

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

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WEDNESDAY
APRIL 10, 2019

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The Board of Commissioners met in the Executive Director's Conference Room, Greenleaf Gardens, 203 N Street, SW, Washington, D.C., at 1:00 p.m., Neil Albert, Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

- NEIL ALBERT, Chairman
- WILLIAM SLOVER, Vice Chairman
- KENNETH D. COUNCIL, Commissioner
- KEN GROSSINGER, Commissioner
- LEJUAN STRICKLAND, Commissioner*
- NAKEISHA NEAL JONES, Commissioner
- JOSE ARNALDO ORTIZ GAUD, Commissioner*
- FRANSELENE ST. JEAN, Commissioner
- ANTONIO TALIAFERRO, Commissioner
- AQUARIUS VANN-GHASRI, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT:

- TYRONE GARRETT, Executive Director
- ALTHEA MCNAIR, Manager of Board Relations

COMMISSIONER(S) ABSENT:

BRIAN KENNER

**via telephone*

C-O-N-T-E-N-T-S

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 1:11 p.m.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, good afternoon.
4 My name is Neil Albert and I chair the Board of
5 Directors of the D.C. Housing Authority. I'm
6 calling this meeting to order. This is a regular
7 monthly meeting being held here at Greenleaf.
8 It's today, April 10th, and it is a little after
9 1:10 p.m.

10 Please silence your cell phones and
11 other devices. And as I mentioned earlier, the
12 acoustics in here are terrible. So we'd
13 appreciate if you keep conversations to the hallway
14 and not in this room. At this point in time, we
15 will like to ask for a moment of silence, as we
16 customarily do.

17 (Moment of silence.)

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. First
19 item in our agenda is the establishment of a quorum,
20 and I'm going to turn it over to our secretary.

21 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you. Commissioner
22 Council?

1 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Present.

2 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Grossinger?

3 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: Here.

4 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Kenner?
5 Commissioner Neal Jones?

6 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Present.

7 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz Gaud?
8 Commissioner Slover?

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Here?

10 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner St. Jean?

11 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Here.

12 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Strickland?
13 Commissioner Taliaferro?

14 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Present.

15 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner
16 Vann-Ghasri?

17 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I'm right
18 here.

19 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Albert?

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Present. And
21 Commissioner Strickland is going to join us by
22 phone and Commissioner Ortiz also.

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1 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you. You have
2 currently eight Commissioners present. You have
3 a quorum.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. First
5 item on our -- next item on our agenda is the
6 approval of the March 13, 2019 Board of
7 Commissioners meeting. I hope everyone had an
8 opportunity to review them. They are lengthy.
9 But at this time, I'll entertain a motion for
10 approval of our minutes. Is there a motion?

11 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Motion.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Is there a second?

13 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: All those in favor,
15 say aye.

16 (Chorus of aye.)

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Any opposed? The
18 ayes have it. Our minutes are approved. We will
19 turn this over to the Executive Director for his
20 monthly report.

21 MR. GARRETT: Good afternoon,
22 everyone. We're going to start off with our

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1 employee of the month for March 2019.

2 As customary, I'm pleased to
3 acknowledge that DCHA is transforming itself.
4 We're moving in a different direction. This
5 Agency is now talking about customer service, not
6 only internally but also externally with our --
7 sorry. I thought I could do it without the mic.
8 Okay. So my back is going to be to you.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No, we can hear you.
10 That's fine.

11 MR. GARRETT: Okay. You're good?
12 Okay. So we're transforming and we're talking the
13 three Cs, our customer service effort and
14 everything else that we're trying to accomplish.
15 So as Executive Director, it's important that each
16 day our employees strive to deliver the highest
17 level of exceptional service while interacting
18 with our customers.

19 In recognition of exemplary service and
20 performance, I have the honor of recognizing an
21 employee again this month who has gone above and
22 beyond in delivering outstanding service to you,

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1 our residents.

2 Our employee of the month for March 2019
3 is Katrina Jeter.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. GARRETT: Ms. Jeter is the
6 relocation project manager for the Office of
7 Capital Programs. And according to her
8 supervisor, she exhibits the mantra of results
9 matter. This is a long synopsis.

10 Ms. Jeter has impressively
11 demonstrated her vast experience in relocation
12 management to further our mission of housing
13 families in a professional manner. She has gone
14 above and beyond to rehouse our families, providing
15 moving assistance, moral support, and helping our
16 families navigate through the nuances of the
17 relocation process.

18 One of her most significant assignments
19 was the Barry Farm relocation effort where she acts
20 as a liaison, coordinating external stakeholders,
21 and internally working with our various
22 departments to ensure each and every resident is

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1 accounted for and receiving the services in which
2 they are entitled to.

3 To date, over 193 families at Barry Farm
4 have been relocated, and Ms. Jeter has played a
5 vital role in the success. During her tenure at
6 DCHA, she has successfully rehoused over 400
7 families across the District. Ms. Jeter's in the
8 Office of the Capital Programs have been invaluable
9 and are greatly appreciated, not only by me, but
10 I'm sure by the residents who she's helped over the
11 years.

12 Please help me to congratulate Katrina.
13 (Applause.)

14 MR. GARRETT: Okay. Our Customer
15 Service award for the quarter ending March 2019.
16 I'm also pleased to recognize an employee who
17 demonstrates exceptional customer service every
18 day in her position as a Fair Housing Program
19 Specialist in the Office of Fair Housing.

20 Our Customer Service recipient for the
21 first quarter 2019 is Ingrid Campbell.

22 (Applause.)

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1 MR. GARRETT: Ms. Campbell has done an
2 extraordinary job going above and beyond her
3 regular duties as a program specialist to serve as
4 a Spanish interpreter for DCHA in support of the
5 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Walk-ins,
6 applicants, as well as inquiries via the Agency's
7 customer service call center to ensure that
8 participants understand what is being communicated
9 to them on their message or their concerns are being
10 conveyed correctly.

11 Apart from providing interpreter
12 assistance, Ms. Campbell interacts with over 100
13 residents and participants with the applicants who
14 seek answers to very serious concerns and issues
15 affecting them and provides them with the customer
16 service demonstrating exceptional warm and
17 friendly -- in a warm and friendly tone along with
18 a professional demeanor.

19 Despite Ms. Campbell's direct
20 involvement in the department that is very hectic
21 on a day-to-day basis, she still processes and
22 operates certain activities. She spends an

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1 enormous amount of time working collaboratively
2 with Fair Hearing staff and the other departments
3 on critical issues that provide a mindful and
4 helpful, courteous, and professional service at
5 all times.

6 Ms. Campbell plays an integral role in
7 the success of the Office of Fair Hearings. Please
8 help me congratulate Ingrid Campbell for
9 delivering phenomenal customer service.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. GARRETT: Okay. So I'm going to go
12 into -- quickly into a director's report. So when
13 we started in January 2019, we talked about our
14 critical assessment of our portfolio and our needs,
15 the discussion of repositioning, revitalization,
16 and a transformation of our Authority, not only in
17 bricks and mortar but also the Agency overall
18 internally and outwardly so that we can provide
19 better customer service and provide better housing
20 for each and every one of our residents.

21 So you know how we got to that point.
22 You know we've been discussing it over the last few

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1 months. And that discussion has led us to this
2 particular point. In our discussions, not only
3 with our Board of Commissioners but also our
4 advocate community and some of the stakeholders,
5 we have made the decision and the determination
6 that we need to more intensive interaction with our
7 residents directly and also some members of the
8 community itself to find out exactly what they're
9 going to be looking for and also allow them the
10 opportunity to ask more questions of us.

11 This does not deter the Housing
12 Authority's effort and mission to identify
13 opportunities and the process for which we're going
14 to transform this Agency and move residents into
15 better conditions. But what it does allow for is
16 more interaction with the community directly to
17 find out what that's going to look like.

18 Now one of the parts of the process is
19 going to be me going out and talking to resident
20 leaders, whether it's going to be one on one or in
21 a group setting. To get the ball rolling, we're
22 going to continue to have interaction with our

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1 Board of Commissioners on the topic. Our advocate
2 community, we're scaling that. We're putting that
3 together so that we can have robust conversations.
4 And then we're going to be dealing directly with
5 our residents and asking them exactly what they're
6 going to be looking for and allowing them to ask
7 questions.

8 We still have a very ambitious timeline
9 in which we need to get this done. And the reason
10 I feel we have an ambitious timeline is because of
11 the conditions that some of our units are actually
12 in. They're extremely urgent, and we believe that
13 it's necessary and I believe that's it's necessary
14 that we take as much action as quickly as possible
15 to deal with it.

16 Everyone knows that we're going to be
17 going into an oversight budget hearing tomorrow --
18 budget oversight hearing tomorrow. There'll
19 probably be questions about exactly what the
20 Housing Authority is going to be doing. I think
21 most of the information that I'll be discussing
22 with the Housing Committee tomorrow will be

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1 information that you've already heard.

2 There's not going to be anything new
3 that's going to be put out into the atmosphere that
4 is going to blindside or come as a surprise to
5 anyone in this room, especially not our Board of
6 Commissioners. We've had open discussion and
7 dialogue about everything that we're trying to do
8 and everything that we're anticipating.

9 And again, no final decisions have been
10 made on anything because one thing that we want to
11 do is make good decisions that respectfully impact
12 our community in a positive way.

13 So that being said, if you were here
14 thinking that we were going to roll out decision
15 making and all these things, that's not going to
16 happen today. We're going to take more time
17 because that's the right thing to do. Okay.
18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. And
20 while our Executive Director takes his seat, I
21 would like to just thank the staff of the Housing
22 Authority who've been working so hard over these

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1 past few months trying to put together this
2 repositioning together. There's still a lot of
3 engagement that needs to be done and will be done
4 with the various communities.

5 I know this week, DCHA staff met with
6 members of the advocacy community. We're going to
7 be socializing these ideas with residents and
8 others in various forums over the next few weeks
9 and months. So stay tuned for more notification
10 from the staff of the Housing Authority. So thank
11 you so much, Mr. Executive Director.

12 So let's move into our resolutions. We
13 actually have one resolution today which is
14 Resolution 19-06 which would approve the
15 allocation of up to five actually project-based
16 vouchers to Capper Square 769N and authorize the
17 execution of other related documents for this
18 project that's commonly known as the Harlow.

19 We have one resident who signed up and
20 will be given the opportunity to speak for three
21 minutes on this resolution. That's Debra Frazier.
22 Debra, can you come forward?

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1 MS. FRAZIER: Greetings, peers -- yay,
2 everybody who came out to Greenleaf, yay -- and
3 Board. I'm Debra Frazier. What am I? A human
4 and housing activist, et cetera. So my questions
5 -- as you all know or everybody may not know, this
6 property is on the Capper footprint.

7 My concerns as I look at this resolution
8 are, one, the ACC units in this building. I'm
9 seeing that there will be five project-based
10 vouchers. First question, didn't this Board
11 allocate project-based vouchers to this property
12 last month? Did you guys do that? Did you do
13 anything around Harlow last month?

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No ma'am.

15 MS. FRAZIER: Okay. So I'm seeing in
16 one of these things, HUD approves the 36 units to
17 move from ACC to affordable. Explain how it's
18 going from ACC to affordable.

19 MR. GARRETT: We're going to -- it's
20 really -- Ms. Frazier, thank you for the question.
21 Really what we're doing is just changing the
22 allocation of subsidy that will be going to the

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1 building. Instead of using ACC subsidy, we will
2 be using project-based subsidy.

3 MS. FRAZIER: And these -- so
4 project-based --

5 MR. GARRETT: The number of units
6 remain the same at 36, though.

7 MS. FRAZIER: So only -- of the 36
8 units, only 6 will be project-based vouchers?

9 MR. GARRETT: No, no. And Kerry,
10 correct me. But they're going to be 36 ACC units.
11 They're going to be funded by a project-based
12 voucher dollar amount equal to five units.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And the staff will
14 get into an explanation of this when they come up.

15 MS. FRAZIER: Which is a challenge of
16 putting the resolution question first before
17 residents understand what's going on. But anyway,
18 so this does not mean there will be no ACC units.
19 It means the funding is different.

20 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am.

21 MS. FRAZIER: So will there be -- are
22 these part of the Capper replacement units from the

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1 HUD Hope VI?

2 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am.

3 MS. FRAZIER: So how many of these
4 units are our replacement units?

5 MR. GARRETT: All of them.

6 MS. FRAZIER: All of them?

7 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am, all 36. I'm
8 sorry, all 36.

9 MS. FRAZIER: Okay. And there was
10 some discussion that our displaced seniors who were
11 burned out would be in this property as well. Will
12 some of them be there, or this is all returning
13 residents?

14 MR. GARRETT: This is going to be all
15 returning residents. Remember, all the Arthur
16 Capper seniors have been placed. So we thought at
17 one time the timelines might match up, but it did
18 not. So --

19 MS. FRAZIER: Okay.

20 MR. GARRETT: -- all those seniors have
21 been housed.

22 MS. FRAZIER: So I think you kind of

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1 explained that all. So there will be ACC. Oh, the
2 other significant question is we were told then it
3 has been the information from Office of Capital
4 Programs that it is too -- oh, the condos. Are
5 these going to be condos? The ACC units are going
6 to be condos?

7 MR. GARRETT: No ma'am, they're leased
8 apartments.

9 MS. FRAZIER: They're leased
10 apartments. So this building is a combination of
11 condos and rental units?

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No, it's just rental
13 units.

14 MR. GARRETT: Just rental units.

15 MS. FRAZIER: So what's the condo thing
16 about? My understanding is they're rental units
17 but they're condos. I thought you bought condos
18 and you rented everything else.

19 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am. Yes ma'am,
20 you do. But Kerry is going to be able to explain
21 that component when she comes up. So we'll hold
22 onto that question.

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1 MS. FRAZIER: Okay. I can ask her when
2 she comes up. I think that is all. Oh, what's
3 PBV? Project-based vouchers. Okay. I think
4 that's all I have.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you, Ms.
6 Frazier.

7 MS. FRAZIER: You're getting good,
8 Garrett.

9 MR. GARRETT: I'm getting better.

10 MS. FRAZIER: Getting a little better.
11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Careful.

13 MR. GARRETT: Thank you.

14 MS. FRAZIER: Oh, when is occupancy for
15 Harlow?

16 MR. GARRETT: Actually, they started.
17 But the affordable units have not been occupied
18 yet.

19 MS. FRAZIER: Just I want to raise with
20 you all, there's a challenge. Another thing comes
21 up. There is a challenge in market rate
22 developments which we're having at the Capper

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1 footprint right now of socioeconomic divide and
2 attitude shifts and drama between market rate folks
3 and ACC folks.

4 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am.

5 MS. FRAZIER: It would be more
6 significant all within on building. We are
7 working with some of your staff now for some modules
8 around that. So be aware of that and please allow
9 for some discussion or pay some attention to what
10 that interaction is going to look like. Because
11 if you don't, there's going to be drama in that
12 building.

13 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am. Thank you,
14 Ms. Frazier.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much,
16 Ms. Frazier. I'm going to turn it over to our
17 Executive Director and his team to give a little
18 bit of background on the project.

19 MR. GARRETT: Okay. Commissioners,
20 I'm just going to call Kerry Smyser up from the
21 Office of Capital Programs, and she'll begin the
22 discussion and the answering of questions in

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1 reference to this particular project. I do know
2 she did pick up an answer for the allocation of
3 funding. So that will be able to answer
4 Commissioner Slover's question from earlier.

5 MS. SMYSER: Good afternoon,
6 Commissioners. I'm Kerry Smyser in the Office of
7 Capital Programs. Resolution 19-06 is to improve
8 the allocation of actually five project-based
9 vouchers to Capper Square 769 North, also known as
10 Harlow, and authorize execution of other related
11 document of Capper.

12 And so the purpose of this is to --
13 actually, we would remove the ACC from the units
14 and then move forward with putting five
15 project-based vouchers on the development. The
16 five project-based vouchers along with the tenant
17 rents is enough to substantiate the operating
18 income for the project.

19 This building, Square 769 or Harlow,
20 it's a ten-story mixed income building at the
21 Capper-Carrollsborg Hope VI redevelopment. The
22 building is 179 units, has 143 market rate units,

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1 and 36 affordable units.

2 The building closed -- we closed on the
3 financing in February of 2017 and then we started
4 on the actual construction in March of 2017. The
5 building is now completed and we have started the
6 leasing.

7 Part of the issue or why we were doing
8 this is because we had an investigation by the
9 Department of Labor from our -- on our general
10 contractor that was at the site. Department of
11 Labor disagreed with how the Davis-Bacon wage rate
12 was actually allocated or paid because we have a
13 market unit component which goes to Ms. Frazier's
14 question about the condominiums.

15 It's about ownership. So this
16 building is basically three components. There is
17 a market rate component and there is an owner for
18 those 143 units. There's an affordable owner
19 which owns the 36 units. And then there is another
20 owner which owns the 4,800 square feet of retail.
21 So those were the actual condominiums, but it's
22 actually an all rental building.

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1 Because the market rate portion of the
2 building is financed with all private money, that
3 does not trigger Davis-Bacon. The affordable
4 side, because there was a Housing Production Trust
5 Fund money and because of the HUD subsidy does
6 trigger Davis-Bacon.

7 The Housing Authority project is paying
8 or was paying the Davis-Bacon wage rate on the
9 affordable component. However, Department of
10 Labor disagreed with the way that we were paying
11 the wage rate and thought that it should be paid
12 on the entire site.

13 Subsequently, the Housing Authority
14 and the partnership actually has received a letter
15 from the Department of Labor which states that they
16 are discontinuing their investigation and they
17 will not enforce the Davis-Bacon wage rate on this
18 site.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Could you speak into
20 the microphone?

21 MS. SMYSER: Oh, I thought I was.
22 Okay.

1 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And could
2 you repeat that, what you just said about the
3 Davis-Bacon?

4 MS. SMYSER: The Davis-Bacon? Yes.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Yes, what
6 did you just say?

7 MS. SMYSER: So April 5th, we received
8 a letter from HUD which says that they will cease
9 pursing enforcement of the Davis-Bacon labor
10 standards with respect to this project. That
11 letter was sent to the partnership's council on
12 April 5th, 2019.

13 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And could
14 you explain for the record exactly what this letter
15 is saying?

16 MS. SMYSER: What that means is that
17 they are not -- we sent a letter into them actually
18 appealing the decision that we needed to pay the
19 Davis-Bacon on the entire building. And they said
20 --

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Who is
22 they?

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1 MS. SMYSER: They is Department of
2 Labor. Department of Labor has come back and said,
3 based on your letter, we are now going to stop,
4 based on your letter and the case that you put
5 before us. And also, we also received -- I also
6 explain too. We received a letter from HUD in
7 December of 2018 which said that we could unwind
8 the deal or take the ACC off of the 36 units and
9 replace it with the project-based vouchers.

10 So Department of Labor is now saying
11 that they will cease their investigation and will
12 not pursue enforcement of Davis-Bacon wage rates
13 at this site.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you guys speak
15 into the mic? It's hard to hear. Up pretty closer
16 to your mouth.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I'm just saying
18 that's predicated on this resolution being
19 approved.

20 MS. SMYSER: That is true.

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. I just
22 want to make that clear. Like, that's --

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1 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: One other
2 question --

3 MS. SMYSER: That's true.

4 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: -- is about
5 the EB-5 program. Now we've already had some
6 controversy in reference to the Bixby based on the
7 socioeconomic division. And we know that too is
8 a EB-5 program.

9 Now with the HALO, whenever you're
10 making these contract negotiations, as a
11 Commissioner representing the family property --
12 and I'm going to just stay on everybody. I'm
13 getting on everybody now. I have cautioned this
14 Housing Authority when it is doing EB-5 programs
15 to stop cutting out our public and Indian rights.

16 In all EB-5 programs, there is not
17 resident council for public housing residents even
18 though there's going to be 36 units. Those 36
19 units could receive at least the whole 25 dollars
20 because with EB-5s, we should get our whole 25
21 dollars.

22 We should also be able to have some type

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1 of -- with their IT system in their computer rooms,
2 there should be where our residents can log in and
3 they will pull up the Family Enhancement Center,
4 all the programs that are running here.

5 And then we're not doing the contracts
6 great enough where our residents, they do get a key
7 to use the swimming pool and everything. But it
8 seemed like their keys don't work and everybody
9 else keys do work. And there's not a clear
10 understanding on what type of residents are we.

11 And the problems you have and problems
12 with this, the reason why you're actually having
13 problems with my constituents is because, first of
14 all, coming from -- we're in Ward 6, and I am being
15 -- now I'm being personal because I'm a Ward 6
16 resident.

17 Ward 6 politics is different than any
18 politics any other ward. So I'm cautioning you now
19 that, A, the next time you coming up with an EB-5
20 program anywhere in the District of Columbia,
21 number one, stop violating our public and Indian
22 rights. It's happening throughout the nation.

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1 That when you go to the table, the first
2 thing you should negotiate is the rights of the
3 tenants under 20 CFR, all of our protection. We
4 have a right to have a resident council when we
5 don't have that right under EB-5 in your mixed
6 income.

7 We have the right to do this. Every
8 right that we have in these programs cut out our
9 public and Indian rights. Can we do contracts that
10 include them?

11 MS. SMYSER: So in the mixed finance
12 program and in Hope VI, as far -- if you're putting
13 an ACC or an annual contributions contract on
14 units, then they do receive the public housing
15 rights.

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So you're
17 telling that at the Bixby --

18 MS. SMYSER: However -- hold on.
19 However, in the Hope VI program because it's
20 looking for inclusion, they don't want to have two
21 separate resident organizations. So you don't
22 want to have a market rate organization and maybe

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1 a public housing --

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Okay. But
3 just --

4 MS. SMYSER: -- organization.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: -- my
6 constituents have a problem. I'm not trying -- I'm
7 just trying -- I just getting to the point.

8 MS. SMYSER: I understand.

9 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: The point
10 is we own the land. We was cut out of the
11 economical distribution. That's number two. And
12 number three, you're going to tell me that you're
13 going to have market renters who move in first.
14 They join the association, and my constituents
15 can't get in. It's political.

16 But if you're doing it from the contract
17 level from the beginning and letting your
18 developers understand what they're cutting us out
19 on. Because everything you do for a public
20 resident nationwide, we are dollars. We represent
21 dollars.

22 If you have a voucher, regardless of

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1 what amount that voucher is, that's your money.
2 That's how much you are worth. So then you have
3 36 units. Let's look at how much dollars we
4 invested in units. We can't never sit on your
5 council because it's locked down.

6 So the only way it can work is through
7 policy. And this is what this Board is about. So
8 all we asking you to do is all you have to do is
9 start talking. We have the advocates that are
10 going to back you. And if you can't do it, the
11 advocates are going to start doing it for you.

12 MS. SMYSER: May I finish? Can I?

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yeah, go ahead.

14 MS. SMYSER: So we have community
15 relation -- I mean, not community relations,
16 community organizations. So at Capital Gateway,
17 I have a community organization where our public
18 housing residents also participate in that
19 organization. It is the actual homeowners. It's
20 the market rate -- I mean, not market rate but the
21 LIHTC lenders as well as public housing.

22 So we have done that in other areas.

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1 There's no reason why that can't happen anywhere
2 else. Right now at the Bixby, we don't have an
3 organization at all for the tenants. So if there
4 is a desire, then that's something that we can
5 discuss with the residents. But we've done it
6 before. It's not something that we have not done
7 before.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can I ask you a few
9 questions? So when is this project going to be
10 completed?

11 MS. SMYSER: This project is now
12 completed. We have the C of O. We received the
13 C of O March 22nd of this year.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And how many units
15 have been occupied so far?

16 MS. SMYSER: Six.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Any of the
18 affordable units have been occupied?

19 MS. SMYSER: Not yet.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So all the six that
21 have been occupied are market rate units?

22 MS. SMYSER: That is correct.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And what's
2 preventing the occupancy of the affordable units?

3 MS. SMYSER: Waiting on this Board to
4 take an action.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: When was this
6 project -- when did this project begin?

7 MS. SMYSER: It closed in February
8 2017?

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: February 2017?
10 When did construction start?

11 MS. SMYSER: March 2017.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: March 2017? And so
13 providing that this resolution gets approved
14 today, when will residents have access to the
15 affordable units?

16 MS. SMYSER: I have 12 residents
17 already that have been approved. So as soon as
18 they can get their things together and move in,
19 we'll start moving them in.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So as early as next
21 week if they get their things together?

22 MS. SMYSER: I don't know about next

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1 week. I have to talk to Katrina because she'll be
2 the one helping them move in. But yes, as soon as
3 possible.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So I'm sure that
5 there are complications about getting things
6 together. I've moved a few times in my life. But
7 now that we know that these units are available,
8 are we doing any type of prep work with the
9 residents that are going to move into these units
10 so that we can facilitate a really smooth
11 transition?

12 MS. SMYSER: Yes, we started that
13 already. So we've had Community Connections
14 working with the former residents, helping them
15 through the application process and then just
16 getting them ready for the moving into the building
17 and dealing with all the topics that we were talking
18 about earlier.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Great. Any other
20 questions from any other Commissioners?

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Yes, I have a
22 few questions. When you say that the building

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1 closed in 2017, can you explain what you mean by
2 that?

3 MS. SMYSER: Yes, it means that we
4 secured our construction financing so that we could
5 start construction on the building.

6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And so then at
7 that point, the partnership was formed that you
8 talked about that owns the three condominium
9 components?

10 MS. SMYSER: Yes.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And can you
12 explain that partnership and what percentage of it
13 that each of them owns?

14 MS. SMYSER: Yes, so there is an
15 affiliate called Capital Housing Partners that
16 it's an affiliate of D.C. Housing Authority. It
17 owns 50 percent in the market rate owner, ownership
18 in the affordable housing ownership and also in the
19 retail ownership.

20 Then the partner is
21 Capital-Carrollsborg which is a joint venture of
22 Urban Atlantic and Forest City. And they own 50

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1 percent in the market rate ownership, in the
2 affordable ownership, and in the retail.

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So each of the
4 two ownership entities own half of each of the three
5 condos?

6 MS. SMYSER: That's correct.

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And was there
8 some action taken with the land, the underlying
9 land at that closing?

10 MS. SMYSER: Yes.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And who owned
12 the land prior to the closing?

13 MS. SMYSER: The Authority owned the
14 land prior to closing?

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And who owns
16 the land now?

17 MS. SMYSER: The market rate owner.

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: The market rate
19 owner? And who's the market rate owner again?

20 MS. SMYSER: The market rate owner is
21 the Housing Authority's affiliate, Capital Housing
22 Partners, along with CCB, that joint venture, that

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1 affiliate.

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And they each
3 own 50 percent of the land?

4 MS. SMYSER: Well, the market owner
5 owns 100 percent of the land. So the Housing
6 Authority -- so to get into it, the land was
7 appraised at ten million dollars. And so the
8 Housing Authority sold that land to the market
9 owner. It will get a portion or 80 percent of the
10 land value back.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So we gave our
12 partner 20 percent of the land value for what?

13 MS. SMYSER: We gave that to them
14 because of the value that has been created by the
15 previous developments at Capper. We have done
16 Capper Senior I, 400 M Street, Townhomes 1 and 2.
17 And CCV actually bore all the risk on that
18 development -- on those developments. So we did
19 agree that they had brought some value too.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And what did
21 they get as -- in those first few deals, what was
22 their -- did they get -- what was their land

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1 distribution in those first few deals?

2 MS. SMYSER: So the Housing Authority
3 continues to own the land at Capper Senior I, 400
4 M Street. On Townhomes 1 and 2, where they're home
5 ownership, the land was sold fee simple. And it
6 goes fee simple to the condominium owner. And then
7 on the public housing units, the Housing Authority
8 actually owns -- they actually own that land.

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So in a future
10 liquidity event when the land is paid for, how will
11 those proceeds be distributed?

12 MS. SMYSER: So they will be
13 distributed 80-20. So in a capital event, the
14 Housing Authority would receive its six million
15 dollars or the balance.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: It should be
17 eight, right?

18 MS. SMYSER: Well, in total, we will
19 receive eight million dollars. You asked at a
20 capital event. So there will be a capital event
21 in seven years.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Right.

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1 MS. SMYSER: When we have to pay off our
2 refinance, the debt from the construction -- well,
3 now the construction gets converted to a permit
4 loan. The EB-5 has to all be paid off. And then
5 anything -- and then the balance is going to the
6 Housing Authority for its land value.

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And during the
8 first seven years, cash distribution is 50-50?

9 MS. SMYSER: It's 50-50.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And as I
11 understand as you said earlier, that goes to our
12 land contribution. So --

13 MS. SMYSER: It does.

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- as I've said
15 before, my concern is that our partner is making
16 more money than we are on this deal. And I don't
17 like that construction.

18 MS. SMYSER: Yeah. So I went back and
19 checked with my team. And so they are booking --
20 their 20 percent gets booked as land value. It
21 does not get booked as profit.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So that will

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1 save us potentially two million dollars? Or we'll
2 still get six millions?

3 MS. SMYSER: We still get the six
4 million at the --

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And they get --

6 MS. SMYSER: -- capital event. They
7 should --

8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- nothing?

9 MS. SMYSER: -- get nothing, yes.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. What
11 happens to the other four million on the land value?

12 MS. SMYSER: Well, I've received two.
13 I'm getting six. That's eight million. The other
14 two million goes to them. That's ten million
15 dollars.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So the property
17 doesn't profit during the first seven years then?

18 MS. SMYSER: Well, basically.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Right?

20 MS. SMYSER: Yes, right. And then
21 after that, we still receive cash flow as the
22 project continues.

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1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So do you think
2 there's any risk in terms of having only five
3 project-based vouchers that cover 36 apartments
4 based on the fluidity of rent?

5 MS. SMYSER: I don't. Not right now,
6 I don't see that, no. So it's all based on the
7 rents that we're receiving from project-based
8 vouchers. The rents --

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Other questions?

10 MS. SMYSER: -- are high enough, yeah.

11 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: But without
12 us owning the land, can you talk a little bit about
13 how those 36 units are going to be maintained for
14 public housing residents over time?

15 MS. SMYSER: So the Housing Authority
16 will still some kind of covenant on that, on those
17 units. We've agreed with HUD that we'll operate
18 those units like public housing. So there won't
19 be any difference in the way that they're operated
20 or run. We are still an owner in the building.

21 So we have our rights to authorize the
22 manager, get rid of the manager. So there are

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1 things that we can do as an owner to make sure that
2 the units remain affordable, to make sure that the
3 appropriate people are being put into the units and
4 that their rights are maintained.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ken? Mr.
6 Grossinger and then we'll come to the right.

7 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: Ken is fine.
8 I don't have a question for you, just a comment
9 which is that, fundamentally, I don't believe that
10 community vouchers should be used to pay for
11 operating costs. I think that's a mistake. These
12 are two different pockets, operating costs,
13 budget, Housing Choice Voucher Program or
14 program-based vouchers.

15 They're very different pots of money.
16 And to sacrifice vouchers that the community would
17 use to pay for our internal costs is, I think, a
18 mistake. And so Mr. Chair, I'll be voting against
19 this resolution.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
21 Commissioner Taliaferro?

22 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: I'm sorry.

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1 What is the difference between the EB-5 program and
2 the difference with the Hope VI?

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: He's asking the
4 difference between EB-5 and Hope VI.

5 MS. SMYSER: So actually, EB-5 is an
6 immigration program. And it allows for foreign
7 investors to invest in projects here in the United
8 States. And they can invest in order to receive
9 a visa. So that's what the EB-5 program is. So
10 they're investing in the project, and they receive
11 a return on their project. Okay? And it's about
12 generating jobs on the project.

13 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And whose
14 the one investing?

15 MS. SMYSER: We have foreign investors
16 from China.

17 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Who are
18 they?

19 MS. SMYSER: I don't have all of their
20 names in front of me.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner St.
22 Jean, you had a question?

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1 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Can you
2 explain a credit equity and what do the D.C.
3 residents get out of it? Like, if you get in
4 condos, right? We have condos there?

5 MS. SMYSER: No.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No.

7 MS. SMYSER: No, the units are all
8 rental. They're not for sale. So as I explained,
9 the condominium is only the ownership. So it's
10 just the owner of the rental units because there's
11 three different components. You have the market
12 rate. You have the affordable. And then you have
13 the retail. It's just the three different owners.
14 They call them condos, but they're not condos in
15 the for sale scenario --

16 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Okay. So who
17 made --

18 MS. SMYSER: -- as an individual for
19 sale.

20 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Okay. So who
21 made this deal in order for them to use PBVs for
22 the operation of the funding? Who actually made

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1 this deal to happen?

2 MS. SMYSER: So that was people from
3 the Housing Authority as well as people on the
4 developer side that we thought that we looked at
5 the rules. HUD says that you can use up to eight
6 vouchers in a project. It does not trigger
7 David-Bacon. And so that is why we presented it
8 and then moved forward with going to HUD to see if
9 they would approve it. We knew we had to come to
10 the Board to get the Board to approve the
11 project-based vouchers going into the deal.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner
13 Slover?

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: How much equity
15 did our partner put into the deal?

16 MS. SMYSER: They put in two -- well,
17 they put in two million. They also put up a
18 guarantee, and they put up 50 percent of
19 predevelopment.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And the two
21 million, was that the deferred developer's fee or
22 was that real cash?

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1 MS. SMYSER: Deferred developer fee.

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. So what
3 if this Board did not approve this. What would
4 happen?

5 MS. SMYSER: Well, then we would move
6 forward and those units would be ACC. They'd be
7 public housing. But then we have a risk that
8 Department of Labor or HUD could come back and then
9 enforce the Davis-Bacon and we would have to pay
10 it.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And how much
12 would the payout be?

13 MS. SMYSER: It'd be 5.4 million to 8
14 million dollars.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Divided by --
16 and we'd be responsible for 50 percent of that,
17 right?

18 MS. SMYSER: Yeah, right now, yes.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: What do you
20 mean right now?

21 MS. SMYSER: Well, I don't know. I
22 mean, there could be some challenges to that. I

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1 mean, our partners may be very upset about that,
2 so --

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Well, why would
4 they be upset? We're upset too.

5 MS. SMYSER: I understand. I'm just
6 saying, could be.

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: What's the
8 value of -- what's more important to this Agency
9 in terms of fulfilling its mission and based on all
10 the headwind that we have, preserving
11 project-based vouchers, to increase housing stock,
12 or try to figure out a way to use the ACC?

13 Or maybe we should just pay -- maybe we
14 should just -- what I get tired of as a Board member
15 is being presented with these situations time and
16 time again where it's just, this is the last time.
17 We've made a mistake. We're just going to have to
18 suck it up this time.

19 Well, maybe we need to distribute the
20 pain around a little bit so that people don't take
21 advantage of us anymore. Okay? We made a
22 decision. The decision didn't work out. And now

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1 I feel like we're picking up all of the broken
2 pieces and our partner is not participating in it.
3 I don't see their participation in this.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you.

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I'm not done.
6 We have a problem, and we, once again, are using
7 our most valuable resource to fix yet another
8 problem. Are we going to have this problem on all
9 the rest of the required units that we have to put
10 onto the site? We don't have enough project-based
11 vouchers to continue to use these the way we do
12 them.

13 MS. SMYSER: No.

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So is it we're
15 not going to be able to get with this Davis-Bacon
16 thing a bunch of other times?

17 MS. SMYSER: No, no, no. You have a
18 different Executive Director.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Well, he has
20 nothing to do with this. The Department of Labor
21 is doing this. My point is why can't we just --
22 maybe we should just pay for this out of the profit

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1 from the marketability side.

2 MS. SMYSER: Well, I don't have that
3 much --

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Well, maybe a
5 capital call.

6 MS. SMYSER: -- profit on the market
7 side. Well, we could do a capital call. But that
8 takes away --

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Maybe we should
10 just --

11 MS. SMYSER: -- still from the Housing
12 Authority.

13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- put in two
14 and a half vouchers, and then our partners should
15 come up with the balance. Why are we covering it
16 all? If we own half the problem, we should provide
17 half the solution. Maybe they should give us back
18 the 20 percent of the land we gave them as making
19 up for this. Maybe that's what we should ask for.
20 What I'm tired of is getting nothing when we keep
21 giving out a lot. And the Board needs to put their
22 foot down at some point, and maybe this will be the

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1 time.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you,
3 Commissioner.

4 (Applause.)

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So at this time, I'm
6 want to ask our secretary to -- first of all, I'm
7 going to ask for a motion to approve Resolution --

8 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: I'm sorry.
9 Before we --

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: -- 19-06.

11 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Before we go
12 into it, can we just have the Executive Director
13 just respond to the resource question --

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Sure.

15 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: -- about,
16 like, why he thinks that it's the best route to use
17 this resource right now and what the impact of it
18 is.

19 MR. GARRETT: So Commissioners, when I
20 look at this deal understanding I came on and the
21 deal was already baked, it was already solidified
22 before I came on board, I believe we had two

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1 options. One was to pay out in cash or to utilize
2 the PBV option.

3 Based on our repositioning effort and
4 the situation that the Housing Authority is in
5 right now, if we were to pay out as a cash
6 transaction, we would be taking away from our
7 opportunity to try and mitigate some of our
8 repositioning issues, some of our interim
9 controls, and some of our environmental issues.

10 We do need as much cash as we possibly
11 can, and we already have a gap on our interim
12 controls of about 14 million dollars to try and
13 complete those before the end of the year. So cash
14 is king for the Housing Authority at this point in
15 time.

16 Utilization of the five PBVs, what I
17 believe is that we will be able to make those PBVs
18 up as we start to reposition the Authority. So we
19 could possibly gain those five vouchers back before
20 the end of the year when we begin repositioning.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. So would
22 someone entertain a motion to --

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1 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I move the
2 Resolution 19-06 to approve the allocation of up
3 to five project-based vouchers to pay for Square
4 769 and authorize the execution other related
5 documents for Capper Square 769 and be moved and
6 accepted to the record.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Is there a second?

8 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Second. Can we call
10 a vote, Madam Secretary?

11 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you. Commissioner
12 St. Jean?

13 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: No.

14 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Taliaferro?

15 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: No.

16 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner
17 Vann-Ghasri.

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: No.

19 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Neal Jones?

20 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Yes.

21 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Grossinger?

22 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: No.

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1 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Slover?

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: No.

3 MS. MCNAIR: And I'd like to
4 acknowledge we have two Commissioners on the phone.
5 Commissioner Ortiz Gaud, can I have your vote,
6 please.

7 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: Yes.

8 MS. MCNAIR: Let the record reflect
9 Commissioner Ortiz said yes. Commissioner
10 Strickland, may I have your vote, please.

11 COMMISSIONER STRICKLAND: Yes.

12 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Strickland
13 said yes. Please let the record reflect.
14 Chairman Albert?

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes.

16 MS. MCNAIR: You have four yes and five
17 no. The resolution is not approved.

18 (Applause.)

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you, Madam
20 Secretary. So next on our agenda is our session
21 for public witnesses. We do call residents first
22 followed by nonresidents. Everyone is allowed

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1 three minutes. We're going to start with Wanda
2 Thomas. Ms. Thomas, please come forward. Wanda
3 Thomas? Is Linda Brown inside? Linda? Come on
4 up, yeah.

5 MS. BROWN: Good afternoon,
6 Commissioners.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon.

8 MS. BROWN: My name is Linda Brown, and
9 I live in Greenleaf Senior. I have a daughter with
10 disabilities. And the reason I'm here today is to
11 talk about last month when Mr. Garrett proposed his
12 PowerPoint.

13 And so my questions is -- on your
14 PowerPoint is when you have the townhall meetings
15 on properties and these issues were presented for
16 the residents, I just want to know that when you
17 presented this PowerPoint, did you take into
18 consideration what the residents of these
19 properties said to you when you put forth these
20 proposals and these issues?

21 Where they're concerned about what was
22 happening on their properties, did you take into

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1 consideration that when you they ask you these
2 questions how stressful it would be when you were
3 going to carry out what you proposed the solutions
4 were to these? Did you take into consideration the
5 stress that it would be on the residents on how you
6 were going to move forward?

7 And as I heard you say earlier, time
8 constraints, how important, time -- you were moving
9 forward with time. How does this help the
10 residents when they can't wrap their head around
11 when you're going to proceed with all of these new
12 policies and resolutions? How are we to catch up
13 and what are we to do when you're constantly making
14 or putting forth these resolutions?

15 What are we to do in the meantime?
16 Because you're constantly moving ahead, and we
17 can't see to catch up. We're stressful. We don't
18 know what's going to happen and when it's going to
19 happen.

20 MR. GARRETT: Well, Ms. Brown, what I'm
21 going to say is one of the reasons why we're doing
22 this is just because of the townhall meetings. If

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1 you recall, when I would go out to the townhall
2 meetings, residents -- just I remember coming to
3 a townhall meeting here at Greenleaf where people
4 were talking about the conditions of the units, the
5 infestation, all the things, the air quality.

6 So we took the townhall meetings. And
7 the reason -- that's the reason why we moved ahead
8 with the environmental inspection of every single
9 unit within the portfolio. So that's how we get
10 to this particular point where we recognize and see
11 that there's an actual need to do something to put
12 residents in a safe environment.

13 Because at this point in time, I
14 acknowledge there are many residents, at least
15 2,600 are not -- those families are in dire
16 conditions that we need to do something about. So
17 when you talk whether or not we've taken that into
18 consideration, we took into consideration the
19 first step, that they're in situations that we
20 don't want them in and situations that we need to
21 do something about. That was the first question
22 that we asked ourselves after meeting with

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1 residents the initial time when we did our
2 townhalls, when I would go out and talk to people,
3 went and had the one-on-ones.

4 So now we move to the position where we
5 have to create some type of solution, some type of
6 plan to move the Agency forward because the
7 deferred maintenance over the course of, let's say,
8 10 to 12 years hasn't been done and has caused the
9 actual deterioration of the units.

10 Saying that we understand, and that's
11 what I was trying to explain to everyone.
12 Understanding that, yes, there is an urgency. And
13 the urgency is because what do we do with these
14 residents in these situations. That's the urgency
15 for me. That's the time.

16 Now we've taken a step back and said,
17 okay, we need to go out and engage the community
18 once more in a meaningful way, make it robust, get
19 feedback from not only our Commissioners but also
20 from the public and the residents themselves. So
21 that's why no decisions have been made yet because
22 we're understanding and hearing what everyone is

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1 saying to us.

2 So we're going to go back out to the
3 community. We're going to go back out to the
4 residents. And once again, we're going to ask
5 those questions about what this means to them, how
6 it impacts them, and actually what do they want to
7 see. Because we're going to give them and give you
8 and your fellow residents a clear synopsis of where
9 we are and why we're at this point and what our
10 actual options are, where the funding will come
11 from to make those repairs that everyone always
12 talks about. Repairs that even you, yourself,
13 have wanted within Greenleaf.

14 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And with
15 that said, I want to acknowledge the president of
16 203, Ms. Leftwich (phonetic) is here. And I want
17 to further to say when it comes to Greenleaf which
18 is my constituents, I've been in this room and I
19 took a different side. Every resident in 203
20 wanted to beat me up because I wanted to keep 203.
21 The residents in 203 want out of 203.

22 You could take a survey yourself when

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1 you leave out of here. This is one property that
2 99 percent of the residents here been asking for
3 this place to be torn down for the last six or seven
4 years. And Charles Allen is very much aware of it.
5 Karen Moone is the only deputy director that we had
6 in operation that toured with me with Ms. Leftwich,
7 203.

8 And those of us predicted, and that was
9 right after receivership how this building was
10 going to be. And those are those residents. Now
11 what happens is once residents makes that decision,
12 they move and transfer but they already made the
13 vote.

14 Now you and 20 and 30 more people then
15 came in and your president just didn't brief you
16 of what have happened prior to you moving in. So
17 by the time you move in and you don't want to come
18 to resident council meetings. Because as you
19 know, all we do is fuss, scream, and holler because
20 we don't never get to vent because we're not even
21 trained properly by DCHA with the Office of
22 Resident Service to even understand the language

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1 that the Board even learned.

2 Every resident up here that sits on this
3 Board, we have to learn a Board language. No
4 person on this Board was going to let us know what
5 repositioning is. And I guarantee you. If I give
6 a test right here, none of you all know what it is
7 either because I too thought repositioning mean you
8 come in somebody's neighborhood. The resident
9 council tell you how we want to reposition our
10 community. I thought I'd reposition Potomac
11 Gardens.

12 Repositioning has three elements. So
13 that means that we need to be taught. Now I'm tired
14 of residents who don't want to know nothing. Now
15 I've come up with every idea I can.

16 Hey, resident service could get
17 somebody to call every resident that got a phone.
18 And they have an automation on it, a number that
19 you can call. And whatever you want to hear about
20 whatever your issue is, you hear it that way. Now
21 if you're hearing impaired, maybe we can connect
22 with the LightHouse for the Blind and they can do

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1 like the Census Bureau.

2 The bottom line I'm saying is don't set
3 yourself up because we say we want to do this and
4 do that. I've got a headache. I didn't hear it.
5 And when we put our effort to make every way
6 possible for residents to understand, our
7 residents can't read. Okay. So now you get a crew
8 together like the Census Bureau knock on your door,
9 hope you're home and let me in so I can sit down
10 and read to you what your lease mean or what's the
11 situation of your property since you didn't got to
12 your ANC meeting who is the one who makes up the
13 idea of what your urban planning is, not this Board.

14 So that's a whole different separate
15 entity. And that's a lot for residents to learn
16 in such a short time. And now you want us to sit
17 at the table and sign off on a property. But you
18 don't know about the infrastructure. You don't
19 know about the pipes. You come here and complain
20 about roaches, bed bugs. Your porch is about to
21 break off. Your ceiling done fell down 20 years.
22 This is what you're telling any Board in the United

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1 States of America.

2 It is time to tear this joint down. It
3 is condemned. And we keep letting you live in it,
4 then it's a lawsuit. You can't have it both ways.
5 We got to figure out to have -- no, I'm just speaking
6 while they're giving me the opportunity.

7 While we've got affordable housing --
8 while we have affordable housing, residents such
9 as yourself have to start focus groups on your own
10 property, with or without -- and the property
11 managers should allow a Linda Brown to be able to
12 have a focus group in Greenleaf Senior. And all
13 of the knowledge that you'll receive, even if it's
14 once a month.

15 Any residents that want to come down to
16 open up them doors, that resident council office
17 or that recreation. I don't like Linda Brown, but
18 the law says that Linda Brown has the right to have
19 a meeting. And Linda Brown can put up flyers up
20 there in Greenleaf Senior, and we're going to meet
21 every Thursday. And you tell them what they need
22 to know.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner, can we
2 have Ms. Brown respond?

3 MS. BROWN: That's all well and good.
4 But guess what --

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Only if
6 your property --

7 MS. BROWN: Can I --

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: No, guess
9 what, Linda. I'm saying all this good stuff --

10 MS. BROWN: Well, I want to respond to
11 that because one of the things is --

12 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: -- but your
13 property manager would have to make it happen.

14 MS. BROWN: -- I don't live in 203.

15 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Right.

16 MS. BROWN: I live in Greenleaf Senior.
17 And not only that is --

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Your
19 property manager is sitting here.

20 MS. BROWN: No, let me finish.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner
22 Vann-Ghasri, could you let her finish? Thank you.

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1 MS. BROWN: When I pay rent -- when you
2 pay rent somewhere, you don't always have to go and
3 advocate for where you live. If you pay rent, you
4 expect the people who own the property to take care
5 of it. I shouldn't have to come and go to meetings
6 and understand all of this. It's not my
7 responsibility if I'm paying rent. I'm just
8 supposed to pay rent and do what my lease says. So
9 to hold me accountable when I come in and ask them
10 for something that they are responsible for, I
11 don't think that that kind of feedback from me is
12 important.

13 (Simultaneous speaking.)

14 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Is she
15 still here?

16 MS. BROWN: I'm here because --

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Aquarius.

18 MS. BROWN: -- I am living it every day.
19 And I want to straighten out because I want to know
20 what it is that my family has to be prepared for.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Prepared for.

22 MS. BROWN: Other than that, I mean,

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1 really, it's not our responsibility for a lot of
2 us. A lot of us can't do that. A lot of us can't
3 be here every day -- I mean, every month to these
4 Commissioners meetings.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Oh, no.
6 I'm talking about the Commissioners meetings. I'm
7 not talking about the Commissioner meeting. I'm
8 talking about as a resident.

9 MS. BROWN: Yes, but we don't have to
10 go. I know, but we don't --

11 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Listen me
12 to carefully, Paulette. Don't take away your
13 right. I just said that when you're in a property
14 as a resident, you have the right to go to your
15 resident council or your property manager, ask him
16 or her to allow you to have whatever focus group
17 you want, which they do not do.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We do have a lot of
19 other witnesses, Ms. Brown. Thank you so much.

20 MS. BROWN: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Ms. Brown

22 --

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And just rest
2 assured that -- so I agree with your position. I
3 think we have a responsibility as the Board and the
4 staff here at the Housing Authority to respond to
5 the needs of residents. And I want to encourage
6 you to come forward and share your concerns with
7 us --

8 MS. BROWN: Yes, I --

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: -- as you have.

10 MS. BROWN: -- think that the
11 communication is really important and how you
12 communicate what you're doing. Because what
13 you're doing, you're still doing in the meantime
14 while we're waiting for answers. You're still
15 proceeding with whatever this Board agree upon.
16 We still have to abide by whatever you agree upon.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So just so you know,
18 Linda, we haven't made a decision one way or the
19 other. And we were saying earlier on there's going
20 to be a lot of engagement, as the Director said,
21 with all the communities that will be affected. We
22 know a number of things. One, that we have to

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1 change the living condition of our residents,
2 right? There are lots of conditions that need
3 immediate attention, and we're going to take care
4 of those attention.

5 But there's a long-term strategy that
6 we have to develop, but not in isolation in the
7 offices of DC Housing Authority but with the
8 community. So the Director may not be as
9 articulate as I am, but I think that's what he was
10 trying to say. That was a joke. But I think
11 that's what he was trying to say that there is going
12 to be a long process that will engage with many
13 stakeholders as possible. I just want to leave
14 here knowing that that would happen under my watch.

15 So thank you so much for doing this
16 every month, and we appreciate you coming forward.

17 MS. BROWN: Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You're welcome. Is
19 Ms. Thomas around? Is Ms. Thomas in the room,
20 Wanda Thomas? Let's move on to Valeria Flamer.

21 MS. FLAMER: Hello, everybody. I came
22 here to talk about --

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon.

2 MS. FLAMER: Good afternoon. I came
3 here to talk about somebody from Section 8, the
4 inspector, sent me a letter. And I'm in a new
5 neighborhood. I've got two more months and then
6 I can move. He gave me a letter that he would be
7 at my house May 29th. There is no name on there.
8 I don't know when the inspector is coming. And I
9 have to open that door for him. He needs my phone
10 number and I need to know who he is because I'm going
11 to make him show me that ID when he get in my house.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Punter, did you
13 raise your hand?

14 MS. FLAMER: So what I was getting
15 ready to say, I don't know who sent me that. But
16 that's not the proper way to send a letter to an
17 elderly person because that building is kind of
18 dangerous, and I'm trying to get out of there.

19 So then I got another letter that was
20 attached to my door that -- on 13th -- from the DCRA.
21 Now he came to my house on the end of Christmas on
22 the last day of December drunk. I said, I know you

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1 ain't came to my house drunk. So I was really
2 pissed how they disrespected me.

3 And this place is owned by William C.
4 Smith. William C. Smith always was nice in renting
5 apartments to blacks. I know from back in the day.
6 And wasn't nothing wrong with those apartments.
7 They was cheaper. It seemed like the more money
8 they're getting, the worse the apartments getting.
9 The apartments was cheap. There was no bugs in it.
10 I got all kinds of stuff wrong with this apartment
11 for 995 dollars.

12 This lady didn't want to give me a
13 receipt for the rent. I said, wait a minute. Hold
14 up. She said, just mail it to me in the mail and
15 told me to give my 300 dollars to this man sitting
16 in a chair. I said, you absolutely -- I am
17 absolutely not.

18 Then the other lady at the corporate
19 office -- I'm going to report her too. She sent
20 me a letter and said I owe three months' rent. I
21 haven't missed a day of rent to them. So she said,
22 I'm out of the office now. But you can -- I'm going

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1 to take you to court. I said, yeah, and you will
2 have egg on your face when you get there because
3 I ain't never been landlord and tenant court for
4 owing the rent.

5 So when I read this letter, you can read
6 a lot without looking at a person's face. Whoever
7 sent me this letter sure want me to lose that
8 voucher. That's nasty. And they didn't care.
9 That's like playing dirty pool. They hope I'll
10 open the door so they can get my voucher. Oh, we
11 came by your house and you did not let us in. I
12 know what they're doing.

13 And some of them act they don't know
14 what they're doing. So they act like an enemy,
15 enemies to me. So who started Section 8? We
16 didn't. I think somebody should've tried to keep
17 people that's been here for a long time like myself.
18 What they should've did is fixed every place brick
19 by brick, neighborhood by neighborhood. And I
20 wouldn't have allowed the Section 8 to get in
21 because that was the way they could sit up there
22 and control us and charge a lot of rent.

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1 This lady even put -- the owners need
2 to start finding out who you're putting in your
3 rental. I think they sabotaging William C. Smith.
4 She put down there prostitution, added a deed on
5 it. I asked other tenants. I said, is that on
6 your lease? You do have to read your lease. And
7 Mr. Gossick (phonetic) was trying to tell that lady
8 that you got the right to organize if you want to
9 organize against people that's not fixing the
10 apartment. That's what she was saying. I read my
11 lease.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Flamer, could
13 you wrap it up?

14 MS. FLAMER: You must read that lease.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Punter can help
16 you with that. So if you don't mind talking to her
17 before you leave today.

18 MS. FLAMER: Oh, yeah.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much for
20 coming down.

21 MS. FLAMER: Because I don't want
22 nobody coming to house if I don't know who it is.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Punter will take
2 care of it. I promise you.

3 MS. FLAMER: All right. The only
4 person right now I've got on my side is the police
5 department. You see, but they even told me. They
6 said, Ms. Flamer, they taking advantage of you.
7 They're saying that elderly people like myself, I'm
8 69. They saying that we're smoking weed. I don't
9 smoke no weed.

10 So they putting -- I think giving young
11 girls vouchers was a big mistake. I signed the
12 recert with my specialist. She had on there, you
13 have any pedophiles. Pedophiles, she's saying
14 that. I said, why are you asking me that? She
15 said, because there's so many pedophiles. Young
16 girls are not mature. They have never been given
17 vouchers.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Well, we can't
19 discriminate based on age.

20 MS. FLAMER: No, but they've got
21 parents, though. They are not grown. That's what
22 I'm saying. That's not no discrimination.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I hear you.

2 MS. FLAMER: What they've been doing to
3 me was how they keep putting that stuff on senior
4 citizens. I was raised by two parents. That is
5 a blessing.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Absolutely.

7 MS. FLAMER: Most people don't.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So we do have a long
9 list of people waiting to testify. I can have --

10 MS. FLAMER: All right.

11 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: -- Ms. Punter take
12 care of your issue and answer any other questions
13 that you have.

14 MS. FLAMER: All right. But I'm going
15 to stay. I'm going to see what you all are doing
16 with the Section 8 because I want to find out where
17 we stand.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you.

19 MS. FLAMER: All right.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Detrice Belt? Ms.
21 Belt?

22 MS. BELT: Okay, sorry.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No, go right ahead.

2 MS. BELT: Hello. My name is Detrice
3 Belt. I'm a former Barry Farm resident and
4 president of the Barry Farm Tenants and Allies
5 Association.

6 On April 9th, 2019, the BFTAA filed an
7 application with the Historic Preservation Office
8 of Washington, D.C. to designate the site of the
9 Barry Farm dwellings as a historic landmark.
10 Barry Farm was more than a public housing project.
11 It was home to civil rights leaders and talented
12 athletes and sparked social movements that shaped
13 the history of Washington, D.C. We cannot and will
14 not allow that history to be swept away with the
15 rubble that used to be our homes.

16 Additionally, as we have stated
17 numerous times, we want to preserve the look and
18 feel of Barry Farm. This is more than a cosmetic
19 request. The design of Barry Farm was innovated
20 and intentional. The large outdoor community
21 areas, the inclusion of spacious townhomes, and the
22 strategic and minimum use of cross streets was

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1 intended to avoid blight, help families remain
2 physically and emotionally healthy, and encourage
3 socialization between neighbors.

4 These design elements nurtured the
5 community that produced Emily Edmondson, Frederick
6 Douglas Jr., the Junkyard Band, and many others.
7 We want to protect and continue that legacy at Ward
8 8 at the original footprint.

9 It is our hope that the hearing and
10 public participation that will follow the filing
11 of this application will serve as an opportunity
12 for DCHA, POAH, New Communities, and the current
13 and former residents of Barry Farm to discuss the
14 future of redevelopment at the property.

15 The BFTAA and community members have
16 engaged an architect and other professionals to
17 help develop a viable alternative plan that
18 includes the design elements I've discussed above.
19 Barry Farm represents an opportunity for the
20 District of Columbia to get redevelopment right,
21 to build something that is truly beneficial to the
22 residents who have endured deplorable conditions,

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1 to really listen to residents and incorporate their
2 ideas, and to build something with character,
3 substance, and benefits beyond the bottom line.

4 To that end, we request that you meet
5 with us in the coming week to discuss seriously
6 considering our alternate plan. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You're welcome. So
8 yes, so we'd be happy to meet with you. Well, I
9 know the Executive Director. I'd love to be in
10 that meeting too. So just coordinate with him.
11 Thank you so much for your time.

12 MR. GARRETT: And I just received the
13 document on Monday.

14 MS. BELT: Okay.

15 MR. GARRETT: So I have it. I just
16 haven't had an opportunity to look at it.

17 MS. BELT: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Terry Williams?

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I'd like to ask
20 if we've given any consideration to a different
21 path on Barry Farm. I've asked, I think, at very
22 Board meeting.

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1 MR. GARRETT: We're discussing it on
2 Friday. I have a meeting with POAH.

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. So --

4 MR. GARRETT: An alternative plan for
5 how to phase or number of units is going to be
6 discussed.

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I just want
9 to just add one comment, and Ms. Belt has helped.
10 Because when you were saying the Junkyard Band, are
11 you speaking of the present members or are you going
12 to include all of the members? Because the
13 original members of the Junkyard Band, there's not
14 too many of them. They're still there, but they
15 still accommodate.

16 And I'm going to be honest. I have a
17 self-interest in the Junkyard Band. My brother
18 was one of the managers. And I'm glad that you're
19 recognizing Stevens Road and the Commissioner
20 Farrell (phonetic) who was on this Board who
21 allowed the Junkyard Band to begin to play in her
22 yard up on Stevens Road.

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1 So I commend you and really appreciate
2 the fact that you're including all of this history.
3 Thank you so much.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you,
5 Commissioner. Gregory Williams? Paulette
6 Matthews?

7 MS. MATTHEWS: Hello, everybody.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Hello, Ms. Matthews.

9 MS. MATTHEWS: My name is Paulette
10 Matthews. I'm a native Washingtonian and I'm also
11 the vice president of the Barry Farms Tenant Allies
12 Association.

13 The last couple of times I've been here,
14 I keep asking what's going on with Barry Farms.
15 That's still the question, and I seem not get any
16 answers. And I just heard you, Mr. Garrett, say
17 that you're getting ready to meet with POAH and you
18 all going to talk. But we won't be in the room.

19 So when we are in the rooms and even when
20 we come to these meetings every month and you all
21 have resolutions and all these different things
22 that you all have, it still should be brought up

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1 about Barry Farm. Because Barry Farms is still a
2 public housing development. And we cannot just
3 keep letting this go. When we ride past our house
4 or come to our neighborhoods and we start seeing
5 stuff being torn down and we have no clue of what's
6 going on.

7 I live right now in Kelly Miller. And
8 when I moved there, to be honest with you, at one
9 point, I didn't know whether I wanted to unpack my
10 boxes or not. Everybody looks at Barry Farms as
11 being a place where there was a lot of gunshots,
12 this, that, and the other. I physically thought
13 somebody was downstairs in my living room shooting.
14 And it woke me up out of my sleep.

15 But that's not really why I'm here.
16 I'm here because we need to be informed. At the
17 same time they had all of those meetings that they
18 had, we took them to court, then they came back.
19 And the meeting protocol was the same. They can
20 sit up there and say, we said this and that and the
21 third, and this is what the residents want. The
22 residents didn't even want the blueprint that you

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1 all show on your all website.

2 I don't even understand why that's on
3 the website because nothing is finalized. And it
4 gives people false hope or having people think that
5 it's a wrap, it's a done deal. Why are you all
6 still fighting? But we're going to keep fighting
7 because you know why. These practices need to be
8 changed. Because while you all sitting there
9 making money, moves, and being time effective with
10 this, that, and the other, you are destroying a lot
11 of people's lives.

12 Then I don't understand how we're out
13 here doing more harm than we are helping people
14 because I live in a community where I don't even
15 own a car now. But when my friends or family come
16 there, they're trying to figure out whether they're
17 going to get ticketed or towed. And I stood
18 outside. I don't even have to go outside. I can
19 look out my window and see all this available
20 parking space.

21 And when I inquired about it, it was
22 said, I have to go to my neighborhood police.

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1 Well, maybe I should be more diligent, but I really
2 don't even know who they are. And then why should
3 I? This is right outside my -- I can look out there
4 and I can see it. So what does the Metropolitan
5 Police have to do about it when you sitting there
6 and that alley is adjacent where all of these
7 parking spaces?

8 You've got a senior building down here
9 with some parking spaces, and then you've got an
10 alley where there's driveway spaces. And only
11 because if you have a car, you get a parking pass.
12 I don't that that's fair. I think that that's
13 something should've been told to me when I came,
14 not that that would've -- it might've made a
15 difference or might not have made one. But I
16 would've known. When we move into these
17 developments, again, we do pay rent. But at the
18 same time, there's certain things that you should
19 let the individuals know who's moving into the
20 community.

21 And another thing before I go, you all
22 have a police chief. Every month, he should make

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1 some type of -- come up here and say something
2 because I don't know whether you all are out of the
3 loop or not about the crime that goes on in your
4 all developments. But I think that that's
5 something that needs to be brought to the table.
6 That's just a suggestion.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Paulette, you
8 suggested that before --

9 MS. MATTHEWS: Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: -- a couple of times.
11 And I think it's a worthy suggestion. How do we
12 report crime incidents at all happening on our
13 properties?

14 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: The same
15 way we do it in operation.

16 MR. GARRETT: It's actually in our
17 monthly Board report.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yeah, but not to the
19 Board, to the public.

20 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Well, we
21 can do it to the public the same way we do it in
22 operation.

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1 MR. GARRETT: We can generate the
2 dashboard for the public to see each month.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So for folks who
4 don't necessarily go on the web every day?

5 MR. GARRETT: We can figure out a hard
6 copy or another way to do it.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Here's my
8 --

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can we just finish
10 one conversation at a time, please.

11 MR. GARRETT: I'm just saying, Mr.
12 Chairman. We can figure out a way to distribute
13 that information to the public in some way, shape,
14 or form.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Great. So
16 Paulette, so I think if you come up here next month
17 and ask me the same question and someone on the
18 staff isn't doing their job. But the Director just
19 promised and you heard him. But you may have been
20 distracted by Commissioner Vann-Ghasri.

21 MS. MATTHEWS: Yes, I was trying to get
22 her attention.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: But he is saying that
2 he'll make that information publicly available as
3 soon as possible.

4 MS. MATTHEWS: I have another
5 question.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Sure.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Wait a
8 minute. Let me say something real quick. And on
9 that recommendation for the record, if you're going
10 to have a Board of Commissioners meeting, the same
11 diagram that you get in operation that tell you
12 every property where there was a burglary, where
13 somebody got raped, it's called Xerox it. Put it
14 on the table like I do the outreach. Every
15 resident that come here would get one. And then
16 the other ones, put them down all through the lobby.
17 Let's not make outreach that difficult.

18 Because if we love each other, and like
19 the same we talk about who is with who and who man
20 is in who house, why can't I say, Paulette, let me
21 copy this for you because this is what's going on
22 in your neighborhood. Because word of mouth is

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1 still the best way to go.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you,
3 Commissioner Vann-Ghasri. You had another
4 question.

5 MS. MATTHEWS: I have a concern really.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Concern?

7 MS. MATTHEWS: And it's actually about
8 the cameras that are spread throughout. I don't
9 have a problem with the cameras. I just want to
10 know do the cameras actually work. Because you can
11 put cameras out there for a deterrent. For me, I
12 need to see a blinking light or something because
13 there's been a situation where as though if the
14 cameras worked, there would've been no need to post
15 nothing on a lamppost to try to find out who anybody
16 was or when it was at. So that's where I have a
17 problem with that.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good question.

19 MS. MATTHEWS: I honestly think that
20 it's a deterrent and that's not fair to the
21 residents. The parking situation is not fair,
22 having to pay, your car getting towed and stuff and

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1 you live there. The cameras, the fake out to make
2 you think that it work but actually it don't.
3 Like, that's a lot of taxpayer's money, and we are
4 taxpayers too. Poor or low income, whatever you
5 want to call us, and we still pay 30 percent of our
6 rent.

7 But at the beginning of the day, we're
8 human and we have to understand and realize that
9 you have to treat people accordingly and stop
10 trying to fake people out. Because when it hit the
11 fan, like them cameras that catch you with the
12 tickets and they send it to your house, 250, they
13 get them. But do those cameras really work? And
14 I'm sure they maintenance them 24-7.

15 So it has me concerned about the cameras
16 that we see how do we actually know that they're
17 physically doing something. Because when the MPD
18 or the D.C. Housing Authority come through, do we
19 get a blank screen or what do we get? Or whether
20 you're going to get the undetermined, just like
21 fires are undetermined. You have special people
22 that go in there and they're inspectors. And at

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1 the end of the day, after doing all their
2 investigation, it's undetermined.

3 We can't keep having this, paying out
4 this money. And at the end of the day, people's
5 lives are still lost under undetermined or that
6 camera wasn't working.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So I don't expect to
8 answer now. But could you let us know at some point
9 in time how do we maintain our cameras? How do we
10 verify their operations? So that in the
11 unfortunate event that Paulette is referring to,
12 we're able to use that information, either for real
13 time or forensic purposes. But just keep that in
14 mind. Thank you so much.

15 MS. MATTHEWS: One more. I'm sorry.
16 But then again, I'm not because there's so much to
17 be going on. And this townhall meeting that you
18 speak of, Mr. Garrett, in all these townhall
19 meetings, it's also funny how we can figure out,
20 like you all say throughout the years, the places
21 are deplorable. But what really blows me is the
22 fact that they did inspections.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes.

2 MS. MATTHEWS: Inspections on a
3 regular basis. And I get so sick and tired of
4 hearing the script get flipped on us because you
5 all come in. You all inspect the places.
6 Sometimes, I'll be trying to figure out did
7 somebody -- was there really an inspector and
8 really do they really have the credentials.

9 But they come in and they see these
10 things and they patch it up and things get worse.
11 It was several houses that I've been in throughout
12 the property of D.C. Authority where I've seen
13 ceilings where you could see the 4x4s or whatever
14 that is up there or pipes or something. And
15 they've been living in those conditions for a
16 while.

17 So to say going to these townhall
18 meetings -- and Ms. Aquarius, the language. I've
19 been coming for a while, and I'm still confused
20 about the language. I think even if I took a class
21 that the language would not be understood or
22 whatever the case may be. Because what I do know

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1 is that I actually have -- I've lived through it
2 which has been an experience. I have done a lot
3 of outreach. A lot of people talk to me. I've
4 seen it with my own naked eye.

5 So to know that it got to get torn down.
6 Like, yeah, we come and tell it, yes, they will tear
7 it down. But the real deal was it probably
8 should've been torn down or they should've had the
9 proper -- used the proper thing to not cheat stuff.
10 Because I can see how when you're at a market rate
11 rent, your house, they're going to get the final
12 number. It's going to be different. I mean,
13 that's just how it goes. And we all know this.

14 And then this makes a community a new
15 community. You're taking the neighborhoods away.
16 For the community, it's no more unity in that
17 community because you've already made a division.
18 Even though you think that you are putting market
19 rate to pay off the bill or whatever you're trying
20 to do, you're starting confusion.

21 We lived in the District of Columbia
22 basically -- I know I have, born and raised -- all

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1 my life. I've seen the changes. Yes, I lived in
2 Maryland, North Carolina, places like that. I've
3 seen the changes. But what I never would've
4 expected, that I would get kicked out of a place
5 in which I lived.

6 And that everybody is welcome and I
7 don't care who comes because I believe God made us
8 all different. We're supposed to be here. But
9 when we get to the point where we kick the residents
10 out from where they are and other people come in
11 and they look at us like we're aliens. And we get
12 pushed to the side, and our laws and stuff is
13 changing. We can't turn the TV up just a little
14 bit because -- you hear me. And then you want to
15 tell people they can't smoke cigarettes.

16 Because I remember the man had his own
17 house and the people -- the white people next door.
18 So I got to call the color, but it is what it is.
19 They was renovating their house. They had a
20 two-year-old child. They called in. The man went
21 to jail because he refused to stop smoking because
22 he was living there way before they was living

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1 there. But you know how things go. Skin and money
2 get a whole lot of things, and we get pushed aside.

3 And that doesn't make any sense because
4 the laws have already been designed to keep us down.
5 As long as you all sit on the Board and keep agreeing
6 to it and don't buck it like the advocaters do,
7 we're going to keep going around this
8 merry-go-round. That's not fair for all human
9 life.

10 And you all need to really do something
11 and need to change the language. She shouldn't
12 have to learn the language. We're living this.
13 And the language needs to be changed within the
14 realms of these laws and these things that you all
15 keep pushing. They do harm to other people.

16 You all, we got people living a silent
17 death. You worrying about cigarette smoke. You
18 got somebody living somewhere that got a lot of mold
19 and some more stuff going on which is triggering
20 asthma and all these other reasons why people
21 getting sick. They can't see it. But if I want
22 to smoke a cigarette. Like, I'm confused now. I

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1 got to smoke a cigarette down the alley because I
2 still got that issue, stress. I'm stressed out.
3 I don't drink alcohol. I smoke cigarettes.

4 I don't even know if I walk down the
5 alley that they say that the police supposed to --
6 you going for a parking space at. If it's okay
7 because they say that belong to the Metropolitan
8 Police. And the Metropolitan Police don't have no
9 problem with me walking down the alley with a
10 cigarette. But then I see a sign that say right
11 there, no smoking.

12 So I'm confused. So can somebody
13 please also help me distinguish whether I'm right
14 and wrong when I come outside and walk down the
15 alley.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yeah, I don't know.
17 Is Ken or Ed in here? They can actually -- Ed Payne
18 or Ken Slaughter, either of them, don't go away.
19 Thank you so much.

20 MS. MATTHEWS: Mr. Garrett, I still
21 want to know the updates, even though I'm walking
22 away, what's going on with Barry Farms.

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1 MR. GARRETT: We're going to be meeting
2 on it on Friday, I'm sorry, with POAH. I'm meeting
3 with POAH on --

4 MS. MATTHEWS: You're meeting with
5 POAH.

6 MR. GARRETT: And then we're going to
7 -- but you heard me also tell Ms. Belt that we were
8 going to be meeting with the Tenant Allies
9 Association -- the Barry Farms Tenant --

10 MS. MATTHEWS: Oh, after?

11 MR. GARRETT: Yeah, afterwards --

12 MS. MATTHEWS: Do you happen to know --

13 MR. GARRETT: -- to discuss --

14 MS. MATTHEWS: -- when it will be
15 because I might be out of town. I don't know.

16 MR. GARRETT: No, we didn't set the
17 date for it. I just got the proposal on Monday.

18 MS. MATTHEWS: Okay.

19 MR. GARRETT: Okay.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Gary Mercer?
21 Welcome, Mr. Mercer.

22 MR. MERCER: Good afternoon, Mr.

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1 Garrett and the Commission. My name is Gary
2 Mercer. I first would like to thank you all for
3 having this meeting with the residents of D.C.
4 Housing Authority. And without delay, I would
5 like to --

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay. Get up closer
7 to --

8 MR. MERCER: -- I would like to request
9 -- I want to request that DCHA replace the cabinets
10 inside my apartments. The cabinets have mildew,
11 broken. It holds a horrible, foul odor. The mice
12 has driven holes throughout the cabinets.

13 Second, my apartment walls are filthy
14 are stained where the water pipes are sweating and
15 has discoloration on the walls and the ceilings.
16 Plaster from the rain from the windows has caused
17 mold.

18 Third, my floors are filthy and ugly
19 because of the old wax that I cannot clean or remove
20 without a buffer and the manpower labor.

21 I have been living in D.C. housing
22 property since -- as a leased client since 2003

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1 where I was transferred from Judiciary House out
2 of efficiency there into a two bedroom apartment
3 in 2006. My daughters have grown up and they have
4 moved out and I'm divorced. And I no longer need
5 a one bedroom apartment. I've been trying to --
6 I mean, I no longer need a two bedroom apartment.
7 I've been trying to move out or get a transfer into
8 a one bedroom apartment.

9 I am both physically and mentally
10 handicapped as documented by several D.C.
11 government and federal government agencies. I may
12 look young, but I'm 56 years old. My mind and body
13 cannot do all the hard labor anymore, especially
14 since I'm taking a lot of medication.

15 My apartment amenities, cabinets,
16 floors, and walls are such an eyesore that it
17 aggravates my mental health and makes me more
18 depressed and sicker. But my social worker from
19 DBH, Department of Behavioral Health, visited and
20 inspected my apartment. She noted the rodent
21 infestation and few code violations.

22 I requested a transfer. But since I

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1 owe over 13,000 dollars allegedly, back rent, DCH
2 had not allowed me to transfer or to transfer into
3 a remodeled or newer apartment and has only placed
4 my name on a waiting list of the DH office downtown.

5 Also requested financial aid through
6 ERAP, but DC Housing Authority -- I mean, the DC
7 Human Services office denied my application over
8 three times. I once tried to paint my own
9 apartment by myself, but I was not able to complete
10 the strenuous job of getting it completed or
11 painted completely. I tried to strip my apartment
12 floors, but was unable to complete the job because
13 I was unable to use a buffer machine.

14 These are my complaints that I would
15 appreciate the Commission would address as my
16 request has fallen on deaf ears. But I wrote this
17 letter earlier today to address the Commission.

18 But before I got to read it to you all,
19 Mr. Little in his office came up to my apartment
20 and he took pictures of the cabinets and promised
21 me that they will address my issue, the walls, paint
22 the walls, do the floors, and repair the cabinets

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1 or replace the cabinets which I'm thankful.

2 I also want to thank 203, Greenleaf,
3 mid-rise family unit, and DHS for coming in our
4 building and painting the walls. Back in March,
5 I mailed to Mr. Garrett's office a complaint
6 letter. I listed about 40 different complaints
7 about 203, how dirty the walls were and that it need
8 -- there were walls in the building that needed
9 painting.

10 That was accomplished and the apartment
11 was upgraded somewhat. I just can't say I'm taking
12 it for granted that you all are not trying to
13 improve 203, the family dwelling. You all are
14 doing a good effort -- making a good effort.
15 Elevators need to be fixed real bad. The elevators
16 break down too often and is unsafe for the people
17 in wheelchairs and the seniors that are in that
18 building, 203, Greenleaf.

19 I think since I've been here, like, 13
20 years, Greenleaf, since Dr. -- I mean, Mr. Garrett
21 has come aboard, Greenleaf family dwelling has come
22 a long way. I wear this shirt. I do not work for

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1 Department of Housing -- Housing Authority. But
2 I was involved with the University of District of
3 Columbia Family Enhancement Center which is an
4 asset to public housing community.

5 And I attended a course -- I completed
6 a course for hospitality and customer service.
7 And this is a valuable asset that I'm proud and
8 happy that the government had sponsored and
9 contributed to this building right here where we're
10 sitting all in. And I want you all -- I appreciate
11 if you all continue to fund it because it's useful
12 in helping the residents obtain jobs.

13 Immediately after I completed my
14 training, I obtained a job at Harris Teeter's. And
15 I worked there a couple months before my arthritis
16 kicked in and my sore foot kicked in. And I had
17 to let the job go.

18 But the important thing is the training
19 that I received and other people receive through
20 the Enhancement Center and the computer lab and the
21 professors, instructors, facilitators that the
22 University of District of Columbia provide to the

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1 residents of public housing.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thanks for sharing,
3 Mr. Mercer.

4 MR. MERCER: Say again?

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I said thanks so much
6 for sharing that with us. And I'm going to ask you
7 to talk to Mr. Larry Williams -- Larry, could raise
8 your hand -- to make sure that the issues that you
9 pointed out in your apartment are addressed.
10 Thank you so much.

11 MR. MYERS: Appreciate your time.
12 Thanks for coming out.

13 MR. GARRETT: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You're welcome.
15 Rhonda Edwards-Hines? I did see Rhonda.

16 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Good afternoon.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon.
18 Welcome.

19 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: My name is Rhonda
20 Edwards-Hines. I'm the current --

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Rhonda, can you
22 bring the mic closer to you so we can hear?

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1 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: I cannot speak
2 that loud because --

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: All right. If you
4 can bring the mic a little closer.

5 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: -- I'm just
6 getting over double pneumonia. Can you hear me
7 now?

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We can hear you now,
9 yeah.

10 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay. I can't
11 speak that loud because I'm just getting over
12 double pneumonia. That's why you guys haven't
13 seen me. So I'm here on several issues, but my main
14 issue is that we just had an ANC meeting --
15 community meeting on the 3rd of this month where
16 POAH, the developer for Barry Farms, and some of
17 the staff from DCHA was present. And they was
18 asking for approval for a permit to do construction
19 on something, a road for a driveway for underground
20 parking.

21 With that being said, what transpired
22 in that meeting was that one of DCHA staff members,

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1 Kerry Smyser -- am I saying her name correctly?
2 One of the Commissioners asked her about the
3 relocation, the return for some of Barry Farm
4 residents.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: That was an
6 ANC commissioner, correct?

7 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Yes, that was at
8 our monthly meeting on April the 3rd. And Ms.
9 Smyser stated, well, they wanted to know was the
10 residents coming back? Was they guaranteed to
11 come back? She made a statement saying, no one has
12 been guaranteed to come back. No one has been
13 approved to come back. And I'm looking at you, Mr.
14 Garrett, because I know you ain't heard this
15 because this redevelopment been going on now since
16 2000. But on the record, they want to say 2005.
17 But I've been there since 2000 when we first was
18 meeting at Matthews Memorial. I'm not sure the
19 number of the resolution even is, Resolution 16 --

20 MR. GARRETT: 16-06.

21 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: -- or 17. Huh?

22 MR. GARRETT: 16-06.

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1 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay, thank you.
2 That stated that the 344 residents that was
3 remaining on the property have a right to return.
4 Okay. So it's a miscommunication somewhere there.
5 And I'm just informing you that it's an uproar and
6 I'm not going to stand for it. It was totally
7 disrespectful because my colleagues was looking at
8 me to what's going on. So I informed them that I
9 was going to come here to the hearing and inform
10 you all of what had transpired at that meeting.

11 MR. GARRETT: Thank you. Ms. Hines,
12 just to -- I know you have some other issues. But
13 we stand by 16-06. There is no other option for
14 us. That's what we're going to follow.

15 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Yeah, I know this.
16 But I just wanted to bring it to the Board's
17 attention what was brung to my Commission. And so
18 with that being said, the AC Commission is
19 requesting for DCHA Executive Director Tyrone
20 Garrett and the rest of the 7 -- I mean, 12 -- it's
21 12 Commissioner, am I correct -- to come to our
22 meeting and we will be glad to correspond with you

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1 guys' schedule so you can come out. Because that's
2 a real big issue that our Commission has.

3 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I would
4 love to be present a Ward 8 meeting.

5 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: When is your next
7 meeting?

8 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Our next meeting
9 is in May, but that is already full. So we're
10 aiming for either June or July. And I don't know
11 if you guys take -- I know you don't take your break
12 until August or September.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: August, yeah.

14 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Because that's --
15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So just send us the
17 dates and we'll make either June or July work.

18 MR. GARRETT: Just send it to Shanita,
19 please.

20 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay.

21 MR. GARRETT: Send the date to Shanita.

22 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay, Shanita. I

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1 don't have Shanita's information.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Shanita, could you
3 raise your hand?

4 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: I know who Shanita
5 is.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay.

7 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: And she probably
8 want to hit me in the back of my head right now
9 because I said that.

10 MR. GARRETT: She'll get you her
11 information.

12 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: I had come in front
13 of the Board on the request to speak. I said an
14 update of what I requested in October of last year
15 about the incident that I was having. I know the
16 personnel has changed, but I want to state this.
17 Everyone, I hear you all when I do come -- I only
18 missed two because I've been sick -- that you give
19 awards out to different individual staff members.

20 I'm requesting that you look into Ms.
21 Punter because she has gone beyond the call of duty
22 because of the things that's happening to me on the

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1 property that I have been relocated to. She calls
2 me Saturdays and Sundays to see how I'm doing. I
3 don't get enough sleep. I'm still up. She would
4 text me at 1:00 o'clock in the morning to say, are
5 you resting? I know you up.

6 She cares. She genuinely cares. And
7 I'm bring this to your attention, Mr. Garrett,
8 because these are the things that you don't know
9 that she do. Okay.

10 And now I know there's been a personnel
11 change, and Mr. Larry Williams has taken over that
12 role. And I just spoken to him too. Ms. Punter
13 have updated him of what the issue were -- I mean,
14 is. And it's still going on as of today. But Mr.
15 Williams asked me to respectfully give him a chance
16 to take care of the issue before I address it to
17 the Board.

18 So I'm going to do that, but I just
19 wanted you to know personally, as you oversee all
20 your personnel for DCHA that Ms. Punter has gone
21 beyond the call.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We appreciate

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1 hearing that. Thank you.

2 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Ms. Hines. I
3 appreciate it. Thank you.

4 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay. And as far
5 as the historical piece for Barry Farms, I have come
6 to the Board several times last year and years
7 before that because asking to remember the history
8 of Barry Farms.

9 And I believe this is the 153rd year
10 thanks to the information from Ms. Belt and Ms.
11 Matthews informing me. We had 150th ceremony at
12 Barry Farms on Barry Farms day. And I invited the
13 staff to come and only two people came. And that
14 was Ms. Watson which was our property manager and
15 Mr. Ron Friday came. It is so much historical --
16 I can't even think right now.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Information?

18 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Reservations on
19 Barry Farms proper that I don't want to, myself,
20 for the Board to forget about. And as far as these
21 meetings that you're having with POAH, I feel that
22 I'm also the current resident council president of

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1 Barry Farms. And I called to get a response
2 because I'm trying to reach out to the residents,
3 the ones that I don't have in my database. How do
4 I do that? Because they elected me to govern over
5 them just as well as they are my constituents as
6 I am their ANC commissioner.

7 So we need to -- I'm looking for the
8 residents that have been relocated to be informed
9 of what's going on, on the property. And when you
10 have meetings with the Tenants and Allies, why no
11 one is willing to meet with me as the property
12 manager -- I mean, the property president -- the
13 president of resident council.

14 MR. GARRETT: I wasn't excluding you.
15 Just Tenants and Allies came up. So we were
16 talking about --

17 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: No, this is not the
18 first time.

19 MR. GARRETT: Okay. But I haven't had
20 any meetings with Tenants and Allies at all. If
21 I meet with them, this will be the first time. And
22 I don't have a problem inviting you to that meeting

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1 also at the same time. That's fine. Once we set
2 a date, you're more than welcome to attend.

3 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay. I just want
4 to be not only kept in the loop. But I want to be
5 informed that someone works with me with informing
6 the residents. Because I was told that I can't be
7 given a call to reach out to the residents. But
8 I need someone that's on DC staff -- DCHA staff to
9 work with me to inform the residents. So I'm
10 working on putting a newsletter out to update those
11 residents. So I will need someone on your staff
12 --

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Who can she work
14 with?

15 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: -- to assist me
16 with reaching out to --

17 MR. GARRETT: We'll figure out who it
18 should be. Off the top of my head --

19 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Ron Friday.

20 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: That's the
21 duties and responsibility -- one of the things --
22 whether you understand it or not, your navigator

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1 is just what a navigator is. So one of the things
2 I recommend is that before Larry Williams leave --
3 and I chair the Resident Service's Resident
4 Initiative Committee.

5 So one thing that I think that we need,
6 all the resident council presidents and those who
7 are doing business with the Office of Resident
8 Service, they need to know the duties and the
9 responsibilities of the navigator. Because if you
10 don't have -- if the resident council -- if your
11 board don't know what the navigator going to do or
12 supposed to do, how are you going to hold him or
13 her responsible?

14 One of their duties is to make those --
15 they're your secretary. They're your PR person.
16 They're your grant writer or they can make
17 reference to you where to get a grant from there.
18 Just what it says, I navigate you. And that's the
19 duties and responsibilities and why you got a
20 navigator and why they're out in the public instead
21 of coming back and sitting at a desk because our
22 committee heard you, especially Commissioner

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1 Slover who's on that committee. He's a co-chair.

2 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Also -- wait a
3 minute. Before you want to close me out --

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No, I'm just saying
5 in response to -- so Mr. Garrett was going to find
6 the right person for you to talk with so you can
7 get information out as you requested.

8 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay. And also,
9 because I haven't removed the stuff from the
10 resident council office on the property. But my
11 understanding is that POAH was supposed to come and
12 pack it up and put it in storage until we returned
13 back. Who do I need to work with? Is that my
14 navigator or the new --

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I think Ms. Punter.

16 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: -- Mr. Harris of
17 Resident Services?

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Punter.

19 MR. GARRETT: Well, you know what?
20 Let's --

21 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Huh?

22 MR. GARRETT: Mr. Chair, just give me

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1 a minute.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Oh, sorry, yeah.

3 MR. GARRETT: I'm going to let Brian
4 from ORS, Brian Harris in the back.

5 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Yes, Mr. Harris,
6 the new --

7 MR. GARRETT: So talk to him, and we'll
8 navigate through the whole entire process. Okay?

9 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay. And with
10 that being said, when you changed the protocol of
11 your personnel, understand please inform even the
12 leadership.

13 MR. GARRETT: It's only been two days.
14 So we're trying to get it together and know exactly
15 where everyone would be and what chairs everyone
16 would actually be sitting in. And that hasn't been
17 done yet.

18 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Well, Ms. Punter
19 --

20 (Simultaneous speaking.)

21 MR. GARRETT: Okay. We're getting
22 into personnel decisions, so --

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1 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: See, because I'm
2 just -- right. You are the Executive Director.

3 MR. GARRETT: So I made some decisions,
4 and I need to disseminate that information and
5 actually make some final decisions on some other
6 people.

7 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay.

8 MR. GARRETT: So if everyone would just
9 give me a moment and an opportunity to do that.

10 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: But see -- and I
11 respect that. But please respect where I'm at with
12 this is that this project been going on for years.
13 So they want me to have my stuff out by the 26th.
14 I'm not going to do no yard sale and I don't want
15 it to be sitting in your storage.

16 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am. So we'll
17 work on that right away.

18 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: So just talk to Mr.
19 Harris?

20 MR. GARRETT: Yes, yes ma'am.

21 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thanks, Ms. Rhonda.

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1 MS. EDWARDS-HINES: Okay. Thank you,
2 guys.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Is Debra Frazier
4 still here? Debra, I'm letting you go twice today.
5 But this time, I'm going to hold you to your time
6 limit. Don't give them eyes.

7 MS. FRAZIER: Everybody else speak two
8 times, not holding to your time line. But that's
9 okay. I'm Debra Frazier, returning resident of
10 Arthur Capper-Carrollsborg, housing activist.
11 There questions and then three comments. One,
12 where's my Housing Choice Voucher Commissioner?

13 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Right here.

14 MS. FRAZIER: On behalf of other
15 Housing Choice Voucher participants, at least 20
16 that I've talked to, please, one, call the list and
17 make sure you have emails and you're reaching out
18 to all 11,000 voucher holders.

19 Secondly, would you please convene
20 sooner rather than later. Let's give you a
21 timeline, within the next two or three months. A
22 meeting face to face for voucher holders to see you

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1 and know you. That's significant.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Great idea.

3 MS. FRAZIER: Okay. You're going to
4 do that?

5 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Yes.

6 MS. FRAZIER: All right. Secondly --
7 you threw me all off. Oh, Director Garrett.

8 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am.

9 MS. FRAZIER: You've talked very
10 eloquently about townhalls and meetings and things
11 you're going to do.

12 MR. GARRETT: Yes ma'am.

13 MS. FRAZIER: Is there a time? Is
14 there a proposed timeline for when these meetings
15 will begin, where they will begin, and how you'll
16 do outreach for the folks? Is there a proposed
17 timeline for that?

18 MR. GARRETT: We actually want to start
19 within the next two weeks. But I just to let
20 everyone also know that we did hire -- well, we
21 didn't hire. We put out a proposal for some
22 assistance from a consultant group. We haven't

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1 selected that information or that group yet. But
2 they're helping us put together a clear path for
3 engaging the community and setting up the
4 stakeholder meetings for us.

5 So we won't be doing this alone.
6 Normally, we go out and do our townhall meetings
7 independently. My office sets them up. But this
8 time, we're going to do it differently,
9 understanding what we need to do and how we need
10 to engage everyone to ensure everyone feels that
11 they've been included. We're going to use an
12 outside group to assist us.

13 MS. FRAZIER: Okay. Thirdly, oh, on
14 the staffing comments now. On staffing, I bring
15 attention to the Board that a lot of you all have
16 been here longer -- you've probably been through
17 the third or fourth -- at least the third Director
18 of Housing Authority.

19 I caution you as an organization and an
20 entity that organizational memory and experience
21 lies in folks who have been in these positions for
22 a long time. Understanding that the shuffle, they

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1 slide -- they let you slide in a shuffle among
2 management and people in positions of leadership
3 at the Housing Authority. That is troubling, and
4 it ought to be troubling to each one of you.

5 Because each person that is relieved,
6 fired, removed, pushed out from this Authority, you
7 lose some organizational memory. You lose
8 experience. And when new people are either
9 brought in on a position they haven't been in before
10 or shifting to some other places, we are the
11 residents. We are the ones who suffer.

12 So if there's a new person in Resident
13 Services who can't find a resident if they fell over
14 them, that's a problem. So please pay attention
15 to the staffing and the staffing shuffle. And we
16 just heard you say, Mr. Garrett, that you will be
17 letting folks know, perhaps on the -- what's that
18 thing -- on the website and maybe in a written piece
19 at the next Board of Commissioners meeting who are
20 people in these new positions and what positions
21 they're in because this is seriously troubling.

22 Third comment, advocates with

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1 understanding the advocate community and those
2 individuals who speak out and on behalf of
3 residents. Advocates are not adversaries. Why
4 we are on the ground sharing information by word
5 of mouth, by flyer, by townhalls to residents who
6 come to us because they trust us. People in this
7 room trust each other. They don't trust you and
8 rightfully so.

9 So advocates are not your adversaries.
10 We are hoping to get out better information and
11 maybe work with you. But understand the trust
12 levels are not there. We will always, have always
13 been on the ground representing, supporting
14 residents. Because as far as this room is full,
15 it's ten times as many people who would love to be
16 here and share their information but have been
17 coming to a Board of Commissioners meeting without
18 any results. So advocates are willing to work with
19 you, but we are not adversaries.

20 Third, some people from Greenleaf have
21 listed it. You talked Board a couple of months ago
22 about all of the units in your public housing

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1 inventory that you discovered needed intense
2 repair. Is Greenleaf on that list? I'll wait.

3 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Under your
4 new director --

5 MR. GARRETT: Wow, I don't want to --
6 well, I can say this. We've had previous meetings,
7 and there is a Greenleaf master plan already for
8 redevelopment, correct?

9 MS. FRAZIER: As far as I know, yes.

10 MR. GARRETT: I think we're still
11 looking at that plan as being something that we want
12 to follow through on.

13 MS. FRAZIER: Which is separate from
14 the repositioning?

15 MR. GARRETT: It could be included.

16 MS. FRAZIER: You all hear that, right?
17 Okay. Lastly, for real, though. You mentioned,
18 Director Garrett, that you will not be -- that this
19 Authority will not be making any steps towards the
20 repositioning until you begin to engage the
21 community in your townhome meetings.

22 MR. GARRETT: Correct.

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1 MS. FRAZIER: So I don't need to ask,
2 did you file a demo-dispo thing at HUD? Because
3 you haven't done that.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: It has to come to the
5 Board first. You would know.

6 MR. GARRETT: It has to come to the
7 Board first. So there would be a Board meeting in
8 reference to demo-dispo application or even a RAD
9 application that we might want to submit.

10 MS. FRAZIER: Any of that on your radar
11 for the upcoming months?

12 MR. GARRETT: Nothing new.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And you said that you
14 would be the last one?

15 MS. FRAZIER: Yeah.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You're a woman of
17 your word.

18 MS. FRAZIER: And it actually is, and
19 you all have almost answered my questions. Thank
20 you.

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And let me
22 say this. Under --

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Debra, take care.

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: --
3 Director Garrett's leadership, I want to caution
4 all new residents. Remember, he only been here for
5 approximately 15 months and something. Look how
6 many people he's been firing.

7 MS. FRAZIER: Well --

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Wait a
9 minute. Maybe he's firing them because of what
10 you're coming up here and saying and reading past
11 remarks that you have made about employees. And
12 maybe, maybe now that your personal feelings is now
13 removed from an employee, now you're back up here
14 wondering what happened. And I would caution us,
15 and I'm really serious. This is my last term being
16 the Commissioner up here. So I'm not losing
17 nothing.

18 We as residents must understand that we
19 are not a state. But you want to be one. And in
20 order to be a state, take off the bikinis and you
21 got to put on the underwears. And maybe Mr.
22 Garrett is one of those people putting on them

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1 underwears for you.

2 The city council done already told you
3 that the mayor didn't even know that the council
4 decided. They want to take back the Housing
5 Authority based on what? Word. Your words when
6 you go up there and you talk about it.

7 Now when you get what you asked for,
8 you're confused. When you become a state, you
9 better pay attention to this 206 women up there in
10 the Congress. I visited them yesterday. They're
11 real. They're not playing games. They don't know
12 nothing about the Congress and ain't nobody gave
13 them key. They there with a vision and a plan.

14 They sit together and they tutor and
15 learn the congressional records because that's a
16 new language. And we here in the District of
17 Columbia, you need to make up your mind. If you're
18 going to be a state and you agree of being a state,
19 think maybe what's happening if you get a mirror,
20 I can guarantee you this. It won't be Muriel who
21 would be having the Housing Authority.

22 So make a decision whether you want to

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1 be independent. Do you want to go back under the
2 mirror. Go home and research on your internets the
3 ones here that know how to ask questions and see
4 what the Housing Authority is doing. Don't come
5 up here and talk our Housing Authority out of not
6 ever having the Office of Resident Service because
7 no other Housing Authority have a Resident Service
8 like you do and every 38 new to work Housing
9 Authority don't even have what you have. And
10 everybody, the whole world is jealous of us.

11 So I'm going caution us. This don't
12 bring our personal feelings in here, we're mad with
13 our managers. Let's make sure our i's, our t's are
14 crossed. And now we ready to roll. And then
15 that's your job to make sure that we move with this
16 new 2019 movement. Not only yours, one D.C., LEDC,
17 WIN.

18 And I'm going to be honest with you. I
19 told the Director that WIN need to be at the table
20 too because I support WIN. And whether you know
21 or not, Fort Dupont was built by WIN. Now if you
22 want to start talking about how to reposition your

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1 communities. If you're already living in one
2 that's been repositioned, find out who
3 repositioned it, whatever is left, design yourself
4 what is left. Don't hate Shawn High (phonetic).
5 Use her as a model and follow her paperwork.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you,
7 Commissioner. Okay. So we're going to move to
8 our nonresidents. And unfortunately,
9 nonresidents, you don't have the luxury of extra
10 time that we give to residents. So you're going
11 to be held to a strict three minutes. So get your
12 thoughts together while we call you. So Daniel,
13 you're up front. You're up first. Okay. We'll
14 get back to you. Don't worry. No, go ahead,
15 Daniel.

16 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Good afternoon,
17 Board. I want to echo some of the sentiments that
18 have been said here by several residents, primarily
19 Ms. Frazier who just came up and who said, we are
20 not adversaries. We may have occasional
21 adversarial moments because we're trying to keep
22 you guys doing what residents want, right?

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1 So for example, we have been doing
2 outreach around what's happening. We feel like
3 residents don't have the luxury of time to wait
4 until the consultants are hired, until you all go
5 out there and talk to folks before they find out
6 what's happening.

7 So we have put out a flyer that says --
8 and I'll read it for you, and I know you guys got
9 a copy of this somehow. Your housing is at risk.
10 Is public housing at risk? Yes. The D.C. Housing
11 Authority plans to remove up to 2,500 units of
12 public housing from the public housing program.
13 Is that true? Yes. This could mean displacement,
14 loss of housing, and loss of tenants' rights.

15 We want folks to know their rights. We
16 had a meeting at Christ United Methodist Church
17 right over here by the Safeway here in Southwest
18 Saturday. It was a beautiful Saturday. And to be
19 honest, I was quite surprised that 25 residents
20 from the general public housing area here in
21 Southwest came to hear what was happening.

22 And our message really is to do your

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1 homework. Find out what's happening. Come to
2 this meeting. I see several people that were at
3 our meeting on Saturday here today, and I applaud
4 them for being involved in this process.

5 So while you guys have your
6 communication platform and what you're saying, and
7 it's a strong one. But please don't act like
8 you're taking the moral high road like you guys care
9 more about residents than anybody else when we've
10 been doing this work for years. I've been doing
11 it for a little bit of time. There's people who
12 have doing it way longer than myself.

13 So please know that we are trying to
14 work with residents so they are involved in this
15 process. Because up to now, there's been nothing
16 that has shown us you guys have their best interest
17 at hand. That could be wrong, but look at the
18 results of what has happened. We want to trust
19 you. We want to work with you. But know that
20 we're going to hold you accountable all the way.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thanks so much,
22 Daniel. Josh Baker?

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1 MR. BAKER: Hi, good afternoon.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon,
3 Josh.

4 MR. BAKER: My name is Josh Baker. I'm
5 the Director of Property Management with the E&G
6 Group. We manage affordable housing throughout
7 the District. And I wanted to talk about ask what
8 the plans are with the fairly abrupt leaving of Ron
9 McCoy as the Director of the Housing Choice Voucher
10 Program.

11 We have been working specifically with
12 Ron and other members of the Housing Authority
13 trying to come up with creative, new approaches to
14 maintain and create affordable housing throughout
15 the District. And Melissa Steele specifically has
16 met with Ron and other members of the Housing
17 Authority.

18 We and other members of the business
19 community are concerned about what the plans are
20 moving forward and if those ideas and plans that
21 were in the works, if they're going to continue.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Josh, very good

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1 question. I'm going to ask the Director to
2 respond.

3 MR. GARRETT: Yes, and Ms. Punter is
4 going to be meeting with those associations and
5 also the groups to make determinations and decide
6 and find out more about what's been going on. In
7 some issues, we always have to worry about whether
8 or not succession is appropriate. But I think we
9 have a solid plan. Ms. Punter is very talented.

10 She did handle housing authorities
11 throughout the region when she was with HUD who had
12 voucher programs. So this isn't new to her. The
13 program itself is not a new item. So she does have
14 a lot of experience. So you're getting someone who
15 knows the program and also is familiar with our
16 local rent supplement program at the same time.

17 MR. BAKER: Okay.

18 MR. GARRETT: So there is always going
19 to be some type of transition. But I think it's
20 going to be smooth. I don't think it's going to
21 be that bumpy a road. And she's going to make
22 herself available to everyone. And if there's any

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1 issues or problems, you can always bring to the
2 administration's attention. But I believe you're
3 in good hands.

4 MR. BAKER: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And sir,
6 let me say this. It's going to be no different than
7 your business. You have someone to work with you
8 that everybody loves and have really good skill
9 sets. When they leave, we do the same thing you
10 do because I'm going to make sure we do it. Because
11 I got two more years and someone else going to be
12 on this Board.

13 And hopefully with you, you're going to
14 learn that maybe when we start making deals and when
15 you start working with us, our residents -- we need
16 to cut some deals and maybe you can help us. Our
17 residents need to cut some money deals so we can
18 go to college. Because we're tired of just getting
19 vouchers and moving from one place to the other.

20 And when you look at how much our land
21 is and when we make a deal with you, the Authority
22 gets some type of little bonuses that they flipping

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1 for their property. The residents, they get moved
2 to a neighborhood they don't want to move in.

3 But maybe if your organization, when
4 you come in and want to do some dealings with us,
5 even if it's just five or six people that you can
6 help get a real job and they can live in some of
7 these rent market-to-market houses or be able to
8 move somewhere. Because we just getting coins out
9 of land and everybody else is getting Benjamins.
10 And some people are really getting them dollars.

11 MR. BAKER: Yeah. I mean, so --

12 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So maybe
13 you can work and help us out.

14 MR. BAKER: I mean, we're working
15 specifically with clients that --

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Thank you
17 so much.

18 MR. BAKER: -- that aren't asking for
19 any money from the District.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Josh, which company
21 are you with again?

22 MR. BAKER: The E&G Group.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: E&G Group? I think
2 I know you guys.

3 MR. BAKER: Yeah, I know Melissa is
4 going to reach out to you as well.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yeah. So yeah, just
6 full disclosure. I've been talking to a number of
7 members in the affordable housing community that
8 provide housing for people exited and homeless, et
9 cetera. And Ron's departure is a concern to many
10 of them.

11 Ron was able to facilitate lots of
12 movements quickly and efficiently, and we want that
13 to continue. And we have, believe me, grilled our
14 Executive Director on what Ron's departure means.
15 He's convinced us that we wouldn't miss a beat, but
16 we will all hold him accountable for that
17 statement. So thanks so much for taking time to
18 come --

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can I get a
20 quick --

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: -- and testify
22 today.

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1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- comment as
2 well? So I just want to make it clear that you
3 represent third-party private owners who take
4 subsidies from the DCHA through the voucher
5 program. Is that the property management you're
6 referring to?

7 MR. BAKER: We own and manage and we
8 also represent third-party clients, yes. We do
9 both.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: But through
11 subsidies that we provide? In other words, we have
12 third-party managers who manage our owned assets
13 as well. That's not you?

14 MR. BAKER: No.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. So
16 you're managing -- your interaction with us is
17 through the subsidies through the voucher program?

18 MR. BAKER: Correct.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So I would
20 encourage you to take this as an opportunity as when
21 things change to get a bigger imprint on the
22 process. In other words, get more involved. Take

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1 advantage of this opportunity to work with the new
2 director to try to push forward some of the things
3 that you're talking about, assuming if they're
4 beneficial to all of us. And I would encourage you
5 to look at this as an opportunity versus something
6 that is going to be problematic.

7 MR. BAKER: Right. And we're asking
8 for continued access. We want to make sure that
9 happens because we had the access before.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Right. Just
11 if you don't get the access, reach out to the Board.

12 MR. BAKER: Thank you very much. I
13 appreciate it.

14 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Baker.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
16 Karissa Spann?

17 MR. GARRETT: I just wanted to
18 recognize our leadership, Ms. Hamilton for Syphax
19 and Ms. Leftwich here at 203 and also Ms. Spencer
20 from James Creek, our resident president.

21 (Applause.)

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Spann?

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1 MS. SPANN: Good afternoon.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon.

3 MR. GARRETT: Good afternoon.

4 MS. SPANN: Chairman Albert, Director
5 Garrett, Ms. McNair, Commissioners, I'm Karissa
6 Spann, the landlord and tenant coach. I've also
7 operated in the capacity of adjunct professor for
8 the University of the District of Columbia. We are
9 teaching leasing for property management course
10 here at Greenleaf.

11 I'm here today serving in several
12 capacities as I provide testimony of Mr. Ronald
13 McCoy's character and leadership as well as
14 accomplishments.

15 As the chairperson of the D.C. Housing
16 Providers' Association, I represent over 4,000
17 landlords who are currently participating in the
18 Housing Choice Voucher Program. As an affiliate
19 and manager with the Horning Brothers, I represent
20 a company who has also served the voucher community
21 by leasing and renting to thousands of families for
22 decades.

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1 I've had the pleasure of knowing Mr.
2 Ronald McCoy professionally for more than 15 years.
3 He and I, we met at the D.C. Housing Authority when
4 he then served as the leasing supervisor shortly
5 after the Agency came out of receivership.

6 Mr. McCoy is one of the most dedicated,
7 hard working, and innovative people I've had the
8 pleasure of working with in any capacity. He is
9 also compassionate, kind, and never misses the
10 opportunity to help others.

11 As the Director of the voucher program,
12 Ron has sculpted the department into a model, not
13 just for participants in this program, but he was
14 also responsible for overseeing those around the
15 country which has helped the Agency move to the
16 position of a high performer and an MTW pioneer.

17 It's no question as to whether Mr. McCoy
18 cares about the community, the Agency, and the
19 stakeholders he's been privileged to serve. His
20 work speaks volumes for him. His heart to help
21 people in general has -- I'm sorry -- in general
22 has obviously made a difference through integral

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1 and effective leadership. And through
2 demonstrated leadership, excuse me, and hands-on
3 approach, the D.C. Housing Authority's success
4 through Ron's leadership has successfully -- that
5 he has successfully spearheaded.

6 And as I close, I just want to say that
7 on behalf of thousands of landlords and housing
8 providers that I represent, it is a little
9 disheartening to even think of losing an incredibly
10 valued person. Thank you for your time and
11 allowing me to share my testimony today.

12 (Applause.)

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you, Ms.
14 Spann. I appreciate it.

15 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Ms. Spann.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Focus Vision
17 Consulting? Can you just state your names?

18 MS. MINGO: Good afternoon. My name
19 is Shakeara Mingo.

20 MS. BROOKS: Good afternoon. My name
21 is Tiffany Brooks.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you.

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1 MS. MINGO: We gave proposals. Does
2 Mr. Garrett have one?

3 MR. GARRETT: I believe we have it. I
4 don't have it in front of me.

5 MS. MINGO: Can he see it? Because I
6 wanted him to -- and there's another copy for --

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Sure, sure, sure.

8 MS. MINGO: All right. Good
9 afternoon. As we already introduced ourselves, we
10 are food justice researchers. We have been using
11 GIS, Geographic Information Systems, and
12 curriculum development as a way to solve the food
13 apartheid crisis plaguing low income communities.

14 This work as afforded us the
15 opportunity to present our solution for solving
16 this pervasive issue at the 5th World Conference
17 on racial inequality in Brazil in September and the
18 IAFOR International Conference on Education in
19 Honolulu, Hawaii in January of 2019. We also have
20 a published paper.

21 Before my temporary assignment ended
22 with DCHA in February of this year, I was working

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1 on how DCHA can solve the food apartheid crisis
2 plaguing many tenants the Agency serves.
3 Residents are facing a new apartheid, and this one
4 deals with food access.

5 I use GIS to identify the number of
6 participants living in food deserts. Based on the
7 maps that are in front of you, 80 percent of the
8 Housing Choice Voucher Program participants live
9 in food deserts. Also, over 75 percent of public
10 housing complexes are in food deserts as well.

11 MS. BROOKS: So in the proposal, we
12 outline two solutions. And one of those solutions
13 is utilizing cooking demonstrations and food
14 distribution hubs that are located in the food
15 deserts. And what we are saying is that this will
16 require DCHA to create an outline and also a
17 curriculum about food knowledge that could be
18 distributed to families that they can take home
19 with them as well as resources that they can work
20 through with their children.

21 We know that there's a summer camp that
22 takes place as well in partnership with the

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1 Department of Parks and Rec. And that is also an
2 opportunity to provide this curriculum so that we
3 can help improve summer learning loss as well.

4 This also creates an opportunity for
5 DCHA to partner with key partners within the
6 community and advocates so that they can help to
7 create a sustainable food model and a sustainable
8 housing model.

9 MS. MINGO: The other project I was
10 working on before my assignment ended is how DCHA
11 can solve the complex problem of tenant placement.
12 That is the second proposal you guys have. That
13 is the AT (phonetic) proposal. The AT will allow
14 the agency to geographically place participants
15 near their most desired resources. The AT would
16 give the residents the opportunity to achieve
17 sustainability beyond the voucher.

18 Even though I am no longer employed with
19 the Agency, I wanted to bring these two projects
20 to your attention. If you are interested, we are
21 happy to meet with you to discuss these projects
22 further.

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1 In the meantime, if you're interested
2 in learning more about our work and our services,
3 we provided our capability statements. And that
4 is the last document you have. Thank you for your
5 time.

6 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Being that
7 I don't have a copy of your proposal, did you take
8 into consideration, being that you have former
9 services with DCHA, that the District of Columbia
10 Housing Authority specially specifically with
11 public housing residents that we have many
12 residents that take a food licensing test right
13 here in this room. And as a Commissioner, I'm just
14 putting this out to you.

15 Here's a recommendation. To include
16 hiring them so they'd be the ones to teach as far
17 as in reference to the food. Because as the
18 president of Potomac Gardens, we have several of
19 our residents who took the food handling. And what
20 we do with theirs, we allow them to do it. And if
21 there's any type of stipend or any donation, we give
22 it to them.

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1 MS. MINGO: I completely agree with
2 that. I think that is so good because this is built
3 within a community. This is a sustainable model
4 that community is going to build. We located the
5 areas that include deserts. It's up to the
6 residents to take advantage. If the residents
7 want to have cooking demonstrations and teach their
8 kids and all of that stuff, that's fine. We're
9 providing the curriculum for the residents to do
10 that. Anymore questions?

11 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So Brian Harris,
12 Brian's at the back. He's raising his hand.
13 Please follow up with him after this meeting. So
14 please follow up with Brian after this. And thank
15 you so much for your time.

16 MS. MINGO: Thank you.

17 MR. GARRETT: Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Brian
19 Harris, you make sure you cut that deal with the
20 food license. Okay. Start now.

21 MS. MINGO: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Jen, we're going to
2 get to you. Don't worry.

3 MS. BISHOP: Good evening, Board of
4 Commissioners. My name is Ms. Bishop. I'm here
5 once again --

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Bishop, can we
7 help you with --

8 MS. BISHOP: Good evening.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you help her with
10 the mic?

11 MS. BISHOP: Okay. Good afternoon.
12 Good afternoon, Board of Commissioners.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon.

14 MS. BISHOP: My name is Ms. Bishop.
15 I'm here to thank you all listening to us, and I
16 very much appreciate all that hear the complaints
17 of the community and the citizens and also the
18 tenants.

19 I hear a lot of things that's running
20 my pressure up that is frustrating me. I've
21 already suffered two heart attacks. I have a blood
22 pressure problem, and I'm a disabled person. But

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1 hearing these things today being discussed of this
2 unfair treatment, this has got to stop before it
3 not only kill me, kill anybody else.

4 I appreciate every bit that you all try
5 to do to make us in better living. But all at the
6 same time, what some of the things that I'm hearing
7 with the complaints of how people have moved on to
8 a new residence and the way they're being treated,
9 pool keys, no storm doors, no gates but other people
10 get it. That's not right. That's not right.

11 There is fair and equal housing for all.
12 Please don't let anybody that's any part of
13 Greenleaf go through any of this that I'm already
14 hearing that they're going through. Regardless of
15 who's responsible, make the correct changes
16 immediately. And that way, I will feel better and
17 put a smile on my face every day that I still
18 continue to try to live and thrive here in
19 Washington, D.C.

20 Thank you very much --

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.

22 MS. BISHOP: -- and I appreciate you

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1 all.

2 MR. GARRETT: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Jen Berger? You get
4 to close us out.

5 MS. BERGER: Excuse me?

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You get to close us
7 out.

8 MS. BERGER: Good afternoon,
9 Commissioners and Executive Director Garrett.
10 I'm Jen Berger, and I supervise the eviction
11 prevention team at Legal Counsel for the Elderly.
12 I've been in that role for 13 years and have been
13 a tenant advocate for 20 years. And for the past
14 15 years, I've been in D.C. and worked closely with
15 the Housing Authority to meet the needs of elderly
16 residents.

17 When it comes to privatization, it's
18 really important because our clients --
19 particularly with our clients but I think with all
20 tenants to get information out really early. I
21 think this has been said already. I just want to
22 underscore that. It is very difficult to

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1 communicate information to our clients in groups.
2 It takes a lot of time.

3 When regulations come out last minute,
4 the impression is that, number one, it doesn't feel
5 like there's professional courtesy because to give
6 thorough consideration to those regulations, we
7 need to take time. And it gives the impression
8 that the feedback really isn't actually wanted and
9 those regs are supposed to just be pushed through.

10 So we have to make sure we're sending
11 a consistent message. If you truly want feedback,
12 then give time for that feedback and think about
13 who the audience is and give courtesy to all of
14 those individuals.

15 Separately, and as a 15 year manager,
16 I'm very careful about this topic because I
17 understand that you can't respond to questions
18 about staffing. But I could not let today go by
19 without coming here to talk about Mr. McCoy.

20 I've worked with Mr. McCoy for 15 years.
21 We have a developed what I would say are nationally,
22 sometimes internationally recognized programs

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1 together. Mr. McCoy was what I would view as smart
2 government, efficient government. He worked to
3 get voucher holders to us before any termination
4 proceedings. We, up until recently -- and I
5 testified about this at city council. There were
6 several years where we were getting those referrals
7 regularly.

8 We had -- when I say nationally
9 recognized, because of that relationship, we got
10 a two-year fellow who was funded by the
11 international law firm of Sidley Austin and the
12 international firm of KPMG which brought
13 recognition in a national management journal to
14 D.C. Housing Authority for their relationship with
15 our office.

16 So it is really difficult when you're
17 trying to work closely with the Housing Authority,
18 help their staff members do their jobs, and in turn,
19 they're helping us do our jobs to use public dollars
20 as efficiently as possible to hear news about the
21 sudden resignation of a dedicated staff member of
22 D.C. Housing Authority.

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1 I communicate that just to say it
2 doesn't go unnoticed. It's troubling, and it
3 affects relationships that were longstanding for
4 people like Ron McCoy and like myself who have been
5 here and will be here for a really long time and
6 care a lot about District residents, especially
7 those served by the Housing Authority.

8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much,
10 Jen.

11 MR. GARRETT: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And just before you
13 go, I just want to say that I've known Ron for as
14 long as you've known him, maybe a little longer.
15 And I've worked with him through his capacity and
16 really appreciated the work that he's done.

17 But we do have a new Executive Director.
18 And the Board, as we said to him this morning,
19 recognize that the ability to hire and fire is his.
20 We want to respect that. But we're confident that
21 he's bringing in the right talent here.

22 I'm confident that Ms. Punter will do

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1 as good a job as Mr. McCoy has done. I want to ask
2 that people give her the time and accept her in the
3 way that you've accepted Ron. This entity was not
4 built and run by one person, and we're going to
5 continue to move forward with Ms. Punter in this
6 new role. And I just encourage everyone to provide
7 her with the support that you have provided Mr.
8 McCoy.

9 That's what I plan to do as the Chair
10 of this Board. I plan to make sure that she
11 succeeds, and I'm hoping that the advocacy
12 community will wrap their arms around her. And if
13 there are things that she needs to improve on,
14 please certainly let her know. But I will
15 encourage all of you to be supportive of her in this
16 new role.

17 MS. BERGER: If I could add a statement
18 about that.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Sure.

20 MS. BERGER: We would never do anything
21 --

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No, I didn't say that

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1 you were going to -- correct.

2 MS. BERGER: -- to compromise our
3 clients and plan to work closely with Ms. Punter.
4 We have a high amount of respect for the staff of
5 the Housing Choice Voucher Program. But I urge --
6 Executive Director Garrett, I urge you not to throw
7 the baby out with the bath water. There are some
8 really good programs in D.C. Housing Authority that
9 people have worked really hard to foster. And they
10 are serving residents well and are efficient. So
11 hopefully we'll keep what works and --

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Absolutely.

13 MS. BERGER: -- change what doesn't.

14 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And I can
15 assure you. We will keep what works and weed out
16 that will not work. Trust me.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Jen, thank you so
18 much.

19 MS. BERGER: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So this ends our
21 meeting today. Our next Board of Commissioners
22 meeting will be held Wednesday, May 8 at Sibley

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1 Plaza at 1:00 p.m. And I look forward to seeing
2 you all there. We're adjourned.

3 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
4 went off the record at 3:30 p.m.)

5

6