

**Minutes of the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
Board of Commissioners Meeting**

Date: June 11, 2007

Time: 6:00 PM

Place: Capital One Tower

201 St. Charles Avenue, 52nd Floor Board Room

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM

2. Roll Call

Quorum was present with Commissioners Abbott, Couhig, Lagarde, Major, Singleton, West, and Woods. Commissioners Brown, Connor, Cowen, and Gray were marked absent.

3. Introduction of Guests

- Harry Cantrell, Central City Housing Development
- Janet Phillpott, United Non Profits of Greater New Orleans
- Lucinda Flowers, local housing policy consultant
- Ernest Stalberte, National Association of Minority Contractors
- Davin Boldissar, BGR
- Becky Bohrer, AP
- Amy Enchelmeyer, Councilman Arnie Fielkow's Office
- Michelle Krupa, Times Picayune
- John KcKnight, Gert Town Enterprise Economic Redevelopment
- Bishop OC Coleman, Greater Light Ministries
- Jeffrey Thomas, ORM
- Royce Duplessis, Councilman James Carter's Office
- Renia Ehrenfeucht, UNO
- Stephanie Grace, Times Picayune
- Yolanda Grinstead, City of NO
- Patty Gay, PRC
- Warner Sylvain, IMPCO
- Dr. Nadine Jarmon, Providence Community Housing
- Pamela Bingham, Clinton Climate Initiative – NO
- Joel Wermsr

4. Review and Approval of the Agenda

Approval Motion: Major

Second: West

Vote: Unanimous

5. Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting held May 21, 2007

Approval Motion: Major

Second: West

Vote: Unanimous

6. Chairman's Report-Part 1: By-laws discussion

The by-laws discussion was moved up because it was suggested that the Body could operate more effectively if it was enabled to take up whatever business that is necessary, rather than being bound by the call of the meeting.

Recommended changes were as follows:

Article 3:2 –

- A. The Chairman of the Authority may (when he deems it expedient), and shall upon the written request of five (5) Commissioners of the Authority call a Special Meeting of the Commissioners of the Authority for the purpose of transacting any business.
- B. Written notice of Special Meetings shall be mailed or hand-delivered to the office or home address of each Commissioner no less than three days prior to the date of such meeting, provided that, with the approval of the Chairman or Acting Chairman, notice may be given by telephone no later than 24 hours prior to such meeting.
- C. All such meetings shall be held at the place determined by Resolution of the Authority.

Motion to approve the amendments to the by-laws: Woods

Second: Major

Vote: Unanimous

7. Committee Reports

a. Finance and Capital Markets

Chairman Singleton informed the Board that the Committee is still talking with the City to resolve differences. In addition, they are closely monitoring legislation in Baton Rouge and Washington.

b. Land Assembly and Disposition

Commissioner West informed the Board that the City Council and the Committee have gotten together on the Lot Next Door Ordinance and there will be a report for the Body, including an update on the mapping component.

8. Executive Director's Report

a. RFQ Report

Mr. Williams updated the Board on the three Requests for Qualifications for which NORA received responses. After an explanation of the evaluation criteria and discussion by the Body, Mr. Williams made the following recommendations;

1. Public Relations Consultant:
The Erhardt Group / Bright Moments
Motion to accept recommendation: Singleton
Second: Major
Vote: Unanimous
2. Human Relations Consultant:
Lewis & Associates dba Service Strategies
Motion to accept recommendation: Singleton
Second: Major
Vote: Unanimous
3. Development Services Consultant:
Comprehensive Development Strategies
Motion to accept recommendation: Singleton
Second: Major
Vote: Unanimous

Chairman Abbott asked Staff to prepare a specific plan of work with a specific cost outline for the Finance Committee's approval before funds are obligated to any of the three approved consultants.

b. Rockefeller Foundation Redevelopment Fellow

The Rockefeller Foundation has established a redevelopment fellowship with the University of Pennsylvania. Under that fellowship they engage individuals with extensive redevelopment experience pairing them with redevelopment agencies such as NORA. These individuals are provided on a subsidized basis for two years, during which time they will receive additional training and site visits to redevelopment locations around the country. NORA has been awarded such a Fellow. Candidate interviews will begin in July.

c. CDBG Funding Update

The Executive Director informed the Commissioners that despite it's submission to the City of NORA's 2005 Audit, a 2007 Budget, and declaration that a 2006 Audit was in progress as previously requested, the City would only make available one half of its 2007 CDBG funding. Per the City, the remainder will only be made available upon the execution of a new Cooperative Endeavor Agreement, the details of which are yet to be determined.

Williams noted that the Mayor's office had provided NORA with discussion points for a CEA but not a CEA fully approved by all necessary departments of the City as had been committed to Commissioner Abbott. Commissioner Abbott added that the discussion points which were received inferred that blighted property would not be transferred to NORA, but instead held by the City along with all monies. A response was sent to the Administration by the Executive Director requesting a full CEA as had been previously discussed. In the meantime, the Chairman asked Mr. Williams to provide the Commissioners with a copy of the response letter sent to the City. Jeffrey Thomas from the Office of Recovery Management participated in the discussion.

d. Adjudicated Lot Sales by the City of New Orleans

In the existing CEA entered by NORA and the City of New Orleans, NORA was given responsibility for tax adjudicated properties. The original list of 4,000 properties for which the City gave NORA responsibility diminished to approximately 1,500 properties as redemptions, double counting and other issues were taken into account. As directed by the Board, Staff was preparing to test its policies and procedures by clearing title on 25-30 properties. The investigation in three different target zones revealed that the City had sold, was in the process of selling, or had allocated tax credits to numerous properties for which NORA had been given responsibility.

Commissioner Abbott reiterated Staff's concern about property dispositions that NORA knew nothing about. The Chairman then expressed particular concern about the public's impression that NORA is responsible for these property dispositions. Commissioner Abbott concluded his comments by clarifying NORA's current position. NORA has not disposed of any property other than those tied to pre-Katrina commitments.

e. The Trust for Public Land

TPL is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other community spaces. They approached NORA offering their assistance as we move forward with acquiring land as part of development plans.

f. Housing Recovery Corporation

HRC, an affiliate of GCR & Associates, aims to return properties to their most productive use given the resources of the owner, the vision of the neighborhood, and the needs of the community at large. As HRC is a group comprised of national banks, they come to NORA as both a resource for mapping and developing as well as a financial resource. Mr. Williams agreed to send the Body additional information about HRC as it becomes available.

g. UNO South

Williams informed the Commissioners that UNO had approached NORA about their plans to develop property at the south end of the campus. UNO is interested in playing an active role in revitalizing the neighborhoods bordering its campus. This project is in keeping with similar projects in other urban cities such as Philadelphia where universities take a leadership role in their communities by redeveloping residential and commercial properties.

h. Preservation Resource Center Proposal

PRC is offering their services to review and access properties, under NORA's authority, according to their marketability, historical importance, and architectural significance. PRC has also expressed interest at previous meetings in assisting NORA with the marketing of its properties.

Commissioner Abbott added that it would also be useful to have information about the restoring or preserving of particular properties.

Motion to authorize the Chair to work with staff to draft the appropriate RFQ and when and if the funding is available, move forward: Couhig

Second: Lagarde

Vote: Unanimous

During the Executive Director's report, Commissioner West asked to be provided a copy of the prospectus NORA is working on. Mr. Williams informed the Board that the prospectus is complete and that he would provide copies to the Board. Chairman Abbott requested that Staff put discussion of the prospectus on the agenda for the next Board Meeting.

9. Chairman's Report

a. NORA Board Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Abbott proposed 09 July 2007 as the next meeting date.

b. By-laws discussion

Discussion taken up after introduction of guests to assist Commissioners in the matter of disbursing meeting business more efficiently.

10. Public Comment

11. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Issues

Motion: Singleton

Second: West

Vote: Unanimous

12. Old Business

None

12. New Business

Darrick Lebeouf, as General Counsel, informed the Commissioners that Staff had completed the annual Legislative Auditor's Compliance Questionnaire. Counsel presented the questionnaire, summarized it and requested that it be approved for submission to the Legislative Auditor.

Motion: Abbott

Second: Couhig

Vote: Unanimous

13. Adjourn

Motion: Lagarde

Second: West

Vote: Unanimous