

Boston Housing Authority RAB Meeting 2-8-18, at 125 Amory Street

Family Public Hsg: *Members* Phyllis Corbitt, Meena Carr, Arlene Carr, Betty Rae Wade.
Alternates Janis McQuarrie (Alt 4), Mai Tai Davis (Alt 8), Cheryl Semnack (Alt 10): 7

Elderly/Disabled Public Hsg: *Members* Michele McNickles, Jeanne Burke Patterson, Rick Gurney, Eugenia Smith, David Turney, Bettie Cutler, John Maloni, Modesta Ballester.
Alternates: Arthur Alexander (Alt 2), Eddie Hartfield (Alt 3): 10

Section 8: *Members* Edna Willrich, Stephen Tracey, Jung Wing Lee, Lennox Tillet, Yvette Moore, Lerona Diggs, Arlette Coleman. *Alternates:* Anita Morris Merriman (Alt 2), Robin Williams (Alt 5), Georgia McEaddy (Alt 6): 10

Absences excused: Val Shelley, Betty Carrington, Pamela Lewis Hoyt, Concetta Paul (Family); Tara Ruttle (Section 8); Marlena Nania (E/D)

Others: John Kane, Kate Bennett, Vivian Lee, BHA; Mac McCreight, GBLS; Sherdain Carter (Washington Beech); Robert Aldrich (Franklin Field),

The meeting was chaired by Michele McNickles. Eddie Hartfield was Timekeeper and Phyllis Corbitt was Sergeant at Arms. Minutes of prior meeting were approved.

1/ **Real Estate Development:** Kate Bennett noted that it was likely that BHA would be submitting demolition and disposition proposals soon for Amory Street and Phase III of Old Colony. For Amory Street, she expected to meet with the residents there in the next week, and then the RAB would get written notice of the submission and a time frame to submit any comments. Kate was not sure whether the time frame would have this come to the RAB's regular March meeting or if a special meeting might be required, and she'd let the RAB know. For Old Colony, it would probably be another month or so. She noted that there probably were going to be a number of these coming to the RAB over the next 12 months. John M. noted that the press had talked about \$100 M for affordable housing from the Governor's office, and \$30 M for the City of Boston, and wondered whether any of this was for BHA. Kate said yes, and BHA counted on this for many of its deals. (With regard to the state, there is a pending bond bill, and BHA in the meantime is still drawing on funds from the prior bond bill.) Mac asked if the Monitoring Committee had voted yet on this, since its approval is needed for any BHA reductions in public housing stock; while the Committee's term no longer automatically expires, given that there's a new City Council, it's likely that BHA/City would be looking at whether any vacancies, etc., need to be filled. Meena said she didn't think Monitoring Committee had yet voted on this. Kate said she'd look into this.

2/ **RAB Budget:** Since neither the Budget Committee chair nor the Treasurer were available for the meeting, John K. presented the draft proposal for a BHA/RAB budget for the period from April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019 (this had also been distributed at the last RAB meeting). The total was for \$46,000, similar to last year, and had a break-down into categories for Transportation (\$15,000), Food (\$8,000), Translation (\$1,200), Childcare (\$1,500), Conferences (\$13,000), Training/Development (\$5,000), and Office Supplies (\$2,300), with breakdowns within each category. It was pointed out that in two areas (Training & Development and Conferences), the breakdowns didn't add up to the total. After some discussion, and where it was pointed out that there were deadlines to get this approved by BHA, the majority voted to

approve the \$46,000 figure and to ask Bill McGonagle to approve it, while at the same time, the Budget Committee was asked to refine the figures so that everything within the categories added up (this can be reported back for the March RAB meeting).

3/ Policy and Procedures Committee Report, Including Bylaw Amendments and Recommendation on Transportation Reimbursements

Mac reported that the Policy & Procedures committee had selected a new chair, Rick Gurney, and had selected a regular meeting time and place (4th Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the back building at 125A Amory Street); Betty Rae Wade agreed to take minutes (Mac took for first meeting since roles weren't yet taken). Notes from the Committee were distributed.

Two bylaw amendments were recommended by the Committee: (a) to permit a majority of the Co-chairs to call a special RAB meeting for good cause; and (b) to have the 2nd designee for the Budget Committee for each constituency be chosen by that constituency (rather than by the Co-Chair), starting with the next annual elections. Both of these amendments were adopted by majority vote.

The committee also recommended clarifying and expanding the transportation reimbursement portion of RAB policy to make clear that: (a) committee members' transportation costs are covered (whether by tax, MBTA, or driving); and (b) RAB members/alternates who attend RAB public hearings can have taxi/MBTA/driving covered, but NOT parking. This was also approved by majority vote.

Mac noted that the committee began a discussion about the possible use of conference technology to allow RAB members who are ill or homebound (such as by inclement weather) to participate, and to change bylaws to permit quorum/counting of participation this way. The Committee is going to discuss this further at its meeting later in February and may have a proposal for the March Board meeting.

Several people mentioned taxi issues as a potential Policy & Procedures committee topic, and Rick said it would be important for people to promptly report any issues and he would be willing to play a role.

4/ Budget Committee: There was a written report which John M. presented. It was particularly noted that there were concerns about having control over taxi vouchers & distribution. It was noted that there was an issue where the RAB computer hasn't been in the office for some time, and the Treasurer confirmed that she had taken it home for safekeeping. The Budget Committee members had asked that it be returned to the RAB office. It was noted that the Treasurer was ill. A majority of the Board voted to ask the Secretary to send a letter to the Treasurer by February 22nd, confirming the earlier request from the Budget Committee and asking that the computer be returned to the RAB office prior to the next meeting of the Budget Committee.

5/ NLIHC Conference: It was noted that to get the "early bird" rate for the National Low Income Housing Coalition conference, there would need to be registration and payment by February 19th. The RAB had previously decided to send 3 people to this conference (one from each constituency), and consistent with the Travel Policy, first choice would be given to those who had not previously attended a national conference who were otherwise in good standing.

Selected as Primary Travelers were Janis McQuarrie (Family), Rick Gurney (Elderly/Disabled) and Robin Williams (Section 8); Back-up Travelers were Phyllis Corbitt (Family), David Turney (Elderly/Disabled), and Edna Willrich (Section 8).

6/ Other Matters

Outreach: There was some discussion about the Outreach Committee, and how efforts had ended to expand the meetings to go to the different developments (it was noted that the Cabrini Green DVD had been a draw for the meeting, as well as bringing donuts and coffee). Both Lenox and Rick indicated willingness to follow up on this.

Secretary Report (Attendance and Mail): Betty R-W did a report both on attendance and on the mail that had come in to the RAB office. In response to the letter to the alternates, all of them said that they wished to continue to be listed with the RAB; Mai Tai Davis attended tonight's meeting, and Safia M. said she intended to come in the future. The RAB mail included something from the IRS. There was some hesitation about what to do with this since neither the Treasurer nor Vice-Treasurer nor the chair of the Budget Committee were present. A majority of the Board voted that the IRS correspondence should be given to the Co-Chairs present at the meeting for them to bring to the next Budget Committee meeting. Betty noted there was also a good letter from a BHA tenant to HUD Secretary Carson cc'd to the RAB and others, and it was voted that this should be shared among all RAB members [this was from former RAB member Anna Mae Cole from Hailey Apts.]

EVALUATION: Generally good meeting, but too many sidebars and people not waiting their turn to be recognized. Got some things done, like the RAB Budget and selection of people to go to NLIHC.