

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON
550 MEETING STREET
CHARLESTON, SC 29403
MINUTES OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston met for a Regular Board Meeting on Monday, the 22nd of September 2025. Mr. Gregory Voigt, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:30pm and the following were in attendance:

PRESENT

Mr. Gregory Voigt, Chairman
Ms. Garcia Williams, Vice Chair
Mr. Nick Schumacher (via Zoom)
Ms. Carol Jackson
Ms. Kathy Nelson
Mr. William "Bill" Hecht (via Zoom)
Mr. Alvin Johnson (via Zoom)

NOT PRESENT

The following were also present: Mr. Arthur S. Milligan, Jr., President and CEO; Mr. Alex McFarlane, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Aris Ferguson, General Counsel; Mr. Brad Walbeck, Chief Human Resources Officer; Mr. Pete Sherman, Director of Development; Mr. Jeremy Erling, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Gabriel Bluestein, Chief Information Officer; Mr. Francis Smith, Director of Facilities & RAD; Mr. Vernon Graham, Security and Public Information Officer; Mr. Zach Messier, Capital Funds Manager; Ms. Diana Ruhlig-Hendrix, Organization Trainer; Ms. Priscilla Waring, Procurement & Contracts Manager; Ms. Calix Stewart, Housing Services Manager; Ms. Tammy Davender, Property Manager, AMP 20; Ms. Khala Simmons, Property Manager, AMP 30; Ms. Carmella Luke, Property Manager, AMP 40; Ms. Rayda Dupree-Scott, Enston Homes Property Manager; Ms. Cordelia Davis, Quality Control Manager; Mr. Jeffrey Nelson, Specialty Crew; Mr. Lance Fuller, Specialty Crew; Mr. David Sanders, AMP 40 Foreman; Mr. Christian Reyes, Enston Homes Foreman; Mr. Anthony Lemon, AMP 30; Mr. Henry Foy, Grounds Crew; Ms. Kathy Simmons, Executive Assistant and Recorder; Ms. Camryn Williams, Executive Legal Assistant; Ms. Jessica Munday, TRIO; Ms. Ellen Rose, TRIO; and Mr. Jordan Jones, Integral.

Chairman Voigt moved to Communications and noted that there were none.

The Chair moved to approve the minutes from the Special Board Meeting held on August 18, 2025. Ms. Carol Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Alvin Johnson. With no further discussion, the Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

INTERNAL REPORTS

The Chairman moved to the Internal Reports portion of the agenda and invited President and CEO, Mr. Arthur Milligan, to share his updates. Mr. Milligan reported that on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, CHA hosted its annual Ice Cream Social in celebration of staff. He noted that multiple staff members attended the Carolina Council of Housing Redevelopment and Code Officials

(CCHRCO) Annual Conference in Myrtle Beach, held August 24–27, 2025. Mr. Milligan further reported that CHA finalized the \$39.75 million purchase of a 209-unit apartment community in West Ashley, expanding the organization's affordable housing portfolio. The community will include both market-rate and affordable units, with AMCS serving as the management company. Cleanup and repairs are expected to take approximately 4–6 months. In addition, CHA raised approximately \$700 to provide school supplies for Sanders Clyde Elementary School, supporting both students and teachers as they begin the new school year. As part of CHA's commitment to workplace safety, the agency hosted an Opioid Prevention Training on Tuesday, September 16, 2025, at the 545 Meeting Street conference room. The session, led by the nonprofit WakeUp Carolina, covered recognizing the signs of an overdose, administering NARCAN nasal spray, and responding effectively in an overdose emergency. With no further questions, the Chairman invited Mr. Alex McFarlane to present his report.

Mr. McFarlane reported no additions to his submitted Board Report. Chairman Voigt noted that reductions were reflected across every AMP in the Tenant Account Receivables. Commissioner Jackson observed that work orders remained higher in AMP 30 and inquired about the cause. Mr. Francis Smith explained that the primary issues were related to flooding, gas leaks, and air conditioning. Commissioner Williams reiterated Commissioner Jackson's concerns, noting that much of what has appeared in the media relates to aged work orders and outstanding requests. She suggested it would be helpful to highlight items that have remained unresolved for an extended period of time. With no further updates or questions, the Chairman invited Mr. Gabe Bluestein to present his report.

Mr. Bluestein reported no additional updates beyond his submitted report. He noted that new YARDI features and system enhancements continue to be rolled out. He further reported that CHA is beginning the next phase of its M365 cloud migration beyond email, with large-scale rollouts of SharePoint (file system), Teams, and Office applications planned in the coming weeks prior to the holidays. With no further questions regarding his report, the Chairman invited Ms. Aris Ferguson to provide her update.

Ms. Ferguson stated that she had no additions to her report, noting it had been a light legal month during which she primarily supported other departments. She confirmed that the quarterly litigation report had been circulated. Chairman Voigt noted that the litigation report would be discussed in Executive Session due to its sensitive nature. Ms. Ferguson emphasized that the report is strictly confidential. She clarified that the risk assessment it contains pertains to insurance coverage rather than liability. With no further questions, the Chairman invited Mr. Peter Sherman to deliver his update.

Mr. Sherman shared positive news from SC Housing regarding tax credits. He reported that SC Housing recently released its draft Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) for 2026, which includes favorable provisions for housing authorities. Specifically, there is now a set-aside for both 4% and 9% tax credits. The 9% set-aside is designated for one housing authority in the state and must apply to an existing public housing site. While the eligibility may seem narrow, Mr. Sherman emphasized that few housing authorities are in a position to submit a competitive application, making this the most favorable language he has seen in years. Additionally, 30% of the state's bond ceiling has been reserved, creating potential opportunities for 4% applications as well. The Governor is expected to approve the plan in November, after which applications will be requested. Mr. Sherman noted that CHA has projects that could fit within these categories. He also reported that final approval was officially submitted today for 275 Huger Street, which will be reviewed by the BAR on October 8. With no further questions regarding the Development Report, the Chairman invited Mr. Jeremy Erling to present his update.

Mr. Erling reported a change in the financial reporting process. He explained that previously, fee-for-service lines appeared as revenue in the COCC and as expenses in the AMPs. For the current year, he has eliminated this practice and adjusted all year-to-date numbers accordingly, effectively unwinding those allocations. Going forward, staff costs that were originally recorded in COCC and billed out to the AMPs will now be directly allocated to the AMPs. This change will result in a clearer and more straightforward presentation of financial data. With no further questions, the Chairman invited Mr. Brad Walbeck to present his update.

Mr. Walbeck reported that one of the projects he is currently working on involves exploring baseline testing to support the hiring process. He explained that the goal is not to conduct personality testing but rather to assess aptitude and the ability to learn, as these factors may help reduce turnover from candidates who leave shortly after being hired. He referenced the Wonderlic test, a 12-minute timed assessment that has been widely used and vetted. He noted that scores on the test can be correlated with various skill levels, ranging from entry-level assembler roles to advanced technical positions. Mr. Walbeck emphasized that while this is just one example, he is evaluating tools that provide similar baseline insights. In addition, he is looking into potential collaboration with ReadySC, a state-supported program that offers no-cost services, which may include baseline testing as part of the hiring process. He stated that such tools could help supplement interviews, as applicants can say anything in conversation but testing may provide a more reliable measure of capability. With no further questions, Chairman Voigt requested a motion to approve the Internal Reports.

Ms. Kathy Nelson made a motion to approve the Internal Reports as submitted, which was seconded simultaneously by both Ms. Garcia Williams and Ms. Carol Jackson. Following no additional inquiries, the Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee decided to postpone approval of the 2026 CHA Budgets until the October Board Meeting. It was stated that a continuing budget resolution is not required to start the fiscal year on October 1, and past practices of extending the prior year's budget were primarily historical. Due to CHA's ongoing RAD (Rental Assistance Demonstration) conversion, the historical requirement to have an approved public housing budget in place at the start of the fiscal year is no longer strictly applicable. Under RAD, certain public housing funding and reporting requirements are modified, which means CHA can begin the fiscal year without an approved traditional public housing budget, though standard financial oversight and internal budget approvals remain in place.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution #5187, Approval of Tenant Accounts Receivable Write-Off

Mr. Alex McFarlane presented Resolution #5187, requesting approval to write off Tenant Account Receivables totaling \$24,385.43. A 12-month overview of Tenant Account Receivables was provided as part of the report. Mr. McFarlane highlighted the five largest accounts and explained the reasons for their proposed write-offs. Ms. Carol Jackson moved to approve the resolution, and Ms. Kathy Nelson seconded the motion. With no further questions, the Chair called for a vote, which resulted in unanimous approval.

Resolution #5188, Approval of ACOP (Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy) HOTMA Changes

Ms. Diana Ruhlig-Hendrix presented Resolution #5188, requesting approval of the ACOP (Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy) HOTMA changes. She provided a condensed three-page summary highlighting the key points for the Commissioners' review. The updated policy is scheduled to become effective October 1, if approved. Ms. Ruhlig-Hendrix noted that the proposed changes were posted on the Housing Authority's website for a 45-day public review period beginning July 23, in compliance with required procedures. No public comments were received. Ms. Carol Jackson moved to approve Resolution #5188, seconded by Ms. Kathy Nelson. With no further discussion, the Chair called for a vote, and the resolution was unanimously approved.

Resolution #5190, Approval of Interior and Exterior Renovations at 640 Audubon Avenue, Job No. 250904

Housing Authority of the City of Charleston received four bids from contractors on September 15, 2025. Oceanview Contracting submitted the lowest responsive and responsible bid, with a base amount of \$799,700.00. The contractor's credentials have been verified and meet CHA's requirements. CHA is requesting approval from the Board of Commissioners to proceed with a contract with Oceanview Contracting. This contract will have a 150-day turnaround. Ms. Carol Jackson moved to approve the resolution, and Ms. Kathy Nelson seconded the motion. With no further questions, the Chair called for a vote, which resulted in unanimous approval.

CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION PERIOD

The Chairman moved to Citizen's Participation Period and there was none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board convened in Executive Session for the specific purpose of discussing negotiation positions with regard to the redevelopment of Gadsden Green. Upon returning to public session, Chairman Voigt stated that discussion occurred; however, no votes were taken and no formal action was made.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Being no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the Regular Board Meeting of September 22nd, 2025 at 7:24pm.