

A regular meeting of Providence Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners will be held as follows:

Thursday, August 27th at 5:30pm

Location: Video and conference call

PURSUANT TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 20-63 THE HOUSING AUTHORITY WILL CONDUCT ALL OF THIS MEETING BY TELEPHONIC AND ELECTRONIC MEANS DUE TO COVID-19.

VIDEO Conference Access: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88946301162>

(tablet or smartphone may also require downloading free Zoom app.)

PHONE ACCESS Dial 888-788-0099, and enter meeting code 889-4630-1162

Anyone having problems accessing the meeting can contact Ainsley Cantoral at 401-419-5121 during the meeting for assistance in being connected.

MEETING AGENDA

- **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**
- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES from July 23, 2020 (Vote)**
- **PUBLIC/RESIDENT COMMENTS**
- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** on Agency developments since July 23, 2020 including COVID-19 testing, visit from HUD, meetings with state and community partners, employee return to work phases, HUD CARES Act funding announcement, Food Task Force efforts and audit update.
- **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**
 - a. **Resident Services Committee Report** on resident services' program and funding updates since July 23, 2020 and resident services adaptations during COVID-19 emergency. (Discussion)
 - b. **Capital Improvements Committee Report** on capital improvements and project updates since July 23, 2020. (Discussion)
 - c. **Finance Committee Report** on the finance and budgeting updates since July 23, 2020. (Discussion)
- **CONTRACT APPROVAL:** Company: Energy One for HVAC system work related to Elevator Projects at Kilmartin Plaza, Dexter Manor and Hartford Park Tower for total cost of \$127,500. Project funded by Capital Fund Program. (Vote)
- **PRESENTATION: PHARI Members Joint Solar Net Metering Procurement**, by Alexey Cherniack, Principal Analyst for Energy Markets and Sustainability, SourceOne. (Discussion)
- **EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5 (a) (1): Closed to discuss performance of Executive Director and all senior staff. (Discussion and possibleVote)
- **ADJOURN (Vote)**

Agenda posted on August 25, 2020. Documents referenced in this agenda will be posted before 5:30pm on Tuesday, August 25th at www.provhousing.org.



**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING:
Thursday, July 25, 2020; 5:30 p.m.**

Conference Call

Phone Access Dial 888-788-0099

Code 861-4972-2196

In accordance with Executive Order 20-46, the meeting was held entirely by video and telephone conference call. Members and anyone else speaking identified themselves when speaking.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nicolas Retsinas called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Nicolas Retsinas
Mary Kay Harris
Vivian Medina
Jessica Cigna
Lonzie Doggett
Rochelle Lee
Roger Giraud
Lawrence D'Alfonso
Thomas Ryan

Absent:

John Iglizzi
Eddie Peguero

Nine members were present, constituting a quorum to conduct business.

Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Retsinas called for a motion to accept and approve the minutes of the June 25, 2020 meeting. A motion was made by Commissioner Lee and was seconded by Commissioner Medina. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Resident Comments:

None

Chairman's Report:

Chairman Retsinas elected to withhold his remarks & turn over to Executive Director.

Executive Director Report:

Director Sanzaro updated the Board on the following items:

1. HUD COUNSELING GRANT & HUD HIGHLIGHT:

- a) on Monday, June 29th, Nancy Smith-Greer, the Director of the Rhode Island HUD office, organized a congratulatory video call in conjunction with Home Ownership Month with Regional Administrator, David Tille with Julie Piccolo and Nicole Morillo for the \$15,425 Housing Counseling grant the PHA was awarded.
- b) Nicole shared success metrics for the HUD Housing Counseling Funds year-to-date through April 2020. The PHA has been able to serve: 109 YTD households, 80 YTD completed financial workshops, 32 YTD completed Pre-purchase home buyers' workshops, 4 YTD households purchased a home.

2. HFHI, JACK REED AND JULIAN CASTRO:

- a) Recently, Habitat for Humanity International began hosting a series of conversations about housing, called +YOU Series which brings together experts from across the US and around the world to discuss COVID-19's intersection and impacts on housing.
 - b) The PHA was invited to participate in a series panel discussion that was streamed live on YouTube called: a discussion with Senator Jack Reed on housing stability during the pandemic. Special Guest for this panel were Habitat's CEO, Jonathan Reckford, Senator Jack Reed, former HUD Secretary Julian Castro, Melissa Sanzaro and an HFH homeowner Catherine Chabot.
 - c) The PHA was honored to talk about the appreciation for Senator Reeds consistent and passionate support and advocacy for housing, but especially public housing also talked about his efforts with Lead and FSS. The PHA told the recent story shared with the board about the highest FSS Escrow check that was distributed to our Chad Brown Resident, Candia Cooper, a mother of 4.
- 3. LEASED HOUSING SHORT FALL AMOUNT, SET ASIDE & CARES ACT FUNDING:**
- a) Although the PHA was put into an anticipated shortfall situation, the amount is not substantial (about \$314K, or 1.6% of HAP spending). Enter Number/Percentage. The PHA team and the HUD contact believes that implementing the action plan components and the expected additional funding expected from HUD.
 - b) Funds are anticipated in the following ways:
 - Leased Housing and Finance applied for Shortfall, Set-Aside and Special Fees prior to the July 15, 2020 deadline. The amount is not determined by the PHA. Funds are usually disbursed in late August - October.
 - Leased Housing and Finance applied for Shortfall, Set-Aside and Special Fees prior to the July 15, 2020 deadline. The amount is not determined by the PHA. Funds are usually disbursed in late August - October.
- 4. HUD HAPPENINGS, RESOURCES & GUIDANCE:**
- a) On July 7, 2020 The PHA applied to HUD in participating the NSPIRE (National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate) demonstration.
 - b) During the strategic planning process, the PHA wanted to be more proactive with inspections to be better prepared for REAC or UPCS inspections, engage the residents and improve scores. Also using the preemptive inspections across the developments to be more proactive vs reactive with the work orders to be more responsive to customers.
 - c) Management heard about HUD's NSPIRE Demonstrations. NSPIRE is where HUD intends to overhaul the Department's 20-year-old inspection process to ensure taxpayer-supported housing is safe and habitable for residents by inviting Housing Authorities to participate in a pilot. Through the demonstration, HUD wants to test the adjustments to standards, protocols and process prior to nationwide implementation and is seeking participation from 4,500 properties which will be selected from a nationwide pool of public housing Authorities.
- 5. BENEFITS:**
- Director Sanzaro reviewed the benefits of joining NSPIRE demonstration.
- 6. SECOND HUD WAIVER NOTICE PIH 2020-13 (HA), REV-1:**
- a) A second PIH Waiver and alternative requirements notice was issued: July 2, 2020 and supersedes: Notice PIH 2020-05.
 - b) The PIH waivers which were released in April allowed housing authorities some flexibilities or provided alternative requirements for HUD regulated processes and deadlines in response to COVID-19.
 - c) The new waiver includes a few additional provisions and include extensions to end dates of December 31st as many of the previous deadlines were July 31st and October 31st.
 - d) HUD understands that COVID is here for the long term
 - e) Most important about the new waiver is that we do not have to self-inspect units in the calendar year of 2020
 - f) The PHA must post waivers and notify tenants as well.

7. HUD/RHODE ISLAND'S EVICTION MORATORIUM –PHA is to release a new HOUSING PRESERVATION PROGRAM:

- a) The HUD Cares Act that has instituted an eviction moratorium which ended on July 24, 2020.
- b) Although the PHA already established a COVID Response Repayment Agreement program where property management worked with our legal team and halted all evictions that were to take place before and during COVID for non-payment.
- c) Since then the State of RI released the Safe Harbor program for renters and landlords. Also, Boston Housing Authority released an article where they have halted all evictions for non-payment until December 31st.
- d) The PHA team huddled and came up with a more enhanced program called the PHA's Housing Preservation Program which is in development.
- e) The PHA will establish a Housing Prevention team of experts comprised employees who are verse in both public housing and housing choice voucher programs. This team will be the centralized repository to work with residents of public housing, participants and landlords of Section 8 to assist to preserve their housing.
- f) This program will involve a very well tracked system which will be high-touch service for those who have experienced loss of work/income and are unable to pay their rent since March 1st. The PHA will assist them to apply for the Safe Harbor funds and be referred to financial counseling.
- g) For Section 8, landlords will receive notice of this program as landlords can also apply for RI safe harbor funding.

8. PARTNER AND COLLABORATIONS UPDATES:

- a) The PHA's Office of Strategy & Development department is working closely with the Census 2020 organization to institute safe and innovative ways to make sure residents count. Since the typical methods in acquiring community involvement is to door knock, the PHA thought to continue efforts to prevent the spread of the virus by sharing safe delivery model with outside stations & is under development.
- b) The PHA is collaborating with Providence Boys&Girls Club as they are opening two sites on August 1st and another one in September with additional funding they have received. They will be recruiting and focusing on PHA families who need care. New funding for BGC will include a licensed social worker. The Resident Services Department and BGC are brainstorming a new approach with data collection.
- c) The PHA connected with the Office of Health Equity Institute, Office of Race, Equity and Inclusion of the Department of Health to discuss the importance of testing.
- d) The PHA provided HUD, Department of Health and PHARI the same presentation to push the importance of testing in our communities now and in the fall. The PHA offered expertise, consultation and assistance to any Housing Authority who had a problem/hot spot.

9. TESTING UPDATE:

- a) The PHA and Lifespan Office of Community Health teams successfully completed three additional testing events at the senior housing buildings.
- b) Kilmartin Plaza residents were offered testing on July 9th where the teams tested 78 residents in a building with 106 units and 120 residents. The participation rate: 70%. Lifespan shared that there were 0 positive cases.
- c) Sunset Village, where 7 out of 26 residents were tested. The participation rate: 27%.
- d) Of the 131 Hartford Park Tower residents tested, 49 residents and 6 employees tested showing a participation rate: 37%.
- e) The PHA tested 406 residents & 14 employees for COVID-19 to date.
- f) Out of the five buildings in total, the average participation rate was 50%. The PHA's smallest building, Sunset Village had the lowest participation rate citing that they preferred privacy and had their own doctors in many cases.
- g) The PHA has started tracking the testing data including operational approaches for various testing approaches and trends. The PHA would like to be a model and expert in this area.

- h) The PHA has scheduled testing for all the remaining high-rises including a retesting at Carroll Tower by end of August.

10. NET METERING:

- a) The PHA team has researched and negotiated a draft Solar Net Metering Credits Agreement involving a Solar Developer and many PHARI that satisfies four components of the Strategic Plan.
- b) The estimated financial benefit of the agreement to the PHA is about \$8.2 million over 20 years, after the 50% of the financial benefit is captured by HUD. The savings will accrue in credits on the electricity bills based on the solar power produced by the new projects that the PHA and other PHARI members serve as sponsors for. There was no objection among any of the 11 PHARI members participating in this collaboration to the choice of the vendor that offered the best financial terms.
- c) Substantial due diligence has been conducted a Request for Proposal was issued, the top contenders were vetted, contract terms favorable to are being negotiated.
- d) The PHA's Strategic Plan Goal #3 are being met through the net metering accomplishments which are:
- Cultivate, enhance and evaluate strategic partnerships
 - Measure the impact of partnerships
 - Support environmental sustainability and conservation
 - Optimize PHA's financial performance.

11. PHA'S PHASE 3 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN:

- a) The focus on testing was one focus of this phase.
- b) In the technology and operations, the PHA successfully acquired an online rent payment system. The team is currently ranking electronic signature system and released its Cyber Security Request for Proposal.
- c) The PHA's thermal temperature kiosks are on route.
- d) The PHA's call max or mass communications system has been working well and is effective way to connect with residents.
- e) The Leased Housing Emergency Outreach efforts resulted in a very high touch rate for Section 8 participants.
- f) The Food Program is growing and the PHA is modeling the Safe Service Delivery model for other programs.
- g) Beautification projects are underway and the PHA's project managers are working with vendors & working in the high-rises to safely continue their work.
- h) The most complex component of Phase 3 is still underway, and the main component is the return to work. There are two mini returns scheduled affecting approximately 65 employees scheduled for July 20th and August 3rd.

12. SECURITY ISSUES:

- a) The PHA Director summarizes various security issues and PHA responses in both high-rises and family developments.

13. PHASE 3 PLANNING:

- a) Reviewed the latest progress on Phase 3 Emergency operations plan at length.

Capital Improvements Sub-Committee:

Commissioner D'Alfonso provided the following summary of Capital Improvements Projects:

- The new tot lot at Hartford Park is 100% complete; this was funded through CDBG and CFP funds.
- A bid package is currently advertised to install a young adult fitness park at Chad Brown; this is funded with a \$33,000 check presented by Councilman Narducci, CDGB and CFP funds.
- Construction to vinyl side 4 bldgs. at Hartford and 6 duplexes at Scattered Sites is in progress.
- The Authority has procured a roof consultant to assess the roof conditions all bldgs. at Chad and Hartford; a full report was received. All the roofs on the Chad Brown side and

Sunset Village need to be replaced; roofs on the Admiral Terrace side and Hartford have 2-3 years left before replacement.

- Further information will be provided in the Monthly Management Report.

Resident Services Sub-Committee:

Commissioner Cigna reported on the following updates relating to Resident Services:

- The PHA was been selected for two grants: United Way's Rhode Island Recovers grant and an AARP grant for a gardening project. Concerning the United Way grant, in making funding decisions, United Way focused on funding agencies that had experienced a major budget impact by Covid-19. The PHA received a grant of \$2,000 from the Rotary Foundation of Providence that will be used to provide Summer Youth Employment Program participants with tablets at the end of the program.
- Food box distribution, in collaboration with the Food Bank of Rhode Island, has provided 2,475 food boxes since the beginning of the pandemic. The new partnership with Family Service of Rhode Island and its Be Safe Plus program is in place and the program is distributing fresh foods and cleaning supplies to elderly and disabled residents at high rises. In addition, the PHA has a new partnership with an organization that serves the Spanish-speaking community. When new partners approach PHA, the Food Task Force examines their safe delivery procedures to ensure they meet PHA safety standards.
- The City-funded Summer Youth Employment Program has begun with 17 youth participating, 12 of whom are PHA residents and three are youth returning to the program after having participated last year. This year's program, due to COVID-19 precautions, is not a work-based experience, but rather a remote learning program conducted 15 hours each week. The program is focusing on developing strengths, increasing leadership skills, developing soft skills, use of technology, communication skills, developing comfort presenting oneself remotely, and offering opportunities for youth to explore careers.

Budget & Finance Sub-Committee:

Commissioner Giraud updated the board on the following:

Financial Overview

- AMPS: @ June 30 bottom line reflects a YTD operating surplus of \$3,668,222
- COCC: showing an operating surplus of \$29,766
- Section 8 Admin: showing an operating surplus of approximately \$582,306
- Section 8 HAP: has booked \$34,790 as overspent for 2020 YTD.

New Funding Sources Related to COVID 19

- \$75,000 Grant through Strategy and Development to fund food distribution during the crisis
- \$2.54 M CARES Act for Operating Funds
- \$513,800 CARES Act for Section 8 Administrative Fees
- \$34,000 CDBG for food distribution

Contract Updates

- Delta Mechanical – Fire Protection System @ Hartford Tower – 335 Hartford Ave - \$1,653,900. Funding Source is the 2017 Bond Proceeds. **Payments processed: \$1,537,289.99 to date**
- Otis Elevator – Elevator Modernization @ Kilmartin Plaza. Funding Source is Bond. Contract total: \$485,000 plus Change Order \$120,025.25 = \$605,025.25. **Payments processed: \$00.00 total to date**
- Otis Elevator – Elevator Modernization @ Dexter Manor. Funding Source is Bond. Contract total: \$831,000 **Payments processed: \$00.00 total to date**
- Ahlborg Construction- HP Exterior Renovations - Funding Source CFP 50118. Contract total is \$339,000. **Payments processed: \$00.00 total to date**
- Martone Construction – Scattered Sites Exterior Renovations – Funding Source CFP 50118. Contract total is \$364,570. **Payments processed: \$00.00 total to date**

- Focus Technology – Managed IT Services – Funding Source is OPS/COCC. Contract total is \$143,964. **Payments processed: \$35991.00 total to date**
- Sole Source Construction – Scattered Sites Porch Rebuilt @ 3 Duplexes. Funding source is CFP 50118. Contract total is \$144,400. Change order for \$72,800. New Contract total is \$217,200. **Payments processed: \$00.00 total to date**
- NES Solutions Security- Additional Security for High Rises due to COVID. Contract total is for \$202,800. Funding source is Ops. Payments processed: **Payments processed: \$172,139.13 total to date**
- PuroClean – COVID related cleaning of high touch common areas in high rises. Funding Source is Ops. Contract total is for \$357,600. **Payments processed: \$202,800 total to date**
- Commercial Roofing - Remove and Replace Roof Hartford Park Tower. Funding Source is CFP 50118. Contract total is \$523,000. **Payments processed: \$00.00 total to date**

Extension of Puroclean contract from Jul 31 to Sept 30, 2020 -cost of \$158,400:

Status; Commissioner Giraud made a motion and Commissioner Lee seconded the motion.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Doggett, Medina, Lee, Giraud, Harris, D'Alfonso (9)

Votes opposed: none

Extension of NES Security contract Jul 31 to Sept 30, 2020 - cost of \$93,600:

Status; Commissioner Giraud made a motion and Commissioner D'Alfonso seconded the motion.

Votes in favor: Chairman Retsinas, Vice Chairman Ryan, Commissioner Cigna, Doggett, Medina, Lee, Giraud, Harris, D'Alfonso (9)

Votes opposed: none

PRESENTATION: PHA's New WIOA Youth Workforce Development Program:

Presented by Julie Piccola, Director of Resident Services and Nicole Morillo, JPP/Operations Manager.

PRESENTATION: Worker's Compensation Insurance Update:

Presented by Kimberly Dawley, Director of Human Resources and Lindsay Francoeur, Human Resource Specialist/Risk Management Coordinator.

Executive Session:

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to enter a private Executive Session. The motion was made by Vice Chairman Ryan and seconded by Commissioner Lee. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to return to open meeting. The motion was made by Commissioner Cigna and seconded by Commissioner Lee. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Vice Chairman Ryan made a motion to seal the minutes from the Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lee. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Lee made a motion that the meeting be adjourned at 7:07pm, seconded by Commissioner Cigna. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Minutes Submitted and Approved By:

Taisha Capo
Recording Secretary

Melissa Sanzaro
Executive Director

DRAFT