

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF KANSAS CITY, KANSAS**

Thursday, July 16, 2020  
12:30 p.m.

Held Electronically  
Via Zoom

On the 16th day of July 2020 at 12:30 p.m. the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Kansas City, Kansas met in special session via Zoom due to the coronavirus pandemic. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Watkins, and upon roll call, the following members of the body were present:

Matthew T. Watkins, Chairman  
Rev. Jimmie L. Banks, Vice-Chairman  
Jacques Barber, Commissioner  
Broderick Crawford, Commissioner  
Rachel Jefferson, Commissioner  
P. Anne McDonald, Commissioner  
Timothy J. Rhodes, Commissioner  
Denise Tomasic, Commissioner  
Cardelia Walker, Commissioner  
Linda Warner, Commissioner  
Charles Wilson, Commissioner

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Thomas M. Scott, Executive Director/CEO  
Cherrie Escobar, Director of Section 8  
Sharron Davis-Mays, Self-Sufficiency Coordinator  
Jacqueline D. Randle, Executive Services Manager  
Caroline Rogers, Director of Finance  
Anthony J. Shomin, Director of Facilities Management  
Elaine Stroud, Assistant Director of Housing Management  
Nebyu Tilahun, Assistant Director of Finance  
John D. Rios, Prospective Board Appointee

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Chairman Watkins called the meeting to order and roll call was taken.

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Chairman Watkins introduced J.D. Rios to the Board. J.D. is a community advocate that is being appointed to the board next week by Christian Ramirez.

Mr. Rios was invited to observe today's board meeting and he provided the following background. Mr. Rios shared that he is a lifelong resident of Wyandotte County. He is a retired school administrator for the Kansas City, Kansas Public Schools after 34 years of service. His last position was Assistant Superintendent of Human and Community Resources. He recently completed his Chairmanship with the El Centro Board after 28 years. He is currently on the Vibrant Health Board and the Bethel Neighborhood Association Board. He is a Trustee for Emporia State University and UMKC, and on the Kansas Head Start Association Board.

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Chairman Watkins called for the approval of the minutes. Vice-Chairman Banks made the motion to approve the minutes of June 18, 2020. Commissioner Barber seconded the motion and the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Banks, Barber, Crawford, Jefferson, McDonald, Rhodes, Tomasic, Walker, Warner, Watkins, Wilson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion carried.

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### **Executive Director's Report**

- Mr. Scott had the Board refer to page 17 which show move-ins and move-outs that are contrary to page 27. The information on page 17 includes modernization transfers due to work that is being done at Plaza Towers and K1-15 Scattered Sites. He then had the Board turn to page 15. The COCC year-to-date number shows (-\$12,032.93), he clarified that during the closeout of year-end there was a payroll period and accrual expenses that were paid in May which shows this deficit. Once this is cleared out, we will be in good shape.
- Mr. Scott recognized the New Bethel Church, Broderick Crawford and Patricia Allen Hogan in finding food products to distribute to the elderly during this pandemic. We were able to serve 350 elderly residents at Wyandotte Towers, Glanville Towers, Westgate Towers, Plaza Towers and Welborn Villa; as well as seniors at Juniper Gardens and St. Margaret's Park. This was a cooperative effort between Housing Authority staff and New Bethel volunteers. Mr. Scott expressed appreciation and thanks to Commissioner Crawford.

- Most of the Board received a letter from HUD dated July 16, 2020. This letter was sent out in error, as a result, a lengthy conversation was held with the HUD Region VII Director early this morning. The repositioning of Juniper Gardens cannot take place until the RFP for relocation services and counseling is in place, there is also an environmental that needs to take place which is still in process. Ms. Cleary asked that the letter be disregarded completely. There is a resolution and letter to be discussed later in today's board meeting. Vice-Chairman Banks noted that the agency is fortunate that Mr. Scott is still here and able to respond to HUD in such a way to bring about an understanding that may not have happened without his leadership. Commissioner McDonald echoed this sentiment.
- Regarding COVID updates, we have installed new flooring and created a handicap accessible meeting area for residents in the main office. We are still waiting on the ADA door and drop for the teller window to be installed.
- We have renovated the old maintenance office on the entry to Resident Selection and Section 8 and ordered the appropriate glassware for that location. This area will be an information center for residents to pick up paperwork, schedule appointments and get questions answered.
- Move-ins began last month in the Resident Selection Department and we have a benchmark of 10 move-ins per week. There are some concerns with BPU for the family developments and the lease signing process that we are trying to work through. We provide 100 percent of the utilities at the high-rises. There were a total of 26 move-ins last month. However, due to restrictions on lease violations unrelated to rent, we were unable to continue those until March 17, 2020 when the courts reopened. We had a total of 16 evictions.
- We are continuing to draw down the CARES Act funding. We recently drew down \$70,642.76 last month. We are preparing to draw down for the improvements discussed earlier which will be in the \$20,000 range. We have about \$1 Million in public housing and about \$150,000 in Section 8 to draw from. We are moving forward with Converge One for our IT support. The old servers and phone systems have been replaced. There are retroactive resolutions in the board packet to cover these expenditures. Once this work was completed, we found out that the CITRIX system has a 2008 server and has lost support from the manufacturer. We will leave CITRIX and go to the Horizon system. We provided laptops for Finance and Section 8 staff. We will replace the thin clients at 100 percent of our developments and go to the laptops to allow employees to be able to work remotely. This cost will be over \$100,000 and is covered in the CARES Act. There are about 45 end-users that will require laptops.
- Software will be discussed by Commissioner McDonald during her Finance report.
- The relocation RFP information came in, but we cannot take action on it today as it came in after the agenda had gone out. *The floor was turned over to Mr. Shomin for an update on the relocation plan.* Mr. Shomin noted that a draft was submitted to HUD. We will be coordinating our efforts with Savanna over

at HUD to move the relocation forward. We need to get the relocation counselor in place and have the meetings with the residents before we can submit a plan resolution to the Board. An application will need to be filled out which is currently being worked on. We are up-to-date on where we need to be until we get further down the road. Mr. Scott asked how long it would take to mobilize the relocation company once they are approved by the Board. Mr. Shomin responded that they could start within two to three weeks once they receive Board approval. Mr. Scott asked if the Board would consider having a special meeting in early August to approve the relocation resolution along with some personnel changes to job descriptions. Chairman Watkins noted this would be taken under advisement.

- Commissioner Crawford asked about the positivity rate for COVID among our residents and any action that has been taken post any positive results. Mr. Scott noted that to our knowledge there are two positive cases in high-rise locations and three employees out right now on emergency FMLA. He noted that he had to be careful about discussing this. One person is on dialysis and we transport them with our staff, taking the necessary precautions. We wipe down the facilities on a daily basis and staff wears PPE. We have been lucky with our staff who are first responders. The high-rises were closed on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March and we have restricted visitors. We have since opened the visitation up due to social incidences with our residents. This is being watched closely and monitored, and we are following state mandates. Commissioner Crawford asked about the communication that is going out to the residents. He noted that some residents of Wyandotte Towers visited the pantry, which he does not know the integrity of, but they indicated there was an outbreak of COVID at Wyandotte Towers. Mr. Scott noted he was not aware of that. However, one of our employees, currently out has tested positive from that building; as was the other one on dialysis. The employee was traced and picked up COVID from their church service. The person on dialysis was not originally complying, but has since done so. There are no new updates from the health department. However, he is not sure that is accurate, but cannot disclaim it. Commissioner Rhodes asked if the agency receives daily updates from the health department. Mr. Scott indicated we once did, but they are now inundated with this across the county. We get our updates from the KDHE website. Commissioner Crawford offered that there is a website specific to Wyandotte County: <http://alpha.wycokck.org/Coronavirus-COVID-19-information>. He expressed that positive tests are increasing in Wyandotte County and he is on a task force where he can help to facilitate what is being done in our nursing homes. He suggested speaking off-line with Mr. Scott and/or Chairman Watkins and Mr. Scott agreed.
- Commissioner Barber asked if Mr. Shomin was ready to give a recommendation for relocation services or would that come up with the resolution. Mr. Shomin explained we prepared an RFP that went out in June. A pre-proposal meeting was held on June 30, 2020. Six proposals were accepted July 8, 2020. A committee scored and evaluated the proposals and that is in the resolution. Mr. Scott explained this information was not in the

board packet, but was emailed this morning and is not up for a vote today. We will discuss the possibility of a special meeting later today. Commissioner Jefferson asked if the Board would be able to ask questions regarding the relocation in the meeting later today. Mr. Scott noted they would.

- Commissioner Wilson asked which high-rise has the two positive cases of COVID-19. Mr. Scott explained that he was referring to Wyandotte Towers and Douglas Heights.
- Commissioner Barber referred to the operating expenses and receipts, under maintenance expenses; we appear to be way ahead. He asked if this was in preparation for the new maintenance facility. Mr. Scott indicated it was not. The maintenance facility is resourced through the Capital Fund Program. We shut down on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March and the fee for service category is running a serious deficit because we stopped working in occupied units which impacts our expenses.
- Commissioner Barber asked about the vacancy rate, specifically K1-15 which has a 50 percent vacancy. Mr. Scott noted that K1-15 at 46<sup>th</sup> & Oak is going through modernization. Mr. Shomin explained that we have modernized five of those units and there are six vacancies. We have delayed modernization of those six units due to COVID. We also need to do lead and asbestos abatement before moving forward.
- Chairman Watkins asked for an update on the maintenance facility. Mr. Scott noted the timeline has been extended until August 17, 2020. The contractor had a COVID situation which reduced his staff from six to three which contributed to the delay. Everything else is continuing, but we will be into August.
- Commissioner Walker explained that she received a call from William Well of aSTEAM Village and the Kansas City, Kansas Envision Center. He is receiving a lot of correspondence from HUD asking him to inform residents of the CARES Act money that is available to them. He is also saying that no one from the Housing Authority is participating in the webinars. He needs a channel to get information to the residents about the services that are available to them. Commissioner Walker said that William Wells wanted her to mention this at the meeting. He told her that Douglas Heights would be an Envision Center location, but he did not hear anything from the Housing Authority, HUD informed him of this. She is relaying on what was told to her and she does not have any answers for him. Mr. Scott noted that the Envision Center process with Mr. Wells has been disappointing. Mr. Scott explained that he spoke at the Region VII office to all the Envision members. Sharron Davis-Mays, our Social Service Coordinator has been involved locally. This is a HUD mandated programming with no funding. We created an Envision Center at Douglas Heights as a result of the loss of the Head Start program. This was communicated to HUD through the contacts that Mr. Wells has. There was a request for us to distribute information from Mr. Wells that was extremely costly. We did, however, make accommodations to distribute information with Section 8 handouts. This is an operational issue and moving forward, Mr. Wells should contact Ms. Davis-Mays.

Commissioner Walker acknowledged there have been some communication issues and it has been disappointing on Mr. Wells' end also. Mr. Scott agreed and we have committed a facility that is ready for occupancy which the Housing Authority is providing on its dime. Commissioner Walker said that people call and ask questions, but she does not recall Envision Center being mentioned at the board meetings. She added the Mr. Wells has not had any communication from the Housing Authority for six months, but she will let him know that Douglas Heights is being used for the Envision Center as he was told by HUD. Mr. Scott said that Mr. Wells was very well informed that Douglas Heights would be used for the Envision Center and he knew from the beginning and he is not at an absence of knowledge on this. Mr. Wells has been in communication with HUD and they signed an agreement with him, not the Housing Authority. Vice-Chairman Banks, gave a word to the wise, that people will often call and try to get a Board member involved in something that needs to be discussed with the Housing Authority staff and should not come before the Board unless there has been an inaction on the part of staff. This puts a Board member in a precarious situation. Commissioner Walker suggested this was the first time she had bought something up and she would let Mr. Wells know.

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## **Committee Reports**

### **Bylaws**

Commissioner Barber stated there was no report.

### **Finance**

Commissioner McDonald noted the Finance Committee met by conference call at 11:30 a.m. today. She did not have an opportunity to provide a written report. They were introduced to the new Assistant Finance Director, Nebyu Tilahun, who is a CPA. He was been working with Ms. Rogers and Mr. Scott to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Finance Department. We are going to stay with Citrin Cooperman & Company LLP for our audit. They will be here in August and it is still being determined if they will be on site or virtual. We should have a preliminary report by October. The rest of the time was spent discussing technology improvements. Mr. Scott has already discussed the use of CARES Act funds for these expenses. We have introduced a new payroll system which will eliminate timecards and paper processes. The first payroll checks will come out next Friday. This will be a lot more efficient. After this, Finance staff plans to work with the banks to provide a pay card for Section 8 tenants, so checks will no longer need to be processed for rent and utilities. This will include direct deposit for vendors. This will not happen right away, but is on the list to get done. They also discussed HAB replacement which tracks information for the Housing

Authority, which has become incomplete and outdated. Discussions are taking place with vendors at this time and again this will not happen overnight.

### **Personnel**

Vice-Chairman Banks noted that the Personnel Committee including Linda Warner, Jacques Barber, Matt Watkins and Tom Scott and he met on a couple of occasions. They are looking at the performance appraisal which was placed aside due to the coronavirus. The current emphasis is on staffing challenges and reorganizational planning. He noted we are blessed to have Mr. Scott during this process and that he does not know of anyone similarly situated who would do the same for us. He noted that Mr. Scott is doing this based on his personal commitment to this agency. He further noted the detail in Mr. Scott's reports, the pandemic response to both the Housing Authority and CHIG, renovations requirements, personal situations, and the management of day-to-day operations; and Mr. Scott needs the Board's unqualified support. He asked the Board to thank Mr. Scott as the day will come when he is not leading the agency. Vice-Chairman Banks then asked that Mr. Scott add to the Personnel Committee report.

Mr. Scott thanked the Vice-Chair and Board. He noted that a firm was hired to conduct the Executive Director search as there was a number of senior management positions open. We had to move away from the first two rounds of applicants and went to the final round. We began with six applicants. Two were eliminated prior to the interview. Four applicants were interviewed and two of those four were eliminated. We have two applicants right now and they will be interviewed next week with the consultant. We plan to interview with the Personnel Committee the last week of July. We are proposing a couple of days to bring them in from out of town, spend time in the field and have the Personnel Committee make a recommendation or have the entire Board do so. Mr. Scott discussed looking to the future with public housing and there needs to be leadership that will take this organization to the next level. Candidates with the qualities to lead the agency do not have the core public housing qualifications. This will lead to reorganization of senior staff and departments to provide this knowledge base which would allow the new leader the ability to prepare the agency for the future. The Executive Director is a servant position and the agency needs the right person to be a community partner.

### **Development Committee**

Chairman Watkins noted this committee has not met. They will, however, be involved with what is occurring with Juniper Gardens.

### **Resident Participation**

Chairman Wilson indicated this committee has not met.

## **Inclusion and Public Information**

Commissioner Warner indicated there are no updates.

## **Community Housing Investment Group (CHIG)**

The CHIG board has met monthly and will meet again next month. After which, they may go back to quarterly meetings. The census continues to be okay with 110 occupants at Delaware Highlands Assisted Living (DHAL) facility. We are maintaining the status quo with COVID-19 cases. We are going into our fifth week with no cases of the virus.

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The Chair asked if there were any further questions concerning the board reports.

Commissioner Wilson asked were the residents being informed by letter regarding the Juniper Gardens' relocation. Mr. Scott noted that was correct. They initially received a letter due to the pandemic. We have been unable to meet in person. A letter went out to let the residents know about the process. Commissioner Wilson asked about the resident's reaction to the move. Mr. Scott stated he has not had any residents contact him directly. There are 265 units and about 138 units are occupied. That property was allowed to vacate in excess of 12 percent under the previous administration. Some of the elderly have been contacted to see if they are interested in moving into high-rises and/or DHAL. Once we have the relocation meetings, this will be opened up for comment. Otherwise, there has not been a lot of feedback from the residents.

Commissioner Jefferson asked about the option of having phases with the relocation of Juniper Gardens' residents and keeping some of the properties on the southern end. Is this still an option or is this up to the relocation company? Mr. Scott noted the role of the relocation consultant is to protect the interest of the residents. The required conversion from HUD is 100 percent. The process consists of getting the plan implemented and approved, and it may be amended. Nothing is cut in stone at this point. This part of the discussion concluded with Mr. Scott saying we want to keep YouthBuild and provide support to them.

## **New Business Consent Items**

Commissioner Crawford made a motion to approve New Business Consent Items, Resolution Nos. 2020-13 to 2020-15. Vice-Chairman Banks seconded the motion and the following vote was recorded:



AYES: Banks, Barber, Crawford, Jefferson, McDonald, Rhodes, Tomasic, Walker, Warner, Watkins, Wilson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Motion carried.

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Resolution No. 2020-13, authority to declare the elevator repair and modernization an emergency and authorizing the retroactive approval of a contract for the repair and modernization of elevator equipment at Douglas Heights High-Rise located at 1742 South 40<sup>th</sup> Street in Kansas City, Kansas with MEI Total Elevator Solutions.

This resolution authorizes the Housing Authority to retroactively approve a contract with MEI Total Elevator Solutions (MEI) for an emergency repair and modernization of elevator equipment at Douglas Heights High-Rise. We are currently under a service and maintenance agreement with MEI at our seven high-rises. The equipment at Douglas Heights has become obsolete which has created an emergency situation at the high-rise. Staff is requesting a variance to the Housing Authority's procurement policy to expedite the elevator repair process which would take five or six months to complete the work otherwise. The quote from MEI will repair and modernize the elevators and bring the equipment up to current code. Staff recommends retroactively declaring this an emergency and authorizing a contract with MEI in the amount of \$494,487. There is adequate funding available in the 2020 Capital Fund Program budget to complete this work.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-13—AUTHORITY TO DECLARE THE ELEVATOR REPAIR AND MODERNIZATION AN EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZING THE RETROACTIVE APPROVAL OF A CONTRACT FOR THE REPAIR AND MODERNIZATION OF ELEVATOR EQUIPMENT AT DOUGLAS HEIGHTS HIGH-RISE LOCATED AT 1742 SOUTH 40<sup>TH</sup> STREET IN KANSAS CITY, KANSAS WITH MEI TOTAL ELEVATOR SOLUTIONS

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Resolution No. 2020-14, authority to declare the replacement of the computer system hardware and software an emergency and approve the authorization of a contract for the emergency repair and replacement of the computer system hardware and software in the Housing Authority's main office located at 1124 North 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Kansas City, Kansas with Converge One.

This resolution authorizes the Housing Authority to declare an emergency for the replacement of computer system hardware and software at the main office and entering into a contract with Converge One. The Housing Authority's computer hardware infrastructure is at its end-of-life and there is no means of technical or parts support through the manufacturer. This upgrade is critical to the integrity of the agency's system. It is more effective to perform a complete system overhaul and migrate to a new computer stack with modern backup infrastructure. The need for this new equipment is immediate and the time required to bid this work would take months to complete. Staff has consulted with Converge One, our previous IT provider formerly known as AOS, who is familiar with our equipment and asked for its recommendation. Converge One's quote for hardware is \$87,535.94; software and licensing is \$32,370.95; fixed fee services is \$26,300; Office 365's monthly fee is \$1,186.80 and any additional services will be billed at a rate of \$175 per hour. There is funding in the 2018 Capital Fund Program for these upgrades. These computer upgrades will allow key staff to be able to work remotely. Future scheduled enhancements and laptops can be funded through the CARES Act. Staff recommends approval of this work to require a variance to the procurement policy by declaring this work an emergency and authorizing the retroactive approval of the contract with Converge One for the replacement of computer hardware and software in the amount of \$146,236.80; a monthly recurring fee of \$1,186.80 and additional services billed at the rate of \$175 per hour.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-14—AUTHORITY TO DECLARE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE COMPUTER SYSTEM HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE AN EMERGENCY AND APPROVE THE AUTHORIZATION OF A CONTRACT FOR THE EMERGENCY REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF THE COMPUTER SYSTEM HARDWARE IN THE HOUSING AUTHORITY'S MAIN OFFICE LOCATED AT 1124 NORTH 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET IN KANSAS CITY, KANSAS WITH CONVERGE ONE

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Resolution No. 2020-15, authority to declare the phone hardware and software system replacement an emergency and authorizing the retroactive approval of the contract located at 1124 North 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Kansas City, Kansas with Converge One.

This resolution authorizes the Housing Authority to declare an emergency to replace the phone system hardware and software at the main office with Converge One. The agency's communication infrastructure was implemented in March 2012. The current version was no longer supported in December 2017, the server hardware in May 2018 and the majority of phones in June 2018. Phones can be easily replaced, but software fixes for system issues and hardware has far surpassed its expected lifespan which poses a significant risk

to the agency in terms of our ability to communicate. There is an immediate need for new phone hardware and software and it would take months for the necessary approvals and installation per our procurement policy. Staff has consulted with Converge One, formerly AOS, our previous provider who is familiar with our phone system. Converge One has provided the following quote: hardware expense is \$39,829 (to include a 5-year manufacturer warranty on new components); installation expense of \$23,650 and cabling expense of \$5,000. There is funding in the Capital Fund Program for this project. Staff is recommending a variance to the procurement policy to declare an emergency for phone hardware and software system replacement and to authorize retroactive approval of the contract with Converge One in the amount of \$68,479.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-15—AUTHORITY TO DECLARE THE PHONE HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE SYSTEM REPLACEMENT AN EMERGENCY AND AUTHORIZING THE RETROACTIVE APPROVAL OF THE CONTRACT LOCATED AT 1124 NORTH 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET IN KANSAS CITY, KANSAS WITH CONVERGE ONE

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**New Business Discussion Item:**

Resolution No. 2020-16, authorizing the Board commitment for the disposition of Juniper Gardens, was introduced.

Mr. Scott noted that many were in attendance last month when HUD was present at the board meeting. There was a discussion regarding the decline of the occupancy rate at Juniper Gardens which leads us to dispose of the property. HUD is requesting a Board commitment for the disposition of Juniper Gardens. This resolution represents a broad commitment that the Board is making to move forward with the disposition of Juniper Gardens.

Commissioner Jefferson made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-16. Vice-Chairman Banks seconded the motion and the following vote was recorded:

AYES: Banks, Barber, Crawford, Jefferson, McDonald, Rhodes, Tomasic, Walker, Warner, Watkins, Wilson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-16—BOARD COMMITMENT FOR THE DISPOSITION OF JUNIPER GARDENS

Motion carried.

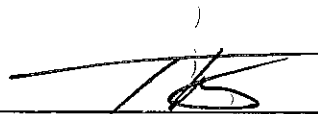
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Mr. Scott noted we would send something out regarding the special meeting for the first week of August 2020.

Chairman Watkins then called for the meeting to adjourn and it passed unanimously.



Matthew T. Watkins, Chairman



Thomas M. Scott, Executive Director/CEO