

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON
550 MEETING STREET
CHARLESTON, SC 29403
MINUTES OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
MAY 18, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston met for a Special Board Meeting on Monday, the 18th of May 2026. 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
Ms. Carol Jackson
Mr. Alvin Johnson (via Teams)

NOT PRESENT

Mr. Nick Schumacher
Ms. Kathy Nelson

The following were also present: Mr. Nathan F. Simms, Jr., President and CEO; Mr. Alex McFarlane, Chief Operating Officer; Ms. Aris Ferguson, General Counsel; Mr. Brad Walbeck, Chief Human Resources Officer; Mr. Jeremy Erling, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Gabriel Bluestein, Chief Information Officer; Mr. Francis Smith, Director of Facilities & RAD; Ms. Susan Chambers, Warehouse Manager; Mr. Zach Messier, Capital Fund Manager; Ms. Priscilla Waring, Procurement & Contracts Manager; Ms. Rosemary Jenkins, Housing Services Assistant Manager; Ms. Tammy Davender, Property Manager, AMP 20; Ms. MaShawn Black, Assistant Property Manager, AMP 20; Ms. Gwen Waring, Office Assistant, AMP 20; Ms. Khala Simmons, Property Manager, AMP 30; Ms. LaQuaintez Gadson, Assistant Property Manager, AMP 30; Ms. Chantel Stewart, Assistant Property Manager, AMP 40; Ms. Rayda Dupree-Scott, Enston Homes Property Manager; Ms. Cordelia Davis, Quality Control Manager; Mr. Henry Foy, Foreman; Mr. Lance Fuller, Foreman; Mr. David Sanders, Foreman; Ms. Jaquie Conyers, Senior Service Coordinator; Ms. Camryn Williams, Executive Legal Assistant; Ms. Kathy Simmons, Executive Assistant and Recorder; Ms. Jessica Munday, TRIO; Ms. Mia Caradonna, TRIO; Ms. Ellen Rose, TRIO; Ms. Patricia Stewart, Resident Advisory Board (RAB); Ms. Pansy Brown, RAB; Mr. Tony Lewis, President of Motivate to Educate (M2E); Mr. Dwayne Wheeler, M2E; and Mr. Herb Frazier, City Paper.

COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Voigt noted that there were no Communications to address.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

The following meeting minutes were presented for approval:

- Special Board Meeting – April 27, 2026

Commissioner Carol Jackson moved to approve the minutes. Vice Chair Williams seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously. *Please note that no objection was made, as confirmed via chat with Commissioner Alvin Johnson.

UPDATE ON PROJECT 3500

Mayor William S. Cogswell Jr. provided an update regarding Project 3500 and recent discussions between the City of Charleston and Integral pertaining to a potential collaborative redevelopment partnership with the Housing Authority.

The Mayor stated that recent meetings with Integral leadership and City representatives were productive and focused on establishing a potential three-way partnership involving the City, Integral, and the Housing Authority. The proposed framework would be presented to the Board during the June meeting and could include an expanded geographic scope involving City-owned properties to support a “build first” redevelopment strategy.

Key discussion points included:

- The proposed arrangement would differ from the current Integral agreement structure and include revised financial components.
- The Mayor emphasized that the proposal remains in development and that additional discussions between the City, Integral, Housing Authority staff, and the Board are forthcoming.
- Chairman Voigt and Commissioners expressed the importance of involving President & CEO Nathan Simms in future discussions prior to Board consideration.
- The Mayor acknowledged Integral’s prior community engagement efforts and stated that future redevelopment discussions would remain transparent and include resident and community input.
- The City will provide a proposed schedule of meetings and discussions to ensure transparency and coordination moving forward.

Mayor Cogswell concluded by expressing optimism regarding future collaboration opportunities.

INTERNAL REPORTS

The Chairman proceeded to the Internal Reports portion of the agenda and recognized President & CEO Nathan F. Simms, Jr. to present his report. Mr. Simms thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as President & CEO and acknowledged the support of staff during his transition into the role. He highlighted several key areas of focus, including conducting an all-staff meeting centered on agency priorities and communication, improving occupancy rates, strengthening resident responsiveness, and enhancing overall operational accountability. He also discussed redevelopment planning efforts, which include evaluating development yields, rehabilitation options, and financing strategies. Mr. Simms further reinforced a “people first” philosophy emphasizing accountability, responsiveness, collaboration, and resident well-being. In addition, he noted plans to schedule introductory one-on-one meetings with Commissioners and to engage with the Resident Advisory Board and tenant councils to strengthen communication and gather feedback from residents. He also addressed ongoing efforts to improve work order response times and more efficiently resolve resident maintenance concerns. The Board members welcomed Mr. Simms and expressed appreciation for his leadership approach and commitment to resident engagement. There being no questions, the Chairman then called for the Finance Report.

Chief Financial Officer Jeremy Erling presented the financial report, highlighting several key areas. He reported that revenue projections have increased by approximately \$170,000 year-to-date, primarily driven by leasing activity within AMCS-managed workforce housing properties. Expenses have also increased by approximately \$260,000, largely due to maintenance inventory, unit turnover activity, and contracted maintenance work. He noted that risks to revenue projections remain primarily tied to delays in the Robert Mills Manor developer fee and potential reductions in HUD operating subsidy funding. Mr. Erling also provided occupancy and vacancy updates, reporting that vacancy days increased from 113 to 121, mainly due to the inclusion of AMCS-managed properties. He noted that nine additional units at Robert Mills Manor were taken offline to accelerate planned renovation work. Renovation efforts at the 1800 Ashley West property are ongoing, with occupancy currently at approximately 85 percent. He further stated that bids for the repair of sixteen fire-damaged units are expected on June 2, 2026, with Board approval anticipated at the next meeting. In terms of development and financing, Mr. Erling explained that the current 4 percent tax credit application will not move forward due to RAD conversion limitations involving geographically separate sites. Staff plans to pursue future 9 percent or 4 percent tax credit opportunities in the next funding cycle. He also noted that an RFP process will be initiated to refinance the Bank of America loan through a bond issuance estimated at \$31 million, with additional financing intended to support continued renovations at the Magnolia property. Regarding Robert Mills Manor, Mr. Erling reported that the project remains pending tax abatement approval and completion of financing, with closing currently projected for October 2026. He added that a renovation contract with Gibraltar is expected to be presented for Board consideration next month. Board members commended the clarity and detail of the financial reporting, and with no further questions, the Chairman then moved to the Operations Report.

Mr. Alex McFarlane provided operational and occupancy updates, noting that tenant account balances across tenant councils have been reduced to below \$30,000 per property. He reported that staff are focusing on underperforming property sites with lower occupancy percentages while maintaining strong performance at higher-performing locations. He also highlighted several operational improvements, including faster emergency work order response times, weekly accountability reviews to identify bottlenecks in unit turnover processes, and monthly strategic performance evaluations related to occupancy and maintenance operations. Mr. McFarlane expressed confidence that occupancy trends will continue to improve throughout the year. With no further questions, the Chairman then moved to the General Counsel Report.

General Counsel Mrs. Aris H. Ferguson reported that the Legal Department continues responding to numerous FOIA requests and ongoing redevelopment-related legal matters. No additional legal updates were provided in open session. With no further questions or instructions, the Chairman invited Mr. Brad Walbeck to present the Human Resources Report.

Chief Human Resources Officer Mr. Walbeck provided an update regarding staffing and turnover trends, noting that recent employee turnover was primarily voluntary. He reported that staffing challenges continue, particularly within maintenance positions, and that Human Resources is conducting a detailed evaluation of maintenance staffing levels and job classifications to better determine operational needs. He also noted that internal promotion opportunities remain available for maintenance staff advancing from Technician I to Technician II positions. Additionally, discussion occurred regarding the potential for salary studies and workforce competitiveness in comparison to other housing authorities and employers. With no further questions, the Chairman then moved to the Information Technology Report.

Chief Information Officer Mr. Gabe Bluestein discussed recent cybersecurity and technology matters, including his attendance at a recent security conference focused on emerging threats

involving artificial intelligence and deepfake technology. He also reported ongoing efforts to ensure the proper handling and routing of suspicious communications directed toward the agency, as well as the completion of a major technology deployment initiative. Board members acknowledged the importance of continued attention to agency security matters. With no further discussion or additions, Chairman Voigt requested a motion to approve the Internal Reports.

Commissioner Carol Jackson made a motion to approve the Internal Reports as submitted, which was seconded by Vice Chair Williams. With no additional discussion, the Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously. *Please note that no objection was made, as confirmed via chat with Commissioner Alvin Johnson.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution #5214, Approval for Tenant Accounts Receivable Write Off

Resolution #5214, requesting approval to write off Tenant Account Receivables totaling approximately \$13,076, was introduced. Chairman Voigt moved to approve the resolution, and Vice Chair Williams seconded the motion. With no discussion, the Chair called for a vote, and the resolution was unanimously approved. *Please note that no objection was made, as confirmed via chat with Commissioner Alvin Johnson.

CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION PERIOD

Mr. Tony E. Lewis addressed the Board during the Citizen Participation Period regarding gentrification of African Americans. Mr. Lewis emphasized the importance of improved communication and outreach to residents, particularly senior residents, regarding redevelopment discussions and agency activities. He encouraged the Housing Authority to provide more consistent and transparent information sharing with residents and community stakeholders. The Board acknowledged his comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Voigt moved to enter Executive Session, and Vice Chair Garcia Williams seconded the motion. *Please note that no objection was made, as confirmed via chat with Commissioner Alvin Johnson. The motion carried, and the Board entered Executive Session in accordance with South Carolina Code § 30-4-70(a)(2) to receive legal advice regarding redevelopment matters, including contract negotiations and related legal counsel for development projects. Upon returning to open session, Chairman Voigt reported that legal advice was received and extensive discussions were held; however, no votes or formal actions were taken.

RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

There being no further business, Commissioner Jackson moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice Chair Williams. *Please note that no objection was made, as confirmed via chat with Commissioner Alvin Johnson. The motion passed unanimously, and Chairman Voigt adjourned the Special Board Meeting of May 18, 2026, at 7:08 PM.