

Boston Housing Authority RAB Meeting 11-14-19, at 10 Lamartine St. Ext. (Anna Mae Cole Center, Hailey Apartments, Jamaica Plain)

Family Public Hsg: *Members* Val Shelley, Meena Carr, Phyllis Corbitt, Betty Rae Wade, Ron Johnson, Aracelis Tejada, Concetta Paul, Arlene Carr, Cheryl Semnack, Janis McQuarrie.

Alternates: Nicole Beckles (Alt 1), Meriem Arachiche (Alt 2), Jeannie Archibald (Alt 2): 13

Elderly/Disabled Public Hsg: *Members* Michele McNickles, Dave Turney, Rik Gurney, Arthur Alexander, Eddie Hartfield, Jeanne Burke Patterson, Eugenia Smith, Marlena Nania: 8

Section 8: *Members* Edna Willrich, Stephen Tracey, Lennox Tillet, Karen Stram, Therese Browne, Judith Frey, Minnie Jackson, Arlette Coleman *Alternates:* Robin Williams (Alt 1), Georgia McEaddy (Alt 2): 10

Absences excused: Jung Wing Lee (leave of absence) Lerona Diggs, Dan Horne, Anita Pleasant, and Modesta Ballester

Others: John Kane. David Gleich, Randi Holland, Brian Sandiford, Gail Livingston, BHA; Mac McCreight, GBLS; Charina Francisco, interpreter; Artemis Johnson (Section 8)

The meeting was chaired by Meena Carr with assistance from Nicole Beckles. Phyllis Corbitt was sergeant at arms, and Nicole was timekeeper. Many people hadn't realized that the minutes from the last meeting were buried in the big Five-Year Plan packet they had received and hadn't reviewed; approval of those minutes was tabled.

1/Annual and Five-Year Plan Presentations from BHA Staff: David Gleich of BHA Leased Housing discussed changes in the Section 8 Administrative Plan proposed in the FY 2020 Annual Plan. He noted there was an additional non-elderly/disabled priority category created which was meant to address trying to maintain the elderly/non-elderly disabled mix that's in BHA's elderly/disabled designated housing when developments are switched to Section 8 or RAD funding. BHA's plan would be to designate 20% of the units in buildings which were all converted to Section 8 (like Amory Street) to non-elderly disabled, and 80% elderly, similar to the current 80/20 mix, but that for RAD buildings with the 25% Section 8 "blend", the RAD 75% would be elderly, and the Section 8 25% would be non-elderly disabled. As units turned over, they would be assigned to similar population. There were questions on some topics that David said would be more appropriately covered by other BHA staff—such as why some developments were taken off the RAD list.

Randi spoke to the BHA federal public housing capital plan. Fortunately federal capital funding in the last few years has been better, and so instead of being down to only \$4 million to stretch out, there is about \$14 million. A priority item will be revamping the intercom systems in many elderly/disabled complexes. (Ron and Betty spoke about how this should be done at their sites, and Randi said that Task Forces and tenants would be involved in this planning at each site.) In addition to the documents the RAB already received, as had been requested during last year's PHA Plan process, she had created a new chart which summarized the Performance and Evaluation (P&E) reports, showing how prior years' funding had been spent. Randi indicated that in FY 2015 BHA was required to do environmental assessments at its sites since this would

be a pre-condition for later funding, and those were available and indicated on the report. For example, at Walnut Park/Bunte Apts., part of the site had previously had a gas station, and so issues with oil residue needed to be addressed. Questions were raised above various developments' work items, and Jeanne urged that any acronyms in reports be spelled out since RAB members are not professionals and don't know what BHA means by various abbreviations. Randi explained some of them but agreed to get John a list of acronyms used which he could get to the RAB. Michele pointed out there were some real capital needs at St. Botolph (roof leaks, etc.) but assumed the reason BHA didn't have anything in the Capital Plan was because of the planned RAD or Section 18 conversion; however, things have been delayed, and it's an urgent matter for residents there.

Brian reported on capital work planned for state public housing sites (not enough handouts, so some shared). He said the priorities were building envelope, roofing, and stairwells. At Faneuil, there had been a special grant for landscaping, so that would be done, along with removal of the last of BHA's underground storage tanks (conversion to gas). Kitchen/bath work as well as accessibility improvements were slated for BHA's Department of Mental Health (DMH) related units. Mac asked if an environmental assessment had been done for the state sites, and gave the example of Gallivan residents speculating whether their property had previously been an orchard and if the soil had been affected by any chemicals. Brian said that matter was not yet being addressed. He would investigate it and it would be addressed based on its priority. There were discussions about specific needs at West Broadway concerning the electrical distribution and power quality. Brian stated that there a transformer project currently out to bid that should address some of these concerns.

Nicole wondered why various items were slated for Orient Heights where it was being completely redeveloped. She said that for example, a bunch of money was spent prior to redevelopment in Phase I, and that work just ended up being a waste because of the later rehab. Brian said it was hard to know, at any time when you prioritize capital work, whether you may get approved funding for a redevelopment project. For Clarification: the BHA has to maintain all of their properties regardless of where they may be in the funding cycle for redevelopment. He provided the example of Washington Beech where an HVAC project was previously completed due to system failures and approximately five years later, it received HOPE VI revitalization funding for redevelopment.

2/ Committee Reports (and Bylaw Amendment):

Policy & Procedures Committee: Rik asked if Mac could present on this. Mac noted that for any votes, since all Family Public Housing representatives were present, the Family alternates would not be able to vote, but other alternates could (since their totals were below 10).

Bylaw Amendment, and Travel Policy/Agreement Provisions: At last month's RAB meeting, there had been a proposed change to the Travel Policy and Travel Agreement to require written reports after conferences, but this had been tabled because the Board wanted the Committee to look into how the "bad standing" matters are reviewed after the Budget Committee determines that someone is ineligible for future RAB funding due to issues with expense reports or failure to submit a timely report (or to be permitted to submit late for good cause). The committee by a split vote (4-3) had recommended that the bylaws be amended so that any Budget Committee "bad standing" action would be subject to Board review and approval (the current bylaws only

provide for Board review if an affected member/alternate chooses to ask the Board to take the issue up). After some discussion, Concetta suggested that the bylaw revision be amended to strike the word “decisions” and substitute “recommendations”, since all Committee action is that—a recommendation, and it is the Board that makes decisions. This was made and seconded as an amendment, and approved, and then the bylaw amendment was accepted by majority vote.

The Board then moved to discussion of the tabled item from the prior meeting. Karen suggested that either oral or written reports be accepted, but others objected, saying it was otherwise too easy for people to just get away with echoing others’ reports. Nicole said that written reports should be required for out of state conferences, but not in state; Mac noted that wasn’t what the proposal was, and written reports were required for any conference, whether out of state or in state. (A distinction was made for an event, such as a lobby day at the State House, where there wouldn’t be anything like a workshop where you’re sharing what you learned at the workshop.) The question came up whether there should also be oral reports or a reading of the report. Mac pointed out that last month, it was pointed out that some reports are quite long and this would take too much Board time, but a good compromise would be for people to, in addition to turning in the written report, providing a brief oral summary of the report (as was done last month). The question also came about when reports could be turned in, and people objected to turning in reports in advance, since otherwise people might “borrow” from someone else’s work (if, for example, a chair got others’ reports). It was agreed that written reports (and expense reports) could be turned in at the RAB meeting. If someone was not able to attend a RAB meeting, he or she could turn in the report to their chair and it would be noted. It was moved, seconded, and adopted to establish the written report policy going forward after this RAB meeting, but the Travel Policy/Agreement (and bylaw amendment earlier in the evening) would be revised to reflect the revised time frame (turn in by next RAB meeting after a conference for written reports and expense reports).

Selection of Substitute for Chair on Budget Committee Where Not Available: Another matter which the Board had asked Policy & Procedures to review was what the procedure should be if a chair wasn’t available for Budget Committee meeting times that were good for the majority and getting a substitute. The Committee had been told the scheduling issue was likely to be resolved, but decided if it wasn’t, that it was recommending that the members of the constituency select the substitute who would serve on Budget Committee during any period of the chair’s unavailability. It was indicated that the scheduling issue was not resolved for the Budget Committee. Therese indicated that if she had been aware of the Committee’s recommendation, she would not have told the Budget Committee that she would be resigning as Section 8 chair. After some discussion, this was moved, seconded, and adopted by majority vote.

There were other items from the Policy & Procedures Committee report, but given limited time, they were tabled to a future RAB meeting.

Budget Committee: Arlene reported as secretary for the committee. The report indicated which individuals were considered ineligible for future funding pending resolving issues on expense reports. David reported that there were no outstanding debts for the RAB (other than tonight’s meal), and John confirmed that there was one more increment of BHA RAB funding to come through in December. David said that he would be suggesting, at a future meeting, that the Board increase the number of slots for the National Low Income Housing Coalition conference in the spring since it seemed to have more value/relevance recently. Questions were raised that the full

Board, as opposed to just Committee members, didn't have a full report of the bank statement for the past month, and there was also a question of how certain expenses or questions were resolved. David agreed to provide a fuller report for the Board on this.

3/ Other Business:

Withdrawal of Chair's Resignation: Mac pointed out that normally under parliamentary procedure, the resignation of someone from an office is not effective until it is accepted by the Board, and the individual is free, until the Board acts, to withdraw a resignation. Therese indicated that in light of what the Policy & Procedures Committee had recommended about a substitute for the Budget Committee, and the Board's vote to approve that recommendation, she was withdrawing her resignation. Mac indicated in light of this, no Board action was necessary on the resignation.

RAB Scheduling: It was pointed out that traditionally the RAB moves its meeting in December to the first Thursday of the month (Dec. 5th) in order to accommodate the public hearings on the PHA Plan which will be on Monday, December 9th (at Copley Branch Library in the morning, and at City Hall in the evening). It was moved, seconded, and approved to do that.

Selecting Section 8 Substitute on Budget Committee: Edna Willrich volunteered to serve as the Section 8 Substitute on the Budget Committee (during any period when Therese is not available due to scheduling). Karen initially submitted her name but withdrew it, and there were no other nominations. Edna's selection as the substitute was accepted by acclamation by the Section 8 members/alternates present.

Meeting ran out of time before any other agenda items could be reached, and it was adjourned.