



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF
HARRIS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**

April 16, 2025

**THE STATE OF TEXAS §
 §
COUNTY OF HARRIS §**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

The Board of Commissioners of Harris County Housing Authority met in a regular session, open to the public on the 16th day of April 2025, at Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA), located at 1933 Hussion Street, inside the boundaries of Harris County in Houston, Texas. Chairman Gerald Womack called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. and called the roll of the duly constituted officers and members of the Board:

Gerald Womack	Chairman	Present
Paul Shanklin	Vice Chairman	Present
Asheley Gilbert	Commissioner	Present
Laolu Davies-Yemitan	Commissioner	Present 1:26 p.m.
Carrie Rai	Commissioner	Present

Melissa Quijano, CEO of the Harris County Housing Authority, and Nicholas Santulli, General Counsel from the Harris County Attorney's Office, attended all or portions of the meeting. Additional attendees included the following:

Beverly Burroughs, Paul Curry, Dominique King, Debra McCray, Kitrina Craft, Kimberly Rogers, Vivian Clark, Arielene Davis, Terumi Shorter, Idrena Williams, and Tabitha Lockhart of the Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA) attended. Cassandra Preston, Larry Smith, Melvin Davis, Eddie McMillian (residents of The Villas at Eastwood), Chandra Ware (Landlord/Property Manager of Sapphire Realty), and Amber Housinger (Director, The Harris Center) were also present.

II. OPENING PRAYER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Carrie Rai opened the meeting with prayer, followed by Commissioner Asheley Gilbert, who led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Commissioner Paul Shanklin, who led the Texas Pledge.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cassandra Preston, a resident of The Villas of Eastwood (The Villas), a property of Harris County Housing Authority (HCHA), expressed concern about the Enrichment Center Program's closing. The program provides counseling and aids residents with rides for shopping and doctor appointments. Where will this help come from with the program closing?

Larry Smith, a resident of The Villas of Eastwood (The Villas), expressed concern about the Enrichment Center Program closing. Mr. Smith stated that the program has helped tremendously in getting his life on track. He has been a resident at The Villas for six years, and the program has changed his life for the better.

Chandra Ware is the landlord/property manager of Sapphire Realty. Ms. Ware stated that she received an email from the City of Houston informing her that a property had failed inspection three times. Ms. Ware noted that it was funny that she got the email after having issues with the tenant. She discovered mold, rodents, and damage to the property, and was in the process of evicting the tenant. Ms. Ware advised that she had been threatened and cursed at by the tenant to the point that she filed a police report and got a restraining order. Ms. Ware believes it is unfair to the owners and landlords that tenants are not held financially responsible for the damages they cause. She does not have an issue with providing housing opportunities to those participating in the Section 8/Housing Choice Voucher program, but there should be repercussions for their actions.

Chairman Gerald Womack would like the HCHA Inspector, HCHA Director, and Ms. Ware to meet to resolve the issue.

Commissioner Carrie Rai wanted clarification on which housing authority agency assists the tenant (City of Houston or HCHA). Ms. Ware stated that the property is with HCHA. Ms. Ware believes the email is bogus from the origin, but the information regarding the tenant and case worker (Catalina Woods) was correct.

Chairman Womack acknowledged that residents (Ms. Preston, Mr. Ware, and others in attendance) again and encouraged them to attend future meetings. He stated that he reached out to the Harris Center regarding the Enrichment Program and was working on a solution to prevent them from having to move. Ms. Ware was instructed to contact Chairman Womack if she did not get the required assistance regarding the inspections.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

ACTION ITEM 1:

Approval of the Minutes of the March 19, 2025, Board Meeting

Vice Chairman Paul Shanklin moved to approve the nominations; Commissioner Carrie Rai seconded, and the motion carried.

V. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

Ms. Melissa Quijano presented the February Monthly Report for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program.

Ms. Quijano reported that on February 20, 2025, HCHA staff met with City of Houston and Harris County housing development leaders to discuss updates and the community's housing needs.

Ms. Quijano first wanted to acknowledge Ms. Chandra Ware and stated that the issues would be addressed and handled.

Ms. Quijano noted that the loan conversion for Northwood Apartments (Twelve620) was completed on March 27, 2025. This process was completed with Ms. Dominique King (HCHA Director of Real Estate Development) and Mr. Paul Curry (HCHA Finance Director)

Ms. Quijano reported that the Affordable Housing Department had compliance monitoring visits from the Harris County Community Services Department on the following dates and developments:

- March 10, 2025 – The Residences at Arbor Oaks – Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Compliance
- March 12, 2025 – The Residences at Arbor Oaks – Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Compliance
- March 23, 2025 – The Residences at Arbor Oaks – Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Compliance
- March 25, 2025 – Louetta Village – HOME Program Compliance
- April 8, 2025 – The Residences at Arbor Oaks were in compliance on November 13, 2025, December 9, 2024, and December 13, 2024
- April 11, 2025 – Cornerstone Village – HOME Program Compliance
- April 11, 2025 – Waterside Court – HOME Program Compliance
- April 13, 2025 – Heritage Estates – Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Compliance

Ms. Quijano noted that HCHA met with the Houston Community College Central Campus Leadership Dr. Edmund Herod, President of Center College and COE Consumer Arts and Sciences, Architectural Design and Construction; Dr. Jackqueline Swindle, Vice Chancellor & Chief of Strategic Partnerships; and Vice President Suzette Brimmer, Central College, Dean of Consumer Arts and Sciences Center of Excellence, on March 26, 2025. To review their programming and provide educational opportunities along with employment training to HCHA residents, VASH (Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing), and HCHA staff on the properties.

Ms. Quijano informed the Board that on April 4, 2025, HCHA met with Precinct 1 Commissioner Rodney Ellis's office to discuss the Tenant Protection Plan.

Ms. Quijano reported that on April 4, 2025, HCHA staff met with Precinct 2 Commissioner Adrian Garcia's staff to discuss community resources for assistance.

Ms. Quijano noted that on April 9, 2025, she and Mr. Curry met with the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) to review the investment policy. More information will be presented to the HCHA Board of Commissioners soon.

Ms. Quijano informed the Board that on April 10, 2025, HCHA staff received training and tips on best practices for detecting and preventing fraud. The Office of Inspector General, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, conducted the training.

Ms. Quijano advised the Board that the Commissioners' Budgeting Committee met for the first time on April 15, 2025, and further information will be forthcoming.

Ms. Quijano noted that the Section Eight Assessment Program (SEMAP) Report was submitted. She provided the Board with a packet explaining the purpose of the SEMAP in more detail. Ms. Quijano acknowledged that Ms. Debra McCray (Housing Choice Voucher Director) and her staff compiled the information for the report. Chairman Gerald Womack thanked the staff for their hard work regarding the SEMAP and asked for more information regarding the rates and whether they are comparable to general marketable rates. Ms. Quijano noted that HCHA rental rates are comparable to other market rates. Chairman Womack requested that future stats be attached for the Commissioners' review for better understanding.

Ms. Quijano acknowledged April as Fair Housing Month. On April 11, 1968, the Fair Housing Act was signed into law, and April is recognized as National Fair Housing Month. This law is to ensure that no unlawful discrimination based on race or color, national origin, religion, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, or familial status is allowed in affordable housing processes. Chairman Womack noted that Fair Housing Month is also associated with the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, who advocated for fair housing for all.

Lastly, Ms. Quijano answered questions from the Board.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Paul Curry (HCHA Financial Director) presented the February financial statements as reported in the Board Book on April 16, 2025.

Mr. Curry noted that there were no notable checks for February. Mr. Curry reported the consolidated financial statements, representing the cash flow balances for the program's reporting period. Mr. Curry explained that cash flows could fluctuate based on HUD funding, as they might send more than is needed during one period

and none the next, allowing the overage to be consumed. This could result in a deficit and a negative account balance.

Mr. Curry reported that the consolidated budget reflected revenue 12% over budget and expenses 11% over budget.

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan wanted clarification on page 6, line item 345, Deferred Revenue, and line item 346, Deferred Inflows of Resources. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan wanted to know if the deferred statement should read prepaid instead because the money is an HCHA asset and not a liability. Mr. Curry explained that the payment in question of line item 342 is part of a ground leasing agreement and, due to the contract, is listed as deferred until the balances are offset in the new year. He stated that line 345 references a portion of the retirement plan, not the ground leasing. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan wants both items to be described differently because he believes they are confusing and unclear. Chairman Womack stated that this issue should be taken up for the auditor to ensure all guidelines are followed correctly.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan wanted to know what clarification there was regarding other revenue listed on page 7. Mr. Curry explained that he budgeted for \$752,411, but the revenue received was \$1,173,656 due to the influx of those who "ported" to Houston, Texas, from other housing programs.

Chairman Womack wanted confirmation that the contracts for the Management Agreements for Sierra Meadows and The Villas at Eastwood each were for one year at a time. Mr. Curry and Ms. Dominique King (Director of Real Estate Development) confirmed that the contracts were effective and renewable each year. Commissioner Carrie Rai wanted to clarify that the contracts were still effective and did not expire in 2024, as noted in the report. Mr. Curry acknowledged his error in not updating the date to July 1, 2025, in the report. Mr. Curry explained that the contracts are on auto-renewal each year. Ms. King also noted that each Management Agreement contract has an insurance policy that would be cancelled should the contract not be renewed. At this time, these are strategic decisions made to preserve the different properties.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan asked if everything was being recorded, so when Ms. King responded, it was noted. Ms. Tabitha Lockhart (HCHA Executive Administrative Assistant) acknowledged that the meeting is being recorded for the record. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan asked why the Suncoast Plumbing Co. contract was listed if it was just a one-time business contract. Mr. Curry explained that all contracts are listed in the report regardless of whether it was a one-time business transaction. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan wanted to ensure nothing legal was being discussed, and Ms. King confirmed that everything had been settled, and she could answer questions.

Mr. Curry presented the budget report for HCHA's actual salaries through February 28, 2025, to the projected budget for HCHA's salaries through February 28, 2022. The presentation included the Consolidated Financial Statement, Housing Choice

Voucher (HCV) Program Budget, Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Budget, Affordable Housing Program Budget, and Central Office Cost Center (COCC) Program Budget.

Commissioner Davies-Yemitan wanted to know what REAC stood for, and Ms. Quijano explained it was for Real Estate Assessment Center, a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program. Commissioner Davies-Yemitan and Commissioner Rai questioned the flow chart of how the budget is listed. Mr. Curry answered questions about salary adjustments.

Chairman Womack wanted to know the staff count. Ms. Quijano noted that HCHA has gone from employing 32 staff members to 44. Commissioner Womack noted that it is the Board does not hire anyone, however; it is the Boards responsibility to set policies.

Lastly, Mr. Curry answered questions from the Board.

VI. HCV AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEPARTMENTS PRESENTATION

Ms. Debra McCray, Housing Choice Voucher Director, presented the HCV lease-up rates as reflected in the Monthly Reports for February 2025, included in the April 16, 2025, Board Book.

Ms. McCray reported that in February 2025, the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV) was 98%. Ms. McCray addressed Commissioner Rai's question from the March 19, 2025, Board Meeting regarding the voucher numbers to decrease. Ms. McCray explained that if the voucher was a Tenant Protection Voucher (TPV), it would not be reissued, and that would cause the number of vouchers issued to change. The TPV comes from the same funding as the HCV, which affects the numbers. Commissioner Rai wanted to know how many TPVs are issued. Ms. McCray stated she would get that number for her. The Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Program was 91%. Ms. McCray commends the HCHA VASH staff for their work with this program, which has come a long way. HCHA VASH program is above the national average of 78%. The Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Program was utilized at 87%. Ms. McCray stated there were no home closings in February 2025, but 6 are currently in the process, with four already preapproved for loans. Vice-Chairman Paul Shanklin asked what precinct the homes are located. Ms. McCray advised that she would not know what precinct the homes are in until closing and could provide that information then. Chairman Womack would like Commissioners Gilbert and Davies-Yemitan to set up a meeting with lenders and vendors with those who have gone through the program. The meeting is to discuss what can be done to make the process better, and he would like this to be done within the next 60 to 90 days to discuss affordable housing and homeownership. Chairman Womack would like the borrowers to be educated on the homeownership process along with the housing inspectors being present as well. He would also like a list of those who are delinquent to prevent anyone going into foreclosure. Chairman Womack commended Ms. McCray and her staff on doing a great job and stated he would like to see more homeowner closings.

The HCV and VASH Programs utilized 97% of funding, and the EHV Program utilized 91% of funding. For February 2025, there were 485 Annual Recertifications with 100% timely processing. 10 VASH Vouchers were issued for February 2025. There are 3047 applicants on the HCHA's HCV waiting list.

Ms. McCray reported that 950 inspections were completed for February 2025, 796 of which were Annual and Initial Inspections at 81%. 131 of the inspections completed were Special/Damage or Emergency, at 17%. The Quality Control inspections totaled 23, with 2%.

Ms. McCray reported that for February 2025, 99% Initial Inspections passed for a total of 191 and 98% Annual Inspections passed for a total of 410. The yearly average passed for Initial Inspections is 99% and Annual Inspections is 96%.

Lastly, Ms. McCary answered questions from the Board.

Ms. Dominique King reviewed the status of properties within the Affordable Housing Division for February 2025, which are included in the April 16, 2025, Board Book. Ms. King identified the high-performing properties.

Ms. King moved to proposed and affordable housing developments that are under construction.

- Bernicia Place—METRO Southeast Transit Development's pre-development activities are ongoing. The estimated closing date is October 2025.
- The HAY Center personnel recruiting is underway at this time.
- The Bluestem Apartments (Twelve620) project is 99% complete and preparing for retainage release and project close-out.
- The First Met Senior Apartments project is 99% complete. All phases of the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Inspections have been passed, and preleasing has commenced.

The Villas at Eastwood (Fenix Estates) Cost Certification is projected for close-out in May 2025.

Ms. Kings addressed Commissioner Rai question regarding the vacancies at the April 16, 2025, meeting. Ms. King noted that the vacancies were due to previous occupants being Senior Citizens (some moved in with relatives or had to go into assisted living facilities and some passed away). There were also some vacancies due to a mold issue that was being corrected. Some of the units have been preleased and or waiting for the occupants to move in.

Lastly, Ms. King reviewed the status of each property's net income for February 2025.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board went into an executive session at 2:43 p.m. to consult with its attorneys, seek or receive legal advice, consult regarding pending or contemplated litigation, and discuss the value or transfer of real property. No action was taken.

VIII. RECONVENE

The Board of Commissioners reconvened for the public session at 1:56 p.m.

IX. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEM 2:

Resolution celebrating National Fair Housing Month

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution; Commissioner Carrie Rai seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-15)

ACTION ITEM 3:

Resolution approving the submission of the 2025 Section Eight Management Assessment Program certification to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution; Commissioner Asheley Gilbert seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-16)

ACTION ITEM 4:

Resolution authorizing the negotiation of and execution of an agreement for Property Management Services for Sierra Meadows

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to table the resolution; Commissioner Carrie Rai seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-)

ACTION ITEM 5:

Resolution authorizing Harris County Housing Authority's Executive Director to negotiate and enter into a Tag-On Addendum to the Harris County Department of Education contract with Documation, Inc. for the provision of Multifunctioning Imaging Devices and office supplies through its Choice Partners Cooperative

Commissioner Laolu Davies-Yemitan moved to approve the resolution; Commissioner Asheley Gilbert seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried. (25-18)

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Carrie Rai moved to adjourn at 4:00 p.m.; Commissioner Asheley Gilbert seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried.

Adopted and approved this 21st day of May 2025.



Gerald Womack, Chairman



Melissa Quijano, Secretary