

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OF THE CITY OF MONROE, LOUISIANA, HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 11, 2020

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, met in Regular Session at 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, June 11, 2020, at the office of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, located at 300 Harrison Street, Monroe, Louisiana 71201, with the option to join via WebEx for virtual conference.

Those present and absent were as follows:

Present: Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

Absent: Vice-Chairman Rick Miller and Commissioner Beverly Lewis

Also present were: William Smart, MHA Executive Director; Karen Crowell, Deputy Director; Cheryl Farmer, Operations Director; Janet Sanderford, Administrative Director; Naomi Jackson, Section 8 Director; Janet Wells, Planning and Development Consultant; and Kara Jenkins, Executive Staff Officer

Guests in attendance were: Detective Chris Bates, Sergeant Chuck Johnson, and Crime Analyst Scott Rogers, from Monroe Police Department

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

TO: Mr. Hal H. Hinchliffe, Chairman  
Mr. Rick Miller, Vice-Chairman  
Dr. Henry Bonner, Jr., Chairman Emeritus  
Mr. Joe Farr, Commissioner  
Ms. Patricia Gix, Commissioner  
Ms. Beverly V. Lewis, Commissioner  
Mr. Steve North, Attorney

You are hereby notified that the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe is called to meet in Special Session at 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, June 11, 2020, at the office of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, located at 300 Harrison Street, Monroe, Louisiana 71201, and via WebEx video conference call for the following purposes:

1. Approve minutes of previous meeting
2. Presentation of management and financial reports
3. Any other business that may come before the board

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HAL HINCHLIFFE, CHAIRMAN  
kj/hh

Dated this June 4, 2020

Chairman Hal Hinchliffe called the meeting to order, and William Smart was asked to open the meeting with a prayer.

Since the May board meeting was cancelled, Chairman Hinchliffe asked the Board for any comments regarding the April meeting. There were none, and Commissioner Joe Farr introduced a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Commissioner Patricia Gix seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

Chairman Hinchliffe gave the floor over to Detective Chris Bates, who introduced himself and his colleagues. Detective Bates informed the Board that Sergeant Mickey Tucker, who previously assisted Monroe Housing Authority as Monroe PD's liaison, had been promoted to Lieutenant and they would be taking care of us going forward. Detective Bates mentioned that crime has been lower than expected during this time with the virus. Commissioner Farr asked what we could do better to impact crime prevention in our communities, to which Detective Bates answered that security cameras and additional lighting are always beneficial for deterring criminal behavior. Janet Wells asked for help in the Preservation Mills area. Contractors have been working diligently to construct our 23 new homes for that development, and they have experienced continual break-ins, with destruction of property and theft at those sites. William Smart expressed his agreement that it has been an ongoing issue and requested additional patrols in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street area. Detective Bates

committed to passing along the tip to the HEAT unit; he also asked that we provide any details we have regarding suspicious activity in that area.

Sergeant Chuck Johnson informed everyone that he has a long history with Monroe Housing Authority; he used to work with us years ago. He discussed his progression in the department and informed the Board that he was over the HEAT unit as well. Sgt. Johnson assured everyone that just because you don't see police cars doesn't mean that there isn't a police presence in the area. He mentioned that they can put officers in some of our houses that are not yet rented to keep an eye on criminal activity.

Chairman Hinchliffe then introduced the first topic for discussion, a request for permission to make a \$25,000 donation to Ouachita Council on Aging. Commissioner Farr abstained from the vote due to a business relationship with OCA. After discussion, Commissioner Gix introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3769**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A DONATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$25,000 TO OUACHITA COUNCIL ON AGING TO ASSIST IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF SENIOR RESIDENTS.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, that the donation of \$25,000 to Ouachita Council on Aging is hereby approved.

The above resolution was seconded by Chairman Hinchliffe. Vice-Chairman Rick Miller and Commissioner Beverly Lewis were polled by phone to ensure agreement, and the resulting vote is as follows:

**AYES:** Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Patricia Gix, Vice-Chairman Rick Miller (by phone), & Commissioner Beverly Lewis (by phone)

**NAYS:** None

**ABSTAINS:** Commissioner Joe Farr

Chairman Hinchliffe moved on to the next topic for discussion. William Smart asked Janet Sanderford to discuss the accounts receivable bad debt write-offs for year end. After discussion, Commissioner Farr introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3770**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE WRITE-OFFS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, that accounts receivable write-offs for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, are hereby approved.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that these write-offs include uncollectible amounts on any additional move-outs as of this date through June 30, 2020.

Summary of balances to be written off so far:

<b>Properties</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Write-Off Balance</b>
Public Housing	2020	144	\$124,369.08
Retirement	2020	11	\$3,209.66
Section 8	2020	29	\$56,373.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>\$183,951.74</b>

The above resolution was seconded by Commissioner Gix and carried the following vote:

**AYES:** Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

**NAYS:** None

Chairman Hinchliffe mentioned the request for approval of the proposed public housing operating budget. Ms. Sanderford provided some information on how she created the budget. After discussion, Commissioner Gix introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3771**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE OPERATING BUDGET FOR PUBLIC HOUSING FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2021.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, that the public housing operating budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, is hereby approved.

The above resolution was seconded by Commissioner Farr and carried the following vote:

AYES: Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

NAYS: None

The next request was for approval of the proposed Section 8 operating budget. After discussion, Commissioner Gix introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3772**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE OPERATING BUDGET FOR SECTION 8 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2021.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, that the Section 8 operating budget for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021, is hereby approved.

The above resolution was seconded by Commissioner Farr and carried the following vote:

AYES: Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

NAYS: None

Chairman Hinchliffe moved on to the next topic for discussion. William Smart asked Janet Wells to discuss the capital fund budget and 5-year plan. After discussion, Commissioner Farr introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3773**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPROVAL OF THE REVISED 2020 CAPITAL FUND BUDGET AND PROPOSED 5-YEAR PLAN FOR 2020-2024.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, that revisions to the 2020 capital fund budget and 5-Year Plan, as detailed in the attached worksheets, are hereby approved.

The above resolution was seconded by Commissioner Gix and carried the following vote:

AYES: Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

NAYS: None

Chairman Hinchliffe mentioned the water heater contract. William Smart asked Janet Wells to provide information. After discussion, Commissioner Gix introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3774**

**A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE LOW BID FROM LOWE'S FOR THE ANNUAL WATER HEATER CONTRACT.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, that the low bid from Lowe's for the annual water heater contract, project # 20GEN03.WH, to purchase a minimum of 50 and up to 100 water heaters over a 12-month period, is hereby accepted.

The above resolution was seconded by Commissioner Farr and carried the following vote:

AYES: Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

NAYS: None

Chairman Hinchliffe moved on to introduce proposed updates to Monroe Housing Authority’s policies and procedures. William Smart asked Karen Crowell to discuss the changes. Ms. Crowell mentioned that a snapshot of the changes was included in the packet, and she assured the Board that she would provide each of them with a binder of the updated policies and procedures. After discussion, Commissioner Farr introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3775**

**A RESOLUTION ADOPTING CERTAIN PROPOSED NEW AND/OR AMENDED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR MONROE HOUSING AUTHORITY.**

**WHEREAS**, Policies and procedures are essential to connecting a company’s purpose and goals to its internal operations; and,

**WHEREAS**, policies and procedures establish guidelines, promote consistency and set standards by which all employees are measured; and

**WHEREAS**, from time-to-time, it is necessary for a company to update its written policies when regulations or procedures change.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the following Policies and Procedures have been amended as described below:

<b>Ref. #</b>	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Revisions</b>
1	Accounts payable	Added procedural aspects; internal controls; and/or elements of the LLASAUP; and/or addressed deficiencies noted in the previous audit.
2	Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP) (stand-alone reference book)	Updated based on Nan McKay subscription service recommended annual updates. The ACOP book is available for your review.
4	Bed Bug Protocol	Updated procedural aspects.
5	Budgets, Revision and Financial Reporting	Added procedural aspects; internal controls; and/or elements of the LLASAUP; and/or addressed deficiencies noted in the previous audit.
6	Capitalization Policy	Updated cost thresholds.
7	Communications and Network Security	Added language to strengthen the rules and code of conduct, confidentiality, and security; and added a Social Media policy.
10	Credit Card Purchase Policy	New Policy. Added to address the LLASAUP and/or deficiencies noted in the previous audit.
11	Disaster Recovery Policy	New Policy. Added to address the LLASAUP and/or deficiencies noted in the previous audit as well as in response to COVID-19.
12	Disposition of Fixed Assets Policy	Updated to more clearly state the policy.
13	EIV System User and Security Policy	Updated to reference current HUD regulations.
15	Ethics Policy and Code of Conduct	Based on LLASAUP and auditor’s recommendations, added an annual certification.
16	Fair Housing Plan	Added language to include persons with vision impairment and limited English proficiency (LEP); and updated the protected class statement.
17	Grievance Procedure	Part of the ACOP – it was recommended by Nan McKay to create a summary document of the procedural aspects of the PHA’s policies regarding grievances.
19	House Rules	Updated to reflect current court costs and administrative fees for filing evictions for non-payment of rent; added Fair Housing language under pet rules to include Assistance Animals; added language to prohibit the attachment of appurtenances and/or personal property to MHA dwelling units.

20	Insurance Policy	Updated to reflect current insurance policies held by the agency.
21	Inventory Control Policy	Added language to disclose potential disciplinary action for failure to report.
24	Payroll Procedures	Added procedural aspects; internal controls; and/or elements of the LLASAUP; and/or addressed deficiencies noted in the previous audit.
25	Personnel Policy	Clarified work hours, dress code, and the tobacco policy; established a holiday pay eligibility requirement; and, based on the auditor's draft review, incorporated statements regarding ethics training; incentive pay policy; sexual harassment training; and made the acknowledgement an annual statement.
26	Pet Policy, Rules and Agreement	Added Fair Housing language to include Assistance Animals; increased sanitary standards; and resident responsibilities to include pet vaccinations; and inserted Fair Housing guidance on Assistance Animals.
27	Petty Cash Policy	Added procedural aspects; internal controls; and/or elements of the LLASAUP; and/or addressed deficiencies noted in the previous audit.
28	Procurement Policy	Updated threshold limits in accordance with current regulations; and, added language for credit/purchasing cards.
30	Purchase Control Policy	New Policy. Added to address the LLASAUP and/or deficiencies noted in the previous audit.
31	Quarantinable Disease/COVID-19	New Policy in response to COVID-19. Policy language drafted in its entirety by legal counsel.
36	Tablet Policy	Expanded user to include staff other than maintenance as potential users.
37	Tenant Payments and Deposits Policy	Added procedural aspects; internal controls; and/or elements of the LLASAUP; and/or addressed deficiencies noted in the previous audit.
38	Tenant Cost to Transfer (at the request of MHA)	Updated in accordance with current regulation.
41	Vehicle Use Policy	New policy to expand on the Vehicle Program section of the Maintenance Plan. The policy includes information on general guidelines; home-to-work transportation; use of personal vehicles for housing authority use; cell phone use; safety; general maintenance for fleet vehicles; GPS tracking for fleet vehicles; accident reporting protocol and reporting form; and an annual statement of acknowledgment.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of all MHA Policies and Procedures are on file at MHA's administrative offices located at 300 Harrison Street, Monroe, LA 71201.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the proposed amended Policies and Procedures are hereby approved.

The above resolution was seconded by Commissioner Gix and carried the following vote:

AYES: Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

NAYS: None

Chairman Hinchliffe brought up that it was time to elect officers for the Board. William Smart recommended leaving the existing officers in place. After discussion, Commissioner Farr introduced the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION # 3776**

**A RESOLUTION RE-ELECTING THE CURRENT OFFICERS FOR ANOTHER TERM ON THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF MONROE HOUSING AUTHORITY.**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, that Chairman Hal Hinchliffe and Vice-Chairman Rick Miller are hereby re-elected as officers for the following year.

The above resolution was seconded by Commissioner Gix and carried the following vote:

AYES: Chairman Hal Hinchliffe, Commissioner Joe Farr, and Commissioner Patricia Gix

NAYS: None

Chairman Hinchliffe shifted to the report section of the meeting, asking Mr. Smart to provide updates. Mr. Smart informed the Board that we have not been able to evict or charge late fees during the pandemic. He added that approximately 40 people have not paid, which is better than expected. Mr. Smart mentioned that food boxes were delivered to each family at our properties. He added that hands-free sanitation stations were being added to the common areas at each location. Mr. Smart provided an update on vacancies: Public Housing has a 97% occupancy rate and Retirement Communities are at 99%. He mentioned that the rent roll and employee report were about the same.

Mr. Smart announced that the governor had signed off on MHA's request to be removed from LA State Civil Service. He disclosed that we will no longer be governed under civil service as of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Commissioner Farr asked if we should get groups together to discuss how things should be handled after leaving civil service. He also suggested reaching out to Lafayette Housing Authority to see what they did since they exited civil service previously. Mr. Smart assured the Board that we would be using our resources to ensure we are prepared going forward.

Chairman Hinchliffe asked Janet Wells to review the construction report. Ms. Wells stated that Burg Jones Lane Office Renovation has become a thorn in our side due to issues with the contractor. She provided an update on Miller Square, stating that testing had been done and abatement must proceed. Ms. Wells added that tornado recovery was still in the works at Miller as well. She mentioned that we would be changing to a traditional framed roof on the Learning Center, taking down the barrel vaults that provide the arches.

Mr. Smart then asked Janet Sanderford to go over the financial reports. Ms. Sanderford referred to the financials that were located in the board packet. She stated that MHA was finishing up the fiscal year in good shape for Public Housing and Section 8.

Chairman Hinchliffe announced that William Smart has been on the job as Executive Director of Monroe Housing Authority for 1 year and 1 day. Refreshments were provided to celebrate his work anniversary. Mr. Smart said he would do it again if he had it to do over again. He expressed thankfulness for his staff and confirmed that he loves what he is doing.

Chairman Hinchliffe asked if there was anything else that needed to be addressed. There being no further business, he adjourned the meeting.

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HAL HINCHLIFFE, CHAIRMAN

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WILLIAM V. SMART, SECRETARY

#### CERTIFICATE

William V. Smart, the duly appointed, qualified and acting Secretary of the Housing Authority of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, do hereby certify that the attached extract from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of said Authority held on Thursday, June 11, 2020, is a true and correct copy of the original minutes of said meeting on file and of record insofar as said attached extract, and I do further certify that each such resolution appearing in said attached extract is a true and correct copy of same resolution adopted at said meeting on file and of record.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have set my hand and the seal of said Authority this 11<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2020.

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WILLIAM V. SMART, SECRETARY

(SEAL)