

**Riviera Beach Housing Authority
CRA Clean & Safe Ambassador Center
1229 E. Blue Heron Boulevard
Riviera Beach, FL 33404
Development Workshop
Official Meeting Minutes
Saturday, June 20, 2020**

Meeting comes to order at 9:09 a.m.

Executive Director (ED) John Hurt begins by noting why the Authority is here, then turns to Chairman Jeffery B. Jackson, who further discusses the point: to connect to the City Council and community.

I. Call to Order:

Moment of Silence—Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call and Recording of Absences

Upon roll call by ED John Hurt, Chairman Jackson is present and presides. Vice Chairwoman Jessica Thurmond is present as are Commissioners Horace Towns and Alexis Lockhart. Commissioner Glen Spiritis is absent. Quorum.

Also present: Ray Wells, RBHA affordable housing consultant; Riviera Beach Councilwoman Julia Botel; Charlene Jackson, member of the public; and Dolores Jones, Heron Estates Senior resident.

Disclosures by Any Board Members

Chair Jackson discloses that he sits on the board of Thousand Oaks and the RBHA owns property in Thousand Oaks.

II. Development of Heron Estates Update and Discussion

- a. Heron Estates Senior (HESr.)
 - i. Questions and Discussion

ED Hurt begins with the fact that HESr., also known as Phase 1, is 100 percent occupied and explains the control breakdown of the units: 50 are project-based units under the control of the WPBHA; 11 are public housing units under the control of the RBHA; and 40 are tax-credit units under the control of HTG, the co-development partner. He then explains how each category is administered and mentions that a HESr. resident, Delores Jones, is here who then talks about what is onsite, what she likes and calls her unit “lovely” with a view of the pool.

ED Hurt notes that there have been one or two deaths since the development opened, but that it is always 100 percent occupied. He also mentions how HTG, the property manager, has been pushing back against the pandemic, including providing masks and gloves.

It is a \$22 million project, he adds, with the Authority contributing \$1 million. At the end of 15 years, we'll have the first right to purchase the building, he says, its remaining debt and take over management of the building. Discussion ensues.

- b. Heron Estates Family (HEF)
 - i. Questions and Discussion
 - ii. RBHA Section 3
- c. Public Comments

HEF is a 79-unit townhouse development , ED Hurt begins, as he discusses the May monthly report from HTG, which includes the name of the project's newly chose general contractor—Newport Property Construction—which was one of 13 contractors that bid on it. One of those bidders: Gulf Builders, which constructed HESr. The chosen winner's bid came in at \$1.5 million less than Gulf's bid, ED Hurt notes.

He adds that, within the next three weeks, we'll be hosting a reach-out event for local subcontractors who might be interested in bidding on the work.

Chair Jackson then cautions Councilwoman Botel about when they hear complaints about locals not getting any of the work; not true, he says. She replies that the city would like to create an internship program to hire locals as interns. Discussion ensues, including about local contractors on Phase 1.

Then, ED Hurt does a PowerPoint presentation on the project, going through the site plan and unit designs.

Billie Brooks, member of the public and former City Councilwoman, enters meeting at 9:40 a.m.

ED Hurt continues, talking about housing unit eligibility, Phase 2 funding, steps leading up to the August closing date and mentions changes being considered from Phase 1, including inspection and management services. The construction period will be 12 to 14 months, he adds.

He then discusses in more detail Phase 2 funding, including a \$500,000 soft loan from Palm Beach County, \$1.4 million from the National Housing Trust Fund and the breakdown of the rest of it.

Commissioner Lockhart asks about monthly rents, after which ED Hurt talks about the Authority's three main goals:

- i. Redevelopment of the former Ivey Green public housing complex;
- ii. Develop an offsite single-family housing site; and
- iii. Develop multi-family housing throughout the city.

III. Offsite Development Initiatives

- a. Developing Partnerships
 - i. 908 Group
 - ii. Urban Farmers
 - iii. Housing Trust Group
- b. CRA/CDDC
- c. Scattered Site Rentals
 - i. Request to the City for Donated properties
- d. Homeownership
 - i. Single Family Initiatives
- e. Public Comments

He then walks through the work that's been done or is desired, including the four-unit building on Blue Heron Boulevard and the property at 19th Street and Avenue E, a prototype for what the Authority wants to accomplish: a 100-unit site built on 1.2 acres provided by the City in partnership.

Discussion then ensues with Councilwoman Botel about a work-together path forward, including creating quarterly meetings with all Riviera Beach-based government agencies. Ms. Brooks then pushes the notion of constructing near the Marina and the benefits.

As ED Hurt shows the design concept for the proposed 19th Street and Avenue E project—a 3-story, full residential or mixed-use development—discussion ensues about key factors supporting the project, support voiced by potential developers and investors and benefits to the community. All we're waiting on, the ED said, is a site.

IV. Public Comments and General Discussion

ED Hurt then asks the Board and public to express any opinions or comments. Discussion ensues, including about creating a single-family homeownership program, increasing the number of homeowners in the city, working with city-contracted banks or city-located banks to create programs.

George and Kemia Lockhart enter meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Commissioner Towns says he wants to see a city that works on one accord and says he supports the idea of quarterly government meetings.

Commissioner Lockhart says she supports unifying the city and wants to do market research of residents to get a sense of what people want. She said she also wants to work to make people aware of what the Authority is doing and would like to see the creation of emergency housing for the homeless and turning renters into homeowners.

Vice Chair Thurmond says she too wants to see an increase in homeownership in the city, more collaborative work with the city and agrees with the idea of working with local banks.

Chair Jackson says he agrees with everyone's points and believes everyone wants to move the city forward.

ED Hurt then responds to all of the remarks.

ED Hurt says the next workshop should be budget focused.

Chair Jackson asks ED Hurt to explain how the Authority lost the 50 housing vouchers to the WPBHA. The ED explains, then says he plans to seek to get them back.

Chair Jackson then goes around and asks members of the public if they have any comments.

Ms. Jones says she's most concerned about homelessness and suggests ways to increase help.

Mr. Wells says he feels very at home in Riviera Beach, that a lot of good information was shared today and that he sees big things coming for the city.

Ms. Brooks first asks if the Authority has a relationship with Habitat for Humanity (no, ED Hurt says) and if there are any signs to put in yards (for CDC? Yes, says Chair Jackson). She then suggests sending an RFP to local banks to see if they're willing to work with the city and getting homeless people in safe facilities short term, like hotels or Catholic Charities, she says. There's no emergency placement in Palm Beach County, she says, but we can do it in Riviera Beach.

Mrs. Lockhart says she'd like to see an increase in awareness of what the CDC has to offer and to have social events that provide the information.

Mr. Lockhart points out how millennials are connected, how young veterans can use the G.I. law to help with housing issues and why it is important for young people to buy and not just rent.

Shannel Gordon, legislative aide to City Councilwoman Shirley Lanier, enters meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Discussion continues.

Vice Chair Thurmond says she'd like to start a self-sufficiency program including, for example, a homeownership program at Heron Estates Family.

Commissioner Towns says he'd like to see a medical services program created at HESr. and to see the Authority try to buy properties that are available on the southwest side of Riviera Beach.

Commissioner Lockhart made a couple of proposals: create a career development program to supplement Vice Chair Thurmond's program for residents to help them move from rentals to homeownership and reinforce multi-media efforts, including adding video, to highlight the work we're doing.

Vice Chair Jackson wants to see a COVID-19 educational and resource program at HESr.; a game night; group conversations and movie nights.

ED Hurt suggests a Housing Resource Center for housing at various levels with a variety of information related to homelessness, affordability, where to go.

Chair Jackson thanks everyone for coming and adjourns the meeting at 11:55 a.m. The next regular meeting will be held July 14, 2020.