

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE
CITY OF OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA
HELD WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2003

The Oakland Housing Authority Board of Commissioners convened a Special Meeting /Work Session at 1619 Harrison Street, Oakland, California on the above date. Chair Richard E. Winnie called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m.

I. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Roll Call

Commissioners present were Alfred Lee, Moses L. Mayne, Jr., Melanie M. Shelby and Chair Richard E. Winnie. Commissioners Marion M. Mills and Jacqueline Taylor were excused while Commissioner Robert Pittman, Jr. was absent.

III. New Business

A. Briefing on the Section 8 Program:

1. General Overview of the Section 8 Program in Oakland. (Tape #1 - Sides A & B: Queue 027 – 150)

Mr. Gresley called upon Mr. Joseph Villarreal, Director of Leased Housing, to provide a general overview of the Section 8 program.

Mr. Villarreal noted the two broad categories of the Section 8 --- the Tenant-based Assistance and the Project-based Assistance. He described and differentiated the two categories. He said that Congress authorizes the program and appropriates the funds. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulates the program and provides the funds to the housing authorities in the country. Narrating a slide presentation (attached) he continued his presentation by describing the relationship between the housing authority, the owner and the tenants and summarized their respective responsibilities.

Mr. Villarreal discussed the rules governing the program and their enforcement. He described the remedies against the family and against the owner who are in violation of the program. Mr. Villarreal indicated the size of the Section 8 program, its demographics, factors that affect the location, the percentile of the Fair Market Rents (FMRs), and the payment standards of FMR. He showed the maps illustrating

homeownership rates, Section 8 units, and proportional distribution of Section 8 vouchers in Oakland. He talked about portability of the Housing Authority and the Alameda County Housing Authority. Mr. Villarreal quickly went through the Section 8 items in the packet that are pertinent to the presentation.

A discussion ensued at the conclusion of the presentation. The Commissioners asked questions that pertain to demographics, project-based assistance, income eligibility, remedies, rights of tenants, Leased Housing staff organization, deconcentration, HUD allocation of Section 8, resources, volume of work caseloads of housing representatives, and significance of Moving to Work (MTW). Mr. Villarreal, along with Mr. Gresley, provided the answers.

Commissioner Lee would like three goals to be addressed by the Authority: (1) review process of supporting and monitoring landlords in the program; (2) frequently track Section 8 tenants; and, (3) expand the program to areas not served by the Section 8 program. Chair Winnie called upon some speakers on the Section 8 program.

Ms. Ollie Arnold was the first speaker. Ms. Arnold expressed concerns about quality housing of tenants, and property owners finding good tenants. She indicated that the Section 8 program is a good program that should stay. She added that staff is doing a good job.

Ms. Rachel Pinsky was the second speaker. Ms. Pinsky pointed out that the Authority operates under federal, state and local laws and there are restrictions on the Section 8 program.

2. Discussion of change to the Housing Quality Standards in the Section 8 Administrative Plan. (Tape #1 - Side B: Queue 151 – 367)

Mr. Gresley provided a background overview for a proposed change to the Authority's Housing Quality Standards (HQS) that take into consideration drug and violent criminal activity in non-Section 8 units in a building. He said that staff was proposing some language that would be presented to HUD for their approval. Mr. Villarreal discussed the HQS performance requirements and cited the language to be proposed to the Board. Chair Winnie noted that this would be back on the agenda for next meeting.

3. Discussion of issues related to project basing of Section 8. (Tape #1 - Side B: Queue 385 – 646 & Tape #2 – Side A: Queue 001 - 010)

Mr. Villarreal made a presentation on project-based assistance. He

discussed Project Basing, of which the Authority has currently 54 certificates and 30 vouchers. He discussed the advantages and disadvantages of project-based housing and HUD's requirements in the competitive selection process. He went over the rationale for the selection criteria with points for elderly housing, disabled housing, supportive services, bedroom-size distribution, homeownership, location, and Section 3 MBE/WBE requirements. A brief discussion followed.

4. Discussion of Federal rules for Section 8 Administrative Fees. (Tape #2 – Side A: Queue 011 - 103)

Mr. Gresley noted that the Omnibus 2003 Federal Budget Bill included provisions dealing with Section 8 administrative fee reserves. He indicated that the Authority was required to report to HUD its administrative reserves as of January 31, 2003. Mr. Gresley discussed the Section 8 fees earned in years 2002 and 2003 and the projected surplus, and noted that the money could not be used other than for Section 8. Mr. Gresley noted that according to Congress, the housing authorities couldn't keep any surplus they have if their reserves at the end of the year are more than 5% of the fees earned. He said that staff would be examining the Authority's financial outlook and come back to the Commission with some suggestions.

B. Preview of items of business to be scheduled for the August 25 Commission Meeting: (Tape #2 – Tape Side A: Queue 109 – 258)

Mr. Gresley indicated that staff would be bringing at the next Commission meeting several recommendations:

1. Briefing on California Senate Bill SB 345.

Mr. Gresley said that staff would be recommending that the Board adopt a position opposing the passage of SB 345 and also seeking City Council opposition as well.

2. Briefing on proposal for creation of an Oakland Housing Authority Police Reserve Program.

Mr. Gresley said that a recommendation to implement an Auxiliary Police Officer Program would be presented to the Board at the next meeting. The police officers would work a minimum of 20 hours and a maximum of 40 hours per month and would work with the Authority's officers and not be on their own. Funds are available.

3. Briefing on procurement of General Legal Counsel services for the

Oakland Housing Authority.

Mr. Gresley would like to recommend to the Board at the next meeting the procurement of a General Legal Counsel Services. He said that staff would present a proposed invitation outlining a qualifications-based selection process for potential law firms.

IV. Public Comment

There was one speaker, Paula Boaz. Ms. Boaz complained about the tenants in her neighborhood that played loud music, talking loud and screaming at night. She said that people in the neighborhood are intimidated.

V. Adjournment

Without any further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Chair

Secretary