

MINUTES

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF ABILENE

Meeting of September 20, 2007, 9:30 a.m.

The Housing Authority of the City of Abilene, Texas, met in a Regular Session on September 20, 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: Tanya Smith Brice, Mary Jay Island and Dale Barthelemy.

Staff members present were: Ebony Bond, Programs Coordinator/Interim Director; Ed McRoy, Assistant Director, Planning and Development; Genette Edmond, Public Housing Manager; Tanya Johnson, Resident Services Coordinator; Stanley Smith, Legal Department, and Mary Ann Martell, Housing Secretary. Guests present were: Stephanie Baker, Brett Reynolds, and Julie Work.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brailsford called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1.0 Routine Announcements, Recognitions and Presentations

Ebony Bond, Programs Coordinator/Interim Director, introduced Julie Work, an Abilene Christian University student who is completing her internship of 150 hours at the Housing Authority. Her degree is in sociology with a minor in criminal justice and she is currently working in the accounting department, but she wants to work in all areas of housing. Stanley Smith from the Legal Department has been assigned to the Board and was also introduced.

2.0 Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held August 16, 2007

Chairman Brailsford called a motion to accept the minutes of the August 16, 2007, meeting, if there was not any discussion. Commissioner Smith Brice made a suggestion that since titles for people are used, it would be good for consistency to provide this detail for Ebony Bond, Programs Coordinator/Interim Director. This was noted. Commissioner Island made a motion to approve the minutes as printed for the August 16, 2007, Board meeting. Commissioner Barthelemy seconded the motion. The Board voted.

AYES: Commissioners Barthelemy, Smith Brice, Island, and Chairman Brailsford

NAYS: None

The motion carried.

3.0 Open discussion for Citizen General Comment and Resident/Landlord Input

There was no discussion since none were present.

4.0 CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 Monthly Status Reports

Chairman Brailsford asked for a motion to approve the Monthly Status Reports.

Commissioner Smith Brice asked to pull Agenda Item #4.1a. for discussion.

Commissioner Island made a motion to approve Agenda Items #4.1 b, c, and d.

Commissioner Smith Brice seconded the motion. The Board voted.

AYES: Commissioners Barthelemy, Smith Brice, Island, and Chairman Brailsford

NAYS: None

The motion carried.

Regarding Agenda Item #4.1 a. page four, Commissioner Smith Brice remarked that there were 60 total inspections with 21 failed inspections and 20 rechecks. She asked for clarity regarding the failed inspections, etc. Ebony Bond said that those were initial inspections along with annual inspections. Some of these initial rechecks could have been from July. The landlord has 30 days to repair any findings; therefore, some of the failed initial inspections from this report could be in September. With no further discussion, Commissioner Smith Brice made a motion to approve Agenda Item #4.1 a. as is in the report. Commissioner Island seconded the motion. The Board voted.

AYES: Commissioners Barthelemy, Smith Brice, Island, and Chairman Brailsford

NAYS: None

The motion carried.

5.0 REGULAR AGENDA

5.1 Update on status of RFQ regarding the acquisition of professional consultant Services by the Housing Authority for a feasibility/impact study evaluating the costs Benefits of the Housing Authority becoming a fully independent agency

Mr. Ed McRoy, Assistant Director of Planning and Development, reported that as of yesterday, 9/19/07, there have been a total of 23 requests for the RFQ, but no proposals as of yet. With that level of response, he felt confident that we should receive at least a dozen proposals before the October 14 deadline. He said the RFQ had been posted to the NAHRO website along with their written publication.

Commissioner Smith Brice asked what inquiries are being made from the agencies. At this point, the initial designated contact is the Housing Secretary who replied that they are asking only for a copy of the RFQ. A list of the different agencies will be compiled for the next Board meeting.

In addition, Commissioner Smith Brice asked what the procedure would be for reviewing the responses. Mr. McRoy answered that the Board will have that choice. Perhaps, he suggested the proposals could be scored and ranked in a certain order.

5.2 Discussion and update on the hiring process for the Housing Administrator Position

Ed McRoy told the Board that we have completed one round of interviews for the Housing Administrator position which was unsuccessful with the candidates that were selected by the interviewing committee. The second round has started and there have been several applications received by HR. One telephone interview has been conducted.

Commissioner Barthelemy wanted to know what was asked during the telephone interview. Mr. McRoy said a list of questions was developed with about 15-18 questions that was distributed to the Committee members. The City Manager ran the meetings and allowed each member to ask questions. Typical questions included: what is your management philosophy?; what are your strengths and your weaknesses?; who do you consider your customer?; what are some of your successes? The telephone interviews are used to screen the candidates and narrow them down. The in-person interviews are more detailed.

5.3 Discussion and approval for a temporary part-time maintenance worker and a permanent part-time maintenance worker for Public Housing

Ms. Bond informed the Board that Public Housing has four positions in Maintenance, however, one full-time worker left for another job so they are not fully staffed. With the recent irrigation, etc., the staff in Maintenance are backed up and working overtime. There is a real need for a part-time worker to help get the units ready for move-in and a part-time temporary/seasonal worker for lawn care, etc. Commissioner Barthelemy asked if the Housing Authority had filled the current vacant Maintenance position. Ebony Bond responded with no, but that it would be filled.

Commissioner Smith Brice inquired if a felony criminal record would prohibit a person from working for the City. Mr. McRoy replied that not automatically since other factors would be considered such as length of time since the crime, the nature of the crime and the position applied for, etc.

Ebony Bond informed the Board that we have had a few applicants apply, but she felt the low response could be perhaps due to the low pay which is posted at \$6.90. However, the new job listing will post the new pay. Mr. McRoy elaborated that the new pay plan includes a 3% raise for all City employees. However, for all positions excluding those at management level, minimum pay rates are being increased by 10%; therefore, if an employee's pay is below the new minimum rate, that employee will receive an additional increase in pay. The control point is being raised also.

Ebony Bond emphasized the need for a permanent part-time maintenance worker and a seasonal part-time maintenance worker. Commissioner Barthelemy who resides in one of the Public Housing sites commented on the exceptional job that maintenance staff does and that he has never been ashamed of bringing guests to his home. Other comments included how our units look great compared to other cities and the fact that ours have "curb appeal." Chairman Brailsford said if there is not any more discussion, he would entertain a motion. Commissioner Smith Brice made a motion to approve the hiring of a permanent part-time maintenance worker and a seasonal part-time maintenance worker for Public Housing. Commissioner Barthelemy seconded the motion. The Board voted.

AYES: Commissioners Barthelemy, Smith Brice, Island, and Chairman Brailsford
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

5.4 Discussion and approval for Public Housing to charge each tenant \$10 for lawn care with the exception of those tenants who are currently 62 years of age and older or disabled

Ebony Bond conveyed to the Board that currently at Public Housing some tenants are paying for lawn care, however, since there is an option, some choose not to pay for lawn care and are responsible for maintaining their lawns. This is resulting in inconsistencies since some tenants are not mowing in a timely manner and lawns don't look uniform, plus, it takes staff extra time to see which tenants are paying for lawn care, etc. Presently, Riveria tenants are being charged \$10 and other sites are charged \$15. This change would reduce the charge to tenants to \$10 per month or \$120 per year for every site.

Commissioner Smith Brice wanted to know what percentage of tenants pay for lawn care. Genette Edmond, Program Manager of Public Housing, replied that Deegan tenants are exempt due to age or disability. At Riveria, about 25% of the tenants pay the \$15; however, they are frequently late. She told the Board that a \$15 late fee is assessed and if not paid, eventually the tenant could be evicted.

Commissioner Barthelemy stated he felt \$10 per month for lawn care was quite reasonable. Commissioner Smith Brice asked then, in all essence, if the rent was going up \$10. Genette Edmond said letters would go out explaining the charge and late fees. Ebony Bond added that the letters would be positive, but they could not say that rent is going up \$10 due to HUD regulations, etc.

Chairman Brailsford called for a motion to approve the fee for lawn care. Commissioner Smith Brice made a motion to approve Public Housing to charge each tenant \$10 per month for lawn care with the exception of those tenants who are currently 62 years of age and older or disabled. Commissioner Barthelemy seconded the motion. The Board voted.

AYES: Commissioners Barthelemy, Smith Brice, Island, and Chairman Brailsford
NAYS: None

The motion carried.

6.0 Executive Session

The Board went into Executive Session at 10:26 a.m., regarding Gene Duke Builders vs. Abilene Housing Authority City of Abilene. The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:33 a.m., with no action taken.

7.0 Adjournment

Commissioner Barthelemy made a motion to adjourn the Board meeting. This was seconded by Commissioner Smith Brice. The Board adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

These minutes of the Housing Authority City of Abilene Board of Commissioners meeting held on 9/20/07, respectfully submitted and approved on October 18, 2007.

V.E. Brailsford
Chairman, Board of Commissioners

10/18/2007
Date

Dale Barthelemy
Executive Secretary, Board of Commissioners

10/18/2007
Date