

# **MINUTES**

## **HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ABILENE**

### **Meeting of January 18, 2007, 9:30 a.m.**

The Housing Authority of the City of Abilene, Texas, met in Regular Session on January 18, 2007, at 9:30 a.m. in the Cypress Plaza Board Room, 534 Cypress Street. Chairman V.E. Brailsford was present and presided. Other Commissioners present were: Gaylynn Isbell and Dale Barthelemy.

Staff members present were: Executive Director Roberta Thompson, Richard Rolison, Tanya Johnson, Megan Santee (Legal), Edward McRoy (Planning and Development Services) and Audria Hammond. Guest present was: Mark Zachary.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

1.0 The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chairman Brailsford.

1.1 Executive Director Thompson stated that she would be presented a 25 Year Service Award at the City Council Meeting on February 7, 2007 at 8:30 a.m.

### **DISPOSITION OF MINUTES**

2.0 There being no corrections, additions, or deletions to the November 16, 2006 Board Meeting Minutes, Commissioner Isbell made a motion to approve the minutes as printed. Commissioner Barthelemy seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Barthelemy, Isbell, and Chairman Brailsford

NAYS: None

***The motion carried.***

**OPEN DISCUSSION FOR CITIZEN GENERAL COMMENT AND  
RESIDENT/LANDLORD INPUT**

- 3.0 There was one landlord present at the meeting. Chairman Brailsford allowed three (3) minutes for general comments and landlord input. David Webb voiced his appreciation for the time to come before the Board and working together to make the Landlord and Housing Office more efficient...a win-win situation. He voiced the following concern: speed up the time that adjustments are made to the Landlord. He stated that he has a check received December 8, 2006, for 5320 Encino. He stated that this is one of the locations that he and Chairman Brailsford had driven during an earlier meeting. The property is a messy looking property with one of the screens missing. Mr. Webb stated that this Tenant needed a home visit as she needs help. He stated that an inspection had been conducted. He had completed the Landlord repairs but the Tenant failed to complete the repairs that were the responsibility of the Tenant. The notation on the check read June 6-July 4 overpayment and \$421.47 was deducted from the check. He stated that the Tenant works and has several children. He stated that you can tell by driving by that there is not much discipline. He stated that during a recent inspection the inspector noted that the doors have holes in them and the walls have holes. He said that he knows that he can evict her according to the provisions of his lease. He requested input from the Board. He stated that the lady is trying to the best of her ability, but needs some help. He said that she goes to work but the house is in a mess and probably does not meet quality standards. He noted that the inspector is due back at the property on February 12, 2007. He stated that if he went to the property on February 11, 2007, the Tenant repairs would probably not be done. He said that he would be told that she would call a relative to make the repairs. In the past this had not happened. He stated that he has had to mow the alley of the property because he had been notified by the City that the grass was too high and he would be fined if they were not cut. He stated that the tenant does not have the capability to get the weeds cut in the alley or the back yard. He stated that he needs input. He said that it is cold outside and he can evict her for violation of her lease, but feels that she needs counseling.

Chairman Brailsford let him know that his concerns would be addressed.

Mr. Webb also requested that adjustments be made more timely and added that more detail regarding the adjustments would be helpful. He also stated that a call to the Landlord of the forthcoming adjustment would also be helpful.

Commissioner Isbell inquired as to whether tenants are aware that they will be terminated from the program if they are evicted.

Executive Director Thompson explained that when the tenant comes on the program an initial inspection is performed on the unit and if the unit passes housing quality standards it becomes an eligible tenant for participation. Every year we go out to re-inspect that unit. Every effort is made to identify any deficiency and the responsible for correcting the deficiency; i.e. the landlord or tenant. Per HUD rules we can give ten to fifteen days to each of them to make the necessary repairs. However, our policy states that we give the maximum thirty days. Each one of them has thirty days to affect correction for that repair. We are not able to bring a tenant in to a specific housekeeping class, as they have a right to attend the class or not attend. We address Housing Quality Standards (HQS) compliance and make any recommendations for housekeeping and how to maintain the units at the initial briefing. We are required to tell them what it takes to maintain the unit to meet HQS. If they do not maintain the unit, there are consequences.

Based on Mr. Webb's presentation, it appears that this unit has had an annual re-certification inspection and failed. It appears that it is the tenant's responsibility to correct the deficiency and she has thirty days to make the necessary repairs. We will go in and do what we will do for all tenants and terminate the tenant's assistance, according to HUD regulations and the PHA policy, if the repairs are not made within the thirty days. Although this sounds harsh, this is what happens across the board for housing authorities.

In between there, so that the landlord is not left holding the fix, we say that the landlord has the opportunity to evict that tenant for tearing up the unit and for causing the unit to fail. During that period, before we implement our decision to terminate, we suggest that the landlord terminate that tenant. We will pay the landlord through the entire eviction process. This happens. It happens during the winter and the summer. Counseling the tenant on housekeeping issues or psychological issues are not a part of the program. The tenant does not have to attend any programs offered in these areas if tenant chooses not to. The process is the following: brochures are given; the tenant is told what they need to do; the tenant is told what to do if something is broken to report it to the landlord; and informed that both the tenant and landlord can submit a request for a special inspection. A citizen can also submit a request for a special inspection. We will then go out and inspect the unit.

With regard to this particular tenant, she stated that what will probably happen is that for failing to comply with HQS the tenant will be terminated. Both parties are given a copy of the inspection form at the time that the unit is inspected informing them that because of failure of the HQS inspection the tenant will be terminated.

She stated that she will get back with her on the \$421.27 deducted.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

- 4.0 Chairman Brailsford asked the Board if they had any questions or wished to pull out any item under the Consent Agenda. There were no questions or requests to pull out any item. Chairman Brailsford entertained a motion to approve  
Item 4.1: Resolution Renewing the Existing Minority Business Policy,  
Item 4.2: Resolution Renewing the Existing Family and Medical Leave, and  
Item 4.3: Resolution Renewing the Existing Procurement Policy.

Commissioner Isbell made a motion to approve Consent Agenda Items 4.1 through 4.4. Commissioner Barthelemy seconded the motion.

AYES: Commissioners Barthelemy, Isbell, and Chairman Brailsford.

NAYS: None

*The motion carried and all resolutions passed.*

Resolution numbers were assigned as follows:

Resolution 4.1 - 0701

Resolution 4.2 - 0702

Resolution 4.3 - 0703

## **5.0 REGULAR AGENDA**

### **5.1 Update on Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan – Mark Zachary**

Mark Zachary, Attorney, updated the Board on the status of the review of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan. In an earlier Board Meeting, it was discussed that Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan would be updated in its entirety. The review is about two-thirds done. He anticipates having a final plan ready to submit to the Board at the February Board Meeting. He noted that it is a lengthy process as the plan contains a number of different things involved it: the Code of Federal Regulations requirement; provision for and allowances for the local Authority to implement policies that are consistent with those HUD regulations and directives as well as any other policies and directives that the Authority wishes to implement that are consistent with the HUD regulations. They have a good base to work from in terms of the plan. Ms. Thompson, Richard Rolison (Housing Programs Coordinator) and he are going through the plan page by page and policy by policy discussing what the regulations say, the flexibility on the policy, and what is in the best interest of the Authority considering both previous input from landlords and tenants and what is known about what works best in Abilene.

Chairman Brailsford sat in on one of the meetings and confirmed the in depth being taken to review and update the plan. He states that he anticipates that it will take another day and a half to complete the review. Once the Board has reviewed the updated plan, a time will be set aside for landlord and tenant input. Ms. Thompson added that the plan format is very user friendly. Because the the plan contains the rules and regulations, it will be a very useful tool for staff training. Work has begun on the Annual and Five Year Plan. The rules revisions must be included in these plans. These plans will then submitted to HUD for approval. She noted that there are ongoing changes in HUD regulations. When the changes are received they will be brought to the Board for approval. Megan Santee (Legal) stated that the changes can be listed as Consent Agenda Items thus expediting the approval process as the foot work and the foundation regarding the change has already been done.. Ms. Thompson stated that one of the major changes concerns college students. In the past, these students could come on the program and their income not be counted. Now, if they are 18 or 19 years of age the income for both mother and father must be counted. She stated that citizenship rules are also changing.

## **5.2 Administrative Updates**

- **Yardi Software**

Ms. Thompson gave the status of the Yardi Software implementation/upgrade. Work has been done on the implementation for the last year. We are now in Phase II of the implementation plan. The software provider is located in San Diego, California. We also work directly with the City IT department and with the Housing staff. This is a tedious process as there are aspects to implement. The staff has already converted the participant's information and is working on those glitches. Work is being done with the City IT department on the PIC upgrades. PIC is HUD's Public Information Center where data concerning tenant's characteristics (i.e. number of people in the family, social security numbers) are input in to the system. She noted that HUD implemented a PIC upgrade. Yardi then had to be contacted to review the upgrade to determine if it can be implemented in the Yardi program. Yardi then must contact the City IT Department to see what will happen with the existing software implementation. During a past upgrade, all data was lost and had to be input again.

In Phase II Low Rent Public Housing, Accounting and Financial component, and Inspections. We will then be able to address direct Deposits. The direct deposit policy will be included in the Administrative Plan for the Board's review and approval. There is currently no date in place for completion.

She added that that staff is fully utilizing the software to work with Tenant files.

- **HUD Mandate: MTCS 95% Reporting Requirement**

Ms. Thompson explained that MTCS is the acronym for Multi-Tenant Characteristic Systems. HUD requires that on a monthly basis HUD Form 50058 is completed on every person that is leased. This form must be submitted to PIC to show our lease up. The form contains social security numbers. This form must be submitted 100% correct. If a PHA falls below 95% they are subject to sanctions. Housing Authorities across the nation has numerous problems. On September 30, 2006, all PHAs had to be at the 95% reporting rate or be sanctioned and subject to lose administrative fees if they were under the 95% rate to PIC. HUD extended the timeframe. The Abilene Housing Authority was at the 95% reporting rate as of the September 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. The Authority is currently at a 100% reporting rate. Mr. Rolison stated that Authority complied before September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Thompson stated that there are changes coming regarding PIC. The Nan McKay Company has a series of two hour audio trainings called "Lunch 'n Learn". She will arrange for staff to participate in these trainings. The Board members are invited to attend the sessions.

### **5.3 Report on Request for Proposal for Consultant on Independent or Internal Management of Housing Authority**

Megan Santee, Legal, stated that she and Ms. Thompson have been working on the Request for Proposal (RFP) and are now at a point where more direction is needed from the Board as far as what would like to be seen as far as preparation of the RFP. The final portion of the RFP will depend on what type of group, entity or organization the proposal is going to reach. During the meeting of she and Ms. Thompson they noted that clarification was need as to whether or not a just a proposal for a cost estimate was needed or a proposal to include both a cost estimate and implementation. If only a proposal for cost estimate is requested, it would reflect only one aspect. A proposal implementation would then be needed. A proposal including an overall cost estimate along with a plan of action and how the plan would be implemented would be more cost effective. All aspects of the proposal would not have to be accepted, only those chosen. Clarification is needed as to which direction to take before the proposal is brought to the Board. Options can also be included.

The proposal will need to be sent out statewide because most of the organizations or companies will not be in Abilene. Ms. Thompson added it has been so long ago that this type of action has occurred, they have been researching to find expertise to find a sample to utilize to move forward. Housing Authorities who have gone through this change will be contacted to determine what process they utilized and request samples of the RFPs utilized.

Ms. Isbell stated that she felt that it would be good in move forward with a proposal to include implementation. Chairman Brailsford and Commissioner Barthelemy agreed. Ms. Santee and Ms. Thompson will work to move forward to development the RFP to include both a cost estimate inclusive of a plan for implementation.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.