

Boston Housing Authority RAB Meeting 4-11-19, at 10 Lamartine St. (Anna Mae Cole Center, Hailey Apartments, Jamaica Plain)

Family Public Hsg: *Members* Val Shelley, Meena Carr, Phyllis Corbitt, Betty Rae Wade, Concetta Paul, Janis McQuarrie, Cheryl Semnack. *Alternate:* Nicole Beckles (Alt 1): 8

Elderly/Disabled Public Hsg: *Members* Michele McNickles, Rick Gurney, Marlana Nania, David Turney. Arthur Alexander, Eugenia Smith, Eddie Hartfield: 7

Section 8: *Members* Jung Wing Lee, Arlette Coleman, Minnie Jackson, Stephen Tracey, Lennox Tillet, Karen Stram. *Alternates:* Robin Williams (Alt 1), Georgia McEaddy (Alt 2): 8

Absences excused: Arlene Carr, Aracelis Tejada, Ron Johnson, Edna Willrich, Jeanne Patterson, Leron Diggs, and Modesta B.

Others: John Kane. BHA; Mac McCreight, GBLS; Judy Burnette, CLVU; Meriem Arachiche, West Broadway; Charina Francisco (interpreter); Dan Horne, 91-95 Washington St.; Jeanne Archibald, Commonwealth; Vanessa Dobson & Peggy Willis, Malone; Anneliese Cooper, Rockland; Artemis Johnson, Section 8; Anita Pleasant, St. Botolph; Diana Saintil, ABCD Youth Services

The meeting was chaired by Val Shelley, with assistance from Robin Williams. Michele McNickles was Timekeeper; Nicole Beckles was Sergeant at Arms. The meeting was opened with a moment of silence to recognize two current or former RAB members who had recently passed away—Alex Rosin and Donna Criel. Minutes from prior meeting were approved with correction that, subsequent to the vote, someone who had a copy of the Cabrini Green video offered it to the RAB, so Rick Gurney’s gracious offer to pay to replace it is not necessary.

1/Future of BHA Public Housing Conference: This was a success, and showed that the RAB could provide the resources and put on such a meaningful event. 20 RAB members/alternates attended, and more assisted with planning/preparation. 29 BHA public housing developments participated, as well as a number of Section 8 tenants, and staff from 8 BHA departments were present, with 156 participants. On feedback, it was noted there should be more time for questions. There was a question of letting others attend (city officials). David suggested that maybe the Mayor could offer buses to help (has been done for other city events). A guest said it was informative, and there should be more of these. Suggestion was made to make sure ramp wasn’t blocked by car. John suggested that an ad hoc training group should convene to figure out what ideas for future events could be brought back to the Board for approval. This was moved, seconded, and approved; Janis, Meena, Georgia, Karen, Marlana, Cheryl, and David volunteered. Georgia also noted that at the end of the month, there will be a meeting of Section 8 participants from the Roslindale zip code, with the assistance of City Life/Vida Urbana, and asked if John could get notice out to the Board in case people wanted to attend.

2/ABCD Youth Services: Diana Saintil from ABCD Youth Services discussed four programs that ABCD has for in-school and out-of-school youth to provide internships with pay, exposure to careers and course materials, and a leg up in the process to get Summerworks jobs. She also

discussed the time frames to apply for Summerworks, and distributed applications and materials for people to bring back to their sites.

3/ Report back from National Low-Income Housing Coalition: A number of people reported on the presentation on redlining (Betty, Janis, Michele) and how it's happened in history and still goes on today. It was noted that no one on SSI can afford housing unless it's subsidized. David said the conference was an improvement from the past, and he was impressed by the presentation by Matt Desmond about patterns of eviction. In addition, the visits to lobby on Capitol Hill were far better organized than in the past. Eddie noted that in some cases, landlords were evicting for less than a month's rent. Mr. Lee said maps were created in the past which said that poor people could only go to x place. There was a discussion of "gap" and "solution"—for affordable housing, what's affordable for one person is not affordable for me, and in transportation, there may be gaps between where jobs are and how you can get there if you don't have a car.

4/ Committee Reports

Budget Committee: The committee recommended no cash withdrawals above \$200 without committee approval, and would only be through chair or treasurer. The "no fly" group due to noncompliance issues had been Concetta, Anita, and Karen; Karen straightened out her paperwork, so she is free to attend future events. The committee was recommending that Eddie be added to the "no fly" list because of non-attendance at the NLIHC lobby day. Eddie gave some reasons why he couldn't do this, and it was noted that he could appeal this through the committee, which might reconsider, and if it didn't, it could be brought by him back up to the full board.

At the last meeting, the RAB had voted on a few Budget Committee recommendations, and had tabled the rest and asked the Committee to streamline them and bring them back to the Board. This was done. For the three recommendations (in handout at meeting), it was moved and seconded that they be adopted, by a vote of 14 for, 3 against, and 3 abstentions.

It was also noted that there is a Budget Committee opening for a 2nd family representative (Betty Walker was the elected representative, but she was removed for non-attendance). Both Nicole and Janis volunteered. The Board decided that their names should be put in a hat and picked randomly (but this didn't happen at the meeting).

It was noted that there was an open position for the Mass. Union convention this weekend (room paid for) because one person couldn't attend from Family; no Family representative volunteered. Karen asked to go and was designated to fill the vacancy.

Policy & Procedures Committee: The Committee had been asked to make a recommendation as to whether the "no fly" sanction imposed on Concetta would lapse at the end of the RAB's original term (end of July, 2019) or should be extended to match the term extension; the majority of the committee recommended that the sanction only go to the original date. This was moved and seconded, and was approved by a vote of 16 for and 2 abstentions.

BHA had concerns about the draft letter that was proposed to go to property managers (BHA and private) and local tenant organizations about RAB members/alternates reporting back and bringing to the RAB community/development concerns. The alternatives were for a revised letter to be prepared which would just go from the RAB, or to first have a meeting with Bill

McGonagle to discuss the BHA concerns and see where to go from there; the majority of the committee had recommended first having the meeting with Bill. After discussion, it was moved and seconded to follow the committee recommendation. This was approved by a vote of 11 for, 1 against, and 7 abstentions.

Rick noted that on the voter registration at recertification and electronic payment options, the Committee has finished its work, and it would be up to the chairs to arrange for BHA to report back on this at a future meeting. Another recommendation, which the committee made, was that BHA should pursue the option allowed by federal law of doing recertifications every 3 years where most of the family's income is from "fixed sources", like Social Security or pensions. It was moved and seconded that this recommendation be adopted, and this was approved by a vote of 16 for and 2 abstentions.

5/ New Business: (a) *Location of Meetings:* It was noted that future RAB meetings for the time being will be held at Anna Mae Cole Center.

(b) *Adding New Members/Alternates:* Several people were nominated to be new members/alternates for the RAB from Family and Elderly/Disabled Public Housing: Jeanne Archibald from Commonwealth and Meriem Arachiche from West Broadway for Family, and Annaliese Cooper from Rockland, Dan Horne from 91-95 Washington Street, Anita Pleasant from St. Botolph, and Vanessa Dobson and Peggy Willis from Malone. It was noted that for Family, they would be next in alternate order from Nicole. Mac suggested that since people were being added the same night, they have the same alternate order (i.e., Jeanne and Meriem would both be Alternate 2 for Family). However, for Elderly/Disabled, with the death of Alex Rosin, there would be one opening for a member position, and the remainder could all be selected as equally ranked Alternate 1. Anita and Peggy were willing to be alternates, but Vanessa, Dan, and Annaliese were all interested in being members. There was a quick election by the Elderly/Disabled members, and Dan was selected by a margin of 2-1-1 as the 10th member; Vanessa, Peggy, Annaliese, and Anita will all be tied as Alternate 1. [There are rules in the bylaws about how to decide who moves up in the case of tied positions and future vacancies.] People were welcomed on board and invited to join the Board members and alternates at the table.

(c) *Summer Outreach Event:* Robin reported on the idea of a summer picnic, and noted that this had been approved in the RAB budget, and people could invite one family member/guest in addition to trying to get additional task forces to send people. It was suggested that an ad hoc group be convened to plan a summer event and report back recommendations to the Board. This was moved, seconded, and adopted. Robin, Janis, Rick, Cheryl, and Minnie volunteered for this. Some people mentioned the idea of having RAB shirts—they've gone to other events, and seen tenants there with shirts from their organizations. It was suggested that this go to Policy & Procedures.

Evaluation: Good meeting, glad to see new people join the board, and welcome.