

**JANUARY 19, 2022 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COVINGTON**  
**BOARD OF HOUSING COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**  
**Attachment A**

A **REGULAR** Monthly Board Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Covington was held on **Wednesday, January 19, 2022**, at the Administration Building, 2300 Madison Avenue, Covington, Kentucky 41014 with Chair Meyer calling the meeting to order at 4:37 P.M.

The following Commissioners were present: Commissioner Bradie Bowen, Commissioner Tom Haggard, Vice-Chair Brandon Mims, and Chair Joseph U. Meyer. Let the record show there is a quorum.

Also present were Steve Arlinghaus, Executive Director; Chris Bradburn, Deputy Director and Jobs Plus Grant Coordinator; Jon Adkins, Director of Resident Services; Linda DiGirolamo, Procurement Officer / Capital Asset Manager; Cynthia Hall, Finance Director; Allura Eckert, Executive Assistant; and Patrick Hughes/DBL, Legal Counsel for the Housing Authority of Covington.

**On the Sign-In Sheet:**

Del Shawn Hayes - Hayes Financial Coaching LLC

Kareem Simpson - Director of Community Services for Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission

Jerome Bowles – President of the Northern Kentucky Branch of the NAACP

Penny Blevins – President of City Heights Resident Council

Jon Adkins began the meeting with a prayer.

Mayor/Chair Meyer stated that before the discussion regarding the City Heights Relocation Plan begins, he would like to go over the background and noted the following:

- City Heights is a remnant of a failed public policy where hundreds of impoverished people are isolated on a hilltop with lack of access to jobs, education, basic services and high crime rate and undesirable living conditions.
- City Heights environment is exacerbated by the high cost of over \$50M that is necessary to bring up the facility up to acceptable safety standards. The cost is over \$80M to make it a desirable environment.
- There is a broad consensus that moving on from City Heights is the best option for the tenants, so the work here has been trying to find a way to improve the opportunities and quality of life for the people living at City Heights.
- The process has been underway for over 2 years, and we have been working with community representatives during that time in several different ways to ensure the highest opportunity for success for the tenants at City Heights.
- Tonight, we will hear from the Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission and the NAACP. They have been engaged in high level negotiations on behalf of and with the tenants. We appreciate your efforts and thank you for the depth of your engagement and commitment to do a better job.
- The motivation for the City Heights project is to help get the tenants into a housing environment that is more conducive to their success in life.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Del Shawn Hayes - Hayes Financial Coaching LLC identified herself as a resident and native of Covington Kentucky and stated the following:

- She sat with NKCAC and NAACP as the City Heights Relocation Plan was reviewed and addressed the mention of "quality of life". She observed the financial resources while looking at the budget and funding going to each resident and noted that if you study apartment.com and apartment listing websites you'll find that there aren't enough apartments available for the City Heights tenants to move into and the average apartment is \$900 and higher, and few landlords take Section 8. This is setting the residents up for failure.
- It takes a savings and decent credit score to get accepted into an apartment, how are we helping the residents establish this? Once they get a letter of notification to move, there is not enough time to help them get a decent credit score.
- Ms. Hayes stated that she submitted a proposal to help the tenants and knows first-hand the time it takes to establish savings and credit. She lived in City Heights for 8 years before she bought a house, 18 years ago.
- With over 280 residents, the community partners can't service them all.
- The residents of Covington, not just City Heights, could not relocate with \$1,300.00 and wants to challenge the budget and propose that the tenants get a higher amount to relocate.

Kareem Simpson – Director of Community Services for the Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission and stated that he had the pleasure of going through this process with Penny Blevins, President of City Heights Resident Council, Mr. Bowles from the NAACP, and Del Shawn Hayes. Mr. Simpson stated that he would like to revisit earlier conversation and pointed out the following:

- It was mentioned that the Housing Authority has been working with community partners and we applaud you for that, but it must be recognized that this collaboration is a result of nonprofits asking to participate and asking how they can help.
- We are asking that there be a more proactive thought from this board and not reactive. This is not meant to be accusatory but as a board that works in the subject matter and who are experts at affordable housing in the region, that's the level we are expecting, as well as the social service agencies and residents.
- Northern Kentucky Community Action Commission is here to support the residents and following their lead and to help answer any questions that you may have.

Jerome Bowles - President of NAACP began by thanking Penny Blevins, President of the City Heights Resident Council and noted that Ms. Blevins was the initiator of NAACP and other partners meeting with the Housing Authority of Covington for the City Heights relocation process and we followed the lead, as Kareem Simpson indicated, and agreed to get together as collaborative partners to come up with recommendations and suggestions. Mr. Bowles stated that he would also like to thank Chris Bradburn, Jon Adkins and Steve Arlinghaus for being a part of this process over the past few weeks. Mr. Bowles further stated the following:

- As African Americans engage in a process of negotiations with city governments and political enemies, often the decisions have been made before we are called to the table, so we wanted to get involved. We are not here just to meet; we are here to engage in a process because there are residents in City Heights who are going to be displaced.
- Despite being called a failed public policy of the Housing Authority; these are our people. They are Northern Kentucky and City of Covington residents.
- All the special circumstance resources that we can acquire for this process should be taken higher and not compared with Newport, Lexington, Louisville or anywhere else in the nation. With the talent and skills of the Housing Authority of Covington, along with the community partners, fresh ideas can be created here and set higher standards and bold ideas so this process can be compared with no other.

- We all still hear the generational backlash in terms of Jacob Price and what happened there and the failure from some of the residents and community leaders of how the process wasn't transparent.
- Something learned at the beginning was that the relocation draft that was going to be submitted by the Housing Authority. That draft detailed what the current process of the relocation without the resident voices being heard.
- We are not here to say that the ideas we presented to you is giving the Housing Authority permission to demolish City Heights. It's not an endorsement of that process.
- As the Mayor stated this will be a process of give and take. There has been some give and take around the table and I want to commend the leadership of the Housing Authority because some of these things have been hard and difficult for both; for the staff and community.
- We are not here to bash the Housing Authority; we are here as a partner and be at the table as the process moves forward.
- The effort on creating a committee on conclusive opportunities where we can speak for the Housing Authority should also exist in the City of Covington where the community can come together to analyze information and produce fresh ideas with a diverse prospective.
- Thank you to Ms. Blevins, staff and everyone around the table.

Penny Blevins - President of the City Heights Resident Council stated that she read the City Heights Relocation draft and feels that there is still a question that hasn't been answered. Ms. Blevins asked and stated the following:

- Why are residents already moving and apartments being boarded up when the relocation plan has not been approved? Nobody should be moving, and the Housing Authority is moving residents' way too fast before the plan is even approved.
- It was mentioned earlier that it will be a slow process that will take 3 years, but it should have never started before the plan was approved.
- She appreciates being at the table and would like to continue to be at the table, but we have to make sure that it's approved before we move forward.
- If a resident moved out yesterday, are they still getting everything outlined? How is Housing Authority backing it up?

Steve Arlinghaus stated that the Housing Authority of Covington staff put a lot of time and research into the relocation plan by studying other Housing Authorities that have been through the relocation process and picked and chose pieces that they thought would be best for the City Heights residents. Steve Arlinghaus further stated that:

- The Housing Authority of Covington met with the present review panel on 3 separate occasions.
- The HAC Board was sent a draft as well as the recommended changes requested by the panel.
- Much of the credit is given to Chris Bradburn for the hours and hours that she put into the research and assembly of the City Heights Relocation Plan.
- We do want to do what's best for the residents and that has been our goal from the very beginning and know that it's a very sensitive issue and when we tell families that we are moving them someplace else, and in some cases, they have lived here for 20 or 30 years, it's not easy to do.
- We also volunteered dialog with residents and review panel, in months from now there will still be questions that will come up. How can we change something to make it better? We are still interested in continuing that dialog with them.

- Penny raised the question as to why we are moving the residents so soon. In our plan it calls for a phase 1 which is focusing on seniors. We knew that the seniors would require more help than a regular family. We have moved seniors into open units at Latonia Terrace and Golden Tower. Today we have 19 senior that we are working with and so far, 4 of those moved to other public housing that we have open. 15 others want to stay in public housing. Some want to go into Section 8 housing. The process with the seniors has run extremely smooth and many are grateful that we are making the effort to work with them as we are.

Chris Bradburn stated that she thinks it has been a great process and the staff has learned a lot and she applauds Penny Blevins for seeking guidance from other agencies as to initiate her concerns in a formal way. Steve is exactly right about having the vacant units available that we couldn't hold indefinitely. HUD does not look kindly on setting units aside when people need to be housed. It's not that we are rushing ahead, it's just an opportunity that came up along when it did.

Jon Adkins stated that he echoes Steve and Chris's sentiments that this was a great learning opportunity for us and we have said this to the review panel and public that we are willing to do whatever it takes to make sure that it's a smooth transition for everybody.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Steve Arlinghaus discussed the following topics verbally. (No written report was submitted for the board packet.)

### **EMERY DRIVE:**

- Emery Drive was transferred to Neighborhood Investment Partners (NIP) on December 1, 2021 however, invoices are still crossing over and HAC continues to work with Damian Sells.
- There is an audit coming up and Cynthia Hall is working on the data that has accumulated in the past month.
- A meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday with legal counsel to review documentation.

### **GOLDEN TOWER:**

- HAC met with Covington Fire Department , PDS and CT Consultants and Engineers for analysis of stacks, units, fire pump and jockey pumps.

### **CITY HEIGHTS:**

- As of January 1, 2022 there are 90 vacancies at City Heights.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

The Housing Authority of Covington staff reporting on the following:

1. Resident Services December 2021 Report – Jon Adkins
2. Financial December 2021 Report – Cynthia Hall
3. Procurement/Construction December 2021 Report – Linda DiGirolamo
4. Operations December 2021 Report – Chris Bradburn

5. City Heights/Jobs Plus & Rivers' Edge December 2021 Report – Chris Bradburn
6. Maintenance December 2021 Report – placed in board packet for commissioners to read.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA – Roll Call Vote**

1. Approval of the December 15, 2021 **REGULAR** Meeting Minutes (**Att. A**)
2. Resident Services Report, December 2021 (**Att. B**) – Jon Adkins
3. Approval of Financials – December 2021 (**Att. C**) – Cynthia Hall
4. Construction Report, December 2021 (**Att. D**) – Linda DiGirolamo
5. Operations Report, December 2021 (**Att. E**) - Chris Bradburn
6. City Heights/Jobs Plus & River's Edge Report, December 2021 (**Att. F**)- Chris Bradburn
7. Maintenance Report, December 2021 (**Att. G**)

**MOTION** of Vice-Chair Mims seconded by Commissioners Bowen to approve the Consent Agenda.

**PASSED.** 4 Yeas. Commissioner Bowen, Commissioner Haggard, Vice-Chair Mims, and Chair Meyer.

#### **REGULAR AGENDA**

##### **COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION NO. 3441 – TO APPROVE THE CITY HEIGHTS RELOCATION PLAN AS AMENDED**

**MOTION** of Vice-Chair Mims seconded by Commissioner Haggard to approve Resolution No. 3441

**PASSED.** 4 Yeas. Commissioner Bowen, Commissioner Haggard, Vice-Chair Mims, and Chair Meyer

##### **COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION NO. 3445 - TO CONTRACT WITH HEDGER MOVING COMPANY LLC FOR MOVING SERVICES FOR CITY HEIGHTS RESIDENTS AFFECTED BY THE DISPOSITION**

**MOTION** of Commissioner Bowen seconded by Vice-Chair Mims to approve Resolution 3445

**PASSED** 4 Yeas. Commissioner Bowen, Commissioner Haggard, Vice-Chair Mims, and Chair Meyer

##### **COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION NO. 3446 - TO APPROVE RENEWAL OF CONTRACT 2020-2003A FOR REFRIGERATORS & STOVES WITH GE APPLIANCES**

**MOTION** of Commissioner Bowen seconded by Vice-Chair Mims to approve Resolution 3446

**PASSED** 4 Yeas. Commissioner Bowen, Commissioner Haggard, Vice-Chair Mims, and Chair Meyer

##### **COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION NO. 3447 - TO APPROVE RENEWAL OF CONTRACT 2020-2003B FOR REFRIGERATORS & STOVES WITH RECKER & BOERGER**



**MOTION** of Commissioner Bowen seconded by Vice-Chair Mims to approve Resolution 3447

**PASSED** 4 Yeas. Commissioner Bowen, Commissioner Haggard, Vice-Chair Mims, and Chair Meyer

**COMMISSIONERS RESOLUTION NO. 3448 - TO APPROVE RENEWAL OF CONTRACT 2021-1002 FOR PAINT, PAINT SUPPLIES AND MINI BLINDS WITH CINCINNATI COLOR COMPANY, INC.**

**MOTION** of Commissioner Bowen seconded by Vice-Chair Mims to approve Resolution 3448

**PASSED** 4 Yeas. Commissioner Bowen, Commissioner Haggard, Vice-Chair Mims, and Chair Meyer

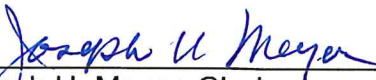
**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**


The commissioners thanked HAC staff and fellow commissioners for their hard work and expressed gratitude for the public comments from Del Shawn Hayes, Kareem Simpson, Jerome Bowles and Penny Blevins.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chair Meyer adjourned the Board Meeting 6:14 P.M.

APPROVED: March 16, 2022      (February 16, 2022 Board Meeting Cancelled)

  
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Joseph U. Meyer, Chairperson  
Board of Commissioners  
Housing Authority of Covington

  
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Steve Arlinghaus, Secretary  
Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Covington