

RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO
REGULAR MEETING
Tuesday, September 7, 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: Debbie Altamirano, Art Apruzzese, Ovsanna Basmajian, Micaela Hernandez, Lorraine Kenney, Guadalupe Marroquin, Charles Oldham, Dizarene Price, Michael E. Simpson, Patricia Souza, Simon Tomassian, Lynn Toomey, Pamela and Jack White

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public Comments.

ORIENTATION

Mr. Apruzzese asked Members of the HASLO Staff and current Members of the RAB to introduce themselves. He then asked each new Member of the Board to introduce themselves and state the apartment complex and city where they resided. He asked each new Member to give a brief summary of the reasons why they had chosen to join the group.

Mr. Apruzzese gave an overview of the Resident Advisory Board which included its history, accomplishments, current activities and future plans. He stressed the importance of “**giving back to the community,**” and stated how impressed he and **Ms. Herrera** were by how often they had seen this same sentiment expressed on the RAB applications of new Members. He also said that sharing common concerns and ideas with other Members and Staff was an important function of the Board. **Mr. Apruzzese** emphasized the concept of “**bridge building**” between RAB Members, HASLO Staff and the Board of Commissioners. He suggested that, although the RAB was an advisory board and the staff and Commissioners had major responsibility to formulate and execute policy decisions, the three parts of HASLO Team could and should work closely together to achieve goals and objectives and to promote communication, competence, cooperation, compassion and commitment throughout the organization.

Mr. Apruzzese then asked each person to share their ideas about what the RAB’s goals and objectives should be in the future – their vision – what they wanted their RAB to accomplish. Several members, including **Ms. Basmajian** concurred with **Mr. Apruzzese** about the need to build bridges between the three components of HASLO; **Mr. Tomassian** spoke about “empowerment” and that “it was a key to change;” **Mr. Simpson** offered the opinion that “each resident had value to the community even though they had low incomes.” **Ms. Hernandez** strongly felt that neighbors should help neighbors, especially with domestic violence issues and she supported children’s well being. She felt that the RAB could be of particular value in promoting a safer living environment for all residents. **Ms. Herrera** stated that, in her many years of experience with the Housing Authority she had gained significant knowledge about this subject. She cited the **Children’s Work Incentive Program** as being a possible vehicle to address the concerns of **Ms. Hernandez**.

A. CONSENT ITEMS

A - 1. Approve June 9, 2010 Regular RAB Meeting Draft Minutes

Approval of the June 9, 2010 RAB meeting Draft Minutes was inadvertently omitted. These Draft Minutes, along with the Draft Minutes of the September 9, 2010 meeting, will be placed on the December 1, 2010 meeting Agenda for review and approval.

B. DISCUSSION ITEMS

B - 1. HASLO Administrative Regulations & History of RAB

Ms. Herrera gave an abbreviated review of the Housing Authority’s Section 8 Program **Administrative Plan** and Public Housing **Admissions and Occupancy Policy**. Originally, HASLO staff member, **Sarah Castilleja** was scheduled to address the Board on this Agenda Item, but she was unable to attend this evening’s meeting. In response to a question from **Mr. Tomassian**, **Ms. Herrera** replied that the Public Housing Program is not portable, but that Section 8 Program Vouchers are. She concluded by saying that binders, containing policies and regulations are available for residents and the public to review at the HASLO office.

In response to a request from **Mr. Apruzzese**, **Ms. Herrera** gave a brief overview of the purpose and history of the Resident Advisory Board. She stated that previous Boards had been handicapped when Board Members had left the housing program. Previous Boards had also suffered when RAB members brought their personal issues to the table instead of trying to resolve them with their assigned HASLO housing specialist. **Ms. Herrera** stressed the importance of bringing issues to the attention of the RAB which served the interests or addressed the concerns of many, or a majority of residents; discussing special or personal issues, agendas or vendettas should be avoided, she advised. If a Member sincerely felt, however, that other members might benefit from the knowledge or circumstance they were experiencing, then it might be valuable to share that knowledge. It was a question of balance, she said. **Mr. Apruzzese** added that all RAB Members were volunteers and no one was receiving any compensation or other benefits from the HASLO for their service on the Board other than the good feelings they might receive from “giving back” or “paying forward” to their community, Housing Authority and fellow residents.

Mr. Oldham said that he had heard all these issues discussed in previous RAB meetings and wanted to know when the Board would be considering some new items and “do something.” **Mr. Apruzzese** said that there were no “Action Items” on tonight’s agenda, just “Discussion Items.” No voting would be done this evening. It was necessary to go over issues which had been previously discussed in order to benefit new Members at tonight’s meeting, he said. **Mr. Oldham** then left the meeting.

B - 2. HASLO Maintenance

The scheduled Agenda Item, **B – 2 RAB Recruitment Campaign – Progress Report**, was replaced and HASLO Maintenance was substituted by the Chair. The Orientation discussion had covered all the matters that needed to be discussed about this subject.

Mr. Lemus, HASLO Director of Maintenance said that he was impressed with the Members of the RAB meeting tonight and that he also shared their interest in creating a “sense of community” within and among residents and HASLO and that he would like to be part of that and serve the needs of the community. He then began a discussion of **Ms. Price’s** June 9, 2010 RAB meeting comments regarding maintenance that had been performed at her apartment recently.

Mr. Lemus stated that it was his desire that residents work closely with the HASLO Maintenance Department to resolve issues as expeditiously as possible in order to prevent them from becoming bigger, more expensive problems. He urged Members to spread the word to their neighbors to call the Maintenance Department as soon as they identified a problem, especially a leaking faucet, plugged sink or bathtub drain. **Mr. Lemus** informed Members that his staff was now attaching yellow door tags to apartment units to inform tenants when maintenance staff had visited a unit. He also said that, in response to tenant feedback, the Maintenance Department was now in the process of replacing tenants' parking stickers on personal automobiles with numbers only; Housing Authority identifying labels would be omitted. The new parking stickers are designed to eliminate any social stigma tenants might feel in being identified as living in affordable housing. In reply to a question by **Mr. Apruzzese**, **Mr. Lemus** said that it was a felony to tamper with a smoke detector. If there was a problem with a smoke detector, a tenant should contact the Maintenance Department immediately. A maintenance worker would be dispatched and fix the problem. **Mr. Lemus** said this policy was designed to promote tenant safety and reduce the threat of property damage caused by fire.

B - 3. HASLO Smoking Policy Update; HASLO Newsletters

Mr. Apruzzese briefly summarized the RAB's role in assisting HASLO in formulating a Smoking Policy for residents. He reviewed the smoking survey which the Board had conducted in November, 2009 and the Smoking Policy Recommendation which the Board approved in March, 2010. He informed Members about the City's new smoking law, **Ordinance 1545** and its prohibition of smoking in common areas of multi-unit residences in San Luis Obispo. **Mr. Apruzzese** indicated that the Staff and Board of Commissioners were in the process of designing a smoking policy that may apply to the inside of HASLO apartment complexes. **Mr. Apruzzese** then distributed recent editions of the *HASLO Newsletter*.

C. ACTION ITEMS

There were no Action Items.

D. NEW ITEMS

There were no New Items.

E. NEXT MEETING DATE/LOCATION

The sixth regular meeting of the HASLO-RAB will be held on Wednesday, December 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)

ADJOURNMENT

The fifth regular meeting of the Resident Advisory Board - HASLO adjourned at 7:30 p.m. Draft Minutes prepared by Art Apruzzese.