

Members Present: Gordon Tremaine, Andrew Mickle, Anthony Gordon, Barbara Fitzsimmons, Jane Morris

Staff & Visitors: John E. Cherry, Bernadette D. Woody, Rob Groeb, Bill Cochran, Barbara Richardson, Erick Baker & Frederick Williams (Boys and Girls Club), Doris Manning

1. **Invocation**

The meeting was called to order at 1:15 PM

2. **Roll Call**

All Commissioners were present.

3. **Approval of Agenda**

4. **Statements of Operation.** No action.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **Action Items**

i. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Executive Session (Seminary Lane, The 400 and Executive Director Evaluation)**

The Board adjourned at 1:20 PM and went into an Executive Session to discuss matters relating to Seminary Lane and The 400 and Executive Director Evaluation. It reconvened in a regular session at 3:40 PM.

ii. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Write Off Uncollectible Accounts for the months ending 12-31-08 and 01-31-09**

Commissioner Mickle moved approval to write off the Uncollectible Accounts for the month ending 12-31-08 in the amount of \$5,263.96 and for the month ending 1-31-09 in the amount of \$1,847.70, seconded by Commissioner Morris. Motion carried (5/0). See Attachment.

iii. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Budgets (PH & Section 8 Voucher Program for FYE 3-31-10)**

Chairperson Tremaine asked if the budgets were approved by the Finance Committee. Commissioner Gordon replied no and it was his understanding that this item should be tabled until the Finance Committee gets together. Chairperson Tremaine stated that the Finance Committee should review the budgets before bringing them to the Board. He said that the budget has to be passed by the beginning of April. Commissioner Gordon suggested that the budget be approved now and, if necessary, make amendments to the budgets.

Commissioner Gordon asked Secretary Cherry what had he decided about the meeting for the budget? Secretary Cherry replied that there needs to be a budget meeting and then there has to be a Special Board meeting after the Budget Committee has an opportunity to review the budgets. Commissioner Gordon asked about a time frame to have the budget approved and Secretary Cherry replied by the end of this month. Commissioner Gordon said that the Board can approve the budgets and then make amendments or adjustments to the budget anytime.

Chairperson Tremaine agreed with Commissioner Gordon's suggestion of approving the budget now and then revisit at the next meeting. Commissioner Gordon asked what would happen if the Board did not approve the budget by April 1st? Bill Cochran replied HUD wants the GHA operating with a budget on April 1st but if it is not there might be a finding.

Chairperson Tremaine said he was not comfortable approving the budget if the Finance Committee has not reviewed it. Bill Cochran said it would be appropriate if the Finance Committee reviewed and approved the budgets before the end of the month.

This item was referred to the Finance Committee for review and then, if necessary, schedule a special board meeting before the end of the month.

iv. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: ED's Evaluation Process**

Chairperson Tremaine removed the ED's Evaluation Process from the Agenda.

v. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Report by Finance Committee**

Commissioner Gordon stated that he will wait until they have the Finance Meeting to report on anything.

b. **Information Items**

i. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Legal Basis for City and County Housing Authorities (Similarities and Differences)**

Commissioner Morris said that she had spoken with Gail Monahan and Ms. Monahan would like to be able to come to the next Board meeting and give a presentation about her ideas about the merger.

Chairperson Tremaine replied that they would have to vote to put it on the Agenda. He asked the Board how they felt about it. Commissioner Fitzsimmons said it was good. Commissioner Gordon asked if it was an exploratory meeting or just a presentation? Commissioner Morris replied, just a presentation. Chairperson Tremaine, hearing no objection, said we will invite Ms. Monahan to next month's meeting. Commissioner Morris said she will call Ms. Monahan and Chairperson Tremaine said it would be appropriate that Mr. Cherry call her.

Chairperson Tremaine stated no one on the Board is authorized to act on behalf of the Board, with the possibility of himself, and that would only be at the direction of the Board. He said it is not appropriate for anyone on the Board to be discussing housing authority business with someone else. He advised the Board to be careful.

Commissioner Gordon asked for clarification on housing authority business because housing authority business is public business.

Chairperson Tremaine clarified that it would be inappropriate for an invitation to come from a Board member; it should come from the Director.

ii. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Update on Ad Hoc Committee on Reduction of Evictions and Write-Offs**

Commissioner Morris said they had another meeting and she got a lot of good information. She was the only Commissioner present but staff, Mr. Cherry and Ms,

Woody was there and she got more information about the difficulties that they deal with, with certain tenants who game the system or have poor priorities and have trouble paying their rent. She said that Mr. Groeb had a couple of opinions, one being that it would be a terrible idea to find a mediator type person to work between tenants and management. He thought it would drive them further apart rather than bring them together on issues. Also, one way to cut down the rent write offs is to evict people more quickly rather than working with them. She said they didn't come up with any final solution to the problem of the write offs. She would like to put a hold on having that committee meet and focus more on looking at job description and director issue.

Chairperson Tremaine said that he felt the same way about the merger conversation right now. He said they have a lot of work to do and he would like to see the Board get a head start on this. He said that Ms. Monahan can always come in a month or two from now.

Commissioner Morris said she disagreed. She thinks the discussion of the merger is just a complete parallel with the discussion of the Director issues. She thinks it needs to be going on at the same time.

Chairperson Tremaine said he is not sure what is driving the conversation about a merger. But if they give themselves a fairly strict timeline, the process hasn't even begun, and that is his concern. He said they ought to be able to layout, at the next meeting, a timeline or process that they plan to do. He asked if it would be a problem of having Ms. Monahan come the next month. Commissioner Morris replied, probably not, but she thinks the more information they have the sooner the better, we can all be thinking.

Commissioner Gordon wanted to remind the Commissioners, as he said before, that if it is put off one month, it will be put off and put off and that is the history of the Commission.

Commissioners Morris and Mickle departed.

iii. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Dwelling Lease for Public Housing**

Secretary Cherry stated that at the Retreat a comment was made to review the dwelling lease as it contains a lot of policies and the Commissioners said they weren't aware of what was in the lease, the requirements in the lease and the various addendums to the lease. Secretary Cherry said that Rob Groeb was prepared to discuss the lease. The lease has been provided to all Board members. Secretary Cherry said there was some concern over the One Strike Policy.

Chairperson Tremaine said at the risk of looking like the Board is putting off discussing this item it will be discussed at the next meeting

iv. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Update on Resident Councils**

Secretary Cherry stated to his knowledge there is only one Resident Council that is operating at this time and that is the Resident Council at Oak Park. He said that he and Ms. Fitzsimmons had met and discussed the requirements for a validation of a resident council and they both agreed that they need to review the by laws of the Oak Park Resident Council.

Chairperson Tremaine asked if there was something that was asked for about the resident council at the last meeting? Secretary Cherry replied, it was whether or not they met the HUD requirements to be a duly certified, duly elected resident council and that is spelt out in the regulations and staff will review the by laws of the organization.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said she wants to have the resident councils able to be functioning and receiving the monies from HUD in order to function. She said in 2004 and 2005 the requirements were followed. She is getting information on 2006 and 2007. Her next step is to go to the other sites to help them connect to resources that can help guide them.

Chairperson Tremaine asked that next time the Board needs to be discussing the lease language and the policies contained in the lease? Secretary Cherry replied, yes.

v. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Update on Maintenance Charges to Residents**

Secretary Cherry said that at the last meeting it was discussed having a meeting with staff and with residents to discuss some of the changes that were recommended on maintenance charges and maintenance policy.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons said that could be kept with the maintenance policy and it could be revisited.

vi. **CONSIDER AND DISCUSS: Update on Seminary Lane**

Chairperson Tremaine asked if there was an update on Seminary Lane other than what was discussed earlier? Secretary Cherry handed out a written memorandum on the status of residents. This was discussed. He said that out of the 47 residents, 32 were approved, 6 were denied for One Strike, 2 have requested a hearing, 1 is over income and was denied, 2 owe money and if they pay the money they owe to the housing authority or Seminary Lane, they will receive a voucher. Four residents did not apply for Section 8 and two residents are pending further information.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons asked if those residents who were not approved is the housing authority helping them connect in any way with what they can afford? Secretary Cherry replied yes, there was some discussion about that.

Chairperson Tremaine asked Commissioner Gordon if he had anything else on his Finance Report that he needed to discuss. Commissioner Gordon replied, no, it can be discussed at the next Finance meeting.

6. **Secretary's Report**

- HUD has provided the GHA with additional funding, stimulus money, which is for the Capital Fund. The amount is approximately \$1.2 million and it is for shovel ready projects. It has to be obligated in one year and 60% spent within two years. The reporting requirements are quarterly and HUD has to be notified of jobs created and jobs saved. Secretary Cherry said that it is his understanding that HUD is also sending stimulus money to the State. He said HUD has not provided notice on the specifics as to how money can be spent. Bill Cochran said this money has to be spent on items that are already in the GHA's five year plan such as roofing, major plumbing work, sidewalks, etc.
- GHA has received \$94,752 for the renewal funding for the PATH program which the Section 8 Department provides housing for those persons who are participating in the PATH program. GHA also received \$132,624 for the VETPORT program. This is a supplement to the existing grant and HUD owes the GHA over \$120,000 to the COCC for this as it has been providing the services while waiting on money from HUD.
- There are 42 veterans who receive vouchers under the VASH program. Twenty-four are leased up and sixteen are looking for units and a couple of them are waiting for inspection appointments and they will be leased up shortly. Should be fully leased up shortly with 70 veterans.

- Secretary Cherry stated that Erick Baker had an announcement. Mr. Baker stated that he wanted to come before the Board and express his gratitude and thanks. He said that he has tendered his resignation as of the end of March. He has selected his replacement, Mr. Frederick Williams who will stay in tune with the vision and the program that the Boys and Girls Club offer. There are eighteen solid programs that are being run; they have over 40 community partners all of who will have a meeting with him and Mr. Williams. We met with Mr. Cherry and talked about some things and have reassured him and the housing authority that the level of service will continue. Mr. Baker said that he is going back to school to get his Masters.

Mr. Williams introduced himself to the Board. He has been working with the Club as program director since October 2008. He said he fell in love with the kids and the programs and was able to see the progress in the last six months.

7. **Announcements/Statements by Commissioners or Executive Secretary**

Commissioner Gordon asked Secretary Cherry about the Briarwood house and Lazarus Ministries. Secretary Cherry said that he and Lazarus Ministries are still working on it.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons asked about the contracts and Secretary Cherry said that there are more to come.

Secretary Cherry said that Debra Fulton is in the hospital. He said he spoke to her today and she is hoping to be released from the hospital today. This is all related to her previous medical problem. Commission Fitzsimmons asked Mr. Cherry to tell Mrs. Fulton that she is thinking about her as she is a vital person.

8. **Citizen's Comments**

None.

9. **Items for the Next Agenda** – Regular Board Meeting 4-08-09.

10. **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned.

Chairperson

Date

Secretary