

External Notes, Boston Housing Authority Resident Advisory Board (BHA RAB) Meeting of November 10, 2022

Minutes from prior meeting approved.

1/ State and Federal Annual PHA Plans: John Kane from BHA noted that RAB members should have gotten a thick packet with a lot of items, but there were still updates and tweaks coming out which BHA will forward to the RAB during the comment period. The comment period is from Nov. 1-Dec. 15th, and there will be public hearings on Zoom on Dec. 12th at 11 and 6 (people need to register to be part of those hearings). People can comment by email, by a letter, or by speaking at one of the public hearings. RAB members are encouraged to volunteer to be at the public hearing and talk about the RAB's role. The State plan includes a number of notes about the plan and public hearing, and pieces on Capital, Maintenance, Operations, Performance Management Review and responses, polices and waivers, and tenant satisfaction surveys. BHA also provided additional remarks on the capital improvement plan. On the Federal side, there are the things the RAB has gotten very used to over time, the HUD template (relatively short), the Supplement (about 90 pages), the Progress Report that lays out big 5-year goals and then what BHA is doing to meet those goals, the Resident Participation Policy (RPP), which will be presented on next month, a report on how BHA is doing on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing goals & objectives (not a HUD requirement yet, and Bob Terrell will report on this next month), the Capital Plan (which Randi Holland reported on last month), and pieces that BHA staff will present on later in the meeting (Administrative Plan, ACOP, RAD Attachment). One member noted that while he had gotten updated info from Randi Holland about spending in prior years, he still couldn't get a good answer to the plan on intercoms at his site.

2/ State Capital Improvement Plan: Brian Standiford of BHA presented the proposed 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan--this hadn't gotten out to the RAB yet (it was emailed out during the call, but will have to be followed up with hard copies), and shared the screen. This included additional money that DHCD had made available--normally BHA's allotment is about \$3.2 million/year, but DHCD had authorized additional American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, either for the BHA to use as it saw fit, or for particularly work directed by DHCD. Brian also said that surveys had been completed which are helpful in identifying costs of repairs versus replacement over the next 10 years--this can then inform what work should be slated for which developments. Asha *** gave a description of the more extensive work being done at Monsignor

Powers (L Street) based on DHCD funding, including ADA compliance, HVAC, lighting, etc.

3/ Proposed Changes in Section 8 Administrative Plan and Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP): David Gleich of BHA reported on a number of proposed changes to the BHA's Section 8 Administrative Plan and to the Public Housing ACOP. Super Priority would be changed so that public housing tenants could also participate in the Section 8 homeownership option, that City-funded voucher participants could be shifted to federal assistance if there was a subsidy shortfall, and vouchers could be offered if a public housing tenant with a disability couldn't get an appropriate accommodation without it. The City is getting ARPA funds to help with homeownership and BHA is helping to support this with Section 8 changes. The working preference will be clarified. BHA has been working with a group called Justice 4 Housing on CORI changes, so they match state law changes to limit the look back period to 3 years for misdemeanors and 7 years for felonies, and juvenile records will not be reviewed. Medical deductions will refer to a helpful IRS publication. Questions came up about sex offenders and about those with fairly petty offenses (simple marijuana possession). David said that federal law bars life-time registered sex offenders regardless of when that occurred, and BHA will still look at that. For petty offenses within the look back period, BHA will always consider mitigating factors to give people a chance. There was not sufficient time to go through everything (ACOP changes would be similar on CORI) and several people asked to have a further conversation/workshop with him. David said it would be best to do this before the PHA Plan comment period was over. Lueteshia Raymond of BHA said that she would arrange for an optional session with David for people to discuss any of this further.

4/ Updates on Redevelopment, Related Annual Plan Pieces, and Mary Ellen McCormack Disposition: Joe Bamberg of BHA said he would address two things: (a) what HUD calls "repositioning", which can involve either redevelopment of public housing or shifts to new subsidy; and (b) a draft demolition/dispositin application for Mary Ellen McCormack (Amy Tran emailed the latter to the Board shortly before the call, and hard copies will get out). Joe noted that in Section 15 of the Supplement, BHA was adding language about exploring use of Faircloth authority, which would allow it to develop new affordable housing. Section 16 includes in demo/dispo for the balance of Hailey (and BHA is completing surveys and thinking about how to utilize \$50 million from the City, in conjunction with a demo/dispo proposal, to address

capital needs directly by BHA in the part not redeveloped through the public/private partnership. General Warren will be added to this list. The RAD attachment is including Orchard Gardens for a possible RAD/Section 8 conversion, similar to the one underway at Mission Main (which BHA hopes to complete by year end). Joe noted that the RAD Attachment also shows the Capital Funds currently received for a site—this is because BHA will no longer get Capital Funds after a RAD conversion, but it is wrapped into the RAD budget. Mac McCreight from GBLS noted that the General Warran piece was not yet in the PHA Plan paperwork; Joe acknowledged this was a fairly recent development, and updated information will be forwarded.

On McCormack, Joe said BHA staff would be happy to respond to questions as people digest what was sent out. The site has 1016 units, and is BHA's oldest. BHA's #1 priority is to replace all of the public housing units with deeply affordable Section 8 tenant protection voucher units project-based into the site. While additional market units will be built on the site, BHA and the City are continuing a discussion about to what extent there could also be housing at a middle tier. Mac asked what the time frame was for people to send any comments, etc. On the proposal. Joe said BHA is still gathering some pieces—it would be good to get responses in 30 days, but also understand more time could be needed. In addition, once it gets to HUD, it will likely take HUD a while to act, and BHA can continue to discuss. A RAB alternate asked about whether people would be required to move to smaller apartments. Joe noted that construction is done to modern standards, and the usual 1-BR apartment is about 30% larger than what was the case in the 1940's. On the other hand, both during any temporary relocation to public housing, and on any return to a Section 8 unit, you have to meet what the bedroom size standards are for the program. A number of households may currently be in larger units than are required, and they will be "right-sized" throughout the process (this can also work in the other direction for those who are under-housed).

5/ Budget Committee Report: A RAB member presented a summary of the Committee's meeting on Nov. 3, and another RAB member presented on the bank statement and Mass. Union conference expenses. The committee is looking into whether more dues were paid to NLIHC than needed to be and whether reimbursement can be secured. There was a continued issue with the bank account which will required followup with the bank. The committee had also recommended an increase in the per diems by \$10. On the per diems, questions were posed if: (a) the new amounts would be

above what the federal government utilized for per diems, and (b) if the amounts should vary by conference, since different areas might have different prices. A majority of the Board voted to table the per diem recommendation to allow people to gather more information (there were a number of nos). It was also reported that while a RAB alternate had said she was going to the conference (and a hotel room and fee were paid), she did not attend or call to cancel, and the question was the taking of next steps under the bylaws. A split majority voted to table this and give the person notice and an opportunity to give her side of the story before taking action.

6/ Policy & Procedures Committee Report: The Board authorized an extension on the meeting to finish this up. Mac McCreight from GBLS reported on this, and there were three recommendations (and related bylaw amendments) reported back by the Committee: (1) To increase the cap on what could be spent for flowers to recognize the death of a RAB member/alternate from \$100 to \$150, and to apply this to the recent death of a RAB member; (2) to also provide for flowers as a “get well” gesture to RAB member out on medical leave, but at the \$100 cap; and (3) to have language about when and to what extent lunch expenditures could be reimbursed for someone authorized by a committee to work in the RAB office for certain tasks. The Board (with some no votes) voted to approve the first two changes on flowers (and to apply the first retroactively to the recently passed member). The Board voted to table the third item.

7/ Other Items, Unfinished & New Business, Etc:

Bank Account Information: A few questions arose around the bank account information, including whether/why a former RAB member would need to come to the bank and why the hotel receipt included an apparent expense on Oct. 31st after the Mass. Union conference was over. A number of Budget Committee members had left the call by this point, and without them, it would not be useful to discuss this—but this should be brought to the Budget Committee meeting next month.

Alternate Moving up to Member Status: With the recent passing of a RAB member, there would be a Family Public Housing Member vacancy. There are two Alternate 1s (both joined the Board at the same time). RAB bylaws provide that one way to resolve a tie is whether adding one person would bring a new BHA development as having a RAB member, and that would be the case with one of the alternates. That alternate is willing to serve, and this was approved. The other alternate was advised that since she’s been meeting minimum attendance requirements,

if any further vacancies came up in Family Public Housing, she would be the next to move to Member status.

Departure of RAB Liaison: Lueteshia had indicated last month that she would be on a leave during December and January and during that time John Kane had agreed to act as RAB liaison. She indicated that come February, she will be returning to BHA, but it will be in a new position, and she would no longer be the RAB liaison. BHA will let the RAB know what will happen then. A number of people said that Lueteshia will be missed.