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The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville (“HACA”) held a regular meeting at HACA’s administrative offices located at 165 South French Broad Avenue, Asheville, NC on Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

**There was not a closed session.**

**Commissioners Present:** Chairman Mychal Bacoate, Vice Chair Kimberly Collins, Commissioner Sean Aardema, Commissioner Carol Goins, Commissioner David L. Robinson Sr., Commissioner Maggie Slocumb, and Commissioner Kidada Wynn

**Commissioners Absent:** Commissioner Laura Sotelo-Garcia, Commissioner Scott Farkas

**A quorum was present.**

**Others Present:** Ella Santos, *President & CEO*; Marvin Jean Jacques, *Chief Operating Officer (virtual)*; Rodney Norman, *Sr. Advisor to CEO*, Cherin Marmon-Saxe, *Executive Assistant to the President & CEO*; and Cindy M. Rice, Roberts & Stevens, P.A., *Legal Counsel*

**Guests:** Kristen Kirby, McGuire Woods, *Bond Counsel*

**Call to Order:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. Commissioner Wynn read the Mission and Core Values of HACA.

**Commissioner Roll Call:** Ms. Marmon-Saxe called the roll to determine all Commissioners in attendance.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:** The Chair indicated that the closed session minutes from the March 19, 2026 Special Meeting listed in the Consent Agenda would be handled separately. Commissioner Collins then made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda for the March 25, 2026 Regular Meeting (excluding the March 19, 2026 Closed Session Minutes). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wynn. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**Approval of Closed Session Minutes:** Ms. Rice then handed out and re-collected the March 19, 2026 closed session minutes. Following the Board’s review, Commissioner Goins made a motion to approve the closed session minutes for the March 19, 2026 Special Meeting and to seal and withhold such minutes from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose or purposes thereof. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Aardema. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**Public Hearing – 2026 Proposed Budget:** The Chair opened the public hearing on HACA’s 2026 Proposed Budget at approximately 5:13 p.m. As there were no public comments, the Chair then closed the public hearing on HACA’s 2026 Proposed Budget at approximately 5:13 p.m.

Commissioner Aardema then made a motion to adopt HACA's 2026 Proposed Budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wynn. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**Presentation – Resolutions:**

By Kristen Kirby, McGuire Woods, *Bond Counsel*

Ms. Kirby presented eight resolutions for bond inducements for Board consideration and approval, as well as a brief overview of each project as follows:

- **Arborvale:** Developer - Baird Cove, LP; Project located in Woodfin, NC; 114 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$19,000,000.
- **Beacon Ridge:** Developer – LDG Beacon Ridge, LP; Project located in Swannanoa, NC; 147 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$23,000,000.
- **Bleumont:** Developer – Bleumont, LP; Project located in Buncombe County, NC; 168 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$27,000,000.
- **Caribou Commons:** Developer – Caribou Commons, LP; Project located in Asheville, NC; 100 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$10,000,000.
- **Sweeten Creek:** Developer – Sweeten Creek Apts, LLC; Project located in Asheville, NC; 126 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$13,500,000.
- **Terrace at River Hills:** Developer – Terrace at River Hills, LP; Project located in Asheville, NC; 1126 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$21,000,000.
- **Valley Commons:** Developer – Valley Commons, LLC; Project located in Swannanoa, NC; 88 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$11,000,000.
- **Vesta on Erwin:** Developer – an affiliated or related entity of Mountain Housing Opportunities, Inc.; Project located in Buncombe County, NC; 159 unit affordable housing development; multi-family housing revenue bonds not to \$15,000,000.

Ms. Kirby went on to explain that HACA is acting as a conduit for the bonds and has no legal obligation to repay, and that HACA receives a fee for the issuance of the bonds as well. She confirmed that the fee is typically 1.25% of the bond issuance. Ms. Kirby also explained that preliminary approval by HACA was required for the developers to submit the project application to the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) for approval. She also added that the bonds would come back to the Board with final details, and for approval and issuance, after NCHFA approval.

Commissioner Collins inquired about the total bonds sought across all of the projects. Ms. Kirby advised the Board that the total for all eight projects is approximately \$140million. She also advised the Board that there is no limitation on the number of bonds that HACA can issue, but the projects do have to be approved by NCHFA. The Chair commented that the cumulative fee to HACA would be approximately \$1.7 million.

There were no additional questions or further discussion. Commissioner Goins made a motion to for the approval of the following Resolutions:

- Resolution #2026-03: Arborvale Bond Inducement
- Resolution #2027-04: Beacon Ridge Bond Inducement
- Resolution #2026-05: Bleumont Bond Inducement
- Resolution #2026-06: Caribou Commons Bond Inducement
- Resolution #2026-07: Sweeten Creek Bond Inducement
- Resolution #2026-08: Terrace at River Hills Bond Inducement
- Resolution #2026-09: Valley Commons Bond Inducement
- Resolution #2026-10: Vesta on Erwin Bond Inducement

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Slocumb. The Motion carried unanimously (7-0).

### **Operations Overview**

By Marvin Jean-Jaques, *Chief Operating Officer*

Mr. Jean-Jaques provided a status update on changes made to HACA's operations. He indicated that abatements (defined as occupied apartment that HACA cannot obtain funding for because of failed inspections) have been significantly decreased. He explained that, at their peak in 2025, abatements were at over 100 units but are now down to 20 units. Mr. Jean-Jaques indicated that vacancies were also down from 180 units to 161 units. He added that due to some recent (criminal) activities, some units are being passed over by potential residents, but that HACA was working closely with APD to reduce concerns and meet the needs of the residents. He noted that they had 1300 potential applicants currently being vetted with 37 units open for occupancy. He further indicated that applicants are being approved and units are being occupied each week.

Mr. Jean-Jaques explained that maintenance was being centralized under a maintenance supervisor (36 years of experience); that a current employee was being promoted to supervisor; and another current employee was being promoted to assistant supervisor. He explained that maintenance would no longer be organized site to site, and that software is in place to track man hours, supplies, fleet management, etc. He added that they were working to train maintenance staff in when to repair vs replace appliances, on how to reduce vendor costs, and to transfer knowledge bases from more skilled senior staff to junior staff, so as to eliminate the amount of contract work required.

The COO went on to explain that HACA has contracted with Amazon to add a safe way for residents to get their packages (particularly at the tower developments). Mr. Jean-Jaques explained that the administration was making a concerted effort to reduce HACA's "cost per unit". He indicated that the cost per unit is right now around \$10,000, but that they hope to significantly reduce that per unit cost. Finally, Mr. Jean-Jaques noted that HACA's prior Finance Director would be rejoining the team.

### **Remarks from the President & CEO**

By Ella Santos, *President & CEO*

Ms. Santos advised the board that the administration is working to improve HACA from the inside out by improving operations, building partnerships in the community and creating a culture of excellence. She noted that they are working to raise the standard across HACA and to create a culture of accountability for both –employees and residents. She emphasized that the focus was to serve residents with urgency, professionalism and care. To that end, Ms. Santos advised the

Board that she and the COO had toured all of the sites, held meet and greets with residents, and obtained valuable feedback from all. She emphasized the effort to improve customer service and how HACA responds to its customers by highlighting the updated phone systems now in place. She also advised the Board that they were modifying the HCV and admission services programs to an appointment based model (as opposed to walk in model), but that walk in hours would still exist on Tuesdays. She indicated that this would help to minimize the wait times for applicants, residents, and give staff more time for one-on-one assistance.

Ms. Santos advised the Board that the administration recognized that the aftercare programming was critical for resident families, and that they remained committed to preserving those programs and the support provided to residents by identifying a path forward with an outside community partners. She indicated that they hoped to have an update for families next week. Ms. Santos also advised the Board that administration was working with legal counsel to finalize important updates to HACA's lease and rules and regulations to set clearer expectations for residents and promote accountability and safety. She added that these documents would be published for public comment in early April. Ms. Santos stated that HACA was also initiating a community safety hours initiative and partnering with APD to increase safety in the various communities through thoughtful and practical steps. She also noted the latest Woodfin project was just about complete and would be open for leasing soon.

Commissioner Goins inquired about whether the new phone system allowed residents to reach a live person. Ms. Marmon-Sexe confirmed that there was still an "operator" option at each level of the call, and that the changes were designed to get residents to an employee quicker and to allow employees to respond quicker (through the use of shared voicemail mailboxes).

Commissioner Aardema added that he wanted to comment on the events that have occurred in the last couple of weeks on HACA properties, and that their hearts go out to all of those impacted. He acknowledged that APD was making progress on the cases. He also spoke of the partnership between HACA and APD that Ms. Santos mentioned, and reiterated that Ms. Santos had organized meetings between APD and site managers. He noted that a housing task force, initially focused on Hillcrest, began in March, and added that, with the recent incidents at Pisgah, the task force has expanded to Pisgah. He also added that a Memorandum of Understanding is place for APD to provide officers for overtime on HACA properties and that MOU would be before City Council next month. He also noted that the intent with the most recent class from the police academy is to form a permanent housing unit later this summer. Ms. Santos added that they had received a lot of good feedback from residents regarding the increased APD presence.

Commissioner Collins gave kudos to Ms. Santos and her team for coming in and doing the hard work, and for finding ways to make HACA more efficient, while also instilling pride in residents and employees. She applauded their efforts and noted the trickle down impact those efforts would have in the HACA community. The Chair commented on the hard work of Ms. Santos, Mr. Jean-Jaques and Mr. Norman at the recent conference in Washington, DC.

### **Public Comment:**

Ms. Chloe Moore provided public comment regarding the status of the Southside Community Farm. She provided a status update and noted the farms' key accomplishments in 2025, including: delivered 1400 pounds of fresh produce to neighbors in Southside; hosted 880 people for free

workshops and volunteer days; continued the grow your own program, with 9 families having container veggie gardens at Southside; and an appearance on Good Morning America to show emergency food response in the wake of Hurricane Helene – all with just a 4 person staff. She also outlined the farm’s goals for 2026, including: expanding programs and new container gardens, increasing production; supporting more cooking with fresh ingredients; and deepening community relationships. She noted that the farm is getting started with classes this week (seed starting, cooking, and water coloring painting out of flowers in the garden). She said the farm hosted 5 volunteer groups and a workshop on planting apple trees this year. She also added that they are supplanting food through donations and grants into free refrigerators and starting seeds indoors. She confirmed for Commissioner Collins that the farm maintains a free seed library. She also indicated that she is a beekeeper, and that the farm works to attract/maintain bees in several ways: raised beds that contain pollinator plants; orchard area that is not mowed; and maintaining native plants (including flower plants) that they do not cut down until the spring.

**Closed Session: None.**

Commissioner Goins made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Collins seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

**Meeting Adjourned: Approximately 6:01 pm.**



**Asheville Housing Authority  
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners  
DRAFT Minutes: March 25, 2026**

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**03/25/2026 Regular Board meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted by:**

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**Cindy M. Rice, Legal Counsel to the HACA Board**

**APPROVED:**

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**Mychal Bacoate, Board Chair**

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

**ATTEST:**

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**Ella Santos, Secretary**

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**Date:**