



# CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

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## ANN ARBOR HOUSING COMMISSION

### Ann Arbor Housing Commission

November 3, 2010

#### SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

#### MINUTES

The meeting took place at Miller Manor (Community Room) located at 727 Miller Ave. in Ann Arbor, MI 48103. President Miller convened the meeting at 5:55 pm. President Miller provided instruction regarding the process for providing public commentary to those in attendance.

#### ROLL CALL:

Commissioners present: Jayne Miller, Ronald Woods, Sasha Womble, Marta Manildi

Commissioners absent: Mark McDonald

Commission Staff Present: Marge Novak (Exec. Dir), Nick Coquillard (Dep. Dir.), Betsy Cornellier (Financial Manager), Kevin Centala (West PH Residency Mgr), Beth Yaroch (East PH Residency Mgr), Weneshia Brand (S 8 Mgr)

In Attendance: Brigitte Burke (City HR Dept), Pam Chalklin (IHN), Marty Strange (Miller Manor resident) two additional Miller Manor residents

- I. **AGENDA** – President Miller stated that this meeting was a working session rather than a formal meeting. She reviewed the agenda and explained the format for the meeting with presentations by staff, questions from Commissioners, followed by setting of priorities.
- II. **PUBLIC COMMENTARY**
  - A. Resident Organizations – none.
  - B. Others Requesting to Speak – *Ms. Chalklin*: Identified herself as an employee of IHN (Interfaith Hospitality Network), spoke of the current need for affordable housing in the community as increasing, her agency is seeing more generational occurrence and re-occurrence of need for housing with families previously served returning for additional services. She stated that her agency would like to renew past relationships with the Commission and begin new partnerships as well. IHN would like to collaborate with the Commission in providing services to those in need. She referenced the Pilot Program

that IHN started with the Commission in 2003 – matching families served by IHN with public housing at a rate of three per year. Since 2006, unfortunately there has not been a good match between families in need of housing and the units available in the Commission’s public housing stock – the family size has not matched to the unit size available. However, IHN would like to collaborate more with the Commission on a community wide basis. *Mr. Strange:* Identified himself as a resident of Miller Manor. Mr. Strange complimented the new management staff and stated that Mr. Centala in particular has done a very good job, especially with asking residents to bring him their problems with proposed solutions. He stated that the new management treats residents equally and fairly. He reiterated an earlier request regarding the possibility of making the rear yard of Miller Manor accessible to residents in wheelchairs and indicated that he would be working with the Center for Independent Living to potentially apply for a grant for this. *Manildi:* Inquired as to what prompted Ms. Chalklin’s attendance at tonight’s meeting, who responded that Ms. Julie Steiner, the IHN Executive Director asked that she attend the meeting. *Manildi:* Asked for clarification on homeless statistics which Ms. Chalklin provided.

**III. NEW BUSINESS** *President Miller:* Provided an explanation of the presentations to be made indicating that the staff was asked to provide one-page overviews of accomplishments and priorities for the next eighteen months, the remainder of FY11 and for FY12, and that the Board of Commissioners should plan on meeting several times during the next eighteen month period to discuss progress made toward meeting the priorities that are established.

**A. Presentations and Questions from Commissioners Following Each Presentation:**

**1. Agency Overview:** *Novak:* Presented a summary of the agency-wide accomplishments during the past year, and the agency-wide priorities for the next eighteen months as listed in the Agency Overview handout. Accomplishments of hiring a permanent full staff, regaining trust of staff and residents, change in culture, short-term financial stability, strengthening relationships inside and outside the Commission, capital improvements to properties. Priorities include continued financial stability – increased cash and in-kind support, staff structure, operating procedures, technology, remove public housing troubled status, analyze public housing inventory for long-term strategy, increase in Commissioner participation. Challenges include the economy, funding of programs, union contract negotiations and increased retirement of union workers, continued motivation of staff. *Woods:* Inquired if there is a fixed listing of requirements to meet in order to move the public housing program out of troubled status. *Novak:* Responded that while the REAC reports do list specific areas where points were lost and that the Commission intends on addressing those specific deficiencies, this does not guarantee that the Commission’s next REAC score will improve, as the next inspector will most likely be a different inspector and the units chosen to inspect will be a different random sample. The Commission will enter into an MOA with HUD to develop a strategy for removing its troubled public housing status. *Miller:* Provided additional details to the Commissioners regarding the

projected increase in retirements among City AFSCME employees, who are largely clerical and maintenance staff.

- 2. Finance Overview:** *Cornellier:* Presented a summary of the financial accomplishments during the past year, and the financial priorities for the next eighteen months as listed in the Finance Overview handout. She reviewed the many responsibilities in the Finance Department and stressed the importance of keeping managers well-informed of the finances of the agency and their departments and that this will make them more effective managers. Mentioned financial administration of VMS, Cranbrook and Shelter Plus Care, Capital Fund Grants, audit work. New staff person doing very well – timely reporting, improved relationship with City finance staff. Priorities include improvements in computer software, additional financial staff and support, better inform the Board and managers. *Manildi:* Inquired if the Shelter Plus Care contract would be expiring similarly to the Cranbrook Village contract, and asked if the Commission receives an administrative fee for this program. *Novak:* Stated that this was not the case and that they are different types of contracts and that the Shelter Plus Care is a five-year renewable contract which has generally been renewed, and that the Commission has not historically received an administrative fee for the Shelter Plus Care Program but intends to begin collecting such fee going forward. *Manildi:* Inquired if the Commission receives technical assistance from the City IT Department with regards to Yardi. *Novak:* The assistance from the City's IT Department specifically with regards to Yardi is limited since the City IT staff is not trained in Yardi. *Miller:* Inquired of the Operational Needs Assessment recommendation regarding the hiring of a financial analyst and the importance of this. *Cornellier:* Stated that this would assist the Finance Department in meeting various deadline requirements. *Yaroch:* Stated that this would be necessary if the Commission increases and diversifies its funding sources. *Novak:* Stated that the Commission is most exposed in the Finance Department with a lack of necessary staff back-up – that if the Finance Director were to leave, there is no other staff person who is trained to undertake the major tasks of the Finance Manager – no-one who can currently step in and do that job.
- 3. Public Housing Overview:** *Centala and Yaroch:* Presented a summary of the accomplishments in the public housing area during the past year, and the priorities for the public housing program for the next eighteen months as listed in the Public Housing Overview handout. Major accomplishments were addressing emergency issues, work orders, consistency in policies and procedures on East and West AMPs, resident concerns, working with supportive service providers and improved relationships with residents, the AA Police Department and others. Facilities management requires much time and attention and is an area that will continue to grow. Going forward will require a balance of maintaining existing facilities and planning for improvements – long term planning impacts today's capital improvement decisions. Collaboration with existing supportive service providers is not sustainable as it is currently operating.

4. **Section 8 Overview:** *Brand:* Presented a summary of the accomplishments in the Section 8 Program area during the past year, and the priorities for the Section 8 Program for the next eighteen months as listed in the Section 8 Overview handout. She stated that the Section 8 funding shortfall correction resulted in no participants being terminated from the program, the Section 8 staff worked on a massive clean-up of the Section 8 waitlist, the Commission moved out of troubled status in the Section 8 Program, VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) vouchers were 50% leased up, and an FSS (Family Self Sufficiency) waiver was approved by HUD. The Department will focus on removal of its FY09 CAP (Corrective Action Plan), focusing largely on improving its Housing Quality Standards (HQS) and Adjusted Income SEMAP indicators. *Miller:* Inquired if the Commission could enroll more participants than the 30 required slots for the FSS Program. *Brand:* Yes – could do more. *Manildi:* Inquired of the number of VASH vouchers. *Brand:* 95 total. *Woods:* Inquired if there was a federal protocol for terminations from the Section 8 Program with regards to last year’s financial concerns. *Brand:* Provided an overview of the Commission’s ability to revoke vouchers issued due to insufficient funding. *Novak:* Further clarified that if terminations were required, they would occur according to the order in which vouchers were issued – in reverse. *Miller:* Inquired of the job analysis undertaken in Section 8 (workload levels and performance). *Coquillard:* Provided a summary of work completed to date by the City’s HR Department to review Section 8 staffs’ job descriptions as compared to what they are actually doing in their jobs. *Miller:* Inquired if there were still customer service issues within the Section 8 Department – we have heard and seen dramatic improvements in customer service in the public housing program, do issues still remain in the Section 8 Program. *Brand:* Issues still remain largely due to the complexity of the Section 8 process but that the Section 8 staff is working to address these process concerns at every staff meeting. *Novak:* The level of complaints in the Section 8 Program has gone down substantially as compared to one year ago.

**B. Board of Commissioners – Additional Questions:** None

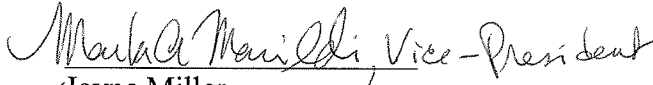
**C. Board of Commissioners – Discussion of Board Membership Transition:** *Miller:* Reminded the Board of her resignation from the Board and notified the Commissioners of her unavailability to attend the November and December Board Meetings but stated that she would continue to be actively involved on the Board, providing input to the Commissioners and staff thru the end of December, and that she was working on finding her replacement. *Womble:* Reminded the Board of her resignation from the Board and indicating that she intends on continuing in her role thru the end of December, but that she intends on relocating in January of 2011.

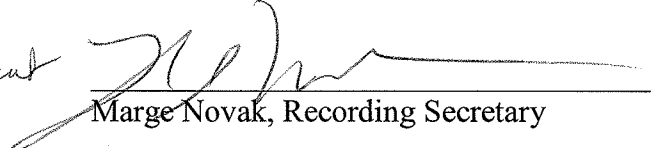
**D. Board of Commissioners – Discussion and Setting of Priorities:** The Commissioners took turns identifying verbally the priorities that each of them thought to be the most important and such priorities were written out by the Executive Director on a large note

pad for all Commissioners and staff to view. *Manildi*: Out of troubled status in public housing, appropriate staffing (including pay), assessment of physical properties and work to develop long-term plan for housing in the community – who are we trying serve, location, etc, plan for personnel, marketing and public relations; *Womble*: Better use of technology, reach out to volunteer organizations, S8 customer service; *Miller*: maintenance practices in public housing, establish other sources of revenue, standardizing operational practices across the agency; *Woods*: Customer Service in Section 8, enhance city and county relationships, addressing public housing stock in more than a patchwork approach. *Brand*: Added working with two other counties in Section 8 area, expanding definition of supportive services to include Section 8 participants and other types of services such as banking and other self-sufficiency support. Once all priorities were identified, Commissioners then further made note of those priorities on the list which they believed to be of highest priority, which include: addressing public housing troubled status, obtaining other funding sources, assessment of public housing stock and long-term planning, plan for personnel (pay, promotion, and development), and expansion of supportive services. The Commissioners then directed the Commission staff to take the final listing of priorities and to prepare a document which lists such priorities along with more specific information to be presented back to the Board for further discussion.

IV. **ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTARY** : None

V. **ADJOURNMENT**: Motion moved by *Womble*, seconded by *Woods* to adjourn at 8:25 P.M.

*acting for*  Mark A. Manildi, Vice-President  
Jayne Miller

 Marge Novak, Recording Secretary