

JANUARY 2016 MINUTES

HOWARD COUNTY HOUSING COMMISSION

January 19, 2016

Gateway Building, 6751 Columbia Gateway Dr., 3rd Floor Board Room, Columbia, MD

HCHC Members Present

Carole R. MacPhee, *Chairperson*
Regina D. Stone-Mitchell, *Vice Chair*
Donzella Curtis
Ian Kennedy
Maurice M. Simpkins

Staff Present

Thomas P. Carbo, *Executive Director*
Ada D. Best, *Chief Financial Officer*
Kelly Cimino, *Chief Housing Opportunities*
Quanita K. Tubman, *Chief, Contracts Mgmt. & Tech Svc*
Samuel P. Tucker, *Chief of Rental Assistance Programs*
Famebridge Witherspoon, *Community Relations Specialist*
Lisa O'Brien, *Sr. Assistant County Solicitor*
Constance A. Tucker, *Sr. Assistant County Solicitor*

HCHC Members Absent/Excused

Christopher W. Oxenham
Stacy L. Spann

Guests/Visitors Present

Carl DeLorenzo
Katja Rhoden

Recording Secretary

Judith C. Davis

I. CALL TO ORDER - 6:00 P.M.

The meeting of the Howard County Housing Commission was held on Tuesday, January 19, 2016, at the Gateway office of the Housing Department. This meeting was called to order at 6:17 P.M., by Chairperson Carole R. MacPhee. A quorum was present to conduct business.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The *January 2016 Agenda*, was previously mailed and electronically sent to Commissioners for their review and comments. A motion was entertained by Commissioner Kennedy and seconded by Commissioner Stone-Mitchell to accept the January Agenda as submitted. The motion passed 5-0.

III. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MINUTES

Following a brief review of the December Minutes, a motion was made by Commissioner Kennedy and seconded by Commissioner Stone-Mitchell to approve the *December 15, 2015 Minutes* as submitted. The motion passed.

IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Invited guests included Director of Policy & Programs for County Administration, Carl DeLorenzo, and Katja Rhoden who was present to discuss Action Item VIII.

V. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

In accordance with the bylaws, the first Chairperson shall be designated by the County Executive and the first Vice Chairperson shall be elected from among the Commissioners and

shall hold office for a one-year term. At each annual meeting thereafter, the Commission shall select, by majority vote of all Commissioners, Chair and Vice Chair.

Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Kennedy and seconded by Commissioner Curtis to re-elect Carole R. MacPhee as Chairperson and Regina D. Stone-Mitchell as Vice Chairperson. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Report reflected on highlights from 2015 that was devoted to hard work of preparing and planning for several groundbreaking projects and initiatives that can help Howard County achieve more livable, sustainable and inclusive communities in the future. The Director's Report and more information can be found on the County's website located under the Department of Housing and Community Development's banner at www.howardcountymd.gov.

VII. HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Chief of Rental Assistance Programs, Samuel P. Tucker, was available to discuss the Housing Choice Voucher Program Coordinator's report, and gave a summary on last year's report. Starting this year and based on HUD funding, staff will be offering leasing for approximately 50 homeless slots to families from Grassroots and the HCV wait list. Percentages from the 50 Public Housing units that converted to Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Project-Based Vouchers effective December 1, 2015, will begin to show on the Utilization Chart.

Commissioner Stone-Mitchell who is also a member of NAHRO, updated members that legislation is expected to pass before the end of this year that will change the recertification process, inspections, administrative burdens and calculations for medical deductions. This is the first major change ever made to the program.

VIII. ACTION ITEM: KATJA RHODEN – REQUEST TO AMEND RIGHT OF FIRST PURCHASE

Chief Kelly Cimino for Housing Opportunities shared a letter received from Katja Rhoden, owner of an MIHU unit, whereas Ms. Rhoden purchased a property with the Commission in 2009, the current holder of second mortgage. Ms. Rhoden, who has recently become engaged, would eventually like to sell her home back to the Commission. For a limited period of time, she is asking the Commission to consider renting her home to another MIHU family who has been identified, offering them a rent with option to purchase opportunity. According to the Right of First Purchase Agreement, Section 4–Primary Residence, “*The owner shall use the premises only as a primary residence and shall not rent or lease any part thereof without the prior written approval of the Commission.*” Ms. Rhoden is invested in the community and is seeking approval from the Commission. After addressing several questions and concerns, Ms. Cimino recommended approval of her request as mentioned.

A motion was entertained to approve the rental of an affordable unit in the Cherrytree Community located in Laurel, Maryland, from the current owner allowing her to rent the unit for 12-18 months. Staff will submit details in writing. The motion was moved by Commissioner Kennedy and seconded by Commissioner Stone-Mitchell. The motion passed.

IX. ACTION ITEM: AMENDMENT TO PURCHASING PROCEDURES – LOCAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE

At last month's meeting, the Executive Director spoke about incorporating the County Executive's new Local Business Initiative into Howard County Housing Commission's Procurement Policy. Commissioners reviewed the added language found on page 16, Section 14.1, Required Efforts – *Additionally, in accordance with County Executive Order 2015-11 entitled "Local Business Initiative," HCHC hereby adopts and incorporates the requirement to buy local whenever feasible. The HCHC will award to a local business in the event of a tie; and, will specifically solicit local businesses for solicitations under \$10,000.* This amount is the procurement law and current standard limit for contracts without going through the bidding process. Quanita Kareem, Chief, Contracts Management & Technical Services explained that favoritism will be given specifically to local businesses.

A motion to approve the Amendment to Purchasing Procedures—Local Business Initiative was made by Commissioner Kennedy and seconded by Commissioner Curtis. The motion passed.

X. UPDATE: REGIONAL PROJECT BASED VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Howard County Housing Commission is working in partnership with local PHAs, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council and the Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership and has submitted an application to HUD to do a pilot program, as pioneered in Chicago since 2002, requesting seed funding over three years to establish the program. Each local PHA will commit a designated percentage of vouchers to a "virtual pool" of vouchers earmarked to be project-based in a development in an area of opportunity. This program will offer a critical new way for low-income families to access the substantial opportunity in the Baltimore metropolitan area and propose a targeted program to show the value and the viability of creating that access through housing strategies in higher opportunity areas. The Howard County Housing Commission will be the lead public housing agency.

The Executive Director announced that HUD has approved the application and is awarding \$500,000 towards administering the project. The Baltimore Metropolitan Council will begin planning and marketing the plan with VRHP administering the vouchers. The idea is to market this program to Low Income Housing Tax Credit developers to do a project in an area of opportunity. As an incentive to HUD, staff is meeting with CDA in hopes they will incorporate this program into their 9% tax credit round that starts in the fall.

XI. UPDATE: DOWNTOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING LEGISLATION

The final draft of legislation is nearing completion and ready for submission including the Development Rights and Responsibilities Agreement (DRRA) between the County and the Howard Research Development Corporation (HRD). First, a Pre-submission Community Meeting on the DRRA is expected to occur over the next 3-4 weeks. It is anticipated legislation will be submitted to the Planning Board's agenda by mid-February. Then, a Planning Board public hearing is expected to be held in mid-April. Finally, the Planning Board will make their recommendations to the County Council who is expected to approve the Joint Recommendations by June. The package includes the DRRA, the Downtown Columbia Plan Amendments, the General Plan Amendments, County Code Amendments, Zoning Regulation Amendments and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the County, the Housing Commission and the CDHC for all portions of the Joint Recommendations that pertain to those three parties.

A lengthy discussion followed a proposed change the HRD made to Sections 4.2B and 4.2C of the DRRA's master lease that describe the rate the Commission will be charged not to exceed 95% of the Section 8 Voucher Payment Standard (VPS) for Columbia, Maryland. Exhibits showed several scenarios that the HRD proposed vs. staff recommendations. The Executive Director's new proposal will suggest HRD lease the units to the Commission at a rate of 95% of the 2016 VPS, and the lease rate be adjusted annually in accordance with adjustments in the VPS by more than 3% annually, or by more than 10% cumulatively. A proposal to the CDHC regarding the Fund will be suggested in the MOU.

XII. UPDATE: REORGANIZATION/RELOCATION

The Reorganization Bill is expected to be pre-filed this week with the County Council to be processed next month. A Public Hearing is scheduled for February to discuss the final recommendations that the Housing Commission be separated from the Department of Housing and moving Homeownership and Grant Programs to the Department of Citizen Services. The County Executive would like the Commissioners' name changed which has to be done by legislation.

Staff is talking to the Association of Community Services of Howard County (ACS) and other non-profits about joining them in a new non-profit center creating a shared office space. Together, this move would not only benefit clients by providing a one stop shop having all services in one location, but non-profits would benefit by sharing common space such as equipment, conference/training rooms. ACS has located a site on Patuxent Woods Drive and is negotiating a lease with landowner. The County Executive has tentatively agreed to make contributions towards the 10 year lease payments (with an option to purchase). Non-profits are asking if Commissioners are willing to serve as the master lessee, which would cover the entire space and sublease out. ACS will serve as manager.

XIII. MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no comments made during this meeting.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business presented to Commissioners at this time and upon motion duly made by Commissioner Kennedy and seconded by Commissioner Stone-Mitchell, the *January 19, 2016*, Meeting of the Howard County Housing Commission was adjourned at 7:28 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith C. Davis
Recording Secretary

***Upcoming Meeting: HCHC
Tuesday, February 16, 2016***