

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF NEW ORLEANS
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2014**

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of New Orleans met in Regular Session in the Helen W. Lang Board Room of the Authority located at 4100 Touro Street, Building B in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana 70122 at 10:30 a.m. on the 14th day of January, 2014.

The Agenda for this meeting is attached.

PRESENT

David Gilmore, Board of Commissioners
Robert Barbor, General Counsel

HANO STAFF

Leslie Dews
Maggie Merrill
Robert Anderson
Sieglinde Chambliss
Dawn Domengeaux
Arthur Waller
Desiree Andrepont
Lesley Thomas
Allan Rivera
Shelly Smith
Mitchel Dussett
Raymond Allen
Kelly Loisel
Larry Barabino
Issachar Nichols
Tomeka B. Jackson

RESIDENTS

Paula Taylor, IDRC
Dianne Conerly, Florida RC
Mary Aples, BW Cooper RMC
Constance Haynes, Fischer
Kim Piper, Iberville RC
Deborah Collins, BW Cooper RMC
Theophilus Moore, BW Cooper
Tanya Norwood, BW Cooper
Valerie Brooks, BW Cooper/MC
Claudette Warren, BW Cooper RMC
Daufinette Martin
Valerie Brooks
Vedra Tyson, Iberville

OTHERS

Terri North, Providence
Claudette Russell
Derrick Francis, City of New Orleans
VanShawn Branch, Advocacy Center
Toni Hackett
Renee Lapeyrolerie, CDM SMITH

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR JANUARY 14, 2014

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Commissioners regular meeting was called to order by David Gilmore, HANO's Board of Commissioners at 10:38 a.m.

II. STATEMENT BY LEGAL COUNSEL

"In accordance with the Louisiana Constitution Article XII, Section 3 and LSA-R.S. 42:11-28 the Board of Commissioners Meeting for the Housing Authority of New Orleans is hereby convened. As established in Sections 14 and 19 of R.S. 42 this meeting is open to the general public and notice of today's meeting as well as a copy of the Agenda have been provided and made available to the public prior to this meeting being called to order. Please adhere to the protocol as established and stated in the Agenda."

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 17, 2013.

Mr. Gilmore APPROVED the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on December 17, 2013.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Claudette Russell: (Ms. Russell handed a copy of an insurance claim form to the Board) I just wanted you to know that D. Jarred, he has an office at City Hall. Mitch Landrieu is running for re-election. I have a problem with the city and the housing. D. Jarred, Law Department, Housing Unit; I was appointed to write to him and tell him about the problem that occurred with the hurricane. He said he doesn't have anything to do with that. Then I forwarded another letter to Mitch Landrieu, and I don't hear nothing. But this problem is with the City.

Mr. Gilmore: What kind of claim is it?

Ms. Russell: It's a city tree that fell from the sidewalk. Remember that?

Mr. Gilmore: Oh, yes, I remember.

Russell: It fell on my mother's house in Hurricane Isaac and damaged her house. You can see it from the outside. I spoke with Mr. Jarred on the phone. Do I wait for another storm to hit it again?

Mr. Gilmore: I wouldn't do that. I think we had some conversation about this last time, and I mentioned to you that one option that you do have, is to get yourself a private attorney.

Russell: Well you did give me a Ms. Williams in City Hall. She said she doesn't have anything to do with that.

Mr. Gilmore: Well I don't remember that for sure. But you always as a citizen have the right to hire an attorney if you think you've been done a wrong, and to bring some sort of a lawsuit against the person or organizations that you think did the wrong. You might want to contact an attorney, who can give you better advice after reviewing this case, than we can. We certainly can't represent you. We don't have any role to play in any of this. But a lawyer can certainly advise you or your rights.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR JANUARY 14, 2014

Russell: Do they have free lawyers?

Mr. Gilmore: Yes. There are, but I don't think Legal Aid handles civil actions. But there are some attorneys who take these kinds of cases on a contingency basis, which means they don't take a fee unless they win. And then when they win, they get a part of the Judgment. That's all I can tell you is to get yourself a private attorney. One way to assure that your rights are respected is to have a consultation with an attorney. Sometimes an attorney will do a consultation with you at no charge before they take the case, and tell you whether you have much of a case.

Vedra Tyson: I'm a resident from the Iberville relocation. I moved into a unit on September 9th, that is not livable. It failed inspection. No heat. It's freezing in the unit. They gave me a 24 hour inspection. They called me yesterday and asked me when can I leave the unit that I'm in. I have nowhere to go, no money to pay deposit, to pay no one to move me.

Mr. Gilmore: Ok. Slow down. We don't want you to get upset. Take it easy. First, right off the bat, we're going to fix this. If you were relocated from Iberville, your relocation is our responsibility. Did you hear what I just said clearly? Ok. Take a deep breath. We're going to fix this. When everything is all said and done, you're going to be Okay. Alright.

Tyson: I've been coming every Thursday to see my case manager. So her supervisor, Tanya Jones, got involved. But she talks to me like a child. I tried to tell her my problem. She called me this morning, just nasty. And I'm just trying to let them know the way that I'm living. I'm not trying to be a problem, just asking them to please help me. The days they had the freeze in the house, it was so cold. I have electric heaters that people have loaned me, water boiling on the stove. I've been coming every Thursday, trying to see someone to get some help.

Mr. Gilmore: Do you have kids?

Tyson: None.

Mr. Gilmore: You're there by yourself? First of all are you okay if I ask you a question or two?

Tyson: Yes.

Mr. Gilmore: Did you move into this place on a Section 8 Voucher?

Tyson: Yes.

Mr. Gilmore: But it failed inspection? How is it that they let you move into this place if it failed inspection?

Tyson: I moved in September 9th, and it failed inspection November 25th and been failing ever since.

Mr. Gilmore: Alright. You have no heat?

Tyson: I'm boiling water

Mr. Gilmore: That's dangerous. Do you have another place you want to go to?

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR JANUARY 14, 2014

Tyson: Since she told me I have to find another place, I told her I was going to just put my stuff in storage.

Mr. Gilmore: No, no, no. Don't do that. Listen. Did you have a relocation-worker from HANO?

Tyson: They came, took pictures of the boiling water on the stove

Mr. Gilmore: Who's the relocation-worker that worked with you?

Tyson: Mr. Mike. But Ms. Shannon came from Relocation. She took pictures and said it's no way I'm supposed to be living like this. She took my paper-work, but still nobody

Mr. Gilmore: Okay. When you were first at Iberville, did you get a relocation-worker?

Tyson: Mr. Michael. But the person who helped me find a house was Ms. Iris, I think it was.

Mr. Gilmore: Have those people been back to see you since then?

Tyson: Not Mr. Michael or Ms. Iris.

Mr. Gilmore: Mr. Waller, where are you? That's Mr. Waller, who the Director of the Section 8 Program. There are relocation workers who are still here in this building. So they are going to get to the bottom of all this. But here is what's going to happen; Mr. Waller, we're going to inspect this place this morning, right now. The unit you moved in to was supposed to pass inspection before they put you in it. One of the things I'm going to ask, is to get a report before the day is out, about why she was moved. If she was moved into a unit that did not pass inspection, how did that happen. I want that information from both our folks, as well as the Urban Relocation Services people. The second thing is, if we need to move Ms. Tyson out of there today, get our movers to put her stuff in storage, and put her in a hotel until we find her another place to live. Got that? At no cost to you, other than the fact that you've already been through the ringer, Ms. Tyson. You won't have to come up with any money, any deposit. Because it was not proper for you to be there, that's our responsibility. And we're going to take care of it. Mr. Waller will report back to my office this afternoon, and you follow up with me.

Dolfinette Martin: First, I need to clear up some misconceptions Mr. Gilmore. Myself, Ms. Brooks and Ms. Noble, the residents, we came together with a Petition concerning the handling of the lead poisoning settlement, and some rumors were going around that we were petitioning HANO. Not true. As I said before, HANO's insurance paid the money. You did your part. We were just concerned with how the case was handled. As far as distributing the money, HANO has done its part. Also, there were a lot of calls to Cooper. But we as residents decided that we need to stand and fight together concerning this. The biggest issue was that we contacted the lawyers and were told that they couldn't get in touch with you, couldn't find you

Mr. Gilmore: Oh, I remember this.

Martin: I have over 27,474 signatures generated from Thursday, January the 9th up until yesterday. Today there is a line of some-300 people looking for us to sign this petition on Earhart. Which proves, if we could find this many people to sign the petition, they could have found us, too. Again, I want to be clear, we are not petitioning HANO. We are petitioning the handling of the case.

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR JANUARY 14, 2014

Mr. Gilmore: Nevertheless, we are a Defendant in this case and we have some interest in a fair and equitable outcome, even if we've paid our money. This is the lead paint case? Billieson case? Right. So, let me ask a couple of questions. Is it that, in the distribution of the funds, you didn't get a share because they couldn't find you?

Martin: One of the claims was that people couldn't be found. Other claims were, myself, I can say, we didn't get the paper-work, or we lost the application, or just story-after-story, since Thursday. Which, myself and a lot of the residents feel, it's a bunch of BS. There's no way you send me paper-work, I send it back and you tell me you lost it, or you didn't receive it. If you are representing me as a claimant, I feel every effort should have been put forth to serve me. Those monies were distributed to those people that were exposed, affected, visited or whatever. Not one story we heard from the people that came out to sign this petition was different.

Mr. Gilmore: What I'm trying to get at is, what's the consequence? What happened to you and all these other folks as a result

Martin: We were pushed to the side, left out. All of these people and ourselves; we didn't get any compensation.

Mr. Gilmore: You got no share of the proceeds?

Martin: None. Most of us didn't get a letter stating that you either you got our application or didn't get our application.

Mr. Gilmore: The other part of the compensation was to have been 200 vouchers made available. Does that mean you wouldn't be able to get any one of those vouchers, as well

Martin: When I called Bruno and Bruno's office, you don't even get that far into the conversation. Case closed; nothing you can do about it.

Mr. Gilmore: I got an inquiry from the Senator's office not very long ago. I wish I could remember who it that was asking about this. But I have to confess at that point, that I didn't pay much attention to it, because I kind of sloughed it off. Because, I figured, like you did, we've fulfilled our responsibilities. But I'm not so sure that's really true. What these folks need to do, it seems to me anyway, is get an audience with the Judge.

Martin: That's what we want.

Mr. Gilmore: Can we intercede on their behalf and ask for the Judge or Special Masters to hear them?

Robert Barbor, General Counsel: The Plaintiff's Steering Committee met and discussed whether they were going take any extraordinary steps to reach out to additional people that might be affected by the lead paint situation. They decided they were not going to do that. That was after the settlement had been completed by HANO, so we really weren't involved in those discussions, but

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR JANUARY 14, 2014

Mr. Gilmore: Let me just interject here. I think what these ladies are saying is that extraordinary measures, you can understand. But all they are saying is that the lawyers, or the court needed to do was to contact us, to get these addresses, and they didn't do that.

Mr. Gilmore: That seems to me, hardly comes under the heading of "extraordinary measures." Wouldn't you agree?

Martin: Right. These people were generated by a post on Facebook and Instagram.

Mr. Gilmore: Well, let me just say this to you. The final judgment as to whether or not the lawyers acted properly or improperly, notwithstanding, because I can't make that judgment. Is there something we can do to get these folks a hearing before the Masters or the court?

Robert Barbor, General Counsel: I think, given our posture, if we can present this information to the Special Masters...

Mr. Gilmore: I got an idea. We haven't given out any of the vouchers. We haven't had any to give. The court has been pressing us, a little bit, to free up some vouchers to give out to some of the members of the Class, in the Billieson case. I'm on the verge of doing that. But I think that I'm prepared to say to the judge, in exchange for freeing up these vouchers, which, by the way, we are no longer under any legal obligation to do, but in exchange for doing it voluntarily, the judge has to hear these complaints. We've got a little bit of leverage; and I don't mind using it. They're going to have to make their case. I can't make their case for them, because I don't have any standing here. But it does seem to me that we are still involved in the case, and we haven't satisfied the case yet. And it's still an open issue for us. We still have some obligation to see that these folks get treated fairly and equitably. Do we know how to reach you guys? We were represented, in this case, by an outside law firm, Rodney & Etter. The Judge has been asking our outside firm about making these vouchers available. I'm asking Bob Barbor to go back to Rodney & Etter, and say to them; to have Rodney & Etter represent the fact that some members of the class have been coming to complain to HANO that an inadequate effort was made to reach out to them. They could have easily been found if the attorneys had used HANO information, and they didn't do it. And I want you guys to have an opportunity, formally or otherwise, either to meet with the Judge, informally in Chambers, or have a formal hearing, to determine whether the attorneys representing the Class acted properly and sufficiently in this case. Then, the rest is up to you, ladies. That's the final authority in this case. There's nothing much more I can do, beyond that. Mr. Barbor needs to know how to reach you to tell you the results.

Martin: Also, I'm trying to put together an empowerment assessment to give to our young ladies, of Cooper and other sites, to come together and come up with some type of job training.

Mr. Gilmore: Ms. Johnigan said to me, Every time we talk about Section 3 and think about try to implement Section 3, it always turns on issues of construction. No offense, but there are a lot of women who either A have no interest in construction, or B have family obligations which would prevent them from getting involved in these construction activities. The training ought to be more diversified. We recognize that most of our residents are women. So we are, in fact, going to start to take a look at that, as an issue, to make our training activities more diversified. I was told, this morning in Cabinet, when the classes begin HANO Academy in February; in the first class they were going to concentrate on construction initially, and the second class, start to incorporate more activities amenable or attractive, for women. But they're telling me, this

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR JANUARY 14, 2014

morning, they are going to move that up and get some of the activities to the first group, and not wait for the second group. If you're interested in getting into HANO Academy, Dawn in the back of the room, Director of Client Services. They're still looking for enrollees, for the HANO Academy classes that are supposed to start in February. So talk to her before you go. It's going to initially open up at Harmony Oaks, but we are looking for a permanent headquarters. There are going to be some other benefits that we go along, for example, paid bus passes for transportation for people to get back and forth to the training center. It's not only limited to public housing residents. It's intended to be for folks that need job training to become employable.

Martin: We also while we out doing the petition, we registered some people to vote. That was something else that we are passionate about because our voices count. We don't want it to become political but we do need those people to know that their voices count. We feel that one registration is a success.

Mr. Gilmore: I think you are wise to link the two things. Because, in the minds eye of so many, poor people in public housing, don't vote in great number. Sometimes they don't get the kind of attention they deserve as human beings, never mind who they are. But if you go out and vote, you become a voting power, and I think you are much better off. But, Ms. Johnigan, Dolfinette, you make sure you hook up with Dawn, so you can make sure that the interest of the women of public housing is represented in all this stuff.

Mr. Gilmore: Okay, well that's it for today.

V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

AUTHORIZATION(S)

Resolution #2014-01 - to approve the disposition activity proposed herein to authorize the Administrator Receiver to submit the appropriate amendment to the Scattered Sites LA01025805 disposition approval to HUD.

Mr. Gilmore APPROVED Resolution #2014-01 to approve the disposition activity proposed herein to authorize the Administrator Receiver to submit the appropriate amendment to the Scattered Sites LA01025805 disposition approval to HUD.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) for attention, Mr. Gilmore **ADJOURNED** the Regular Meeting at 11:22 a.m.

APPROVED:

**DAVID GILMORE
ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVER
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**