

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON**  
**550 MEETING STREET**  
**CHARLESTON, SC 29403**  
**MINUTES OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**  
**DECEMBER 15, 2025**

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston met for a Special Board Meeting on Monday, the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 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 (via Zoom)  
Mr. Nick Schumacher  
Ms. Carol Jackson  
Ms. Kathy Nelson  
Mr. William "Bill" Hecht  
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; Ms. Diana Ruhlig-Hendrix, Organization Trainer; Ms. Susan Chambers, Warehouse Manager; 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; LaQuaintez Gadson, Assistant Property Manager, AMP 30; Ms. Carmella Luke, Property Manager, AMP 40; Ms. Chantel Stewart, Assistant Property Manager, AMP 40; Ms. Rayda Dupree-Scott, Enston Homes Property Manager; Ms. Jaqueline Conyers, Enston Homes; Ms. Cordelia Davis, Quality Control Manager; Ms. Kathy Simmons, Executive Assistant and Recorder; Ms. Camryn Williams, Executive Legal Assistant; Ms. Jessica Munday, TRIO; Ms. Mia Caradonna, TRIO; Mr. Jordan Jones, Integral (via Zoom); Mr. Teddy Parker, Parker Nelson; Mr. Carlton Bowers, Parker Nelson; Ward Mungo, Ward Mungo Co.; MJ Beiner, Ward Mungo Co. (via Zoom); and Ray Nix, Nix Development Co.

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

**PROCUREMENT PROCESS CLARIFICATION**

Prior to approval of the October 27, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes, Commissioner Bill Hecht requested clarification from Ms. Aris Ferguson, General Counsel, regarding the bidding process and whether the Housing Authority is required to accept the lowest bid. Ms. Ferguson explained the three solicitation methods utilized by the Authority: Competitive Sealed Bids, Requests for Proposals (RFPs), and Requests for Qualifications (RFQs). Ms. Ferguson clarified that under the Competitive Sealed Bid process, the Authority is required to award to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. In contrast, RFPs and RFQs are evaluated using pre-established scoring criteria, with awards based on qualifications and overall score rather than price alone. She further explained that Competitive Sealed Bids are typically used for commodities or defined

construction-related tasks and are less common for large development projects where qualifications are critical. Thresholds for procurement methods were also reviewed, including micro-purchases, small purchases, and construction versus non-construction limits. The Board expressed appreciation for the clarification, noting that prior discussion had conflated the different solicitation types. The explanation satisfied the related action item.

The Chair moved to approve the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held on October 27, 2025. Ms. Carol Jackson made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Bill Hecht. With no further discussion, the Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **SPECIAL ADDRESS**

Mayor William S. Cogswell, Jr. addressed the Board regarding a proposed partnership between the City of Charleston and the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston to address the need for affordable housing on the Charleston peninsula. He reviewed the high-level framework previously discussed, which contemplates a public-public partnership in which both the City and CHA would contribute land at fair market value, engage a private sector developer, and pursue a “build-first” strategy to ensure no displacement of current residents.

Mayor Cogswell reported that a draft framework document outlining the proposed partnership had been provided to the Board and emphasized that it is intended as a discussion document. If the Board wishes to proceed, the next step would be engagement of legal counsel on both sides to draft a formal partnership agreement for consideration and approval by City Council and the CHA Board.

The Mayor provided updates on potential City-owned sites to support the build-first strategy. He reported that while the City remains under contract with Charleston County for property on Morrison Drive, appraisal challenges have prompted the City to pursue an alternative site at 899 Morrison Drive as a potential primary option. He noted that this alternative could free City funds to contribute toward design and pre-development costs as part of the City’s partnership contribution.

Mayor Cogswell outlined anticipated next steps, including property selection, appraisals, proposed zoning changes, development of schematic designs, and creation of a coordinated communication strategy for residents, stakeholders, and the public. He reported that the City is pursuing a new zoning classification (MU-WH-3) to allow increased density with a requirement that 50% of units be permanently affordable, with first reading anticipated in January.

Board members asked questions regarding feasibility analysis, absorption rates, zoning details, appraisal methodology, HUD requirements, and precedent for similar partnerships. Mayor Cogswell acknowledged that feasibility and financial modeling would be necessary as the process advances and emphasized that no transfer of property or final commitments would occur without appropriate due diligence. He further noted that while the partnership approach is innovative, preliminary discussions with HUD have been positive and supportive of the concept.

Mayor Cogswell emphasized the importance of continued collaboration, transparency, and timely communication as the initiative progresses and expressed optimism that the partnership could serve as a model for addressing affordable housing challenges. He concluded by thanking the Board for its engagement and invited continued dialogue as next steps are developed.

## **INTERNAL REPORTS**

The Chairman proceeded to the Internal Reports portion of the agenda and recognized President and CEO Arthur S. Milligan, Jr. for his report. Mr. Milligan reported that ongoing bi-weekly meetings among the City of Charleston, the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston, and the Center for Public Enterprise continue to advance collaborative housing finance initiatives. In response to an inquiry from Commissioner Carol Jackson regarding duration and scope, Mr. Milligan stated that the engagement is expected to continue for approximately two months, with a total cost of \$15,000. Mr. Milligan further reported the successful completion of the Authority's annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, with donated items collected at multiple locations and delivered to Our Lady of Mercy Community Outreach. He also noted the Authority's annual Thanksgiving Luncheon recognizing staff for their service and commitment, and acknowledged EHMG and Ms. Rayda Dupree-Scott for hosting a Thanksgiving meal for individuals experiencing homelessness. 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 reiterated that Tenant Accounts Receivable were up in every AMP category for the month of November. Commissioner Nick Schumacher inquired about the relationship between the percentage of delinquent accounts and the total dollar amount of accounts receivable. Mr. Alex McFarlane explained that the variance reflects differences in tenant rent obligations and subsidy levels, noting that a lower delinquency percentage may still result in a higher dollar amount if the unpaid balances are associated with higher rent amounts. Vice Chair Williams drew the Board's attention to the TRIO report, noting positive community feedback following outreach efforts at Esau Jenkins Village, including acknowledgment of the Housing Authority and the President and CEO for their participation and support. She commended the ongoing coordination among the COO, PIO, and property management staff, noting that regular involvement of property managers strengthens outreach and marketing efforts. Vice Chair Williams also noted that recent media coverage has been neutral to positive and expressed appreciation to staff involved in the initiative. Vice Chair Williams inquired whether the work order report included the age of outstanding work orders and requested clarification on the length of time requests had remained open. Director of Facilities Francis Smith responded that the report reflects work orders primarily from the past 45–60 days and noted that older, aged work orders have been significantly reduced through targeted daily efforts. He further reported that many of the previously aged items involved water leaks, flooding, and roofing issues, and that continued progress is being made to close remaining work orders. Vice Chair Williams thanked staff for the update and expressed appreciation for the efforts. With no further updates or questions, the Chairman invited Mr. Gabe Bluestein to present his report.

Mr. Bluestein reported no additions to his submitted report and with no questions regarding his report, the Chairman invited Ms. Aris Ferguson to provide her update.

Ms. Ferguson reported that she had no additional updates and noted that the Quarterly Litigation Update had been distributed prior to the meeting, with hard copy information provided to Board members during the meeting. She advised that any specific questions would be addressed during Executive Session. Commissioners expressed concern regarding the timing of Board Reports

and litigation information distribution, noting difficulty reviewing materials received on or shortly before the meeting. The Board requested that, moving forward, all board reports, including litigation updates, be provided no later than the Thursday preceding the Monday Board Meeting to allow sufficient time for review and informed guidance. Ms. Ferguson acknowledged the request, noting that the Quarterly Litigation Update is confidential communication used merely for reference and discussion purposes during Executive Session. It was further noted that all other Board reports would be distributed in a timely manner. Commissioners also suggested that earlier distribution would allow questions to be submitted in advance, benefiting both Board Members and staff. The Board expressed appreciation for the format and content of the Quarterly Litigation Update, including its trends and observations. With no further questions, the Chairman invited Mr. Peter Sherman to deliver his update.

Mr. Pete Sherman provided a brief update on the Kiawah Homes redevelopment, reporting that the first Certificates of Occupancy for Phase I were expected imminently. Phase I includes approximately 27 units, with an initial 14 residents anticipated to return as units become available. While the project is slightly behind schedule, overall completion remains projected for August 2026. Total construction costs are approximately \$11 million, or \$180,000 per unit, funded primarily through Section 18 bonds and a \$1 million ARPA loan. Renovations include full interior rehabilitation, ADA units, roof and window replacement, a renovated community center, and a new playground, completed with partial grant funding. Mr. Sherman noted that the improvements have significantly enhanced unit quality and community amenities.

Mr. Ward Mungo and Mr. Ray Nix provided an update on the proposed redevelopment of 275 Huger Street, outlining the project's history, financing pivots, current design, and updated cost estimates. The development has evolved from an original LIHTC approach to an Essential Function Bond structure, with the project now proposed as a 77-unit, one-for-one replacement development supported by bond financing, ARPA funds, City and CHA subordinate funding, and deferred developer fees. The presenters reported that the project is fully hard-bid, shovel-ready, and projected to close in 2026, with an estimated 20-month construction period. Commissioners expressed significant concerns regarding total development cost, per-unit cost, construction method, escalation risk, project timeline, and long-term durability, and indicated the need for additional clarity and detailed review. By consensus, the Board did not take action and directed that the project be referred to a future Finance and Development Committee meeting for further analysis and discussion prior to any consideration of approval.

Mr. Pete Sherman had no additional items to report. Commissioner Hecht raised concerns regarding the development pipeline, noting that one future project lacked projected dates and emphasizing the need for clearer timelines and sequencing. He underscored the importance of aligning project schedules with CHA's overall borrowing capacity and long-term strategic priorities, stating that future approvals would require a more holistic view of project timing, funding constraints, and prioritization. Commissioner Hecht requested that Mr. Sherman take the lead in developing a more detailed and forward-looking pipeline, including estimated timelines for both City-partnered and non-City projects, to support informed Board decision-making. Mr. Sherman acknowledged the request and agreed to work with staff, including coordination with the City, to refine and present a more comprehensive development pipeline in the near term. With no further questions regarding the Development Report, the Chairman requested Mr. Jeremy Erling to present his update before Mr. Brad Walbeck.

Mr. Erling presented the new financial report layout, reflecting the updated budget and offering more detailed visibility at the property level. Overall, revenues are slightly below projections, but expense savings have led to a positive bottom line versus budget. Early-year fluctuations and

seasonal trends are expected to stabilize, with market factors, such as oversupply and competitive lease incentives, impacting some properties. Section 8 revenues have seen periodic adjustments, contributing positively to overall performance. Key observations include the impact of ongoing renovations on occupancy, with the Kiawah Homes units excluded from active occupancy counts due to construction. Commissioners noted the importance of tracking development-impacted units separately and understanding deviations from budgeted occupancy levels to inform strategy. The report also highlighted the necessity of clear commentary on variances, line-item forecasting, and the need for executive accountability in addressing occupancy or revenue shortfalls. Commissioner Bill Hecht requested that Jeremy's financial presentation be scheduled immediately following the CEO's report at future Board meetings so the Board can review the financials before engaging with other executive discussions. With no further questions regarding the Finance Report, the Chairman requested Mr. Brad Walbeck present his report.

Mr. Walbeck reported that the year ended stronger than the previous year, noting minimal staff turnover with two retirements this month. With no further discussion or additions, Chairman Voigt requested a motion to approve the Internal Reports.

Commissioner Nick Schumacher made a motion to approve the Internal Reports as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jackson. Following no additional discussion, the Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### *Resolution #5198, Authorization to Submit a Section 18 Disposition Application to HUD Special Applications Center for 195 Units at the Robert Mills Manor Development*

Mr. Pete Sherman explained that this is essentially the same resolution authorizing CHA to submit a Section 18 Disposition Application to HUD Special Applications Center that we approved for Meeting Street Manor, but this one is for 195 units at Robert Mills Manor. A motion was made by Ms. Carol Jackson to approve Resolution #5198. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kathy Nelson and approved unanimously by the Board.

### *Resolution #5199, Approval for Tenant Accounts Receivable Write Off*

Mr. Alex McFarlane presented Resolution #5199, requesting approval to write off Tenant Account Receivables totaling \$2,882.00. A 12-month overview of Tenant Account Receivables continues to be provided as part of the report. Mr. Nick Schumacher moved to approve the resolution, and Ms. Carol Jackson seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the Chair called for a vote, and the resolution was unanimously approved.

### *Resolution #5200, Approval of a One-Year Extension of the Grace Bridge Loan*

Mr. Jeremy Erling presented Resolution #5200 regarding approval of a one-year extension of the Grace Bridge Loan with Bank of America. During discussion, the Board reviewed an amendment and waiver related to the Sixth Amended and Restated Loan Agreement, which identified that the Housing Authority had incurred additional bond debt without obtaining the required prior written consent, resulting in specified covenant breaches. Commissioners expressed significant concern regarding restrictive provisions in the existing loan agreement that require lender consent before the Authority may incur future debt, as well as language in the amendment acknowledging a breach. The Board emphasized that any extension or refinancing must remove or fully negate these restrictive covenants and avoid admissions that could adversely affect the Authority's financial position. Due to the need for revised language and further legal negotiation, the Board

declined to take action at this time, withdrew the pending motion, and directed staff and legal counsel to renegotiate the agreement and return with revised documents for Board consideration, potentially at a special meeting. The Board also requested a review of all other outstanding loan agreements for similar restrictive provisions.

### **CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION PERIOD**

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

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Commissioner Nick Schumacher moved to enter Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jackson. The Board entered Executive Session to discuss the search process for a new President & CEO of the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston and matters related to Ms. Aris Ferguson's Quarterly Litigation Update. Upon returning to open session, Chairman Voigt reported that advice and counsel were received and extensive discussions were held; however, no votes or formal actions were taken.

### **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

*Conditional Approval of Resolution #5200, Approval of a One-Year Extension of the Grace Bridge Loan*

Following Executive Session, Commissioner Nick Schumacher moved to conditionally approve Resolution #5200 regarding approval of a one-year extension of the Grace Bridge Loan with Bank of America, subject to the condition that in-house counsel, in coordination with outside counsel, negotiate revisions to the loan documents to remove any provisions requiring Bank of America's consent for future indebtedness and to eliminate all language acknowledging or referencing a breach of the loan agreement. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Carol Jackson.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Voigt adjourned the Regular Board Meeting of December 15, 2025, at 8:52 PM.