



Sarasota Housing Authority (SHA)
269 South Osprey Avenue
Sarasota, Florida 34236

Board Meeting
McCown Towers Board Room
April 30, 2025
4:30 P.M.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Taylor called the regular meeting of the Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners to order at 4:31 pm.
- II. **INVOCATION**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**
Commissioners Present: Chair Ernestine Taylor, Vice Chair John Colón (in at 4:42 pm), Resident Commissioner Nicole Roman, Commissioner Carolyn Mason, Commissioner Duane Finger, Commissioner Jack Meredith and Commissioner David Morgan
Commissioners Not Present: N/A
Invited Attendees: City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch (out at 5:23 pm), Valerie Buchand (Resident Council), Agnes Kirkland (Resident Council), Jake Zunamon, Joe Chambers & Attorney Ric Gilmore
SHA Personnel: William Russell, Ken Waters, Michelle Stears and Andrea Keddell
- V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. SHA Regular Board Meeting – March 26, 2025
 - Chair Taylor put up the minutes from the March 26, 2025, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner Finger made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously. Commissioner Meredith voted present.
- VI. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
 - A. SHA Regular Board Agenda – April 30, 2025
 - Chair Taylor put up the agenda for the April 30, 2025, Regular Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- VII. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**
 - A. Future Scholars

- Michelle Stears introduced Ms Anayah Walker, Director of Student Programs & Lordana Guillaume, Student Success Coach, with the Education Foundation, who went on to present on the program(s) they run and the services they provide SHA student residents. Both expressed appreciation for the ability to work with our students.
- SHA student residents, seniors and undergrads, introduced themselves and which area school they attend. Each senior announced the college they will be attending and discussed the scholarships they're receiving.

B. City Commission Liaison Update

- City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch shared that she's aware of 3 current SHA projects (Lofts on Lemon II, Amaryllis IV, and Central Gardens/22nd Street) currently in the works and asked if there were any questions for her on these projects.
- Lofts on Lemon costs estimates were discussed.
- Mr. Russell brought up the potential need to rezone McCown Towers in order to move forward with funding applications, which could include an amendment to the Comp Plan. Mr. Russell asked if this could be expedited to move along faster and City Commissioner Ahearn-Koch stated she could assist with this process and bring it up to City Commission.
- Commissioner Morgan inquired about the project in downtown Sarasota to see if SHA would be allowed to be involved as a partner and or lead to help build affordable housing on that property. City Commissioner Ahearn-Koch suggested bringing SHA into the discussion on this project and asked Mr. Russell and this board to provide her with bullet points and a letter, as soon as possible, outlining SHA's desire to become a partner in this project.

VIII. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

A. Ms. Valerie Buchand, Resident Council Member from Janie's Garden, presented the following:

- Ms. Buchand reported that, when SHA caseworkers are doing recertifications, they go through resident's bank accounts, and they should not be allowed to count funds that are paid back to the residents (i.e. funds they loaned out and are being paid back). This needs to be dealt with. She does not believe SHA has the authority to go through resident bank accounts and she's asking for a meeting to discuss this.
- Ms. Buchand inquired if residents were being moved into the Courts residences that are being torn down and was told, "no", this is not being done.
- Ms. Buchand brought up a continuing situation with Mr. James Hendrix, stating that he still doesn't have an apartment.

B. Ms. Addie Newsome, who spoke on behalf of her mother living at Janie's Garden, reported on the difficulty she's having in getting her mother relocated to a 1st floor apartment/unit at Lofts on Lemon I and Cypress Square. She's currently on the 2nd floor and it's medically necessary for her to be on a 1st floor apartment/unit, as she has difficulty getting up and down the stairs.

- Mr. Russell will get back to her on this and make sure she's aware of the options available to her, once a unit becomes available in one of the developments.

IX. RESOLUTIONS – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

A. Res 25-10: Whistleblower Policy

B. Res 25-11: Bertha Mitchell IFB Contract Approval

- Commissioner Mason pulled B. Resolutions 25-11.
- Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve the remaining Consent Agenda item, A. Resolution 25-10. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

B. Res 25-11: Bertha Mitchell IFB Contract Approval

- Commissioner Mason inquired about the number of handicapped units at this project. Mr. Russell responded that there are 5 designated ADA compliant and accommodations are made on an as needed basis for other units. She also expressed concern about moving HVAC units from the attics to closets and what will residents use for closet space. Mr. Russell responded that the closet in use is not the only closet in the unit but that he will need to look into if any of the closet space is still useable after the HVAC unit is relocated there. Commissioner Meredith added that it's beneficial to have them in the unit closet and that they're usually small HVAC units and don't take up the entire closet or are installed in a smaller closet. Mr. Russell stated he will get back to Commissioner Mason on this issue.
- Discussion took place on the logistics of the project, the bids that were submitted and that the project will be done in phases. Attorney Gilmore added that, based on the information provided, this looks to have been a HUD compliant IFB.
- Commissioner Meredith made a motion to approve Resolutions B. 25-11. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

X. OLD BUSINESS

A. Development Updates / Redevelopment Report (Calston/Smith-Henzy)

McCown New Tower/Parking Garage

- Mr. Russell reported that the pending litigation on funding from FHFC may be finalized in our favor and could result in \$15 million in funding for this project.

Lofts on Lemon Phase II

- Mr. Russell reported that the financial closing for this project is 6/19/25. Pre-construction work has commenced to prepare for construction once the project is closed, financially.
- Commissioner Taylor inquired about the parking for current residents of Lofts on Lemon during construction of the Phase II. Mr. Zunamon responded that approximately half of the parking spaces will be lost during construction so they are working on some off-site parking options for current residents.

Amaryllis III/Cypress II/Courts II

- Mr. Russell reported that the financial closing took place last month and construction should begin this week.

Amaryllis IV/Cypress III & Central Gardens (22nd St.)

- Commissioner Meredith inquired if the board had been advised or the plan changes to the Central Gardens project and if it will affect the Development Review Committee. He's requested the Mr. Zunamon provide larger versions of the plans to the board for reviewing them more easily.
- Mr. Russell reported that they originally budgeted \$500,000 from Section 8 administrative fee reserves when it had planned to self-develop the project and that SHA is still willing to pledge those funds to the project to see if it will assist the project in getting the design options desired.
- It was stated that this can all be discussed further at the upcoming Ad Hoc Development Committee meeting on 5/20/25.

B. Public Art Donation from City's Public Art Collection

- Mr. Russell provided background that the city has a new public art representative, Ciera Coleman, and of the offer to SHA to receive some free art at its Lofts on Lemon I and II developments. Pictures and details were handed out of the flower tree sculptures that are being offered as a donation for the Lofts on Lemon property as well as designs for placement of art at Lofts on Lemon II. Several commissioners joined Mr. Russell & Ms. Coleman on a site visit to look at placement of both art pieces.
- A donation agreement will need to be signed, and Mr. Russell is requesting board approval.
- Commissioner Morgan made a motion to approve signing an agreement for the donation. Commissioner Finger seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. None

XII. PROGRAM UPDATES – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

- A. Monthly Financial Statements
B. Board Committee Meeting Minutes
C. Housing Choice Voucher Report
D. Housing Management Reports
E. Capital Improvement Report
F. Resident Services Monthly Report
G. Resident Advisory Board/Sarasota Housing Authority Agency-Wide Resident Council (SHAARC) Board Report (*not submitted*)

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- Commissioner Colón made a motion to accept the Program Updates Consent Agenda. Commissioner Mason seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

XIII. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMENTS

- A. Commissioner Mason commented that she recommends that the SHA Board Members attend the next Sarasota County Fair to visit the SHA student's submissions to the 4-H gardening booth to support the students. She will notify all of the dates for next year.

- B. Commissioner Finger announced that this will be his last, in-person, meeting before he moves to Vermont permanently. He's enjoyed his time serving on the board from 2005-2025. He will be able to attend the next couple meetings by Zoom.
 - Mr. Russell stated that the board thanks Commissioner Finger for his many years of service and they will send a service award gift to him and plan to recognize him at an upcoming meeting.
- C. Commissioner Taylor thanked Commissioner Finger for his services. She also inquired about when they could schedule the next Board Retreat.
 - It was discussed that the retreat takes place at the Lofts on Lemon 5th floor recreation room and be scheduled for Saturday, June 21st from 8 am to Noon. It was discussed that the new breakfast place, The Breakfast Company, may be a good option to try.
- D. Commissioner Morgan also wished Commissioner Finger well and thanked him for his service. He also reported that there may be some new regulatory changes coming down from HUD and the board should be ready for these unconventional regulatory changes due to the new administration.
- E. Commissioner Roman expressed 2 concerns:
 - The 1st is regarding a compliance concerns at Cypress Square. She reported that she'd personally received a 60-day notice for a rent increase that only provided less than 40 days' notice. Commissioner Roman went on to discuss the concerns that the income guidelines listed by HUD do not seem to be followed by Cypress Square management. She inquired if rent increases bring the rent up to a market-rate, are the units still considered to be "affordable." Mr. Russell responded the federal policy states that if the tax-credit unit is assisted with a project-based voucher the rent could be up to 110% of the fair-market rent. This does not necessarily mean that the tenant will pay more than 30% of their income though, based on the subsidy allowed by the voucher.
 - The 2nd is regarding income verification and reporting income. She's found contradicting policies within SHA's child support computation and income guidelines and HUD guidelines. SHA states child support is only considered at recertification, not during the year. Mr. Russell responded that the SHA policy calculates income based on the previous 12-month history to calculate the next year's rent. Commissioner Roman maintains there's a contradiction in the policy because it states an interim recertification can be done if there's a change submitted. Mr. Russell further stated that SHA's Agency Program Manager has offered to meet with Commissioner Roman privately to discuss this in detail. Mr. Russell will report back to the board on the policy and whether or not there's flexibility in the policy and if it aligns with HUD. If SHA needs to have a different threshold it will need to be done consistently and approved by the board.
- F. Commissioner Mason brought up a handout she's provided to the board from Ms. Williams about the leases at Janie's Garden Marketplace. Mr. Russell stated that he has spoken with Ms. Williams, the broker and Janie's Garden's manager. The lease concerns have been discussed, but the long-term lease that is currently in place, even though the space looks to be empty, is current in rent. The space is being used for storage and there's no reason for management to break the lease to allow for another renter.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 5:55 pm.