

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
OAK PARK HOUSING AUTHORITY
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2016
7:41 A.M.**

OFFICIAL RECORD

PRESENT: Commissioners Butler, Davis, Hellwig, Hill, Kelley, & Chairman Kralik

EXCUSED: Commissioner Muse

ALSO PRESENT: Maria Saldaña, Executive Director; Mike Eckel and Ken Peterson, Kolnicki, Peterson & Wirth, LLC; Melissa Neyfeldt, Ken Southward, Beth Swaggerty, and Rhonda Doyle, Staff

QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 7:38 A.M. by Chairman Kralik.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 12, 2016

It was moved (Butler) and seconded (Hellwig) to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2016 regular meeting. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

RESOLUTION APPROVING FY2015 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Ms. Saldaña introduced Mr. Eckel and Mr. Peterson, the Authority's auditors, to the Board. She turned the discussion over to Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson reviewed the audit in detail informing the Board that in their opinion the financial statements were in all material respects compliant with generally accepted accounting principles.

Mr. Peterson went on to highlight changes in revenues and expenses from 2014 to 2015, overall, and for each of the Housing Choice Voucher programs, and Mills Park Tower.

Mr. Peterson concluded that the Housing Authority Programs were performing well.

Mr. Peterson asked for questions. Commissioner Hellwig inquired about the interest rate for the mortgage and the property at 324 N. Austin, detailed on page 20. Mr. Peterson said he would check it. Ms. Saldana noted she thought it was 4.3%.

Commissioner Hellwig then asked about the lease with Catholic Charities for 21 South Blvd. and asked whether the lease was renewed. Ms. Saldana said yes and noted that in 2010 the lease was extended for 10 years.

Commissioner Kralik asked what the 681 total units under the Authority's management included. Mr. Peterson explained that it included Vouchers and the units at the Tower. He added that page 37 showed the breakdown. Commissioner Kralik then said that page 37 reflected a total of 672. Commissioner Hill asked which number was correct. Mr. Peterson answered the 672 number was correct. Mr. Peterson indicated that the total on page 15 would be changed to 672.

Commissioner Davis asked if the auditors were issuing an unqualified opinion in connection with the audit. Mr. Peterson answered yes, and that the terminology has been changed from unqualified to unmodified.

Lastly, Ms. Saldaña said she would like to change the language in Note 2, page 18. She said that instead of saying that the Authority shares common administrative offices and staff with OPRC, it should state that OPRC manages the programs of the Authority pursuant to a Management Agreement. Also, she indicated that OPRC was not an affiliate of the Authority, but had a contractual relationship.

It was moved (Hellwig) and seconded (Butler) to approve and adopt the FY2015 audit. The roll call vote was as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Butler, Davis, Hellwig, Hill, & Chairman Kralik

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Commissioners Kelley and Muse

Chairman Kralik complimented staff, stating he appreciated their work with the auditors

Ms. Saldaña said that she appreciated the hard work of Mr. King, Mr. Sinn, and Mr. Southward.

Mr. Eckel and Mr. Peterson departed the meeting at 8:00 A.M.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

MILLS PARK TOWER

Ms. Neyfeldt reported that she is still working on filling the vacancies but unfortunately many people have passed away or moved to assisted living. She said that she has applicants ready to move in and that she will be moving them in in September and October.

Ms. Neyfeldt reported that they hosted a birthday party for one of the residents who turned 100. An article was passed around to the Board about her celebration.

Ms. Neyfeldt reported that the usual maintenance is being done around the building.

Ms. Neyfeldt asked for questions. Chairman Kralik asked the status of the handicapped unit. Ms. Neyfeldt said that it would be completed in a few weeks and that she has someone in the building scheduled to move into it when it's finished.

HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

Mr. Southward reported that there were 420 program participants in the regular Voucher program. He said the lease up rate was 98%.

Mr. Southward reported that there were a total of 47 Mainstream Vouchers leased. He said that one family is needed to meet the goal of utilizing the remaining 5 NED Vouchers for the chronically homeless. He said he needs another referral from Housing Forward.

Mr. Southward reported that we are starting the eligibility process for 15 applications from the waiting list. He said this process would take 60 – 90 days.

Regarding the NED Vouchers, 12 are being utilized, 2 have Vouchers and are searching for units, and 1 is having a problem with obtaining the security deposit.

Mr. Southward added that we have been receiving referrals and that we have more applicants that we need to determine their eligibility. He said this may take 60 days. He added that he was hoping to get 15 NED applicants housed by the end of the year.

Mr. Southward reported that there have been no Vouchers issued from the Mainstream Waiting List.

Mr. Southward reported that there were 63 billable port-in clients and that there were a total of 18 participants, port-outs, for which other Housing Authorities are billing the OPHA. He said that there are 15 participants with Vouchers searching for housing in Oak Park.

Chairman Kralik asked Mr. Southward how often we retrieve names from the Waiting List. Mr. Southward answered that as the numbers dip, then we look at it and begin to pull names from the list. Chairman Kralik then asked him the last time we pulled names from the regular Waiting List. Mr. Southward said it was in November of 2015.

Mr. Southward fielded questions from the Board such as the timeframe for the Waiting List to reopen, the amount of Voucher holders of the 2000 we are serving that were housed, the total number of Voucher holders that came off the Waiting List, etc. Chairman Kralik asked Mr. Southward if there are other ways to become a Voucher holder. Mr. Southward answered that all applicants come through a waiting list.

Chairman Kralik then asked him to characterize what the circumstances are for applicants to have their name withdrawn from the Waiting List. Mr. Southward said the reasons have been all over the place, but mostly non-responsive to our letters.

Lastly, Chairman Kralik commented that he appreciated all of the work that goes into running the Program; adding that all of the work Mr. Southward has been doing is very exciting and encouraging.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Ms. Saldaña began by stating that Commissioner Davis attended the Oak Park Board of Trustees study session and discussion regarding affordable housing at the Village of Oak Park on July 25th. She said that Ms. Swaggerty also attended the presentation and took the notes that were included in the packet.

Ms. Saldaña asked if the Board had any comments or questions on the affordable housing discussion overview.

Commissioner Davis said that there were questions posed to the Trustees regarding their thoughts on how the Village should support affordable housing. He said that he shared Trustee Ott's opinions in requesting that Village staff exercise due diligence in researching other communities that had inclusionary ordinances for affordable housing components in new developments to determine its true impact before assuming it was a deterrent to attracting new development in the community. Commissioner Davis stated that he thought an inclusionary ordinance was an important part of maintaining and advancing affordable housing.

Commissioner Kralik said he believed that without an ordinance requiring affordable housing, that staff is at a disadvantage in negotiating for affordable housing. He also added that if downtown multifamily developments do not have affordable units, there is a great risk of economic segregation.

Commissioner Davis agreed with Chairman Kralik, commenting that he believed we need to send a letter back to the Village indicating our concerns. Ms. Saldaña added that she thinks we need to conduct more research and gather real data suggesting what the impact would be in terms of diversity and affordability.

Commissioner Davis departed the meeting at 8:30 A.M.

Ms. Swaggerty emphasized that Trustee Brewer was not opposed to an ordinance. She said there was much discussion about sustaining affordability.

Commissioner Kralik volunteered to write and circulate another letter to the Village Board putting the Authority on record to assist them in any way we can. He said he would talk to Andrew (Drew) Williams-Clark regarding the timing.

Ms. Saldaña suggested directing any questions to Tammie Grossman.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Saldaña reported that we applied for a \$35,000 administrative support grant from the Village and that it is up for approval by the Village Board.

Ms. Saldaña reported that we are still down one caseworker. She indicated that administrative costs would creep up as a result of the new Yardi conversion, and the hiring of a new caseworker.

Ms. Saldaña reported that she continues to attend RHI meetings. She said that there is an opening to apply for a grant at the federal level, and that we are joining their efforts.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Kralik asked the Board if future meetings could begin at 7:45 A.M. because he has morning commitments prior to the meeting. He added that he would also reach out to the Commissioners who were absent to ask them too.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Hellwig congratulated the new slate of Officers.

At 8:42 A.M., it was moved (Butler) and seconded (Hellwig) to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Hill, Secretary