



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
MEETING
OF
HARRIS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**

January 15, 2025

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
 §
COUNTY OF HARRIS §

I. CALL TO ORDER AND RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

The Board of Commissioners of Harris County Housing Authority met in a special session, open to the public on the 15th day of January 2025, at Harris County Housing Authority, located at 1933 Hussion Street, inside the boundaries of Harris County in Houston, Texas. Chairman Gerald Womack called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and called the roll of the duly constituted officers and members of the Board:

Gerald Womack	Chairman	Present
Vacant	Vice Chairman	Vacant
Asheley Gilbert	Commissioner	Present
Paul Shanklin	Commissioner	Present
Laolu Davies-Yemitan	Commissioner	Present

Melissa Quijano, Executive Director, and Nicholas Santulli (outside general counsel with the Harris County Attorney's Office) attended all or portions of the meeting. Additional attendees included the following:

Beverly Burroughs, Debra McCray, Paul Curry, Dominique King, Terumi Shorter, Kimberly Rogers, Cindy Ramos, Vivian Clark, Tabitha Lockhart and various staff of the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) attended. Judge Joe Villarreal with the Municipal Court Division (MCD), Carrie Rai (Executive Director of Tony's Place), Francisco Castillo (Precinct 2), Kelly Barnett, Amanda Payne, Chidarrell-Palmer, Diana Featherson (Policy Advisor with Harris County Precinct 4) were also in attendance.

II. OPENING PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Ms. Debra McCray opened the meeting with prayer, followed by Commissioner Paul Shanklin, who led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Judge Joe Villarreal, who led the Texas Pledge.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Gerald Womack acknowledged outgoing Commissioner Joe Villarreal (Judge with the Municipal Courts Division), who served as the Vice Chairman of the HCHA Board of Commissioners for the past 10 years. He spoke of Judge Villarreal's years of dedication to the board and tireless efforts to improve the agency's productivity. He stated that Vice Chairman Villarreal had done an outstanding job as a Commissioner and that the HCHA is what it is today because of him. Chairman noted that words could not express his gratitude for Judge Villarreal's dedication to the Board and his friendship.

Judge Joe Villarreal thanked the HCHA staff for their hard work. He spoke about his time with the HCHA Board of Commissioners and stated his objective was to help improve HCHA's work for the community. Judge Villarreal charged the HCHA staff to keep up the good work. Judge Villarreal welcomed incoming Commissioner Carrie Rai to the HCHA Board of Commissioners and encouraged her to leave her mark as she works with the Board.

Chairman Womack awarded Judge Villarreal with a plaque on behalf of the staff and Executive Director, Commissioners of HCHA and Commissioners Court, he commended him for his dedication to HCHA.

Chairman Gerald Womack administered the Oath of Office to the incoming Commissioner, Carrie Rai (Executive Director for Tony's Place). Commissioner Carrie Rai was voted in on 12/10/24 to the HCHA Board of Commissioners.

Chairman Womack acknowledged the presence of Nicholas Santulli (Assistant County Attorney from the County Attorney's Office), Francisco Castillo (from Precinct 2), and Diana Featherson (Policy Advisor from Precinct 4).

Ms. Kelly Barnett and Ms. Amanda Payne, representing the homeowners in the Lakeshore Subdivision in Houston, Texas, addressed the Board regarding property adjacent to theirs. Ms. Payne allowed Ms. Barnett to do all the talking, whom she acknowledged as an attorney. Ms. Barnett stated that the property belongs to HCHA, and they wanted to remind HCHA that they would like to purchase it in 2025. Ms. Barnett noted that a proposal for the purchase was submitted to Ms. Dominique King. No future statement was given. Ms. Barnett thanked the Board for listening to them and asked if there were any questions, to which the Board stated they had none at this time.

Chairman Womack thanked Ms. Barnett and Ms. Payne for coming out in the weather, which spoke a lot about their interest in the property.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION ITEM 1:
APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 10, 2024

Ms. Vivian Clark noted that the projection showed December 10, 2025, instead of December 10, 2024, to ensure the correct date was voted on.

Commissioner Paul Shanklin moved to approve the minutes from the board meeting on December 10, 2024. Commissioner Asheley Gilbert seconded, Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan abstained, and the motion carried.

V. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Ms. Melissa Quijano, Executive Director and CEO presented to the Board HCHA's activities from November 20, 2024, to January 15, 2025, reflected in the January 2025 Board Book.

Ms. Quijano reported on the HCV Program Funding Utilization rate for November 2024. The Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) Utilization was 99% for 4,192 families served. The Veteran Affairs Supporting Housing (VASH) Program Utilization was 91% for a total of 613 veteran families. The Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Program Utilization was 90% for a total of 183 families assisted.

It was reported that the Housing Choice Voucher and Veteran Affairs Supporting Housing programs' Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) expenses were 104% of funding, for \$5,271,608. The Emergency Housing Voucher program's HAP expenses were reported to be 74% of funding, for \$248,547.

Ms. Quijano noted that on December 11, 2024, HCHA VASH Coordinator Ms. Katherine Escamilla worked with the Veterans Administration and the Sheriff's office to assist with housing a veteran who had been homeless for 14 years in Katy, Texas.

Ms. Quijano reported that close-out was completed on the Cornerstone and Louetta 15-year exit on December 3, 2024.

Ms. Quijano informed the Board that Congresswoman Erica Lee-Carter invited HCHA staff to participate in the Federal Resource Fair on December 19, 2024, and HCHA staff did attend to assist.

Ms. Quijano reported that the HCHA's Audit report was submitted to HUD's REAC System by our auditor on December 24, 2024.

Ms. Quijano reported that she met with HUD on January 10, 2025, and they provided some resources with free PHA Board Trainings available online in the HUD Exchange website and will forward the site information. Additionally, during this meeting HUD provide guidance related to proposed State of Texas law requiring all PHA's to have Board Meetings live streamed and suggested that HCHA wait until the State of Texas makes it law before making any policies. Ms. Quijano reported that HCHA

will work with the current equipment and recommends getting this process started.

Ms. Quijano informed the Board that on January 7, 2025, Habitat for Humanity invited HCHA employee, to share her experience alongside Harris County Judge and City of Houston Mayor before the City of Houston, in being one of the first families in Houston to work alongside President Jimmy Carter in building her home through his program back in 1998. The HCHA employee is Ms. Cindy Ramos.

Commissioner Laolu Davie-Yemitan commented on the legislation filed concerning live streaming. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan stated to keep in mind that 7000 pieces of legislation would be filed, and 1100 to 1200 (less than 20 %) might be approved. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan stated that we should stay aware of our functioning as an entity. Chairman Womack stated there would be selected representation from Harris County at the meeting in Austin to discuss the new legislation. Chairman Womack thanked Commissioner Davies-Yemitan for his input, because all are to be advocates for the things that affect HCHA. Commissioner Paul Shanklin noted that in the spirit of transparency, he thinks it is a good idea to live-stream for those who cannot attend physically but want to be present. Chairman Womack stated that the board would encourage the staff to move forward.

VI. FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Paul Curry, Finance Director, presented the November 2024 financial statements for HCHA as reported in the January 15, 2025, Board Book. The report includes check registers, contract logs, and contracts expiring in six months.

Mr. Curry reported the consolidated financial statements, representing the cash flow balances for the program's reporting period. Mr. Curry explained that cash flow could fluctuate based on HUD funding, whether it sent more than was needed during one period and none the next so that the overage could be consumed. This could cause a deficit and the account to be negative.

Chairman Womack asked Mr. Curry if WE Security Inc. was paid monthly. Mr. Curry explained that the check for \$18,375 was for services from June through October 2024. Normally, the management company would make the monthly payments, but due to the falling invoices, WE Security Inc. reached out to HCHA, and HCHA made the full payment. Chairman Womack asked how the payments would be handled in the future, and Mr. Curry stated the management company for HCHA would handle the payments. Mr. Curry said he was sure Ms. Dominique King had spoken with the management company. Chairman Womack asked if it was in the management company contract that they were responsible for paying the bill, and Mr. Curry said yes. Chairman Womack said, "So we should not have a problem with this again?" Mr. Curry responded, "No, sir."

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan asked if the payment of \$30,000 to Sun Coast Plumbing Co. Inc. was a down payment and how much the total job was. Ms. King clarified the total payment to replace the 90LF of the Sanitary Sewer is \$44,415.

Chairman Womack paused the meeting for a 3-minute break for copies to be made of the Financial Check Register for the Commissioners of the HCHA Board. Chairman Womack reconvened the meeting at 1:43 p.m.

Lastly, Mr. Curry answered questions from the board.

VII. HCV AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEPARTMENTS PRESENTATION

Ms. Debra McCray, HCV Director, presented the HCV lease-up rates reflected in the October 2024 and November 2024 monthly reports, included in January 15, 2025, Board Book.

Ms. McCray reported that for October 2024, the HCV Program was 98.7%, the VASH Program was 89.3%, and the EHV Program was 90.1%. One homeowner closed for October, and one closed for November 2024. For November 2024, the HCV Program was 98.8%, the VASH Program was 91.1%, and the EHV Program was 90.1%. For the year-to-date, the HCV Program was 101.6%, VASH was 86.2%, and EHV was 90.1%. For November, there were 469 Annual Recertifications with 100 % timely processing. There was 19 VASH Vouchers issued for November 2024. There are 3046 applicants on HCHA's HCV waiting list.

One homeowner was closed for October 2024, and another closed for November 2024. Ms. McCray stated she would have more pictures and information at the next Board meeting. One closing was for Precinct One, Commissioner Rodney Ellis, and the other was for Precinct Three, Commissioner Tom S. Ramsey.

Chairman Womack advised that the City of Houston is assigning homeowners \$120,000 to purchase homes, which will aid the buyers for five years. Chairman Womack said the HCHA Homeowner program should be advertised on the HCHA website. Commissioner Asheley Gilbert advised that a workshop and classes be set up to educate voucher recipients about buying a home. Chairman Womack stated that there should be equal development opportunities in each precinct in Harris County. Chairman Womack appointed Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan to work with the Housing committee.

Ms. McCray reported that 678 inspections were completed for November 2024, 508 of which were Annual and Initial inspections. One hundred thirty-three of the inspections completed were Special or Emergency. The Quality Control type of inspections completed totaled 17. Overall, the pass inspection rate in October for the Initials was 91 %, and for the Annuals, 95%. Overall, the pass inspection rate in November for the Initials was 99%, and for the Annuals, 94%. Commissioner Carrie Rai asked if there are common reasons why units may fail the inspections the first or second time. Ms. McCray stated often that the unit will pass the inspection the second time, and when they do not, it's usually due to the landlord thinking the repair is too much. Sometimes, the participant does not want to move or cannot move, and more time is given to allow the repairs to be done to pass the inspection. The tenant is

allowed to move if the repairs are the landlord's responsibility. If the tenant is responsible, they cannot move.

Lastly, Ms. McCray answered questions from the Board.

Ms. Dominique King, Director of Real Estate Development, reviewed the status of existing properties within the Affordable Housing Division for November 2024, which are included in the January 15, 2025, Board Book.

Chairman Womack asked if Sierra Meadows was being worked on. Ms. King stated that the dark part is past, and that Phase Two was being wrapped up. We are waiting for a consultant to evaluate. An application was submitted to Frontier and CenterPoint Energy for an incentive to replace all the A/C units at no cost to HCHA. Chairman Womack suggested applying for grants to offset the cost of the A/C units as well as research programs that will help with the landscaping of Sierra Meadows.

Ms. King moved to the proposed developments and developments that are under construction. Bernicia Place—METRO Southeast Transit Development has pre-development activities ongoing, and the estimated closing date is June 2025. Personnel recruiting and drafting of the standard operating procedures is underway for The Hay Center. Ms. King reported the following:

- The Hollows project is 100% complete. HCHA has received a retainage release.
- The Northwood Apartments is 100% complete. HCHA has received a retainage release.
- The Bluestem Apartments project is 99% complete. It is preparing for retainage release and project close-out and is awaiting compliance release.
- The Residences at Arbor Oaks is 100% complete. HCHA has received a retainage release.
- The First Met Senior Apartments project is 94% complete. Punch walks are underway for Phase One.
- The Villas at Eastwood cost certification projected close-out is scheduled for March 2025 with a response from TDHCA with additional request predating back to construction. Ms. King and her department are working on this request.

Lastly, Ms. King answered questions from the Board.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into an executive session at 2:11 p.m. to consult with its attorneys, seek or receive legal advice, consult regarding pending or contemplated litigation, and discuss the value or transfer of real property.

IX. RECONVENE

The Board of Commissioners reconvened for the public session at 3:02 p.m.

X. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEM 2:

Resolution honoring Cindy Ramos as the Harris County Housing Authority employee of the quarter (January – April 2025)

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution, Commissioner Paul Shanklin seconded, and the motion carried. (25-01)

ACTION ITEM 3:

Resolution by the Harris County Housing Authority (the "Authority") approving and ratifying (i) an amendment to the purchase and sale agreement for Greenwood Katy (the "Property), and such other actions necessary or convenient to the carry out this resolution

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Paul Shanklin seconded; all were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-02)

ACTION ITEM 4:

Resolution authorizing the negotiation and execution of a contract with MRI Software, LLC to provide software and software support

Commissioner Paul Shanklin moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan seconded; all were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-03)
Ms. Quijano answered questions for Commissioners.

ACTION ITEM 5:

Resolution approving the submission to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Agency (HUD) of the Harris County Housing Authority Annual Public Housing Agency (PHA) Plan for the fiscal year 2026 and the 5-Year PHA Plan for the fiscal year 2026 to 2030

Commissioner Paul Shanklin moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan seconded; all were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-04)

Ms. Quijano answered questions from Commissioners regarding updates to the PHA Plan. Ms. Quijano reported the PHA Plan included information related to the Bernicia Place Development planned activity as it relates to Project Based Vouchers. Commissioner Rai asked what staff has been doing to strengthen the relationship with Metro. Ms. Quijano responded that recently staff have been working closely with their leadership staff in regards the Bernicia Place project. Commissioner Shanklin asked if HCHA anticipates any pushback of the Plan from Metro given the political climate. Ms. Quijano stated that HCHA does not anticipate this. Chairman Womack recommended HCHA research to incorporate modern technology in the next two years for the PHA Plan with examples as Uber and other transportation services. Commissioner Gilbert reported that residents may also utilize transportation providers with their Medicaid and Medicare benefits to assist them.

ACTION ITEM 6:

Resolution approving the revision of the Harris County Housing Authority Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan

Commissioner Paul Shanklin moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Ashley Gilbert seconded; all were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-05)

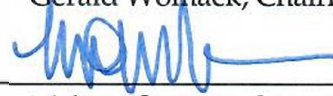
XI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Paul Shanklin moved to adjourn at 3:20 p.m. Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Adopted and approved this 19th day of February 2025.



Gerald Womack, Chairman



Melissa Quijano, Secretary