



**Asheville Housing Authority**  
**Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners**

Draft Minutes: August 28, 2024

Meeting Location: HACA Central, 165 S. French Broad Ave., Asheville, NC 28801

[Click Here](#) to view all meeting materials

**I. Work Session Meeting Opening & Roll Call:**

Chairman Jackson opened the Work Session and asked for roll call at 5:07 PM

**Board Members present:** Chairman Tilman Jackson, Vice Chairman Reginald Robinson, Commissioner Scott Farkas, Commissioner Roy Harris, Commissioner David L. Robinson Sr., Commissioner Kidada Wynn. HACA President & CEO Ms. Monique Pierre was also present at the meeting.

- **Approval of Agenda**

**Vice Chair Robinson moved** to approve the agenda as presented, **Commissioner Farkas seconded** the motion. The Commissioners unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

- **Executive Update presented by Ms. Monique Pierre, President & CEO** ([Click Here](#) for Executive Report)

Chairman Jackson requested that Ms. Pierre go over the Executive Report and address the questions that were presented by the Board of Commissioners on July 24, 2024.

**1. Child Care RFP Update:**

The process has been very complex, and with a great deal of staff participation and dedication, much progress has been made.

- **PEAK Academy** had their first day of school at the Edington Center on Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>.
- **Christine Avery** has accepted their lease and has started preparing to move to the Lonnie Burton Center. They are working on getting their utilities and internet set up and have been very responsive and collaborative.
- **Community Action Opportunities** stated that they have outstanding questions about their contract and lease. They have yet to reply with red-lined comments on the actual document. Our attorneys are involved now. They have not accepted.

**Commissioner Harris asks** for clarification on who has not accepted. **Monique responded** that it is Community Actions Opportunities.

- Additional activities include relocating the Resident Services office to the old management office across the street. There is still some signage to be completed so that the residents know exactly where to go.

**2. Free Internet to the residents**

- Staff has done some research and reached out to local providers for information on any resources for providing internet access to affordable housing residents. Programs that were available during the COVID era programs that have now ceased. Land of Sky has shared some providers, so our next step is to learn what may be available.

- Main goal now is to provide the residents with information about the local providers who may offer reduced services.
- HACA’s Director of IT, Adina Bianchi, is participating in the Tech Forward Conference that is centered around nonprofit technology, with a goal to represent affordable housing residents and learn what is available now or in the near future.

**Commissioner Farkas asks** how much it would cost to supply internet to the residents. **Monique responded** that we have 2117 units give or take 100 for current vacancies. The price per unit is unknown at this time, but the total cost would be quite significant, and it would be best to look for grants that could assist with the costs.

**Chairman Jackson asked** if Christine Avery is the only Child Care provider has signed. Monique explained that Peak has also returned their signature pages, and they require signature in front of a notary, which will take place after the meeting.

**Chairman asked** for further information on Community Action. Monique explained that they have not returned any paperwork yet. They were sent all of their documents on the same schedule as the other responders. They did have some concerns, so we engaged our attorneys, who reached out to get further explanation. There still has been no response.

**Commissioner Harris** asked if they have kids in session yet and expressed concern if they have not started in line with school starting. Monique stated that none of this information has been shared by Community Action, despite the fact that they were very eager to partner with us.

### **3. Community Partnerships**

- Building partnerships with areas centered around vulnerability in housing, with the city and the County.
  - **Continuum of Care**
    - Board led; 300 members made of up community leaders, the Mayor, and City Managers
    - Nonprofit service providers and big teams that serve the homeless and folks looking for affordable housing
    - Important that we are at the table so that areas specific to our communities including modest income issues & affordable housing are heard and represented during any decision making process.
- **Racial Equity Committee**
  - What does racial equity look like from the council perspective
  - What the response is to Housing needs
  - Puts us at the table when discussing how we can establish racial equity in the justice system.
- **My Daddy Taught Me That – Community Health Workers Meeting**
  - Kids were invited to share their experiences within their communities with regard to violence
  - Spoke to their goals and vision about how to reduce violence
  - Opens up dialogue, connects with community and presents training opportunities, talk to waitlist opening and how to use the online application process

- **Duke Energy**
  - Energy projects ongoing and in the future, making sure that Housing needs are kept at the forefront when making decisions
  - Connecting with the Business Community and building partnerships

#### **4. HCVP**

- **Waitlist Has Opened**
  - Online application is live
    - Glitches on the first day; Ms. Noele Tackett was right on it and fixes were made
    - Over 286 applicants so far but some had to be adjusted due to the glitch that opened up to lists that are not open at this time.
  - Staff straining has been offered
  - Training for Community partners was held, and we have done foot traffic, posted flyers and distributed them in local churches and libraries; translated into Spanish as well.
    - Pulling on a weekly basis – on Mondays
    - 200 – 300 applications – short sprints so that we can adjust and improve the process real time
    - Will allow us to pull for our 2-3 bedroom townhomes
  - Housing that is attainable and open for all who qualify
  - Will assess after October 31<sup>st</sup> and possibly open the Tenant Mobility Vouchers next so that people can move around.

**Chairman Jackson requested** additional information on the glitch. **Ms. Noele Tackett explained** that something occurred in the back end of YARDI and Rent Café which opened up waitlists that have not been used in years. It was identified very early, and corrections were made in YARDI, but there is some clean-up. Approximately 75 people out of the 300 that have applied have been affected. **Chairman asked** for more detail about the clean-up. **Noele further described** the process for communicating with those affected, and that all were instructed that they do not need to start over but will need to apply for a different waitlist.

- **Vacancy Rate Update**
  - Application process is helping to reduce the vacancy rate
  - Pulling weekly will allow us to more rapid house people
  - Goal is a significant reduction by November
    - Fresh Applicants
    - Empowering Site Managers and Assistant managers who are able to directly contact people, assess with the process, submit admission packets with specific notes on next steps
    - Maintenance is very involved
      - Strong support with inspecting and making sure that the units are ready and have walk throughs are done with the managers
      - Doing additional work at sites that need more attention by doing grounds clean-up
      - More skilled and bigger team to support additional activities
    - Staging Units and taking pictures

- Marketing efforts: Advertising on local affordable housing websites and local apartment rental sites; Great success at Maple Crest

**Chairman Jackson asked** how long it will be before we see impact on the vacancies. **Monique reiterated** that weekly pulls will start next week. **Chairman asked** about timeframe for funding impact. **Monique explained** that the deadline is December 31<sup>st</sup>, but the goal is by November. Many people do not like to move that close to Christmas, and once kids get out of school families like to be settled before the holidays. December is a tough month to lease-up. **Chairman asked** for additional detail on HUD requirements for funding and **Monique further explained** that they will pull by December 31<sup>st</sup> or early January to make the decision on what the subsidy will be. We keep a record of all vacancies and leasing movement as HUD does make exceptions based on justifications that we supply. There are also other opportunities to request additional resources. We have just been awarded \$116,00 VASH. The goal is to make sure that we do not go below where we were last year.

**Commissioner Farkas asked** what the goal is from vacancy to occupancy. **Monique replied 30 days.** That said it relies heavily on the condition of the unit, the preparedness of the tenant. We have had units that have been so destroyed that it takes longer to get them to occupancy standard.

More detailed information about 4 main reasons for inflated vacancy rate can be found in the full [Executive Report](#), on page 3.

## **5. Staffing Activity and Retention Plan**

- **Hiring**

- Previous leadership kept HACA completely understaffed
- Continue to hire qualified staff
  - Built strong infrastructure by immediately hiring critical positions including
    - Director of Human Resources
    - Procurements and Contract Manager
    - Director of Information Technology
    - Newest hires to this structure include
      - i. Director of Finance
      - ii. Director of HCVP
  - Building bench strength and growing critical support departments including
    - Housing Support Specialists
    - Maintenance team
    - Administration teams
    - Site managers and Assistant that are capable of handling a Housing Authority of this size and complexity
  - Improving the hiring processes
    - Attracting more qualified candidates
    - Effective on-boarding practices
    - Offer training opportunities

**Commissioner Harris asked** what the Youth Program Assistants do. **Monique explains** that they are made up full time, part time, and seasonal staff that work on the Resident Services team to work on summer programs, and during summer camp with all of the kids in our community.

- **Terminations**
  - Conditions of termination
    - Voluntary
      - People have made the choice to move on
      - We support their life decisions and celebrate with them
    - Involuntary Terminations
      - Not the right fit for a complex Housing Authority
      - Policy violations is the main reason
      - Support people through a successful career at the Housing Authority
      - Provide the opportunity for success
- **Employee Retention**
  - Build administrative infrastructure to support the staff
    - Institute SOPs to create flexibility and consistency in approach
    - Update forms and processes that have been in place for many years
    - Updated Handbook so that it representative of day to day at HACA
  - Improve Healthcare options
  - Promote and encourage additional professional training and certification
  - Department activities to promote higher morale
  - Additional holidays added to schedule
  - Employee Referral program is being developed
    - Many applicants are asking for jobs
    - Being referred by existing staff
  - Open communication culture
    - Cross department task force teams
  - Annual Performance program
    - Annual goal setting
    - Monthly reviews
    - Tied to increase
      - Cost of Living Increase
      - Performance Evaluation Score

- **Additional Business**

1. **5-Year Plan and MTW Supplement Update- Presented by Ms. Sheri Guyton, Director**

- **Timeline for Submission**
  - Submission date is October 17<sup>th</sup>
  - 2 resident input sessions in July
  - Currently in Public Comment until September 12<sup>th</sup>.
    - HACA website page for comments
    - Special Email address has been established to accept comment
    - Notifications have been sent to residents
  - Compilation of all HUD required documents scheduled to be completed for review . submission, and approval at the September Board meeting
  - Public Hearing will occur the day before the Board meeting
- **Resident Comment Sessions**
  - Used last year’s goals as baseline

- Made process more simplified
- Easier to digest & understand
- Residents highlighted what’s import to their day to day life
  - Ideas about what their communities would be like
  - More ownership opportunities
  - Don’t necessarily want multi-story buildings
  - More close proximity to outdoors
- Conditions for our admission policy and commitment to the community that we serve
  - Well-housed
    - i. Replacement of appliances or new
    - ii. Respect from management offices
- MTW supplement note
  - Currently have a waiver to allow a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to administer vouchers
  - Recommendation to rescind or pause
    - i. Residents not a member of the organization
    - ii. Not feeling well served by the third party
  - Honor our obligation to administer our programs to the standard that HUD requires
    - i. Better serve our residents with fair and equitable process
    - ii. Honor CoC process and offer a single point of entry
  - Recommendation that there be multiple organizations that have access to those vouchers to better serve the community

**Chairman Jackson asked** which organization was of concern. **Monique responded** Homeward Bound. **Chairman Jackson asked** if that will be taken away from them now. Monique further explained that it gives us the right and access to execute the program. Our Housing Support Specialists have the knowledge to execute this program. RFP process for awarding PBV’s to other non-profits to better serve the communities and stabilize access to housing. Rocky River has applied for and were awarded PBV’s. Our PBV’s are a very good resource and pay very well.

## **2. Goals and Objectives Executive Update:**

Detailed Goals and Objectives can be found in the full [Executive Report](#). Quarterly Update will be presented shortly

**Commissioner Harris asked** how HACA stands in HUD’s view. Monique responded that we are in good standing we are not a troubled Housing Authority at all. For the size and complexity, and the number of employees we are running with, we are in good standing. **Commissioner Harris asks** why he does not see plaques as he does in other buildings. **Monique further explains** that we can submit our programs reporting the outstanding, cutting edge work we do to Nahro and HUD, but we do it when we are sure that we are ready to receive them.

**Meeting Adjourned at 6:15 PM**

**Regular Session Meeting Opening & Roll Call:**

Chairman Jackson opened the Regular Session at 6:17 PM.

**Board Members present:** Tilman Jackson, Board Chair, Reginald Robinson, Board Vice-Chair, Commissioner Scott Farkas, Commissioner Roy Harris, Commissioner David L. Robinson Sr., Commissioner Kidada Wynn. HACA President & CEO Ms. Monique Pierre was also present at the meeting.

• **Approval of Agenda:**

**Vice Chair Robinson moved** to approve the agenda as presented, **Commissioner Harris seconded** the motion. The Commissioners unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

• **Approval of Previous Minutes: August 28, 2024**

**Commissioner Farkas moved** to approve the minutes from April 24, 2024 meeting, as presented. **Commissioner Wynn seconded** the motion. The Commissioners unanimously approved the previous meeting minutes from August 28, 2024.

• **Resident Services presented and Acknowledged FSS Graduates**

Robert Butler introduced Sabria Covington and recognized her for accomplished including

- Improving her credit score
- Receiving her Bachelor of Science in Mass Communications
- Full time Employment

• **Public Comment**

Chairman Jackson covered the [Rules for Public Comment](#), thanking everyone in advance for respecting the timing and order, and giving everyone a fair opportunity to speak.

There was 2 speakers from the community expressing thoughts and concerns around progress and community involving with Southside Farm and losing good case managers and lack of response to questions, Tenant Based Vouchers.

Chairman Jackson and Ms. Pierre thanked all of the members of the public for taking the time to attend and making their voices heard.

• **Report of the Secretary**

**1. Executive Report presented by Ms. Monique L. Pierre, President & CEO ([click to view report](#)):**

- **Asset Management Report presented by Ms. Evette Smith, Director**
  - 117 vacancies across the properties
  - 16 units ready for movement with 18 more expected shortly
  - Goal is to get the remainder ready before the end of the month

Condition of units is an issue. Mr. Norman and the maintenance teams are working extra hard to turn them around and make sure they are ready for occupancy. Site managers and maintenance are also focusing on grounds clean up across properties. Important to keep the properties in the best condition and show the residents that we care about their communities.

- **HCVP Report presented by Ms. Noel Tackett, Director**
  - 2 new Housing Support specialists hired
    - Training under way
    - Redistributing the case load more evenly across team
  - Over 1300 new applications processed so far this year
    - Over 500 visitors to the office
    - Sent over 200 applicants to property managers
  - RentCafe continued training and streamlining processes
  - From waitlist opening around 300 applicants
    - 59 2-Bedroom
    - 28 3-Bedroom
    - High demand for 1-Bedroom
  - 205 HQS Inspections

Noele recognizes Andy Boell for the outstanding efforts and contributions he is making to assisting the team, training the new folks, while managing his own case load.

**Chairman Jackson asked** about how that ties to 16 then 18 files that have been sent to property managers. **Noele explains** that there are many non-responses, and pit of the 1300+ people are in varying stages of the process. The files are sent to help with communication efforts to folks so that we can get them housed.

- **Maintenance Report presented by Ms. Monique L. Pierre, President & CEO**
  - Establish centralized Maintenance infrastructure
  - 2 new Maintenance Mechanics with more being hired now
  - 2 major Leaks at Asheville Terrace with Insurance companies
  - Relocation of Southside Management Office
    - Signage ordered
  - New Garbage compactor Truck with additional fleet vehicle inventory work being done
  - Mr. Norman and staff working tirelessly to accomplish the moves, Eddington Center preparation for PEAK etc.
- **Financial Report presented by Ms. Monique L. Pierre, President & CEO** ([click here to view Financials](#))
  - Negatives for July 07 2024 is due to the timing of payroll that straddled July and August
  - Finance Committee with Commissioner Farkas, Tara B, and Ms. Pierre and Ms. Joyce Willoughby
    - Allocation of responsibilities
    - Meeting critical deadlines
    - Ontrack with Tenant Incomes and are confident that any deficit can be made up before the end of the year
    - Lease Up's and HCV occupancy doing well
  - Resolution asking for Budget Changes
    - First time we are doing this, and it is important that this is in front of the Board in real time



- Removing development dollars that will not be used this year
- Adding additional dollars for Resident Services activities
- Exigency of our long standing lead inspector

- **New Business:**

- 1. **Resolutions**

**Commissioner Farkas questioned** if the bad debt is for 3 months. **Monique described** that this is full bad debt, and we are cleaning up our books. It has not been happening on a regular basis, and it has not been reported to the Board in the past for permission to do so. This does not mean that we are not continuing to collect. **Commissioner Farkas asked** if bad debt is budgeted for so that the Board can get comfortable with what the norm is and what to expect. **Monique explained** that this has not been done in the past but we can start doing this. With the new Director of Finance, we will see this report on a monthly basis and will never see it this high again. **Commissioner Farkas asked** if the tenants who have the bad debt are still at the properties. **Monique said** that there are a couple who are. They have been put into a payment agreement. Commissioner Farkas inquired if this gets reported to HUD. Monique said no, but at the end of the year everything is represented in the audit statement.

Commissioner Harris comments on how overjoyed he is to see the Early Education Resolution has been presented and that the community is involved.

- 2. **Consent Agenda to accept all Resolutions:**

Consent Agenda – The following Resolutions are presented for the consideration of the Board of Commissioners, as drafted.

Chairman asked for a motion to accept Resolutions as presented, without verbal recitation.

**Commissioner Robinson moved** to accept the Consent Agenda and all resolutions as written, presented, and without verbal recitation. **Commissioner Farkas seconded**. **Commissioner Wynn recuses** herself from the vote on Resolution 2024-20. The Commissioners unanimously approved the Consent Agenda.

- **Resolution 2024-19:** HACA Community Paramedic Contract Amendment
- **Resolution 2024-20:** Award Usage of HACA Property to Provide Early and Childcare Services
- **Resolution 2024-21:** Ratification to Purchase an Additional Van for Transporting Children
- **Resolution 2024-22:** Ratification to Lease an Additional Vehicle for Director of Maintenance
- **Resolution 2024-23:** Approval of Budget Change Proposal 01 for FY2024
- **Resolution 2024-24:** Write-off Bad Debt
- **Resolution 2024-25:** Ratification of Agreement for HQS Inspection Services
- **Resolution 2024-26:** Approval of Temporary Easement on HACA Land for I-26 Expansion Project

- **Meeting Adjournment: 7:37 PM**

The next scheduled meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2024 at the HACA Central Office.



**Asheville Housing Authority**  
**Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners**

**Draft Minutes: March 27, 2024**

Meeting Location: HACA Central, 165 S. French Broad Ave., Asheville

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Tilman Jackson, Board Chair

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTEST:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monique L. Pierre, Secretary

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Transcribed by: Cherin Marmon-Saxe, Executive Assistant to President & CEO*