

RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, June 9, 2010

Community Room
Del Rio Terrace
1345 Ella Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-4180
805-783-2899 (Chair)
805-543-4478 (HASLO Office)

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson **Art Apruzzese** called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Art Apruzzese, Assia Maghni (Vice-Chairperson), Christine Armstrong,
Charles Oldham, Dizarene Price

Absent: Lisa Barton, Ruth Dawn-Griffeth, Arian Macari, Mandi Milliken, Carl Montoya,
Jonathan Richardson

Staff : Sarah Castilleja – Housing Specialist
Jose Lemus – Director of Facilities (absent)
Vela Herrera – Director of Housing Management (absent)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public Comments.

A. CONSENT ITEMS

A - 1. Approve March 3, 2010 Regular RAB Meeting Minutes

Mr. Oldham moved that the Minutes from the March 3, 2010 regular meeting of the RAB be approved; **Ms. Maghni** seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. DISCUSSION ITEMS

B - 1. HASLO PHA Plan - Resident Advisory Board Input

Ms. Castilleja informed the Board that each Member would receive a copy of the **HASLO PHA Plan** about June 16, 2010. She reviewed the general purpose of the Plan and requested that each Member review the document and respond with comments by June 28, 2010. A brief discussion about delivering the Plan ensued and a consensus was reached that Email would be the most efficient means to transmit the document and return comments to HASLO staff. **Ms. Maghni** requested that she be allowed to pick up her copy of the Plan at the HASLO office and **Ms. Castilleja** agreed. **Ms. Castilleja** requested that, even if Board members do not have any comments to make about the contents of the Plan, she would like Members to Email their reply to staff and inform them that they have read and approve the Plan. Members agreed to do this.

B - 2. Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program – New List

Ms. Castilleja reviewed the **Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program** which would soon be opened to establish a new waiting list for tenants. She provided information which thoroughly summarized the Section 8 Program; this summary included Section 8's relationship to public housing, the fifteen point preference program (which gives priority status to veterans, homeless, disabled, senior citizens, and working poor families), and other features of the program. **Ms. Castilleja** referenced the public notice which RAB Members were given as part of their packet of information with the meeting agenda; this notice provides the dates, times and telephone numbers to call if a citizen is interested in applying for Section 8 housing assistance. A lengthy discussion then ensued with many questions asked of **Ms. Castilleja** by RAB Members, particularly **Ms. Armstrong**. The merits and liabilities of the program were discussed and a better understanding of the Section 8 program was achieved by Members. **Ms. Castilleja** requested that the September 1, 2010 meeting of the RAB include an Agenda Item about the **Administrative Plan - Section 8** and the **Admissions and Occupancy Regulations for Public Housing**. **Mr. Apruzzese** agreed to place this item on the Agenda for the next RAB meeting.

B - 3. Expanding Membership for Resident Advisory Board and Quorum

Mr. Apruzzese spoke of his concern that residents were not adequately represented because of the low rate of participation at Resident Advisory Board quarterly meetings. Stressing the importance of residents to attend these meetings, he said that the RAB is their opportunity to share their concerns to resolve issues and establish "community spirit."

Ideally, **Mr. Apruzzese** continued, each apartment complex should be represented by one Representative on the Board. He shared his concern that low participation by residents might end the Board's existence and/or handicap efforts to improve housing services that are provided by the Staff and Board of Commissioners. **Ms. Castilleja** strongly agreed with **Mr. Apruzzese's** assessment and added that the Resident Advisory Board provides a very valuable component to the Housing Authority which was much needed and appreciated. She also stressed the importance of forming a "community" where residents help one another. She said that many attempts have been made in the past to establish an effective RAB, but none had succeeded, because of personality conflicts and other disagreements among RAB Members. **Mr. Apruzzese** stressed the need for a cooperative and civil spirit among all Board Members.

A discussion followed as to how to proceed to attract new RAB Members. **Ms. Castilleja** suggested that the **S. Higuerra, Los Osos Valley Road, S. King and Branch** housing complexes might be fertile apartment complexes to recruit new Members. **Jennifer Whalen** and the **Montgomery couple** were mentioned as residents who might be willing to volunteer if they were contacted. It was agreed that **Mr. Apruzzese** would compose a letter to recruit new Members and HASLO Staff would mail this to all residents. The letter would also include information and a brochure from the City of San Luis Obispo about the city's new smoking law, **Ordinance 1545**. In answer to a question by **Mr. Apruzzese** about who the letter should be mailed to, **Ms. Castilleja** advocated a unified, countywide RAB that should include tenants from public, non-profit and other housing programs served by the Housing Authority. She suggested that, as membership expands, RAB meetings might be held in the North County, San Luis Obispo and the South County in order to stimulate and empower resident participation throughout the service area. **Ms. Maghni** volunteered to translate into Spanish the membership recruitment letter which **Mr. Apruzzese** will compose.

The issue of establishing a quorum for RAB meetings was set aside for the time being because it was felt that current membership levels were too low and the Board too new. A consensus was reached that a quorum and other administrative and organizational matters could be addressed as membership levels rose and the Board developed greater potential to perform its role.

B - 4. Maintenance Issues

A brief discussion of housing maintenance issues was addressed at this point in the meeting. **Ms. Price** expressed some concerns about faulty maintenance which had been performed at her apartment unit. Painting, repair of a screen door and plumbing work was defective and seemed to indicate a lack of sufficient training by those who performed the services, in her opinion. **Ms. Castilleja** suggested that **Ms. Price** document all her concerns (e.g. take photographs) in order to avoid being overcharged for necessary repairs to her apartment. She said that maintenance staff was currently experiencing understaffing, but she did not indicate the reason for this or how long it would last. **Mr. Apruzzese** stated that **Ms. Price's** experiences might indicate the prevalence of wider problems with maintenance activities performed for other tenants too. **Mr. Oldham** said that maintenance had been good at his apartment.

B - 5. City of San Luis Obispo Ordinance 1545 (2010), New Smoking Prohibition Law; HASLO Staff and Board of Commissioners Smoking Policy

Mr. Apruzzese and **Ms. Castilleja** reviewed the new city smoking ordinance and explained its application to all multi-unit residences in the city. **Mr. Apruzzese** stated that he and HASLO staff members met recently with **Brigitte Elke**, Principle Administrative Analyst, City of San Luis Obispo, who is the architect of the legislation which prohibits smoking in most places in the city. He referred Members to handouts in their agenda package which includes a copy of the new ordinance and a brochure which describes the law. An in-depth discussion then commenced among RAB Members about the consequences, enforcement, scope and viability of the law.

Mr. Oldham asked **Mr. Apruzzese** what the reaction of the Staff and Commissioners had been to the RAB's letter, policy statement and smoking survey. **Mr. Apruzzese** replied that it had not been favorable, but the Board of Commissioners and Staff could not proceed to address this issue further; they needed City Staff to provide legal guidance about the new law's application to smoking on balconies of individual apartment units. Was it legal or not? Pending that legal clarification the Housing Authority would then presumably move to address the issue of whether or not to ban smoking inside apartment units as the city had banned it outside in public areas, including "common areas" of multi-unit residences within city boundaries. **Mr. Oldham** said that the RAB had done all it could, and all it was asked to do on the smoking issue. It had made its policy recommendation and the issue was basically in the hands of the Staff and Commissioners now. **Mr. Apruzzese** concurred with this assessment and said that the RAB was an advisory body and it was the role of the Board of Commissioners and Staff to make policy.

C. ACTION ITEMS

There were no Action Items.

D. NEW ITEMS

There were no New Items.

E. NEXT MEETING DATE/LOCATION

The fifth regular meeting of the HASLO-RAB will be held on Wednesday, September 1, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Room at the Del Rio Terrace Apartments located at 1345 Ella Street, San Luis Obispo, CA (southwest corner of Johnson Avenue and Ella Street, adjacent to French Hospital). On-street parking is available. Please do not park in tenant parking lots.

ADJOURNMENT

The fourth regular meeting of the Resident Advisory Board - HASLO adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Minutes Prepared By Art Apruzzese.