



**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
OF
HARRIS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**

December 10, 2024

**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 10th day of December 2024, 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
Joe Villarreal	Vice Chairman	Present
Asheley Gilbert	Commissioner	Absent
Paul Shanklin	Commissioner	Present
Laolu Davies-Yemitan	Commissioner	Absent

Melissa Quijano, Executive Director, attended all or portions of the meeting. Additional attendees included the following:

Beverly Burroughs, Debra McCray, Paul Curry, Dominique King, Terumi Shorter, Kimberly Rogers, Vivian Clark, and Tabitha Lockhart of the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) attended. Carrie Rai (Executive Director of Tony's Place) and Antoniette Jackson (outside Counsel with The Banks Law Firm) also attended.

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 Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal, who led the Texas Pledge.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Gerald Womack introduced Carrie Rai, who will be appointed by the Harris County Commissioner Court later today, 12/10/24, as the new Commissioner on the HCHA Board of Commissioners.

Carrie Rai (Executive Director for Tony's Place) stated that Tony's Place supports and empowers LGBTQ youth. Ms. Rai has worked extensively in the Houston community for several years. She worked for the Coalition for the Homeless of Houston and was the Associate Program Manager at SEARCH. She stated she had previously worked with Ms. Melissa Quijano in those roles. Ms. Rai informed the board that she is an immigrant from Canada who recently became a United States citizen in May 2024. Ms. Rai said she is excited to work with the community and HCHA Commissioners Board. Chairman Womack thanked Ms. Rai for her beginning service with the Board.

Chairman Womack noted that it was sad to acknowledge that Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal would be leaving the HCHA Board of Commissioners. 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 Womack advised that there would be a special acknowledgment for the Vice Chairman at a near future date.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION ITEM 1:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 20, 2024

Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal moved to approve the minutes from the board meeting on November 20, 2024. Commissioner Paul Shanklin seconded, and the motion carried.

V. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEM 2:

Resolution Authorizing Harris County Housing Authority to provide the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development the Annual Real Estate Assessment Center submission as prepared by HCHA's Independent Auditors

Ms. Melissa Quijano, Executive Director for HCHA, advised the board that one of the main requirements of the Federal Housing Choice Voucher Program administered is Financial Management and with that there is a requirement that we submit the annual single audit to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) nine months after the fiscal year end and the auditor from CLA would be presenting the report.

Ms. Mandy Merchant, CPA Principal for CliftonLarsonAllen LLP (CLA), thanked the board for allowing her to present the board with information regarding the recent audit of March 2024 for HCHA. Ms. Merchant introduced herself and informed the board that she was the managing principal on this job and has been with CLA for over 23 years and works

exclusively with housing authorities across the country. Ms. Merchant presented her report and outlined the audit goals and reports with the next steps to submit to HUD. She outlined the process during the audit and reported new GASB requirements for this year. Ms. Merchant reported that during their Single Audit onsite visit they reviewed up to 200 tenant files in the HCV program since compliance is very important for HUD and to ensure that all compliance requirements that HUD has established are followed. Ms. Merchant reported that the audit opinions for the Financial Statements, the Federal Awards Report and the Internal Controls Report were unmodified also known as clean audit opinion and in addition there were no findings. Ms. Merchant congratulated HCHA on no findings this year as there have been previously.

Chairman Womack stated he was speechless of the great news. asked Ms. Merchant to clarify that there were no findings that needed to be reported to the Harris County Commissioner Court, and Ms. Merchant reiterated that there were no findings to be reported. Chairman Womack thanked Ms. Merchant for an Audit that had no findings and stated what a wonderful Christmas gift it was, as well as a parting gift for Vice Chairman Villarreal. He also thanked Ms. Merchant and the HCHA staff for their hard work.

Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal moved to approve the resolution, Commissioner Paul Shanklin seconded, and the motion carried. (24-40)

ACTION ITEM 3:

Resolution Authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an Interlocal Agreement with Harris County for the provision of Legal Services

Commissioner Paul Shanklin wanted clarification and as the Vice Chairman had raised his opinion and as understood as the County Attorney does not have to report to us as when or how they work and as when we submit a request what is the expected turnaround time. Ms. Quijano stated that it has not been worked out yet and is pending, however normally this would be within a week. Ms. Quijano reported that the County Attorney will now assign requests to staff. Commissioner Shanklin indicated that it would be good if a concrete deadline could be worked out, so nothing is left hanging to be resolved. Chairman Womack asked if Ms. Quijano felt good with the arrangement until a permanent lawyer could be placed with HCHA. Ms. Quijano stated that she felt good about the agreement and that more details were being worked out.

Commissioner Paul Shanklin moved to approve the resolution. Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal seconded, and the motion carried. (24-41)

ACTION ITEM 4:

Resolution by Ratifying actions taken by Harris County Housing Authority's Executive Director to extend and preserve the current agreement for Internet Technology managed services with Salco Solutions for the benefit of the Harris County Housing Authority

Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal moved to approve the resolution. Commissioner Paul Shanklin seconded, and the motion carried. (24-42)

ACTION ITEM 5:

Resolution establishing a Nominating Committee by the Board of Commissioners

Chairman Womack motioned to appoint Commissioner Paul Shanklin as Chairman of the committee.

Chairman Gerald Womack moved to approve the resolution and the motion to appoint Commissioner Paul Shanklin as Chairman of the committee. Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal seconded, and the motion carried. (24-43)

ACTION ITEM 6:

Resolution establishing an Affordable Housing Committee

Chairman Womack motioned to appoint Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan as Chairman of the committee.

Chairman Gerald Womack moved to approve the resolution and the motion to appoint Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan as Chairman of the committee. Vice Chairman

Joe Villarreal seconded, and the motion carried. (24-44)

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Gerald Womack moved to adjourn at 1:34 p.m., Commissioner Paul Shanklin seconded, and the motion carried.

Adopted and approved this 15th day of January 2025.



Gerald Womack, Chairman



Melissa Quijano, Secretary