

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON
550 MEETING STREET
CHARLESTON, SC 29403
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
FEBRUARY 23, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Charleston met for a Regular Board Meeting on Monday, the 23rd of February 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
Mr. Nick Schumacher
Ms. Carol Jackson
Ms. Kathy Nelson
Mr. William "Bill" Hecht
Mr. Alvin Johnson

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. Jeremy Erling, Chief Financial Officer; Mr. Gabriel Bluestein, Chief Information Officer; Mr. Vernon Graham, Security and Public Information Officer; Ms. Susan Chambers, Warehouse Manager; Mr. Zach Messier, Capital Fund Manager; Ms. Priscilla Waring, Procurement & Contracts Manager; Ms. Tabitha Polite, Procurement & Contracts Specialist; Ms. Calix Stewart, Housing Services Manager; Ms. Tammy Davender, Property Manager, AMP 20; Ms. MaShawn Black, Assistant Property Manager, AMP 20; Ms. Khala Simmons, Property Manager, AMP 30; 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; Ms. Ellen Rose, TRIO; Mr. Teddy Parker, Parker Nelson; Mr. Carlton Bowers, Parker Nelson; Ms. Patricia Stewart, Resident Advisory Board (RAB); Ms. Pansy Brown, Resident; Ms. Maria Isom, Citizen; Mr. Reginald Graham, Charleston Development Academy (CDA); and Dr. Shawn Johnson, Charleston Development Academy (CDA).

Chairman Voigt noted that there were no Communications to address.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

The Chair moved to approve the minutes from the Annual Board Meeting held on January 26, 2026. Ms. Aris Ferguson noted that one minor revision was needed to correct the order of the Internal Reports, as the Operations Report was inadvertently omitted and presented after the Development Report. Commissioner Carol Jackson moved to approve the minutes as amended, which was seconded by Commissioner Nick Schumacher. With no further discussion, the Chair called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

INTERNAL REPORTS

The Chairman proceeded to the Internal Reports and invited President and CEO Arthur S. Milligan, Jr. to present his report. Mr. Milligan noted that Executive Staff and Property Managers met with newly elected Councilmember Ben D'Allesandro to discuss Housing Authority initiatives and district priorities. He also reported that the Housing Authority conducted a mandatory defensive driving course for employees who operate Authority vehicles, which was also offered to other staff seeking a four-point reduction certificate and/or defensive driving certification for insurance reduction purposes. Mr. Milligan stated he had no additions to his written report and invited questions. Commissioner Garcia Williams acknowledged the recent dedication ceremony at 10 Saint Margaret St., renaming the property Miriam Gadsden Place in honor of longtime resident Ms. Miriam Gadsden, and expressed appreciation for the Housing Authority's engagement efforts. With no further comments, the Chairman recognized Mr. Jeremy Erling to present the Finance Report.

Mr. Erling provided an extensive overview of January financial performance, year-end projections, and factors driving variances, including revenue, expenses, and occupancy. Rental revenue is tracking below projections due to reduced occupancy, though updated modeling anticipates a gradual increase, targeting 95% by September 2026. Grant revenue remains significantly below expectations, averaging approximately \$43,000 per AMP per month, pending HUD funding updates for June through September. Development fee revenue has shifted materially, particularly for Robert Mills Manor, with a larger portion now expected to be recognized upon project stabilization in 2029. Utility expenses, including water and electricity, are trending higher than budgeted, and contracted unit turnaround costs are increasing across several developments, prompting upward adjustments to overall expense projections. System-wide occupancy currently stands at 91%; however, Commissioner Bill Hecht emphasized the need for clarity on total unit count, units offline due to major renovations, and a distinction between normal unit turnovers and units under major rehabilitation. The Housing Authority currently has 279 units offline for major renovation, excluding routine turnovers. Commissioner Nick Schumacher requested a detailed property-level breakdown, including Meeting Street Manor and Robert Mills Manor, and a unified occupancy dashboard linking total inventory, units offline, available units, occupied units, and performance targets compared to actual results. Regarding debt and capital structure, the Housing Authority is evaluating refinancing its Bank of America loan with a 10–15-year bond issuance at an estimated 4–4.5% interest rate, with the first two years potentially interest-only to support renovations and stabilize occupancy. Mr. Erling also addressed Commissioner Carol Jackson's question regarding shortfalls, stating that the Housing Authority is unable to issue new Housing Choice Vouchers due to HUD budget authority limits, and even with unused slots, the agency must remain within its budget to avoid a "shortfall" designation. During discussion, commissioners requested enhanced reporting, including occupancy dashboards, peer benchmarking, and a detailed leasing production pipeline. They reviewed unit count discrepancies, occupancy metrics and forecasting methodology, month-to-month revenue variances, historical performance benchmarks, and the feasibility of achieving 95% occupancy. Commissioners also requested benchmark comparisons to other housing authorities, a clear monthly leasing pipeline to meet occupancy goals, and a breakdown of normal unit turnovers versus "hard turns." With no further questions or discussion regarding the Finance Report, the Chairman requested that Mr. Alex McFarlane come forward to present the Operations Report.

Mr. McFarlane presented a structured plan focused on improving occupancy rates and reducing unit turnaround times. He reported that system-wide occupancy is approximately 91%, with 279 units currently offline for major renovation. The average unit turnaround time is about 80 days,

driven primarily by extensive “hard turns” resulting from aging infrastructure, structural deficiencies, vandalism in unsecured units, and delays in procuring specialized materials such as doors and windows. The operational goal is to reduce turnaround times to 30 days, and ideally 21 days when feasible, in order to increase unit availability for families on the waitlist, which currently includes approximately 300 applicants depending on bedroom size. To address these challenges, Commissioner Nick Schumacher recommended maintaining an inventory of difficult-to-source materials to shorten turnaround times and developing enhanced dashboards to track total units, offline units due to development or major repairs, and routine turnovers. Commissioner Bill Hecht emphasized the need for clearer reporting, benchmarking against peer housing authorities, and refining monthly occupancy production targets, including reviewing past strategies that achieved occupancy rates of 96–97%, with a goal of reaching 95% occupancy by September 2026. With no further questions, the Chairman invited Mr. Pete Sherman to present the Development Report.

Mr. Sherman provided a comprehensive update on Meeting Street Manor, focusing on renovation versus redevelopment strategies for the 73 currently vacant units. He reviewed key infrastructure challenges, including significant water system failures, aging building conditions, and historic preservation requirements under Section 106, as well as considerations for RAD and Section 18 conversions, which require units to be reoccupied prior to conversion and involve interim repairs of \$1–2 million. The current renovation proposal includes full modernization of interiors, HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and windows, along with exterior improvements, site work, and playground upgrades, with estimated construction costs of approximately \$14 million over 24 months and developer fees projected at \$2 million. CHA has already invested roughly \$1.2 million in predevelopment and water infrastructure improvements funded through capital funds and state housing grants. Commissioner Bill Hecht requested additional financial modeling, including side-by-side comparisons of light-touch rental strategies, full renovation, and full redevelopment approaches, with clear presentation of rent differentials under each scenario. Timing considerations discussed included tax credit deadlines, RAD closing windows, contractor pricing expirations, and potential City partnership planning for Project 3500. With no further questions or discussion regarding the Development Report, the Chairman recognized Ms. Aris Ferguson come forward to present the General Counsel Report.

Ms. Ferguson reported on contract renewal negotiations with TRIO Solutions, noting that the contract would be presented to the Board in March if final costs exceed \$100,000. She also provided an update on a FOIA request, which was amended to request the 2024 performance evaluation and addendum, as well as all 2025 Board Reports. Legal counsel is processing the request. Ms. Ferguson reported that she had no additional updates, and the Board raised no further questions. The Chairman then invited Mr. Brad Walbeck to provide the Human Resources Report.

Mr. Walbeck reported that HR is evaluating a transition from ADP for payroll and HRIS services to reduce costs and minimize reliance on paper-based processes. With no further questions regarding the HR Report, the Chairman requested Mr. Gabriel Bluestein to present the Information Technology Report.

Mr. Bluestein reported on the rollout of new desktop computers across Housing Authority sites, replacement of aging audiovisual equipment in the Board Room, and reimaging of laptops to align with updated security and operating system standards. 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, which was seconded by Commissioner Carol Jackson. With no additional discussion, the Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution #5206, Approval for Tenant Accounts Receivable Write Off

Mr. Alex McFarlane presented Resolution #5206, requesting approval to write off Tenant Account Receivables totaling \$ 21,830.97 in uncollectible tenant accounts. Chairman Voigt asked for clarification on a reversed online payment regarding an eviction cancellation. Staff confirmed it had been reversed via the bank/credit institution. Commissioner Nick Schumacher moved to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Bill Hecht seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the Chair called for a vote, and the resolution was unanimously approved.

CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION PERIOD

The following individuals addressed the Board during the Citizen Participation period:

Ms. Patricia Stewart, Housing Authority Resident (Resident Advisory Board)

Ms. Stewart expressed concerns regarding redevelopment rumors, contractor influence, and housing stability. The Chair clarified that personnel and contractual matters cannot be discussed publicly and assured residents that the Housing Authority prioritizes safe and affordable relocation.

Ms. Pansy Brown, Wraggborough Homes Extension Resident

Ms. Brown voiced concerns about potential redevelopment and displacement. The Chair reaffirmed the Housing Authority's commitment to resident communication and housing security.

Dr. Shawn Johnson, Executive School Director for Charleston Development Academy

Dr. Johnson requested clarification on how redevelopment might affect the school. The Chair responded that no final decisions have been made and emphasized continued community engagement.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Nick Schumacher moved to enter Executive Session, which was seconded by Commissioner Carol Jackson. The motion carried, and the Board entered Executive Session pursuant to South Carolina Code §30-4-70(a)(1) to discuss a personnel matter regarding the CEO search, and pursuant to South Carolina Code §30-4-70(a)(2) to receive legal advice regarding contractual negotiations and redevelopment matters, including City partnership discussions.

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 before the Board, Chairman Voigt moved to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Carol Jackson. With no additional discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Chairman Voigt adjourned the Regular Board Meeting of February 23, 2026, at 7:40 PM.