

Boston Housing Authority RAB Meeting 4-13-17, at 125 Amory Street

Family Public Housing: *Members* Concetta Paul, Phyllis Corbitt, Val Shelley, Betty Rae Wade, Aracelis Tejada, *Alternates* Carole Sullivan (Alt 1), Janis McQuarrie (Alt 6): 7

Elderly/Disabled Public Housing: *Members* Michele McNickles, Marlana Nania, John Maloni; *Alternates* David Turney (Alt 1): 4

Section 8: *Members* Edna Willrich, Jung Wing Lee, Lennox Tillet, Marilyn Lopez, Lerona Diggs, Judith Frey, Stephen Tracey; *Alternates:* Arlette Coleman (Alt 1), Anita Morris Merriman (Alt 3), Karen Stream (Alt 3), Robin Williams (Alt *): 11

Absences excused: Meena Carr, Arlene Carr, Cassandra Ledesma (Family Public Housing); Norman Younger, Jeanne Burke Patterson, Modesta Ballester (Elderly/Disabled Public Housing);*** (Section 8)

Others: John Kane, Vivian Lee, BHA; Mac McCreight, GBLs; Nancy Figueroa (CBPH); Sherdain Carter (Washington Beech), Pamela Hoyt (Franklin Hill).

The meeting was chaired by Edna Willrich; Val Shelley was Timekeeper and Phyllis Corbitt was Sergeant at Arms. Minutes of prior meeting were approved.

1/Committee reports:

Budget Committee:

Concetta sent out an email about how the balance of the RAB budget for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2017 was allocated, ensuring that the funds were fully spent. This included the purchase of a video about Cabrini Green which members can borrow/view. There was some discussion about whether it was proper to reimburse a member for picking up food (as opposed to paying delivery charges to a third party); the majority of the Board voted to approve this as a one-time expense, while at the same time saying this should be avoided for the future.

Concetta noted that the letter encouraging tenants to participate in the Grievance Panel was signed by the three chairs and is going out in a mailing from BHA.

For the Mass. Union conference, at last month's meeting, we had authorized an uneven split in slots (4 family public housing, 2 Section 8, and 2 elderly/disabled public housing), to correspond with those who indicated interest in going. One of the family public housing members will not be going on the RAB budget, and it was agreed that this slot would be reallocated to a Section 8 member/alternate (in addition to Karen & Edna who were approved at last month's meeting).. Judith and Lenox volunteered, but after some discussion about the principles that the Policy & Procedures Committee was recommending for selecting those attending conferences (given preference to those who didn't attend a prior national or state-wide conference during the RAB term), Lenox withdrew and Judith was approved. Chairs will check with their attendees about how they're getting to the conference so the Treasurer can make appropriate arrangements (including whether any taxi voucher was needed to get to the train).

John noted that the sign in sheet has a space where people who are seeking reimbursement for travel should indicate how they came to meeting: "D" means "drive" (mileage reimbursement);

“M” means “MBTA”, “R” means “The Ride”, and “T” means taxi. Reimbursements may not be immediate, but will likely be issued once a quarter.

Policy & Procedures Committee: David allowed Mac to present the summary of the Policy & Procedures Committee’s written recommendations on a Travel Policy. The Policy includes certain basic principles both on selecting those who will attend RAB-paid conferences or events and on the obligations of those selected; it also adds certain additional duties for the Treasurer, Secretary, and Chairs which will be folded into the Bylaws. During the discussion, there was a recommendation to be clear about responsibilities for contacting Backup Travelers if originally designated attendees indicate inability to attend—it was agreed to amend the draft so that this is the duty of the chairs (and not the Treasurer). Mac also noted that after the Committee met, he obtained feedback from BHA’s Civil Rights Department that reasonable accommodation requests be reviewed by the RAB and the BHA on a case-by-case basis, but consistent with the overall guidelines, and this was added to the end of the Committee report. The RAB voted to approve the Travel Policy, as revised. See P&P recommendations from March 2017 for greater detail.

2/ ITOA Taxi and Local Travel Reimbursement: Staff from ITOA had been invited to the RAB meeting, but were not present when the meeting began, and so the Board proceeded with the Committee reports. ITOA arrived late, and the Board then had a discussion with them. However, the information provided was not the same as BHA and the RAB had been provided in the past (such as what the fares would be when a cab was shared), and it was recommended that a meeting be convened with the head of ITOA. Several board members expressed frustration and wondered if the ITOA arrangements should be retained.

3/ Old Business, New Business, Announcements, Etc.:

JRAP: John noted that the Juvenile Reentry Assistance Project (JRAP) had been revised so that it could assist with the sealing of records for juveniles and young adults who are in BHA Section 8 households, as well as those living in federal public housing.

MOA: The Memorandum of Agreement between the BHA and the RAB has been approved and signed with the term covering April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2020.

AFFH: There is a flyer for a Roxbury discussion on health & fair housing on Tuesday, April 25, 2017 at Hibernian Hall at 184 Dudley Street, Roxbury MA 02119 from 5:30 to 8 p.m., where people can share their ideas about Boston’s fair housing assessment. Boston Tenant Coalition is trying to get the word out on this. This is a direct follow-up to the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) analysis that BHA and the City of Boston are doing. As noted last month, BHA has revised its Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the RAB so this is part of the RAB’s work, in addition to reviewing and commenting on the Public Housing Agency Plan.

Leave of Absence: Betty Carrington asked for a 2-month leave of absence. (Some questions arose about whether people were overusing excused absences when leaves should be requested, and whether leaves were being tracked. Mac suggested that this would be a good discussion for the Secretary/Co-Secretary and Chairs to have.)

Additional Family Public Housing Alternate: Pamela Hoyt Lewis, who was on the RAB previously, was nominated and approved as an additional Alternate for Family Public Housing

(she would be Alternate #*) Pam lives at the Franklin Hill Mixed Finance site and is one of the Tenant Association Board members there.

4/ **Evaluation:** Generally good meeting, got some things done; but too many sidebars.