

**JOURNAL OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COOK COUNTY  
REGULAR PUBLIC SESSION  
November 16, 2023 at 12:01 p.m.**

**ROLL CALL**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Wendy Walker Williams, Chair  
Polly Kuehl, Vice Chair  
Elaine Kroll, Commissioner  
Eric L. Slaughter, Commissioner  
Norma Salleh-Barone, Commissioner  
Nilda Soler, Commissioner

**COMMISSIONER NOT PRESENT**

Herb Porter, Commissioner

**HACC STAFF PRESENT**

Danita Childers, Executive Director  
Sheryl Seiling, Director of Rent Assistance  
Tina Pourroy, Director of Asset Management & Development  
Deborah O'Donnell, Procurement Manager  
Jon Duncan, General Counsel  
Marcus King, Director of Strategy and Communication  
Nahid Khumawala, Comptroller  
Erica Campbell, Behavioral Health Care Liaison  
Darrick Shafer, Regional Manager North (participating via Zoom.us)  
Chalone Liddell, Regional Manager South (participating via Zoom.us)  
Maria Reyes-Collins, Director of Leasing and Compliance (participating via Zoom.us)  
Jackie Hodges, Director of Operations  
Diana Cornejo, Human Resource Generalist  
Ernest Lofton, Director of Information Technology (participating via Zoom.us)  
Raquel Burnette, Ed.D., Director of Human Resources  
Ardeth Gardiner, 504 Coordinator and Legal Assistant  
Zellores Harrison, Executive Assistant

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Wendy Walker Williams called the November 16, 2023 meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Cook County to order at 12:01 p.m.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chair Wendy Walker Williams opened the floor for public comments. No public comments were submitted.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Eric L. Slaughter and seconded by Commissioner Nilda Soler for approval of the consent agenda, which included approval of the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of October 19, 2023. Commissioner Nilda Soler moved for an amendment to the draft Minutes to reflect that she was not present for the October 19 meeting, and the amendment was approved with all “ayes.” The motion to approve the minutes, as amended, carried with all “ayes.”

## **PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTIONS**

### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – HACC – 31**

A Resolution Setting the Regular Housing Authority Board of Commissioners Meeting Schedule for the Calendar Year 2024.

Jon Duncan, General Counsel, presented Resolution No. 2023 – HACC – 31. He explained that the Illinois Open Meetings Act requires that public agencies must publish its calendar of public meetings for 2024 prior to the end of 2023.

Mr. Duncan reminded the Board of Commissioners that a Resolution to set the 2024 Board Meeting Schedule was previously discussed at the October 19, 2023 Board meeting and was tabled until today’s meeting in order to adjust the proposed meeting dates and times. The revised schedule that is being considered today reflects that all of the Board’s meetings for 2024 will fall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, and that the starting times for all meetings will be at 12:00 Noon instead of 2:00 p.m.

Following a discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Nilda Soler and seconded by Commissioner Norma Salleh-Barone to approve the Resolution Setting the Regular Housing Authority Meeting Schedule for the Calendar Year 2024. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – HACC – 32**

A Resolution Ratifying the Selection of Danita Childers as Executive Director of the Housing Authority of Cook County

Jon Duncan, General Counsel, presented Resolution No. 2023 – HACC – 32. He reminded the Board that an oral motion was approved at the October 19, 2023 meeting to select Danita Childers as the new Executive Director of the Housing Authority. Representatives of the Region 5 office of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development subsequently indicated that their preference was for their records to include a formal written resolution approving the selection of Danita Childers as the Executive Director.

Approval of this resolution will adopt and ratify the Board’s previous selection of Danita Childers as the HACC’s Executive Director in response to HUD’s request for a written resolution.

Following a discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Nilda Soler and seconded by Commissioner Eric L. Slaughter for approval of Resolution No. 2023 – HACC – 32. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023 – HACC – 33**

A Resolution Authorizing a Change of HACC Address and Signatory for the Apex Construction Letter of Credit Account, Held by Wintrust Bank, N.A.

Tina Pourroy, Director of Asset Management & Development, presented Resolution No. 2023 – HACC – 33. Ms. Pourroy explained that the Board approved a resolution at its October 20, 2022 meeting which authorized the Chief Financial Officer to execute a letter of credit that was required for the Otto Veterans’ new construction project. The \$5,561,130.25 Letter of Credit account is held by Wintrust Bank, N.A. The HACC subsequently moved its offices from 175 W. Jackson Boulevard to 10 S. LaSalle Street, and Alesia Hushaw and Karl Becker, who were the previous signatories on the Letter of Credit account, subsequently left the employment of the Housing Authority.

This resolution will authorize changing the signatories on the Wintrust Letter of Credit Account and will also authorize updating the address of the Housing Authority’s offices on that account.

A discussion ensued regarding the new signatories on the Letter of Credit Account. Tina Pourroy noted that only one signature is required for the letter of credit. A consensus was reached that Executive Director Danita Childers would be the only signatory on the account for now, and that the Chief Financial Officer would be added as a signatory to the Letter of Credit Account after their appointment.

Raquel Burnette, Director of Human Resources, summarized the status of the search for the new Chief Financial Officer, which remains underway.

Following the discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Norma Salleh-Barone and seconded by Commissioner Nilda Soler for approval of Resolution No. 2023 – HACC – 33. The motion carried with all “ayes.”

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Executive Director Danita Childers began her employment with the Housing Authority on November 13, just three days before this Board meeting, and she said that she expected to provide a more detailed report for the next Board meeting.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Director of Rent Assistance Sheryl Seiling provided the Board with additional information related to the Small Area Fair Market Rent Payment Standards which were revised recently. Sheryl Seiling stated that applicants who were on our previously existing tenant-based wait lists receive a preference for project-based wait list openings.

Sheryl Seiling provided clarification related to a question that was asked by Commissioner Elaine Kroll during the October meeting, stating that there are 78 units at Summit. There are 60 units in the Summit Senior main high-rise building plus another 18 units in the Summit Senior Villas across the street, three (3) of which are public housing and 15 of which are project-based voucher properties. A discussion ensued regarding the financial reporting for the 78 Summit units.

Jon Duncan, General Counsel, reported that the HACC is still waiting for a response from HUD’s Recovery Team regarding the HACC’s Recovery Plan that was submitted to HUD in September.

Tina Pourroy, Director of Asset Management & Development, reported that that HACC also has not received a response from HUD to the HACC’s request to extend the deadline for the filing of the FYE 2023 audited financial statements. She reported that representatives of HUD’s Region 5 office informally told her that they had never seen such a request being granted by HUD. Further discussion followed regarding the financial reporting of reserve accounts in the HACC’s financial statements.

Marcus King, Director of Strategy and Communications, reported on media coverage regarding Danita Childers joining the Housing Authority.

Commissioner Eric Slaughter reported on a CEDA event which he recently attended that he would like the HACC to participate in the future.

Commissioner Elaine Kroll reported on planned holiday events at the Summit property.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Nahid Khumawala, Comptroller, reported that the FYE 2022 audited financial statements have not yet been filed with HUD and that the auditors are continuing to work toward completing them.

Once the FYE 2022 audit is completed the FYE 2023 can be finalized. She reported that HUD has advised her that the FYE 2023 audited financial statements can be updated after the initial filing due date of December 31, 2023.

Commissioner Polly Kuehl stated that the first Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for November 30 with the goal of revising the reporting format for the HACC's financial statements, covering all of the public housing programs and each of the RAD projects separately. This would provide a method for the Board to better monitor cash and operating income and balance sheets. Commissioners Polly Kuehl and Eric Slaughter plan to meet each month with the Comptroller and the property managers to review the financial statements in detail. By January we should have the financial statements in more useful formats.

#### Discussion

Vice Chair Polly Kuehl also noted that tenant accounts receivable is large at nearly every property, and she requested details of what is owed by tenants and whether they are under termination notices or repayment plans.

Sheryl Seiling stated that HACC tenants could apply for ERA2 funds, which was not possible under ERA1. The ERA program is ending soon so any such applications will have to be in by the end of November. Tenants who need further assistance can reapply.

Darrick Shafer, Regional Manager North, said that any tenant who owes rent money is offered a payment plan, and if they refuse to enter into a repayment plan they are served with a 30-Day Notice for non-payment of rent.

Chalone Liddell, Regional Manager South, noted that the eviction courts have been requiring that HACC go through the ERA program prior to evicting a tenant for non-payment, and that a lot of money is received that way. But Chalone also mentioned that we have tenants who get that assistance and then they don't want to pay their rent thereafter. On those we proceed with the eviction process.

Tina Pourroy, Director of Asset Management & Development, noted that some of the accumulated tenant accounts receivable represent old debts from tenants who have moved out, and that these are usually not collectable.

Commissioner Eric Slaughter noted that CEDA has resources to help the tenants apply for rental assistance and that there is money available for this.

Comptroller Nahid Khumawala noted that a lot of the tenant receivables that are reflected on the financial statements are very old and uncollectable, and that write offs of some of these receivables are being discussed with the auditors.

### **MOTION TO MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made and seconded to move into Executive Session pursuant to sections 2(c)(7), 2(c)(11) and 2(c)(12) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act in order to discuss a threat of litigation, investment contracts and establishing reserves or settlement of claims. The motion carried with all ayes.

The Board then took a brief recess at approximately 1:20 p.m. before convening the Executive Session, for which separate minutes are kept. The Executive Session was called to order at approximately 1:33 p.m.

### **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**

Following the Executive Session, the Board returned to public session at approximately 2:20 p.m.


General Counsel Jon Duncan noted for the record that no votes were taken during the Executive Session other than to adjourn the Executive Session and to return to public session.

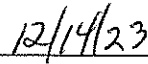
### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for the Board's consideration, Chair Wendy Walker-Williams requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was then made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn carried with all "ayes."

The Meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Danita Childers, Executive Director  
and Secretary

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date