



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

**May 15, 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 regular session, open to the public on the 15th day of May 2024, at Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA), located at 1933 Hussion Street, inside the boundaries of Harris County in Houston, Texas. Chairman Gerald Womack called the meeting to order at 1:02 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 (Excused)
Paul Shanklin	Commissioner	Absent (Excused)
Laolu Davies-Yemitan	Commissioner	Present

Melissa Quijano, CEO, and Silvia Tiller, General Counsel from Harris County Attorney's Office attended all or portions of the meeting. Additional attendees included the following:

Beverly Burroughs, Debra McCray, Paul Curry, via virtually online, Dominique King, Terumi Shorter, Arielene Davis, and Tabitha Lockhart staff of the Harris County Housing Authority. Antoinette Jackson, Principal with The Banks Law Firm and outside Counsel, was also in attendance.

**II. OPENING PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Debra McCray opened the meeting with prayer, followed by Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan, who led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal, who led the Texas Pledge.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**ACTION ITEM 1:**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 17, 2024**

Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal moved to approve the minutes from the Board Meeting on April 17, 2024. Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan seconded the motion; all were in favor, and the motion carried.

**V. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

Ms. Quijano presented to the Board the HCHA's activities from April 18, 2024, to May 15, 2024, which are reflected in the April Board Book.

Ms. Quijano updated the board regarding the recommended opportunity to explore the Disparity Study Fund Grant available and would bring it back to the Board for final approval. The application will be reviewed when it becomes available. The letter of intent was completed and submitted. Chairman Womack asked Ms. Quijano to confirm that the letter of intent was just a letter of our interest in the Disparity Study Fund and no financial obligation from the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Quijano confirmed that was correct.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan asked Ms. Quijano if there was an urgency and/or timeline in the event the Board wants to advance the effort forward. Ms. Quijano responded that at this time only the letter of intent was requested. Chairman Womack asked Ms. Tiller if she had any comments regarding this since she has been in discussions with the County. Ms. Tiller responded that the County has approved funding for this study to include certain entities as HCHA to apply and we are following their programmatic process by submitting our letter of intent at this time. Ms. Tiller stated that after we follow their process then we would have a schedule to follow, and we would have the Commissioners the opportunity to weigh in if we want to complete that process. Ms. Tiller also stated that due to the limited funding available, we may have missed such an opportunity if the letter of intent was not submitted. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan requested that due to this opportunity being open even more widely to other entities and that there is potential that we may miss out on this opportunity to leverage funds and have a Disparity Study completed that we quickly follow up with this opportunity with a timeline to have completed. Chairman Womack requested that Ms. Quijano work with legal and complete any requests or information needed for this opportunity. Vice Chairman Villarreal asked if we had looked into the issue that Commissioner Shanklin had raised during the last meeting. Ms. Tiller responded in detail that this was looked into, and that Commissioner Shanklin's question had been addressed at the previous



meeting.

Ms. Quijano reported that HCHA staff participated in Fair Housing Month Training with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Region VI Office of Fair Housing on April 22 and 23, 2024.

Ms. Quijano reported that HCHA Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Coordinators collaborated with the VA (Veteran Affairs) Office and issued 44 vouchers to Homeless Veterans on April 25, 2024.

Ms. Quijano informed the Board that HCHA was invited to Commissioner Garcia's 2Casa Housing Summit and mini-Resource Fair on May 4, 2024. HCHA participated in a panel discussion regarding housing, policy, and issues in the Latino community.

Ms. Quijano reported that on May 9, 2024, HCHA assisted the Harris County Community Services Department as a partner with stakeholder input in the development of their 2024-2028 Consolidated Plan. This process helps them to outline their priorities and objectives for utilizing HUD Entitlement funds within the Harris County service area over the ensuing five years.

Ms. Quijano reported that the Affordable Housing Department had compliance monitoring visits from the Harris County Community Services Department on the following dates and developments:

- April 29, 2024 – Heritage Estates - HOME Program Compliance
- April 29, 2024 - The Hollows - Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Compliance
- May 7, 2024 - Baybrook Park - HOME Program Compliance

On April 16, 2024, HCHA received notification from the Harris County Community Services Department that the Waterside Court Affordable Housing Development met all requirements of the Housing Quality Standard inspections conducted in January, March and April 2024.

On April 23, 2024, HCHA received notification from the Harris County Community Services Department that The Villas at Eastwood Development met all requirements of the HOME program compliance visit conducted on March 19, 2024.

On May 3, 2024, HCHA received notification from Harris County Community Services Department that Sierra Meadows Development met all requirements of the Housing Quality Standards inspections conducted in November and December 2023 and May 2024.

On May 13, 2024, HCHA received notification from Harris County Community Services Department that The Retreat at Westlock development met all requirements of the Housing Quality Standards conducted in February and May 2024.



Ms. Quijano thanked Ms. Dominique King and her team in the Affordable Housing Dept. for their great work in ensuring that compliance is met and working with all the properties in preparation for these reviews.

Chairman Womack asked Ms. Quijano that if what she just reported was that CSD went out to all these different housing developments, and they conducted their inspections and they said they said our developments met all the requirements that was satisfactory for the families who live in their units to live there? Ms. Quijano responded yes. Chairman Womack asked Ms. Quijano if these had been inspected and if they go to every unit? Ms. King responded that inspections are conducted on every restricted unit as required and identified by CSD. Ms. Antoinette Jackson, Principal with The Banks Law Firm, and outside Counsel for HCHA, also responded to include that units may be identified as floating units that are based on eligibility of the family at the time they apply and may not always remain affordable based on their eligibility and what may be available. Chairman Womack reported that it is very important to the Board that all developments are continuously inspected as a part of the routine process as required.

Ms. Quijano reported the First Met Apartments Development located at 8870 West Sam Houston Parkway is 80% complete. It is located in Precinct 1 and has 157 one-bedroom and two-bedroom units combined.

Ms. Quijano reported a total of 487 HCV Annual Recertifications were completed with 100% timely processing for March 2024. One new voucher from HCHA's HCV waiting list was issued with a total of 3,004 families remaining on HCHA's HCV waiting list. The HCV Program Voucher Utilization for March was 4,291 families for the HCV Program, 563 families for VASH, and 195 families for the Emergency Housing Voucher Program. Overall, HCHA assisted 5,049 families, with a total of 14,117 residents in Harris County for the month of March 2024. Chairman Womack requested for the reported information of assistance be provided in detail by precinct in the future.

Ms. Quijano acknowledged and recognized Reverend William "Bill" Lawson, for his leadership and service to our community.

Ms. Tiller, requested that agenda Action Item 3: *Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and enter into a contract to procure an electric utilities provider*, be taken out of order due to a final recommendation received earlier in the morning and Shell has accepted and held on their price point, which would require execution of an agreement in real time. Ms. Tiller asked the Board of Commissioners that if they had questions regarding the process, she has asked Mr. Jay Anderson to call in to take questions and outline the process in detail. Ms. Tiller reported that this is for the purchase of utilities for Buildings 1, 2, and 3 on-site at The Villas at Eastwood. Ms. Tiller reported that the new recommendation has changed from 72 months to 24 months for total bundle cost of \$432,209 from the resolution presented in The Board

Book the change is a result of the volatility of the market and new lower recommendation received from Shell than the one previously received and identified in the resolution. The market would then be reassessed prior to the 24-month period end by the consultant, and they will provide a new recommendation.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan requested a synopsis and comparison of prior cost to the new rate from Mr. Jay Anderson.

Mr. Jay Anderson consulted via phone conference regarding Shell Corporation's electric service bid for a 24-month contract and responded to the board's questions.

Vice Chairman Villarreal asked Ms. Tiller if the blank spaces of the resolution were to be updated with the new recommendations. Ms. Tiller responded that it would not and that the minutes will serve as the record of the transaction and normally handled as such in these type of real time scenarios. Ms. Tiller answered additional questions from the Board.

**ACTION ITEM 3:**

**Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and enter into a contract to procure an electric utilities provider**

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to amend the resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and enter into a contract to procure electric utilities from Shell based on the proposal provided by the consultant; Vice Chairman Villarreal seconded, all were in favor, and the motion for the resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into the contact carried. (24-19)

**VI. FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Paul Curry presented the HCHA's March 2024 financial statements via video conference. The consolidated budget reflected revenue over budget by 9% and expenses over budget by 8%.

Lastly, Mr. Curry answered questions from the Board.

**VII. HCV AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEPARTMENTS PRESENTATION**

Ms. Debra McCray presented the HCV lease-up rates reflected in the March 2024 monthly reports, which are included in the May 15, 2024, Board Book.

Ms. McCray advised the board that the HCHA SEMAP score was 100%. Chairperson Womack would like a roundtable meeting with potential homeowners who are voucher recipients.

Lastly, Ms. McCray answered questions from the Board.



Ms. Dominique King reviewed the status of properties within the Affordable Housing Division for the month of March 2024. Ms. King identified the high-performing properties. Lastly, Ms. King reviewed the status of each property's net income for March 2024.

Ms. King moved to proposed and affordable housing developments that are under construction.

- The Hollows project is 100% complete. The project is preparing for retainage release and project close out.
- The Northwood Apartments is 100% complete. The project is preparing for retainage release and project close out.
- The Bluestem Apartments project is 99% complete. Buildings one through seven passed HQS (Housing Quality Standards) Inspections allowing for occupancy. Certificates of Compliance/Occupancy were received for all buildings.
- The Residences at Arbor Oaks are 100% complete. The project is preparing for retainage and project close out.
- The First Met Senior Apartments project is 80% complete. Interior finishing, including HVAC and electrical installation, is underway. Interior painting and cabinetry installation have commenced. An initial leasing call was held with the Harris County Housing and Community Development Department.

Ms. King advised that The Villas at Eastwood (Fenix Estates) had submitted a response to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs regarding Cost Certification. Ms. King answered questions from the Board.

Lastly, Ms. King answered questions from the Board.

#### **VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board went into an executive session at 2:15 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 3:38 p.m.

#### **X. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

##### **ACTION ITEM 2:**

**Resolution authorizing travel and other expenses for Paul Curry, Director, Director of Finance, Dominique King, Director of Real Estate Development, and Jesus Menchaca, Construction Coordinator**

Chairman Womack moved to amend the resolution to include Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan to attend the training and to approve the resolution, Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal seconded, and the motion carried. (24-18)

**ACTION ITEM 3:**

**Resolution authorizing the Executive Director to negotiate and enter into a contract to procure an electric utilities provider**

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan motioned to accept Shell's proposal for the 24-month contract to provide energy needs; Vice Chairman Villarreal seconded, and all were in favor, and the motion for the resolution authorizing the Executive Director to enter into the contact was carried. (24-19)

**ACTION ITEM 4:**


**Resolution authorizing the Executive Director of the Harris County Housing Authority to negotiate and execute the First Amendment to the Legal Services Agreement with the Harris County Attorney's Office for the provision of Legal Services**

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution, Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal seconded, and all were in favor, and the motion was carried. (24-20)

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to adjourn at 3:41 p.m., Vice Chairman Joe Villarreal seconded, all were in favor, and the motion carried.

Adopted and approved this 26th day of June 2024.



Gerald Womack, Chairman



Melissa Quijano, Secretary