



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

Regular Board Meeting
McCown Towers Board Room
September 24, 2025
4:30 P.M.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Taylor called the annual meeting of the Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners to order at 4:32 pm.
- II. **INVOCATION**
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. **ROLL CALL**
Commissioners Present: Chair Ernestine Taylor, Vice Chair John Colón (in at 4:37 pm), Commissioner Jack Meredith, Commissioner Carolyn Mason (out at 5:42 pm) and Commissioner Philip DiMaria
Commissioners Not Present: Commissioner Nicole Roman and Commissioner David Morgan
Invited Attendees: City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch, Attorney Ric Gilmore, Attorney Paul Quin, Joe Chambers, Jake Zunamon, Chris Gallagher (Hoyt), Sarah Rubin (Big Waters Land Trust, Jennifer Martinez/Randy Stollar (Consult HR Partners), Valerie Buchand (SHAARC), Agnes Kirkland (SHAARC) and Carolyn Spencer (SHAARC)
SHA Personnel: William Russell, Michelle Stears, Lance Clayton and Andrea Keddell
- V. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. SHA Annual Board Meeting – August 27, 2025
 - Chair Taylor put up the minutes from the August 27, 2025, Annual Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner Mason made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- VI. **ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA**
 - A. SHA Board Agenda – September 24, 2024
 - Chair Taylor put up the agenda for the September 24, 2024, Board Meeting for approval.
 - Commissioner DiMaria made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Meredith seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.
- VII. **SPECIAL PRESENTATION**
 - A. SHA Partner Introductions (Big Waters Land Trust)
 - Ms. Michelle Stears, SHA's Director of Resident Services, introduced Sara Rubin, Youth Education Manager, with Big Waters Land Trust and provided some history of the group and their work with Sarasota Housing Authority youth residents. Ms. Stears also introduced one of the teen students, Pierre Lubens, who's participates in the youth programs.

- Ms. Rubin provided an oral presentation that gave a brief overview of the program activities and outings that they do with the SHA youth residents. The programming provides children (averaging about 12 to 14 children per outing) with access to wild places to explore and learn about the wonders of our natural world, helping to shape their views on wildlife and habitats, instilling a love for nature, and inspiring their desire to protect the environment.
- B. SHA Compensation/Benefits Presentation (Consult HR Partners)
 - Mr. Russell introduced the Consult HR Partners team, Jennifer Martinez and Randy Stollar, who have been providing HR consultation services to SHA for 3 years.
 - Mr. Stollar shared his screen and went over a presentation outlining SHA's compensation and benefits program and how it compares with other, similar, agencies. Under compensation the presentation touched on market pricing and pay range progressions as well as job families and career pathing. With regard to benefits the presentation touched on health and wellness, retirement planning, paid time off (PTO), paid holidays and professional training and development.
 - Questions were asked and answered.
- C. SHA Historical Overview Presentation (William Russell)
 - Mr. Russell shared a presentation outlining SHA progression and growth over the past 20 years. Within the past 15 years, SHA has re-developed 9 developments totaling 665 units and currently has 4 more development in the pipeline that will add another 404 units. Mr. Russell also presented on staff growth, the increase in HUD assessment scores from 2005 to 2025 and the 4 different peer recognition awards that SHA has received.
- D. City Commission Liaison Update
 - City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch reported that she has provided Mr. Russell with the site plan for the downtown sarasota project to share with the board and residents. She also attended the afternoon meeting for McCown/Annex Residents on 9/16/25 that went over the plans for the new McCown Tower. She shared the input she received with the City Manager and City staff. The City Manager has asked Commissioner Ahearn-Koch to get back to her on the timeline for this new tower. Mr. Russell reported that this should be covered and reported on by Mr. Chambers under the development update.
 - SHA Commissioner, Philip DiMaria, asked if Commissioner Ahearn-Koch had any information on the City's position on public parking being included in the new tower. Commissioner Ahearn-Koch responded that she believes the surrounding community is pushing for the City to work with SHA to work towards getting some public parking, but that the timing may not match up and that from what she's heard from the residents at McCown that they are not in favor of having the outside public have access to their parking area. The City Manager is planning to conduct a parking assessment of what City currently has and what it needs in the future.
- E. County Commission Liaison Update
 - None.

VIII. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

- A. Agnes Kirkland, a resident from McCown Towers/Annex, reported the parking lot is not well lit at night and the lights are not working. She also reported that the wellness check program needs to be reinstituted. She suggested that signs could be used on the doors letting residents know who would like a wellness check and who would rather not participate.
- B. Donna Rochleau, a resident from McCown Towers/Annex, reported on the design plans for the new McCown Tower that were presented to the residents last week and expressed concern about the lack of natural light/windows in the back of the units, as detailed in A-1B and A-1C. She stated that she believes the units need to be wider.
- C. Ms. Valerie Buchand, Resident Council Member from Janie's Garden, reported that McCown recently had a resident found in their unit 10 days after they had passed away. She is also requesting that the wellness check program be reinstituted. Ms. Buchand also requested to know how many residents either have been evicted or had to move due to not being able to afford their rent at the new developments. She believes there have been rent increases. Lastly, she reports that the residents of McCown are stakeholders and do not want public parking included with the new tower and that they are actually afraid of public parking. The residents have been requesting to have the gate fixed for months, in order to keep the public out.
- D. Ms. Pamela Runyon, a resident from the McCown Towers/Annex, inquired if the gym could be reopened. The equipment is already in the room.

IX. RESOLUTIONS – ACCEPTED BY CONSENT

A. Res 25-17: Amendment of Culture Guide/Personnel Policy

- Commissioner Meredith made a motion to approve Resolution 25-17. Commissioner Colón seconded the motion.
 - The motion was voted on and passed unanimously.

X. OLD BUSINESS

- A. IFB 1014-B02 Annex Stairwell Report (Lance Clayton & Chris Gallagher from Hoyt)
 - Lance Clayton, SHA's Director of Construction and Capital Improvements and Chris Gallagher from Hoyt addressed the board and informed them about the obstacles they are facing with the upgrades that need to be done to the exterior east stairwell at the McCown Annex. Mr. Clayton stated that the regulations imposed by the fire department and city are causing the upgrades to be very challenging and they may need to look into adding an additional stairwell next to the current stairwell.
 - Mr. Gallagher reported that the project has been in the works for 5 years and the stairs have continued to deteriorate so the original drawings need to be updated. Mr. Clayton explained that the McCown renovation took place at the same time and staging issues had delayed the Annex project. He added the issue is how to repair the stairs while keeping the stairwell useable for emergencies and discussed all the different options they've proposed to remedy the issue of how to keep the stairs operational during renovation. However, none of the scenarios are optimal.

- Mr. Gallagher's final summation was that the project may need have new plans drawn up with the cost estimated and have the different proposed options re-bid. Commissioner Meredith inquired if the board could see the proposed plans and it was discussed what the estimated cost for the different plans would be (Plan A and Plan B). Mr. Gallagher reported that a "temporary stair" would run approximately \$250,000.
- The suggestion was made to come back to the board with some cost comparison estimates of the different options to rehab versus building new.

B. Development Updates / Redevelopment Report

McCown North Tower/Parking Garage

- Mr. Chambers Resident reported that 2 resident meetings were held on 9/16/25 to show proposed plans to the residents, with 1 meeting in the morning and 1 in the afternoon. They are on a time constraint with Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) to get the project underway. So, a commitment is needed from the City by the end of 2025 as to whether or not public parking is to be added into the design.
- Mr. Chambers responded to the comments regarding the unit designs lacking enough natural light stating that the plans are open to discussion. He stated that the thought was to have the bedrooms in the back, with less natural lighting, because it may be desirable for sleeping. He added that an option to have lighting in both front and rear isn't supported by the current designs and that the designed are code compliant.
 - Commissioner Meredith requested that the plans be re-sent to the board and added to the next agenda for discussion.
- Commissioner Meredith inquired what the benefit would be to included a public parking area in the garage asking if adding an additional level would be a potential revenue source? Mr. Chambers responded that there was reluctance from the City to share revenue to add additional parking but a final decision does need to be made in the next couple months.
 - Discussion took place on what the plan would be to separate public vs resident parking to address the safety concerns of the residents. Concerns were raised that elderly residents would want the ground floor and not want to have to park on higher floors and have to walk further to get to their unit. Concern was also expressed about noise level and late-night traffic if public access was permitted.
- It was decided to continue this discussion as an agenda item on the next board meeting agenda.

Lofts on Lemon (Phase II)

- Mr. Chambers reported the groundbreaking was held for this project and Cypress II and was well attended. Wiseman Construction is well underway on the site, and they should be going vertical soon. FPL is working to finalize the power line issue.

Cypress (Phase II)/ Courts II / Amaryllis III

- Mr. Chambers reported the Marmer Construction team is moving along with construction and this development should also be going vertical soon. The first building should be delivered by the 2nd quarter of 2026.

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

- Mr. Chamber reported that they have resubmitted all the plans for the Development Review Committee (DRC) and working through the process. They are looking to have the financial closing and begin construction by the 2nd quarter of 2026.

C. President/CEO Evaluation Results-Compensation Determination

- Commissioner Meredith suggested this be tabled and put on the next agenda for discussion, since only 4 of the 7 Commissioners are present at this meeting.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

A. HCV Admin Plan Amendment-Expiration of Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Funding

- Mr. Russell reported on the current situation happening in HUD with this program. SHA currently has 49 families in the EHV program that would be affected by the loss of this funding. SHA is in a “shortfall” situation and are working with a team to circumvent the problem of not have the funding to support all the landlords. At this time no new vouchers can be re-issued while in shortfall. Mr. Russell outlined 2 options SHA has for moving forward with the EHV families. One would be to notify the families, letting them know the program is ending and SHA can no longer fund their subsidy/assistance. The other option would be to amend the Admin Plan and apply for waivers from HUD to get \$1,000 per voucher fee to move the affected families to the top of the HCV waiting list and get absorbed into the regular voucher program. Mr. Russell added that Broward Housing Authority is giving their EHV families a 6-month notice of termination of subsidy and that he knows of 2 other nearby housing authorities are providing alternate vouchers to their EHV participants.
- Following discussion, it was decided that a letter be drafted to EHV participants informing them of the situation and what SHA is doing to mitigate the situation so that they do not lose their assistance. Mr. Russell will send the draft letter to the board to review prior to sending the letter.

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 (*if Submitted*)

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

XIII. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMENTS

- A. Commissioner Meredith reported that he attended the recent Housing Development Law Institute (HDLI) Commissioners Conference. The conference keeps the attendance low so that it's a more personalized experience. He stated that they went over the HDLI's Model Rules and Procedures for a Board of Commissioners and that he's asked Mr. Russell to purchase this for SHA and that electronic copies will be available for all the commissioners. Commissioner Meredith also asked for Mr. Russell to provide information to the board on the FSS programs and promoting independence for residents, including how many SHA residents have graduated from SHA's program to independence.
- B. Commissioner DiMaria thanked Mr. Russell and staff for putting on a successful groundbreaking event for Lofts II and Cypress II.
- C. Commissioner Taylor thanked the City and SHA Board of Commissioners for allowing her to Chair this board and thanked all the residents that attend all the meetings.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The Sarasota Housing Authority Board of Commissioners meeting was adjourned at 6:37 pm.