

Board Meeting Minutes
July 16, 2024
12:00 p.m.

The Board of Commissioners Meeting for the City of Douglas Housing Authority was held at the Administration Office, 937 Thrash Circle, on the 16th day of July 2024, at 12:03 p.m.

Chairman J.L. Veal called the meeting to order and Vice-Chairman Irene Murray gave the invocation. Those present and absent were as follows:

Present

J.L. Veal – Chairman	Toni Sawyer - DHA Attorney
Irene Murray – Vice Chairman	Clara Graham – Executive Director
Ernestine Thomas Clark – Commissioner	Sandra Gore – Director of Operations
Rosemary Street Nixon – Commissioner	
LiNetha Munford - Commissioner	

Absent

None

Agenda & Minutes

Chairman J.L. Veal stated he would like to entertain a motion to approve the July 16, 2024 Agenda. Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark made the motion to approve the July 16, 2024 agenda and Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon seconded the motion. Ayes carried. Chairman J.L. Veal asked for a motion to approve the May 21, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon made the motion to approve the May 21, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes and Commissioner LiNetha Munford seconded the motion. Ayes carried with no questions raised.

Pending Issues

Chairman J.L. Veal stated next is the pending issues and there are no pending issues to discuss.

Legal Issues

Chairman J.L. Veal stated legal issues are next and DHA Attorney, Toni Sawyer, stated the Housing Authority needs to check our reserves to make sure we have 6 months in reserves. Ms. Graham stated we have more than 6 months probably about 9 months. HUD is looking at the reserves of the Housing Authority so they can cut funding for next year. HUD is looking at new Inspire Inspections to cut funding. HUD is doing different things to push Housing Authorities to privatize. HUD is pushing RAD because they are a separate entity than HUD. RAD has separate cooperations that purchase/lease projects from the Housing Authority so these private cooperations can give bonds to renovate the projects. Since these private cooperations now own these projects HUD no longer gives the Housing Authority any funding. Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon asked Ms. Graham what is something we can do. Ms. Graham stated Community Wide we are going to cut down trees and overgrown bushes. Ms. Graham stated that cutting down trees are expensive and you can see when you come to the Administration Office off McDonald Road we have already cut down some big trees at both entrances. We have some sidewalks to repair that are buckling and concrete is expensive. With the Inspire Inspections we have some smoke alarms that are too close to the AC vents so Mickey is working on the amount

of these that have to be moved. We have some receptacles that are 1 prong that need to be 2 prongs. I am installing black decorative fences, landscaping in some areas, and remodeling the Bryan Circle Center to make a game room and art room. These are some of the things I am working on to spend some money.

Vice Chairman Irene Murray asked if we were going to do anything with Roundtree Center for the Seniors. Vice Chairman Irene Murray stated we have some Seniors who are not ready for the Senior Center downtown but they like to read, get together, play games and other activities. Somebody might have to be there to get paid to open the center for the seniors. Like the city has somebody over the Recreation Center. Ms. Graham stated we have a center on Phillips where we have activities for the elderly residents but due to Covid and the distancing Carolyn has been holding some activities at Roundtree. We just had a Western Cookout for our senior residents. Vice Chairman Irene Murray stated when the city had the Roundtree Center and had liability insurance it was open for the children and the seniors every day. Ms. Graham stated that HUD discontinued this. Ms. Graham stated the Housing Authority can collaborate with an agency to have an activity at the Roundtree Center maybe on Tuesday and Thursday but it must have some of our residents involved in the activity and housing would have to work with the agency. Housing cannot let someone have the Roundtree Center for free and our residents not be a part of the activities. HUD had us get the Roundtree Center back because the city was subleasing the center for birthdays, family reunions, etc. and renting it for free from housing so HUD discontinued this because the city would not pay any rent.

Ms. Graham stated we can collaborate with an agency or group because First Baptist is having an activity on Wednesdays at the Roundtree Center for the youth. Vice Chairman Irene Murray stated when you collaborate they have to pay and Ms. Graham stated that the activity has to involve housing and housing residents.

Director of Operations

Sandra Gore presented the following information to the Board:

- Leasing Report as of July 11, 2024. DHA had 0 move-in(s), 0 make ready, 0 move-outs and our occupancy percentage is 99%. DHA has 11 move-in(s) year-to-date and 10 move-out(s) year-to-date.
- Management Report for June 27, 2024. DHA's total units for Authority 11, 12, & 13 are 381, Total Collections for Authority 11, 12, & 13 are \$84,546.40 and Total Security Deposits for Authority 11, 12, & 13 are \$98,555.00.
- Charge-offs for the month of April 2024 & May 2024 total \$951.57. Chairman J.L. Veal asked for a motion to approve the Charge-offs. Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark made the motion to approve the Charge-offs and Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon seconded the motion. Ayes carried. Resolution # 24-16-07-658.

Executive Director

Executive Director, Clara Graham, stated the first item is the Cafeteria Plan for July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. Ms. Graham stated the Cafeteria Plan goes along with our Insurance Policy that offers all employees insurance that are eligible. Chairman J.L. Veal asked for a motion and second to approve the Cafeteria Plan for July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025. Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon made the motion to approve the Cafeteria Plan for July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024 and Vice-Chairman Irene Murray seconded the motion. Ayes carried. Resolution #24-16-07-659.

Executive Director, Clara Graham, stated that the Housing Authority has a new Security Officer and it is Tameka Williams, wife of Corey Williams that was employed with the Housing Authority. Security Officer Tameka Williams started to work last week. She will be working the night shift from 5 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Ms. Graham stated she has a personnel issue that she wants to bring to the Commissioners attention before the matter spreads through other employees so I want to nip it in the bud before it gets out of hand. The problem is that an employee takes their 40 hours of Vacation and they are to return to work on the following work day instead of returning to work on the following work day they are calling in sick to use their Sick Leave to get an extra day. When this happened the first time I did not think anything about it but another employee in the same department has done the same thing. I think this is abusing the Sick Leave. I think the policy should be amended to say if you take your 40 hours Vacation you are to come back to work the following work day and if you call in that day it will be deducted from any Vacation Time you have left or if the employee has no vacation left the employee will not receive any pay for that day. I feel like the two employees that done this got back late and did not want to come in so they called in sick. I think this will come up again with other employees. Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon asked Ms. Graham if she requires the employee to bring in a doctor's excuse if they call in sick. Ms. Graham stated yes if an employee is out three days sick they have to bring in a doctors excuse. DHA Attorney, Toni Sawyer, stated that most businesses have in place that employees cannot use Sick Leave the work day before Vacation Leave and cannot use Sick Leave the work day after Vacation Leave without a doctor's excuse. Ms. Sawyer stated the same thing goes for Holiday Pay and Ms. Graham stated we have that in place for Holiday Pay. After much discussion, Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon made the motion that employees cannot use Sick Leave the work day before Vacation Leave and cannot use Sick Leave the work day after Vacation Leave without a doctor's excuse and if the employee does not bring in a doctor's excuse the employees day will be unpaid leave. Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark seconded the motion. Ayes carried with Resolution # 24-16-07-660.

Ms. Graham stated the next item is the Juneteenth Holiday. In our Personnel Policy we put Juneteenth is the third Monday in June and it is not because it rotates. Ms. Graham stated we need to put Juneteenth Holiday because it is June 19th of every year. DHA Attorney, Toni Sawyer, stated we need to change the date to Juneteenth Holiday. Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon made the motion to change the date to Juneteenth Holiday and Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark seconded the motion. Ayes carried with Resolution # 24-16-07-661.

Ms. Graham stated the next item is the Resident Commissioner Criteria & Interview Questions. Our Attorney advised us in the last meeting we need to go ahead and fill the Resident Commissioner Position. This has been a hard position to fill. The Resident Commissioner Criteria is on the last page. We had one person to apply for the position but is not eligible because of not having a High School Diploma or GED. DHA Attorney, Toni Sawyer, stated one of the qualifications for the Resident Commissioner is to have a High School Diploma or GED. As a Board, you all can wave this requirement one time to fill this seat because it has been open for six to seven months and you had only 1 applicant to apply. Vice Chairman Irene Murray asked Ms. Graham if she knows this person. Ms. Graham stated she is a tenant, she pays rent on-time, and is not a lease violator but I cannot say how the applicant would operate on the Board. Ms. Sawyer stated it is required by Georgia law that the Board has a Resident Commissioner and the minutes can read that you had one applicant after six or seven months and the Board is waving this requirement one time to meet the Georgia Law. After some discussion, Vice Chairman Irene Murray made the motion to wave the High School Diploma/GED requirement this one time to meet Georgia Law requiring the Board to have a Resident Commissioner and Commissioner LiNetha Munford seconded the motion. Ayes carried with Resolution # 24-16-07-662.

Ms. Graham stated her last item is the NAHRO Conference September 26 -28, 2024 at the Marriott Orlando World Center Hotel in Orlando, Florida. Commissioners asked what dates were the GAHRA Annual Conference. The GAHRA Annual Conference is September 15-17, 2024. Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon asked when do we need to let you know if we will be attending the NAHRO Conference and Ms. Graham stated she would send the Commissioners the link to see what time the classes start so you all can make your decision about attending.

Plan Agenda

Chairman J.L. Veal stated the next item is to plan the agenda for the September 14, 2024 Board Meeting. Ms. Graham stated it will need to be cancelled or rescheduled due to the GAHRA Annual Conference. Chairman J.L. Veal asked for discussion. After some discussion, Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon made the motion to cancel the September 14, 2024 Board Meeting to attend the GAHRA Annual Conference and Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark seconded the motion. Ayes carried with Resolution #24-16-07-663.

General Discussion

Chairman J.L. Veal asked about our old office building by City Hall. Ms. Graham stated that the Board had approved for Ms. Graham to implement a business at that location but due to certain circumstances that occurred I never implemented the business. If you all would like for me to advertise it for rent I will. Chairman J.L. Veal stated he hates for it to sit there. DHA Attorney, Toni Sawyer, stated as long as we owned the building we are good. If you decide to sell the building we must go through HUD because there is a process to go through. We would have to get HUD's approval because the funding came from HUD. Ms. Graham stated the funds would go back to HUD.

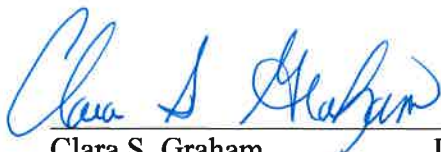
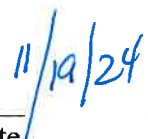
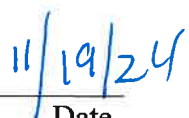
Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark stated she has a question and maybe a suggestion if the question is not answered. Do we have a policy in place where we can enforce our residents to

move their trash containers to the back of their apartments. Ms. Graham stated we have a policy. We have sent out flyers informing the residents about this and they will do it for a little while and then stop. We have a Yard Policy and a Trash Container Policy. Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark stated she thought we did but only two people in her area put them in back her and her neighbor. We constant send out flyers and tell them. We have charged tenants on Gaskin that have missed pulling out their containers on trash pick-up day and the trash is everywhere. The tenant is charged \$40 and if she doesn't mind paying then we don't mind charging. Trash blows everywhere and Ms. Graham stated that Bussey picks up so much trash. Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark stated the trash containers are ragged and the lids are this way and that way. Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon stated they can call for another trash container. Commissioner Ernestine Thomas Clark stated she called and they have not picked up her old trash container yet and she called again and was told they have seven more days before they will come. DHA Attorney, Toni Sawyer, stated you have to go to your City Council Meeting.

Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon stated on Baker Highway you can leave your trash container out there because they have missed for one month because the city is working on sidewalks. You have to leave the trash container out there because they might come and dump it and they might not since they are working on the sidewalks. This is why they are left out on Baker Highway for now.

Adjourn

Chairman J.L. Veal asked for a motion to adjourn the Board Meeting. Vice Chairman Irene Murray made the motion to adjourn the Board Meeting and Commissioner Rosemary Street Nixon seconded the motion to adjourn. Ayes carried with the Board Meeting adjourning at 12:52 p.m.

			
Clara S. Graham	Date	J.L. Veal/Irene Murray	Date
Secretary		Chairman/Vice-Chairman	