The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners: Strategic Planning
Minutes: September 12, 2026

The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville ("HACA") held a special Board of Commissioners strategic planning meeting on Saturday, September 12, 2026, at the Goodwill Learning and Resource Center in Asheville, North Carolina.

Call to Order and Attendance

Chair Mychal Bacoate called the meeting to order at **9:12AM** and took a formal roll call.

Commissioners present: Chair Mychal Bacoate; Scott Farkas; Carol Goins; Kidada Wynn; Kimberly Collins; and Maggie Burton-Hughes. Staff and presenters included Ella Santos, President & CEO; Marvin Jean Jacques, COO;

Commissioners absent: Sean Aardema, Laura Sotel-Garcia

Other Staff and Special Guests: Michael Kelly, Principal at Housing Industry Professionals (HIP), Kyle Parks, Owner Parks PR, Catherine Mencher, Dir. Private and Public Partnerships, Cherin Marmon-Saxe, Executive Assistant.

Agenda and Order of Discussion

- Discussion participants: Board members and staff
- The communications presentation was moved before lunch, followed by SWOT and five-year goals. No vote on the change was recorded.
- No vote on the adjustment is recorded.

Portfolio Repositioning and Rehabilitation Procurement

- Marvin Jean Jacques outlined rehabilitation of existing properties and redevelopment of selected sites.
- Rehabilitation was described as a three-to-four-year effort covering approximately 600 units at six communities, including tower properties, Altamont, and Southside properties at Erskine, Walton, and Livingston.
- Staff reported Asheville Terrace's recent inspection score of 96 and discussed new inspection requirements. Commissioners requested plain-language explanations of acronyms.
- Commissioners urged early engagement with trusted community representatives, clear explanations of rehabilitation versus redevelopment, and opportunities for residents to see completed work.

- Staff estimated five to seven years for redevelopment projects in the pipeline and a longer possible timeline for Southside; neither was an approved schedule.

- Marvin reported three responses to the rehabilitation RFP and recommended Fairstead.

- Staff evaluated firms' experience improving occupied properties and their understanding of HACA's existing RAD conversion; approaches requiring a new conversion or different ownership structure did not fit this rehabilitation procurement.

- Commissioners questioned scoring differences and proposal suitability. The Board discussed private capital, continued HACA ownership and control, developer equity, cash flow, and reserves.

- Marvin said ownership percentages, pricing, and financial terms would be developed in a Master Development Agreement for later Board review.

Board action: Chair Bacoate requested a motion to approve the rehabilitation RFP award to Fairstead. Commissioner Carol Goins moved approval; Commissioner Kimberly Collins seconded. On roll call, all six Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried unanimously (6–0).

- Conceptual plans included increasing Aston Gardens from approximately 50 to 111 units and combining multifamily housing, nearly 100 affordable homeownership opportunities, and commercial space at Pisgah View.

- Staff identified an approximately $48 million financing gap. Concepts were not final budgets or approved unit counts.

Current Conditions and Board Governance

- Discussion covered HUD program requirements, funding, work requirements, economic mobility, and mixed-finance and mixed-income housing approaches.

- Board governance topics included mission and strategic oversight, solvency, compliance, budgets, housing quality, and accountability.

- Commissioners discussed nepotism, relationship disclosure, the employee handbook and code of conduct, and the distinction between disclosure and automatic disqualification.

- Procurement interests and public trust were discussed. Ella proposed funding for Board training and invited conference and course suggestions.

Communications and Community Engagement: Kyle Parks

- Discussion participants: Kyle Parks (Parks PR); Commissioners and staff.
- Parks PR reviewed media response, interviews, HACA's website and social media, resident stories, partner recognition, and the HACA Voice newsletter.
- A planned Affordable Housing Asheville newsletter would feature HACA and partner initiatives for civic audiences.
- Commissioners discussed security-camera and safety questions, interview preparation, and referring media inquiries to the communications team.
- Commissioners suggested outreach through neighborhood associations, faith leaders, and trusted local contacts, including the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance.

Follow-up: Parks PR will circulate communications links and guidance; staff and Commissioners will identify community contacts.

Goodwill Workforce Resources

- Discussion participants: Goodwill representative; HACA staff and Commissioners.
- Goodwill described résumé and application assistance, job leads, interview clothing, training, internships, programs for adults with intellectual disabilities, and meeting space. HACA may explore hosting interns.
- Participants suggested a college and career fair for younger residents, including community college, training, and historically Black colleges and universities.

Follow-up: Staff will connect residents to Goodwill resources, clarify eligible work-requirement activities, and explore internships and a career event.

SWOT Discussion

- SWOT weaknesses included aging properties, financial and operating systems needing improvement, older technology, inconsistent communication, organizational transition, and access to staff.
- Commissioners requested a project inventory and clearer explanations of resident and agency benefits in development partnerships. Police coverage and related costs were also discussed.

- Threats and opportunities included uncertain funding, construction costs, safety, housing demand, local jobs and transportation, MTW flexibility, public land, and housing and workforce partnerships.

- Several Commissioners emphasized the importance of early, authentic community participation in future development planning.

Five Proposed Strategic Goals

- Ella Santos presented five proposed strategic goals for discussion; the Board did not vote to adopt the plan.

- Preserve and expand affordable housing through rehabilitation, appropriate redevelopment, partnerships, and lasting HACA ownership and financial value.

- Improve resident safety and quality of life through property improvements, community partnerships, wellness outreach, and resident councils.

- Support resident success and economic mobility through work-requirement preparation, Family Self-Sufficiency, childcare, transportation, technology, financial education, and career pathways.

- Strengthening organizational excellence through financial stewardship, technology, data, accountability, training, and governance.

- Improve customer service through consistent standards, feedback, staff access, scheduled appointments, and Tuesday walk-in hours from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Housing Choice Voucher Program and Asset Performance

- The Board discussed project-based voucher limits, specialty voucher categories, and whether HACA should obtain lasting value when vouchers support private developments.

- Staff distinguished tenant-based from project-based assistance, explained administrative fees and landlord participation challenges, and discussed voucher utilization.

- Portability and interlocal service arrangement were discussed. No voucher policy change was approved.

- Commissioners discussed inspection abatements, vacancy-related subsidy losses, housekeeping, smoke alarms, maintenance, turnover, preventive inspections, and energy efficiency.

- Staff said voucher and unit data require cleanup before final performance measures can be established.

-

Implementation, Reporting and Board Materials

- Commissioners requested tasks, milestones, responsible staff, baseline measures, and outcome indicators for each strategic goal.

- Ella proposed quarterly reports and a high-level annual timeline, with detailed schedules updated separately.
- Cherin Marmon-Saxe asked about Board packet timing, volume, and electronic delivery.
- Commissioners requested earlier complex resolutions, concise decision summaries, interpretation of financial data, and improved meeting-room document display.
- Cherin discussed reducing paper packets by January and continuing advance text notices; no paperless policy or purchase was approved.
- Staff discussed Friday coverage, staggered schedules, maintenance availability, phone routing, shared voicemail, and potential call-center support; these remained under consideration.

Next Steps and Adjournment

- Ella will circulate the DRAFT five-year plan and seek City and County feedback before potential Board consideration on October 28, 2026.
- Staff will develop phased milestones, baseline measures, and quarterly progress reporting.
- Staff will report on resident councils and continue early engagement around rehabilitation and redevelopment, especially in Southside.
- Staff will return the rehabilitation Master Development Agreement and verified procurement terms for Board review.
- Cherin and staff will refine Board packet timing, summaries, digital access, and presentation options.
- Parks PR will provide communications links and pursue community outreach.

Meeting adjourned at 4:14PM. Ella thanked everyone for their attendance, participation and support.

The Housing Authority of the City of Asheville
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners: Strategic Planning
Minutes: September 12, 2026

08/26/2026 Regular Board meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted by: Cherin Marmon-Saxe, Executive Assistant

APPROVED:

Mychal Bacoate

Mychal Bacoate, Board Chair

Date: 10/28/26

ATTEST:

Ella Santos

Ella Santos, Secretary

Date: 11/03/2026