



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

**July 16, 2025**

**THE STATE OF TEXAS     §  
  §  
COUNTY OF HARRIS     §**

**I.     CALL TO ORDER AND RECORD OF ATTENDANCE**

The Board of Commissioners of the Harris County Housing Authority met in a regular session, open to the public, on July 16, 2025, at the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA), located at 1933 Hussion Street, within 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
Paul Shanklin	Vice Chairman	Present
Asheley Gilbert	Commissioner	Present
Laolu Davies-Yemitan	Commissioner	Present
Carrie Rai	Commissioner	Present

Melissa Quijano, Chief Executive Officer of the Harris County Housing Authority, and Neeharika Tumati, General Counsel from the Harris County Attorney's Office, attended all or portions of the meeting. Additional attendees included the following:

Paul Curry, Kimberly Rogers, Terrance James, Vivian Clark, and Tabitha Lockhart of the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) were in attendance. Also in attendance were Kechia Kyles (Landlord/Kecha Rentals), Curleesha Riggins (Tenant/HCV participant), and Toni Jackson of the Banks Law Firm (outside legal counsel).

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

Mr. Paul Curry opened the meeting with prayer, followed by Commissioner Carrie Rai, who led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Vice Chairman Paul Shanklin, who led the Texas Pledge.

## **III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Kechia Kyles (Landlord/Owner of Kech Rentals) noted that she had been affiliated with Houston Housing, Harris County Housing Authority, and other government programs.

Ms. Kyles stated that the tenant damaged property that jeopardized the safety of families, including herself. This experience has led her to reconsider her participation in these programs. The 1<sup>st</sup> issue she has is regarding payment. Ms. Kyles states that she attempted to negotiate with Ms. Beverly Burroughs (HCHA Director of Quality). Ms. Kyles states that instead of addressing the tenant's fraudulent activity, Ms. Burroughs reduced the payment due her and allowed the tenant to relocate to another property. The fact that HCHA allowed the tenant to relocate to another property is deeply concerning.

Ms. Kyles noted that the tenant claimed to be a victim of domestic violence and engaged in a destructive pattern of behavior. Ms. Kyles states that Ms. Burroughs refused to make a payment and address the issues. Upon the tenant vacating the premises, significant damage was discovered. Including intentionally turning on the gas stove to fill the house with gas, removing the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, removing the door locks, and theft of Ms. Kyle's tools; discovering concealed severed gas and electrical wires, and deliberately leaving open water valves. These actions created a serious risk of fire or explosion and could have caused substantial damage to property, people, and animals, as well as financial losses.

Ms. Kyles states that, despite several attempts to pursue legal action, HCHA has been unable to provide an address for the tenant. The tenant did not give a forwarding address. Emails were sent to Ms. Melissa Quijano (HCHA Chief Executive Officer) and Ms. Burroughs, and to this day, no emails or phone calls have been received. It seems they are unconcerned. This incident highlights serious flaws in the current system, including the lack of accountability for tenants who cause significant damage, engage in fraudulent behavior, or create unnecessary financial burdens for landlords. As taxpayers who support these government programs, we deserve better protection.

Ms. Kyles asks that the Board consider implementing stricter policies, including managerial allegiance regarding forwarding addresses and the immediate termination of assistance for tenants who intentionally damage properties. The current lack of oversight and accountability encourages irresponsible behavior and discourages landlords from continuing to participate in these programs. Ms. Kyles believes a proactive approach with stronger consequences for destructive behavior is crucial for the long term and the integrity of the program. Many landlords, including herself, are re-evaluating their participation due to these risks.

Ms. Kyles informed the Board that the young lady who is coming has the tags from the

gas company that could not turn the gas on, and also has the wires that were cut and bent.

Chairman Gerald Womack asked if the time was up. Ms. Tabitha Lockhart (HCHA Executive Administrative Assistant) confirmed the time was up for Ms. Kyles.

Chairman Womack acknowledged that Ms. Kyles was appreciated, and he would ask Ms. Melissa Quijano (HCHA Chief Executive Officer) to have a staff member to come down and assist Ms. Kyles.

Ms. Quijano responded that Mr. Terrance James (HCHA Senior Admissions Manager) would assist Ms. Kyles.

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan told Ms. Kyles that she would remain in the meeting while she waited for Mr. James to assist her.

Vice Chairman Paul Shanklin asked if the second lady wanted to speak as well. Chairman Womack stated that he believed she just wanted to provide a supplement to Ms. Kyle's statement.

Ms. Lockhart informed the Board that there was another speaker, a woman who wanted to make a statement.

Chairman Womack requested that the speaker state their name, provide the address to be discussed, and be given 2 minutes to address the Board.

Ms. Curleesha Riggins (Tenant of Kecha Rentals) provided her name and the address 1226 Kings Meadow Drive, Houston, Texas 77044.

Ms. Riggins informed the Board that she was a new tenant of Ms. Kyles and that she had a lot of trouble getting things turned on due to the previous tenant who was there before her. The water could not be turned on in time because the previous tenant had left all the faucets on.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

##### **ACTION ITEM 1:**

##### **Approval of the Minutes of the June 18, 2025, Board Meeting**

Vice Chairman Shanklin moved to approve the resolution; Commissioner Asheley Gilbert seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

#### **V. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Board entered an executive session at 1:14 p.m. to consult with its attorneys and seek or receive legal advice regarding pending or contemplated litigation, discuss the value or transfer of real property, or discuss any item listed on the agenda.

No action was taken.

**VI. RECONVENE**

The Board of Commissioners reconvened for the public session at 2:00 p.m.

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

Ms. Melissa Quijano, Chief Executive Officer, presented the CEO report for the month of July 2025 as follows:

Ms. Quijano notified the Board that HCHA was preparing for its Annual Internal Audit.

Ms. Quijano advised the Board on the Admin Plan revisions as of June 20, 2025. These revisions pertain to the conversion of Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs) to Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs), ensuring that participants will not be terminated from receiving assistance.

Commissioner Rai asked about the initial plan for those whose vouchers were set to expire in 2030.

Ms. Quijano replied that the EHVs are not eligible for renewal per the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations. The EHVs are not permanent vouchers. The EHVs are transferring to HCV based on HUD guidelines. Due to the high rising costs and limited funding, they will not last until 2030. The participants would also have to qualify for a need to be moved to the HCVs.

Commissioner Rai inquired about the number of vouchers being issued for the HCV program and the total issued in the past year. Ms. Quijano explained that the only vouchers issued in the past year were Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing Vouchers (VASH). Mr. James stated that the last HCV issued was in February 2021, and there are currently 3048 families on the HCV waiting list at this time. Ms. Quijano explained that in order for vouchers to be issued there has to be funding for that program. She will be meeting Mr. Paul Curry (HCHA Finance Director) and Mr. James to see how things can be held. Chairman Womack stated that it was good that Ms. Quijano and the staff were putting in a place a procedure now in case the funding ended before 2030 for the EHV participants.

Chairman Womack stated there is a large number of people in need of assistance and it is wise to plan ahead. He inquired about the number of people on the waiting list at this time, and Mr. James informed the Board that there are currently 3,048 families on the waiting list. Chairman Womack acknowledged that there had not been a lottery (A housing lottery is a system used to randomly select applicants for affordable housing units when demand exceeds supply) in some years. Mr. James stated that the last lottery was in 2020. Chairman Womack noted that the numbers still needing assistance was dangerous especially anticipating the funding cuts that may happen.

Mr. Paul Curry (Finance Director) addressed Commissioner Rai and stated that in 2024, HCHA was in short fall and per HUD unable to issue any vouchers. With a short fall you may have units available, but no funding for them. HCHA received assistance of \$2,000,000 due to the shortfall. Ms. Quijano will meet with Commissioner Rai at a later

date to discuss the process in more detail.

Lastly, Chairman Womack requested that the microphone used by the presenters be updated so that the departmental reports can be heard clearly.

## **VIII. FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Paul Curry (HCHA Financial Director) presented the May financial statements as reported in the Board Book on July 16, 2025.

Mr. Curry reported the consolidated financial statements, representing the cash flow balances for the program's reporting period. Mr. Curry explained that cash flows could fluctuate based on HUD funding, as they might send more than is needed during one period and none the next, allowing the overage to be consumed. This could result in a deficit and a negative account balance.

Mr. Curry reported that the consolidated budget reflected revenue 1% under budget and expenses 6% under budget.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan inquired regarding the positive balance \$1,646,332 in the budget for spending. Mr. Curry noted that the fees were from development programs and confirmed that the funds are to be used for more Affordable Housing Developments.

Mr. Curry reviewed the contracts that expire within the next six months, covering the period ending August 31, 2025.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan wanted instructions on accessing the Microsoft 365 account assigned to him. Mr. Curry replied that he would get the information to him. Chairman Womack requested that Ms. Lockhart ensure the information was provided. Ms. Quijano stated that she would make sure all the information was forwarded on how to access the account.

Lastly, Mr. Curry answered questions from the Board.

## **IX. HCV AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEPARTMENTS PRESENTATION**

Mr. Terrance James (on behalf of Ms. Debra McCray, Housing Choice Voucher Director) presented the HCV lease-up rates as reflected in the May 2025 Monthly Reports, which are included in the July 16, 2025, Board Book.

Mr. James reported that the utilization in May 2025, for the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) was 97% for a total of 4,072 families; for the Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program was 90% for a total of 600 Veteran families, and for the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Program was 80% for a total of 165 families.

Commissioner Rai stated, out of the 4,239 HCV vouchers awarded, 4,072 were leased. What was going on with the other 167? Are they all issued? Mr. James explained that he

would confirm that all of the 4,239 vouchers have been issued and get the information to her. Commissioner Rai stated that she wanted the same information for VASH as well. Mr. James also noted that the 167 voucher holders could be looking for a place to rent, or in the process of moving due to the Housing Assistance Program (HAP) contract ending.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan commented that the HCV voucher total went from 4,243 in March to 4,239 in May. Why was that? Mr. Curry explained that there was a reduction in the Foster youth's vouchers. That program was not being utilized, resulting in a reduction of the Foster youth vouchers. Commissioner Rai asked why the vouchers were not being utilized, and Mr. Curry stated that Ms. Beverly Burroughs handles that program and is currently out of the office. Mr. Curry will need to obtain that information from Ms. Burroughs at her earliest convenience and provide it at the August Board meeting. Ms. Quijano noted that the program was a 2-year program, and that was the reason for some of the Foster youth voucher reductions. Mr. Curry explained that with these types of programs, just like the EHV program, the voucher cannot be reissued.

Mr. James noted there was one participant beginning the application process, one home in the application process, and one ending the program in May 2025. Commissioner Womack advised that the City of Houston was providing up to \$125,000 to assist those in the program wanting to buy a home.

Mr. James reported the HCV and VASH Programs utilized 100% of the HAP funding, totaling \$5,222,523, and the EHV Program utilized 139% of the funding, totaling \$ 221,353.

For May 2025, 455 Annual Recertifications were processed in a timely manner at 100%. 13 new VASH Vouchers were issued. There are 3048 applicants on the HCHA's HCV waiting list.

Mr. James reported that 980 inspections were completed in May 2025, 892 of which were Annual and Initial Inspections, representing 86% of the total. 68 Special/Damage or Emergency inspections were completed, at 12%. The Quality Control inspections totaled 20, at 2%.

Vice Chairman Shanklin asked where the inspection for Ms. Riggins, who had previously spoken, would fall under. Mr. James advised that Ms. Riggins' inspection would have been an Initial Inspection. Vice Chairman Shanklin wanted to know if the findings had not been reported in the previous tenants' Initial Inspection. Mr. James explained that the unit passed the Initial Inspection of the previous tenant, and the property failures were identified in July, after that tenant had moved out in May. Commissioner Rai reiterated that had Ms. Riggins been on the HCV program, her Initial Inspection would have failed, and Mr. James confirmed that. Chairman Womack stated that it was the landlord's responsibility to inspect after the tenant moved and report any discrepancies. Mr. James noted that to be true. Commissioner Gilbert asked why the previous tenant was allowed to move out after 1 month. Mr. James stated that the previous tenant was permitted to move out under extenuating circumstances, with the landlord's consent. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan asked what happens if it is found

that the tenant damaged the property. Mr. James stated they would be terminated from the HCV program. Ms. Quijano, due to family obligations, an opportunity to request a formal hearing process is given before termination. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan stated that consideration should be taken for first-time landlords and landlords in dealing with tenant and landlord issues regarding inspections and termination from the program. Commissioner Gilbert asked if information could be included in the onboarding packets for the landlord. Chairman Womack suggested adding a video to the HCHA website to aid landlords.

Mr. James reported that for May 2025, the yearly average passed for Initial Inspections is 100%, and for Annual Inspections, it is 97%.

Lastly, Mr. James answered questions from the Board.

Chairman Womack thanked Mr. James for his hard work.

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

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan asked Ms. Quijano how things have been going since the incident that took place at the Northwood/Twelve620 Apartments. Ms. Quijano advised that an investigation was still ongoing. Chairman Womack asked if everyone was ok, and Ms. Quijano stated that the Harris Center is providing counseling.

### **ACTION ITEM 2:**

#### **Resolution approving the Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2026, Budget Revision No. 1**

Mr. Curry was asked to provide more information regarding the Budget. Mr. Curry explained that there had been an increase in the salaries of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and General Counsel (GC). Mr. Curry noted that there was an increase in legal fees due to the absence of an in-house counsel, and HCHA had not yet received an invoice, but was anticipating one. Chairman Womack stated that he and Vice Chairman Shanklin requested this information previously, because they need to know where HCHA stands with the budget. Mr. Curry also noted that the budget increased due to vehicle maintenance, the refinancing of Fenix Estates LLC, and providing activities for the residents at all of the developments. Additional cubicles will be added to provide space for new employees and to address the increasing costs of IT. Commissioner Rai pointed out that she thought the IT position was now going to be full-time, not part-time. Mr. Curry stated that, due to half of the year being over, the budget reflects what the IT person, along with the other positions, would receive until the new year.

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution; Vice Chairman Paul Shanklin seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-23)

**ACTION ITEM 3:**

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

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution; Commissioner Asheley Gilbert seconded. Commissioner Carrie Rai abstained, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Rai questioned if the changes were from HUD that were mandatory versus suggested, or HCHA internal policy changes. She also wanted to know about the income changes, and how this affects the clients. What documentation there is, will it increase or decrease certain areas, and she needs clarification on it all. Ms. Quijano advised that the changes were recommendations from HUD. She also noted that this resolution could be moved to next month to provide further discussions. Vice Chairman Shanklin noted that the definitions are noted in the document.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan stated he did not believe an item could not be tabled once it has been voted on.

The Board revisited this item after discussing with Attorney Neeharika Tumati (General Counsel) that it was to be motioned to be reconsidered.

Vice Chairman Shanklin moved to reconsider the resolution, and Commissioner Rai seconded. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan abstained, and the motion carried.

Commissioner Rai moved to reconsider the resolution at the August Board meeting.

**ACTION ITEM 4:**

**Resolution by the Harris County Housing Authority (The "Authority") approving and ratifying (I) an amendment to the purchase and sale agreement for acquisition of the real property for Bernicia Place (The "Project"), such other actions necessary or convenient to carry out this resolution**

Chairman Womack acknowledged Outside Counsel Toni Jackson for working on this project. Ms. Jackson noted that the Commissioners would receive documents in the next few weeks, allowing for the filing of the Tax Credit paperwork. The paperwork would require the signatures of each of them.

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution; Commissioner Asheley Gilbert seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-25)

**ACTION ITEM 5:**

**Resolution approving the amendment and extension of the current contract of employment of the Executive Director, Secretary, and Chief Executive Officer of the Harris County Housing Authority**

Commissioner Carrie Rai moved to approve the resolution; Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-26)

## ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to adjourn at 2:56 p.m.  
Commissioner Carrie Rai seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

Adopted and approved this 20th day of August 2025.



---

Gerald Womack, Chairman



---

Melissa Quijano, Secretary