

**WESTERN PA HOUSING DIRECTOR'S ASSOCIATION**  
**Meeting Minutes**

**October 25, 2011**

**Chestnut Ridge Resort**  
**132 Pine Ridge Road**

The Annual Meeting of the Western Pennsylvania Housing Director's Association was held on Tuesday, October 25, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the Chestnut Ridge Resort in Blairsville.

Sue Straw opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. She recognized Jim Chandler, Executive Director of the Venango Co. Housing Authority as the new Secretary. She asked for a motion to approve this appointment. The motion was made by Sandy McGuire and seconded by Steve Hall. The motion was carried with a unanimous vote.

Sue also asked for a motion to keep Steve Hall as the Treasurer as allowed per the by-laws. The motion was made by Mike Washowich and seconded by Kelly Hicks. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

Sue thanked all of the previous and current officers for their support over the years as she served WPHDA as an officer.

Sue presented Karen Rega, Executive Director of the Armstrong County Housing Authority with a gift for all of her years of service to WHPDA as she is retiring from the housing authority this year.

At this time, Sue turned the meeting over to the new President of WPHDA, Steve Bucklew, Executive Director of the McKeesport Housing Authority. Steve thanked Sue for all of her hard work and presented her with flowers and a plaque in recognition of her years of service as an officer in WPHDA.

**Approval of the Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes as presented from the August 24<sup>th</sup> meeting was made by Cheryl Johns, seconded by Lorene Osborne. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.

**Bills and Communications/Treasurer's Report**

Steve Hall, Treasurer, reviewed the financial statements for the month ending September 30, 2011.

Lorene Osborne moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented; Kelly Hicks seconded the motion. The motion was carried with a unanimous vote.

## **Report of Committees**

The Planning Committee met a few weeks ago.

The next meeting is the Christmas meeting which will be held December 1, 2011 at the Rivers Casino in Pittsburgh. Speakers for this meeting will be Susan E. Gingrich – DPW Director of Housing & the Local Lead Agency Program; and Phil Letendre – Program Manager of U.S. Communities Intergovernmental Purchasing Program. The Association will provide two free lunches to each Authority; any additional lunches will be \$25.00 each.

Steve passed out copies of the Tentative Regular Meeting Schedule, Tentative Accountant's Meeting Schedule, and Tentative Property Managers Meeting Schedule for 2011-2012.

Steve also passed out the Proposed Workshop Schedule for 2012

## **Unfinished Business** – N/A

## **Other Business**

Steve asked the members that if there are any ideas for speakers for the upcoming meetings that they let any of the officers know at least one month in advance.

## **New Business**

Steve introduced Jaqueline Molinaro-Thompson, recently appointed Director of the Office of Public Housing, Pittsburgh HUD Field Office. Jaqueline is pleased to have this position and explained to the group that they are working towards hiring a Division Director. They are currently in the process of “trying” out some of the HUD staff who are interested in the position. Kathy Tallirico initially was appointed to the position of Acting Division Director and Paul Miller is currently serving in this capacity.

Jaqueline reviewed the HUD goals, new for Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2011.

- Maximize occupancy in Public Housing and Section 8
- Close out ARRA grants
  - 32 out of 36 are fully expended
- Recovering Public Housing Authorities that are troubled
- Improve financial viability of Housing Authorities
  - HUD to start looking at budgets
  - Financial Analysts will look at budgets to see if there are suggestions

At this point Jaqueline introduced Paul Miller who discussed the vacancy rate in public housing. We are housing 1,100 more people. The vacancy rate went from 9.4% to 4.5%. There are 27,400 vouchers filled and we are now housing 329 homeless veterans through the VASH program.

Regarding the Section 8 Program, Paul also discussed that the Voucher Program is in its second year of a decrease in the fair market rents and there are some areas being affected by the

Marcellus shale activity. Paul recommended to the group that they look into the Success Rate Payment Standards for those authorities that are experiencing issues due to the FMRs or Marcellus shale.

The Executive Compensation Notice which requires housing authorities to report the five highest paid employees was done mainly because of the troubled agencies across the country. HUD found that these large authorities had very high paid top level staff.

Paul then turned the presentation back over to Jaqueline.

She moved on to Financing Governance and troubled PHAs.

- The PHAS scoring has changed drastically. Occupancy is now 40% of a PHAs score.
- Board Initiative – HUD will be working with and meeting with Boards to educate them on their responsibilities
- Training and information sessions – the first of these sessions took place at the PAHRA conference in Bedford Springs. Housing authorities received an email last week about information sessions that will begin the 1<sup>st</sup> of November.
- Resource Guide – the rough draft was distributed at PAHRA for comment. Comments have been submitted to HUD. It is now in its final version and they hope to have it available for distribution at the Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> training session.
- Troubled PHAs
  - PHARS – Public Housing Authority Recovery & Sustainability
  - HUD will focus on the operations of the entire agency. Each housing authority is responsible for their performance.
  - If PHA goes into troubled status the field office will determine what level of troubled they are in and react accordingly

At this time, Jaqueline concluded her presentation and answered questions.

### **Adjournment**

Steve asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Cheryl Johns made the motion and Sue Straw seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dusti Dennis

**NEXT MEETING: December 1, 2011  
Rivers Casino  
777 Casino Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212**