,286.17.

Chairman Raines stated he would take a motion for Resolution 17-22. Commissioner Gray moved the motion for approval of Disbursements for the month of May; Vice-Chair Weldon-Gordon seconded the motion. Chairman Raines asked if there were any questions. Seeing there are none Chairman Raines asked for the roll call. Upon roll call the motion carried as follows:

**RESOLUTION 17-22 (Attached)**

	<b><u>AYES</u></b>	<b><u>NAYS</u></b>	<b><u>ABSTAINS</u></b>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		
Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Resolution passed.

Jelani B. Garrett, Secretary/Interim Executive Director introduced Resolution 17-23 authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a contract with Standard Elevator Services for the servicing and maintenance of our elevators at the three senior buildings.

Chairman Raines stated he would take a motion for Resolution 17-23. Commissioner Gentry moved the motion; Vice-Chair Weldon-Gordon seconded the motion. Chairman Raines asked if there were any questions. Seeing there are none Chairman Raines asked for the roll call. Upon roll call the motion carried as follows:

**RESOLUTION 17-23 (Attached)**

	<b><u>AYES</u></b>	<b><u>NAYS</u></b>	<b><u>ABSTAINS</u></b>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		
Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Resolution Passed.

Jelani B. Garrett, Secretary/Interim Executive Director introduced Resolution 17-24 authorizing an increase in the amount of \$69,000 over the original contract amount to allow for the payment legal services rendered by Hill Wallack, LLP outside of the original contract period.

Chairman Raines stated he would take a motion for Resolution 17-24. Commissioner Gentry moved the motion; Vice-Chair Weldon-Gordon seconded the motion. Chairman Raines stated it was moved and properly seconded and then asked if there were any questions. Seeing there are none, Chairman Raines asked for the roll call and upon roll call the motion carries as follows:

**RESOLUTION 17-24 (Attached)**

	<b><u>AYES</u></b>	<b><u>NAYS</u></b>	<b><u>ABSTAINS</u></b>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		
Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Resolution Passed.

Jelani B. Garrett, Secretary/Interim Executive Director introduced Resolution 17-25 authorizing an increase in the amount of \$86,995.90 over the original contract amount to allow for the payment of Tenancy and Occupancy legal services rendered by Szaferman, Lakind, Blumstein & Blader, PC. outside of the original contract.

Chairman Raines stated he would take a motion for Resolution 17-25. Vice-chair Weldon-Gordon moved the motion; Commissioner Tossie seconded the motion. Chairman Raines stated it was moved and properly seconded and then asked if there were any questions. Seeing there are none, Chairman Raines asked for the roll call and upon roll call the motion carries as follows:

**RESOLUTION 17-25 (Attached)**

	<b><u>AYES</u></b>	<b><u>NAYS</u></b>	<b><u>ABSTAINS</u></b>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		
Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Resolution Passed.

This concludes the report of the secretary.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Chairman Raines stated that the resolutions took care of the unfinished business and asked if there was any more unfinished business; any questions, comments or concerns.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Vice Chair Weldon-Gordon stated that tomorrow, to my knowledge, Commissioner Gentry is going before City Council. Would you like us to go to support you? Chairman Raines asked if she was him or Commissioner Gentry. Vice Chair Weldon-Gordon stated she was asking him because he would have to speak in front of City Council. Chairman Raines stated: that is fine, I know how busy everybody's schedules are and I know it is a busy time of the year but if you can come out to support both Commissioner Gentry and I will both be very grateful. Chairman Raines stated he is also up for re-appointment.

## **REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

Chairman Raines stated the only thing he had to report is that there will be an executive session after this meeting to discuss personnel and contracts.

Chairman Raines said we will now move onto Public Comments.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION**

Chairman Raines stated that in order to make the public session flow a little easier, the Executive Director and I have a sign in sheet and I will call your name and you have two minutes. Please state your name and address for the record.

Chairman Raines stated that the first one up to speak is Bertha Vaughn, 490 Hoffman Avenue, Apt 707.

Bertha Vaught stated that she has an issue regarding her request for transfer. They have allowed me to have my son with me under a mental condition and I am in a one bedroom right now. She stated that she in a request back in October for a 2 bedroom and I have provided all the documentation that asked of me. He does get his monthly allotment and I turned in the awards letter and everything; they have all the information. I just need to know if you are going to move on this issue soon as you did with the vacancies.

Jelani B. Garrett, Interim Executive Director, explained that he did not want to get into her individual situation in a public session and asked that you speak to Mr. Godfrey following the meeting and so we can get all the particulars of your situation so that we can address it.

Chairman Raines stated that Mr. Garrett will follow up with the entire Board as he did with this last one.

Aaron Wilson, 237 Oakland Street, is requesting a reasonable accommodation for his apartment. He said that it is too congested with his wheel chair, walker and bike and I don't want to put the stuff out on the balcony so I am asking if I can be moved to a one bedroom so I can have more room to settle in.

Mr. Garrett asked Mr. Wilson if he had put in for a transfer yet. Erin Wilson stated he did and said he provided a doctor's note and everything and hasn't gotten a response.

Jelani B. Garrett, Interim Executive Director asked Mr. Wilson to speak with Mr. Godfrey after the meeting.

Chairman Raines stated that for the record one of the things we are trying to do to better address resident concerns during Board meetings, the Executive Director has tasked his Deputy to talk with people offline so, like he said, your particular situation is not in open forum and he will follow up with the Board.

Clarence Willets, 490 Hoffman Avenue, Apt 411 – Welcome back, nice to see you, we are familiar with you, can we meet your Deputy I have residents here with me and we don't know what is going on. If we can have a formal meeting, his name. Mr. Garrett prompted Mr. Godfrey to introduce himself.

My name is Clifford Godfrey and I am the Interim Deputy Director under Mr. Garrett. As we move closer to becoming official we will make our rounds but right now we have been tasked with stabilizing the agency, a request that came from HUD so that is our primary focus.

Mr. Willets stated he had a concern with bedbugs there was a bedbug check done in May. It was a three day process, those who had infestations in their apartments they filled out forms they ordered mattress covers and we have not seen anybody since. It has not been treated and it has been over thirty days, no bags have been brought, no instructions on treatment have been given. Are you aware of this asking the Executive Director through the Chair is he is aware of the outcome of the sweep?

Jelani B. Garrett, Interim Executive Director, stated he is aware of some of the outcome of the sweep. I don't want to get into that in the public session but we can talk about it. Quite frankly we have some issues with the preparations we are trying to work with because a lot of times we have seniors and disabled and we have a hard time prepping for the bedbug treatment. For instance, you have to wash all your clothes, dry all your clothes, and pack all your clothes in bags. What we have found in the past is we had companies out to do that but it was like throwing good money after bad because if they don't do the washing and drying of the clothes and they just put the clothes in the bags and then open the bags back up after the treatment has been done then the bedbugs reemerge. So when you get an opportunity speak with Mr. Uriel Burwell right there he is basically the management person who is handling the extermination process and we are trying to get non-profit companies to come in and talk with our resident services department in addition to helping on the Housing Authority's dime maybe there are other organizations out there that can help the seniors and disabled with the washing of the clothes and the drying of the clothes so that we can ensure that when we do that service it is effective and it is not a reoccurrence of those things.

Clarence Willets thanked him for the information and then stated his thing with this is #1 there was no communication past that point, # 2 It is a health hazard; if you have bedbugs next door and they come into my house. I don't know if they have hepatitis C they are blood suckers so now I don't know what I am coming down with. It has not been addressed as far as we are concerned. We are the ones living in it so therefore any non-profit or anything that has to be brought in I think we need to be readdressed on this because the gentleman that came out asked are you prepared. He made an assessment, those that could pack up and do for themselves nothing have been addressed and that along with the health is a concern.

Jelani B. Garrett said he understood but wanted to say and you would know from before that, I don't know that you will agree or not but we had a pretty effective system that we

had implemented in addressing bedbugs. In all honesty this is the beginning of my 9<sup>th</sup> week and there are a lot of issues and that is definitely something that we want to get back in order and even make it better because even though we think we had it semi. Like I said before, bedbugs are an ongoing war. Yes bedbugs and the roaches. Like I said make contact with Mr. Burwell, get to know him because he is going to be around and we are going to do our best to address the issue.

Clarence Willetts stated that right now he has no timeline. He then brought up issues with the van. Some of the residents have a difficult time getting up into the van and we help each other but some of the other low income developments have a bus that has a lift and he wants to know if we can get something like that. He said that right now if there is an event or something not everyone can go because the van is not equipped for residents in chairs. I am sure there are grants out there for this type of vehicle. We need to make this happen and that is why we are petition the Board on this level. Next, I hope that Bertha's issue will be resolved today. This goes to show the residents that after her experience that after coming here and sitting outside of someone's office and they never respond for 3 to 4 hours and they are the only one in the waiting room and you get no response. It appears that when there are issues, they get shifted among department heads. We need a list of whose job does this as a department and whose does that so we can contact.

Jelani Garrett, Interim Executive Director informed Mr. Willetts that as a resident of the Housing Authority your contact is your site manager. The site manager is the first line of contact that you should have. Now when you come to a Board meeting like this, we don't have every site manager sitting here but we do have certain people here that are tasked with certain things. That is why I brought you to Uriel to get some more information. That is an additional contact though; you should really be talking to your site manager and you know I have an open door policy; Clifford has an open door policy. He is actually over the Housing Operation piece and if there is a problem and you don't get your manager you come up the line. We don't want to make it adversarial because there is no reason for it to be adversarial.

And lastly, we know that you don't meet in July and August but we would like for the Board to meet in the Abbott Building in September so that the residents can see how you function and also to be able to ask you a line of questions. Either thank you for what you have done and acknowledge it or remind you that you haven't followed through yet.

Commissioner Gentry asked for clarification on when the sweep was done.

Clarence Willetts confirmed that it was May of this year. It has been over 30 days and that is why I am addressing it. So therefore with the heat the bedbugs are increasing, it is very uncomfortable for some and that means that they are carrying them. Every time they leave their apartment they are carrying them somewhere on their presence. So therefore it widens the infestation. It needs to be addressed yesterday.



Thank you very much and I hope that you will accept our invitation for September.

Chairman Raines asked if there was anyone else from the public that would like to speak.

Mark Lee, 490 Hoffman Avenue, regarding the trash around the building. He stated that Mr. Eutsey has the contract when it comes to the cleaning of the grounds and they were doing in front of the Josephson building really nice and it seems like the Abbott building is always put on the back burner. I spoke to Mr. Eutsey and he walked over to see and now they started to clean it up. I spoke to Mr. Zachary and Mr. Uriel about the 2 garbage cans. One of them hasn't been lifted and dumped in over 4 months so Mr. Uriel came out and leaned it up against the brick wall. I spoke to Mr. Eutsey again and he had some of the guys take some of the garbage out. Mr. Zachary said that they pay for this to be dumped. Now we are waiting for a replacement but the other one is still leaning and is creating a situation like Mr. Clarence is speaking about. My apartment itself is clean and I am having no problems right now. I want to thank the Board for allowing me to speak. But this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Also, the office where Ms. Bea used to be there is a lady who moved in our building has the background in counseling and she can help us. We need to get someone in here in this position. Maybe she can get paid for a couple of days.

Chairman Raines stated for the record, I am aware of your meeting with Councilman Chester and I discussed this with the Executive Director this morning and he is already working on some of your issues.

Charlotte Davis, 490 Hoffman Avenue I am the new kid on the block but I am not new when it comes to City Council and the needs of the people in the community. I am from Trenton but I moved away for a period of time and when I came back I was floored by the issues with the people trying to help one another to maintain the community so that we don't need outsiders to come in and do what we should be doing all the time.

We have a lot of things going on in our section of town and if we can just get the people on City Council to just come out and talk to the people in the community because there are people who want to come out but just aren't able. I myself have disabilities but I don't let them stop me. I am a person of preservice and when I see something wrong, I am going to speak about it but I want to speak to the right person about it. I am not a person who likes gossiping I am a person who likes results and I like to do things hands on. Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

Jelani Garrett, Interim Executive Director asked Ms. Davis to make contact with Ms. Pamela Brooks after the meeting. She is our Director of Resident and Community Services. Any volunteering and different stuff, those types of discussions we encourage that.

Ms. Davis stated that they are already looking forward to putting a little office together on our site. So that we can participate in some activities and get the word out to the community about what we are trying to do because there is power in numbers. I think it is time to just stop talking about it and we need to do what needs to get done.

Vice Chair Weldon-Gordon asked Ms. Davis how long she has lived in the building.

Ms. Davis responded she has lived here for six months now. I moved out of New Jersey and has just relocated back.

Clarence Willets stated that we would like to get the office up and running at the Abbott building.

Chairman Raines told Mr. Willets that is something he can speak to Ms. Brooks about after the meeting. Mr. Willets continued to speak and Chairman Raines said with all due respect you had an opportunity to speak. Mr. Willets immediately stopped talking and sat down.

Tracy Taylor, 5 Mellon Street - the last time I was here was in February and I brought my concerns about the front doors not being locked. Building 5 has been the haven for children's play house. I am constantly having to get people who don't even live there out of the hall way. It is a pit stop and it is ridiculous. I want to know what has been done if anything? Another concern is work orders being done in a timely fashion for safety concerns. The light in the hall way went out. That work order was put in May 10<sup>th</sup> and that work order was not completed until sometime in June. There should be a better system for simple work orders. Simple work orders should not have to take that long especially when it is a safety hazard as well.

Jelani Garrett, Interim Executive Director, informed Ms. Taylor that we have made the investment to repair all the doors and to put the access system back in place. The contractor has actually ordered all the parts. Mr. Godfrey said the first meeting with them is June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Raines stated that we will be going into Executive Session to discuss Personnel and Contracts and we will not be returning to the public session I will also like to say hello to Mr. Cameron Hunt from the Rutherford Heights Civic Association.

Chairman Raines asked for a motion for adjournment. Commissioner Gray moved the motion and upon a voice vote the motion carries as follows:

	<b><u>AYES</u></b>	<b><u>NAYS</u></b>	<b><u>ABSTAINS</u></b>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		

Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The Board then went into Executive Session to discuss personnel and contracts.

Chairman Raines stated we are back in public session. At this time I will take a motion to extend the Interim Executive Directors contract through September 15, 2017. Commissioner Gentry moved the motion; Commissioner Gray seconded the motion and upon roll call the motion carries as follows:

	<u><b>AYES</b></u>	<u><b>NAYS</b></u>	<u><b>ABSTAINS</b></u>
Com. Shenette Gray	1		
Com. Gary Gentry	1		
Com. Kim Taylor	1		
Com. Darlene Weldon-Gordon	1		
Com. Jessie Tossie	1		
Com. John Raines	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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Jelani B. Garrett  
Board of Commissioners  
Housing Authority  
of the  
City of Trenton