

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

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WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 14, 2018

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The Board of Commissioners met in the Barry Farms Recreation Center, 1230 Sumner Road, S.E., 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
- NAKEISHA NEAL JONES, Commissioner
- JOSE ORTIZ GAUD, Commissioner
- ANTONIO TALIAFERRO, Commissioner
- AQUARIUS VANN-GHASRI, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT:

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

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

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Adjourn 199

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

2 1:02 p.m.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon,
4 everyone. My name is Neil Albert. I'm Chair of
5 the Board of Commissioners. I'm calling this
6 meeting to order. This is our regular meeting of
7 the Housing Authority meeting out here on November
8 14th at Barry Farms Recreation Center.

9 Would it possible to remember to
10 silence your phones and any devices. And I'm going
11 to ask folks who are standing around at the back,
12 particularly DCHA staff, to just please take the
13 first available seat.

14 And as is our custom, we're going to
15 observe now a moment of silence.

16 (Moment of Silence)

17 Thank you. I'd now ask our secretary,
18 Althea, to establish a quorum.

19 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you, Commissioner
20 Slover?

21 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Present.

22 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Council?

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1 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Present.

2 MS. MCNAIR: Mr. Rosenberg?

3 (No audible response)

4 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Kenner?

5 (No audible response)

6 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Neal Jones?

7 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Present.

8 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz Gaud?

9 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: Here.

10 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner St. Jean?

11 (No audible response)

12 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Taliaferro?

13 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Here.

14 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Vann Ghasri?

15 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Present.

16 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Albert?

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Present.

18 MS. MCNAIR: You have seven
19 commissioners present. You have a quorum.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So today's agenda is
21 the regular Board agenda. We do have two
22 resolutions on the agenda today. I remind that we

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1 do give the public, persons who wish to speak, both
2 on the agenda and internal issues, an opportunity
3 to do so.

4 We will start with people who have
5 comments on the resolutions. If you're commenting
6 on one resolution you get three minutes to speak.
7 If you're commenting on more than one, we ask you
8 to combine that into a five minute presentation.
9 So we have one resident signed up to speak on the
10 resolution. So she's looking at me. Yes, Debra,
11 come on up.

12 Oh, you can come right up.

13 PARTICIPANT: Mr. Albert, don't you usually
14 go first?

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: No, no, no. You're
16 the only person. You comment first, and then we
17 get the staff to come up and talk about it.

18 MS. FRAZIER: Okay. Well, howdy everyone
19 and my peers. Hurray, you're all here, let the
20 record show ---

21 (Applause)

22 MS. FRAZIER: I'll raise the question to

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1 around Resolution 18-33. Some of these may be
2 answered as it directly describes what's going on.
3 So on Resolution 18-33, the questions that come to
4 mind are these.

5 One, as I understand this resolution,
6 it was a writeoff with the legal accounts of
7 tenants. I submit, one, if you're talking about
8 accounts as they become delinquent and vacancies
9 that have happened over time, is this still after
10 -- and you're saying you would like to be able to
11 collect the monies that are owed from tenants who
12 are gone?

13 So I submit that sometimes there's
14 vacated units because they're being put out. And
15 maybe there are domestic violence organizations
16 that they would be located.

17 So when it comes to collecting money
18 from tenants whose accounts are delinquent in units
19 have been vacated by this Resolution for some time,
20 one, how do you find these tenants and, two, since
21 tenants have vacated the units, are they indeed
22 legally responsible for the rents they've incurred

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1 while they were on the property?

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So we're going to get
3 that answer when the staff presents. So you can
4 raise as many questions as you want.

5 MS.FRAZIER: The other question is it seems
6 to me it's double dipping if, as an organization,
7 you're willing to writeoff delinquent accounts,
8 okay, that's a standard practice.

9 However, if you're writing off my
10 account from the books, and then you're trying to
11 take me to Court and make me pay the legal fees,
12 it seems like you're receiving a double advantage,
13 in my understanding on the book, as money that can't
14 be collected. But you're trying to collect the
15 money. That seems double dipping to me. And I'd
16 like you to explain about it.

17 So also, a unit is vacated because a
18 tenant has been disgraced or has passed away. In
19 what ways do you collect the money from these
20 missing tenants?

21 The next thing is the units are vacated,
22 if the resident is still on -- how do you find the

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1 resident? Are they still in public housing or did
2 they change the scope of redirect. So how do you
3 expect to find these folks and who do you hold
4 responsible?

5 I guess the other question that comes
6 up too is if there were two of us on the lease, can
7 you elect to come after both me and the other lease
8 holder? Are we both legally responsible, or what
9 are the other accommodations with that? On the
10 second --

11 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you just add two
12 minutes? Go ahead, ma'am.

13 MS. FRAZIER: On Resolution 18-34,
14 which is pretty long, I haven't read it, but these
15 things come to mind. Violence against women will
16 get the --- one, many of us see these things
17 happening to our women and fellow -- fellow women.
18 How do we guarantee anonymous reporting?

19 If you see me being beat up, you may want
20 to call authorities about my situation. But I
21 don't -- perhaps, one the reasons I'm in that
22 situation is I don't want to be identified. So how

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1 do we ensure anonymity and safety for the women who
2 are experiencing domestic violence?

3 Second, who will enforce it? Is this
4 --- you're doubting regulations. Whose job is it
5 to enforce these regulations. Is it Housing
6 police, is that MPD, whose job is it to enforce
7 this?

8 Next thing that comes up is, again, how
9 do you guarantee the safety of the battered woman
10 if you want to move her to another location away
11 from her abuser? Is there a provision for
12 referring her to a battered women's shelter? What
13 kinds of things do you have for these women as we
14 become aware? Is it what they do?

15 And what are the consequences for the
16 persons abused? If a woman is beaten badly by a
17 person who's still on the lease, and she moves to
18 another lease or she elects to move to California,
19 what happens to the vacated unit if the abuser is
20 locked up. Does that woman get to come back to her
21 unit?

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you very much.

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1 So we're going to provide answers during
2 discussions of the resolution. Thank you so much,
3 Debra.

4 At this time, I'm going to ask for
5 approval of our October 10th meeting minutes.
6 They were presented to the entire Commission. Are
7 there any comments, changes, or recommendations?

8 (No audible response)

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: If not, I would
10 entertain a motion to approve. Is there a motion?

11 PARTICIPANT: So moved.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So moved, is there a
13 second?

14 PARTICIPANT: So moved.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: All in favor, say
16 aye?

17 (Chorus of ayes)

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Any opposed?

19 (No audible response)

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: All right. Next
21 we'll turn to the Executive Director's Report.

22 MR. GARRETT: I'm going to defer part

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1 of my time to make a presentation.

2 PARTICIPANT: Can everyone hear me?

3 (Chorus of nos)

4 PARTICIPANT: Can everyone hear me now?

5 (Chorus of yeses)

6 PARTICIPANT: Okay. It is truly a pleasure
7 and honor to help one of my staff on behalf of the
8 Agency. Come forward.

9 Now, I can see a lot I'm going to talk
10 about how. She serves our clients twice a month.
11 And she makes sure that they fit in, and she makes
12 sure that anybody who comes in tries, on the front
13 end, and on the back, to make sure that they believe
14 that their rights are protected.

15 Now, I don't know if you all are sports
16 fans. I'm going to ask how many Washington fans
17 do we have up here? How many Washington fans do
18 we have here? How many Dallas fans we have here?

19 PARTICIPANT: Now, this lady is our
20 franchise player, you know how valuable they are,
21 this lady is a franchise player for fair hearings.
22 That's how valuable she is. And it is my honor to

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1 present this to her as employee of the month, the
2 month of October in 2018.

3 (Applause)

4 PARTICIPANT: Thank you very much.

5 PARTICIPANT: Thank you.

6 MR. GARRETT: Commissioner's I just
7 want to have publicly just give you, again, just
8 a little briefing on behalf of the residents.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you put your mic
10 closer.

11 MR. GARRETT: My apologies.
12 Currently we have about 57 assessments that were
13 done for the seniors out of 159, with 36 of those
14 159 had
15 leases and 15 of those residents had moved into the
16 apartments.

17 As we move forward, our goal is to have
18 every have one, at least the bathroom windows,
19 individuals are no later than December 9th,
20 December 7th, I'm sorry, no later than December
21 7th. I've asked the Board to see their new homes.
22 If that's not the case, we'll continue the case

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1 against them, and we'll go to the Council with those
2 particular residents.

3 As far home ownership, those with our
4 risk assessments were with 248 complexes. We got
5 thirteen more to go. And we should be finished
6 those by the end of the month. Having said that,
7 we will have advice on exactly how we fared at all
8 the complexes and what our best result was. And
9 the last part is just filling --- I set out web data
10 for Barry Farms.

11 But right now, it's going to have 23
12 individuals that are moving toward relocating to
13 basic units. Fourteen of those, those will be
14 relocated to public housing units on I are
15 utilizing public housing.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
17 So let's go on to our Resolutions. There are two
18 resolutions on our agenda today. And Debra,
19 thanks for teeing off a lot of the pertinent
20 questions that should be responded to on these
21 resolutions.

22 So the first resolution is Resolution

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1 18-33 which would authorize the Executive Director
2 to charge off tenant's accounts receivable for a
3 vacated unit. And so, Mr. Executive Director, as
4 you describe your resolution, maybe if you can
5 answer the questions that were raised by Ms.
6 Frazier a few minutes ago.

7 MR. GARRETT: So Commissioners, and to
8 the public, this particular resolution denotes
9 balances that have been carried over since 2009.
10 The idea is to go ahead and write those balances
11 off as they were identified that way for several
12 years. And this was an annual occurrence when we
13 bring vacated balances to their attention.

14 The vacated balances are for units that
15 are not occupied. So that means Ms. Grazier raised
16 those questions. These are not units that are
17 occupied by residents or residents who are no
18 longer with us.

19 I don't believe this is double dipping,
20 because the money is still based on a lease that's
21 still owed to the Housing Authority. So even if
22 you're writing it off, it is still money owed. But

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1 in our estimation, we are not going to keep assuming
2 this particular aspect of it, at least not
3 utilizing this tool or organization.

4 And nine times out of ten, what will
5 happen in this particular situation is that a
6 resident will be looking for some other type of
7 subsidy and will be using the EID system, which is
8 HUD system throughout the country.

9 They're going to pop up again as to
10 whether or not they have vacated under good
11 standing or a vacated unit owing money to another
12 Housing Authority. So that is one mechanism that
13 we've got to identify that particular resident
14 through another system where another Housing
15 Authority often can keep the subsidy.

16 We were discussing it earlier, and it's
17 not going to take the Housing Authority to downsize
18 and collect to find obtain these balances for these
19 particular residents. What we're going to do is try
20 to create some type of proactive program in advance
21 to the point of action. More public Resident
22 Services in order to help educate and work with our

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1 residents so that they're more comfortable.

2 That's an ambition that we're going
3 start beginning writeoffs on the first. There'll
4 also be education but also some ideas of Council
5 for incentives for residents in paying their rent
6 and not leaving us in a position like that.

7 PARTICIPANT: My name is Fred
8 Gillerton, I have a question about whether that
9 includes a resident that has passed away. No it does
10 not. Nine times out of ten, it's not dealing with
11 a resident who has passed. This is just the
12 residents who have either skipped out or have
13 engaged through litigation through the eviction
14 process.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I think one of the
16 questions that Ms. Frazier had asked was if you're
17 not aware of one person responsible for the lease,
18 where is the break?

19 MR. GARRETT: The break is always the
20 leaseholder. And so that leaseholder will be the
21 person who's deemed responsible.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Are there any

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1 questions from the Commissioners? Commissioner
2 Slover?

3 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: I think that an
4 important distinction here is that -- and it's not
5 persons.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you put your mic
7 closer to your mouth?

8 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: But I think it's
9 important to point out that these people -- these
10 are not current clients for the properties vacated
11 not just the unit where they're no longer
12 participating in housing. And so that's part of
13 writing off the debt. And this is something that's
14 way more housecleaning. It's certainly done more
15 regularly.

16 And so I applaud the executive
17 director's staff for taking this on. And right
18 now, I think it's an important distinction, that
19 these are not current clients where the tenants are
20 paying these products.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thanks for
22 clarifying that, Commissioner. Were there any

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1 further questions on this resolution?

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Mr. Chair?

3 I have a further question with this resolution to
4 allow the executive director to charge off
5 particular accounts receivable for the units.
6 Number one, I wanted to address the recognition
7 what is a writeoff that public housing had
8 collected tenant mislabels, who wrote those and
9 why.

10 Whether or not these residents, even
11 though these residents are no longer residents of
12 the District of Columbia, how do you know that.
13 How are they?

14 Whether or not they return is
15 representing the Housing Authority for past
16 constituents that they do a hardship petition as
17 soon as they arrive. And furthermore that the
18 residents can pay rent, will not pay late charges,
19 rent charges for utilities, air conditioning,
20 refrigerators, late rent.

21 Then the Housing Authority will not
22 abuse residents on a straight rent. Because

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1 usually, in most cases, when we turn these around,
2 what happens to this one who doesn't pay the public
3 housing, goes to court, that court determines as
4 part of the rent.

5 In fact, judges have allowed for
6 residents to show a petition. A further portion
7 of this bill will allow that residents will create
8 a bill of rights through this resolution. Because
9 if a landlord can receive a petition wherefore
10 these residents are at stake -- and I know the
11 difference from being there -- yes, these writeoff
12 accounts can impact your credit.

13 And we have to maybe look at each
14 individual settlement, even though the individual
15 won't pay the rent, some individuals discard their
16 units because their units were uninhabitable. And
17 they're paying rent, and still get that letter.

18 We have the right to take DCHA to court
19 and place their money into an escrow account. So
20 I do believe that all this needs to be taken in
21 consideration. Let alone the fact we do not have
22 the talent and the constituents and allow the

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1 housing choice voucher, allow the physical
2 condition, and Commissioner at large. I hope that
3 each of you Commissioners endorse my conversation
4 and hope this Housing Authority will look at all
5 your constituents, your federal constituents.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you,
7 Commissioner Vann-Ghasri. Any other
8 commissioners?

9 (No audible response)

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So Resolution 18-33
11 has been presented. I will entertain a motion to
12 approve. Is there a motion?

13 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: I make a motion.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Is there a second?

15 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Second.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: All in favor, say
17 aye?

18 (Chorus of ayes)

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Those opposed?

20 (No audible response)

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Oh, roll call.

22 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you. Commissioner

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1 Slover?

2 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Yes.

3 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Council?

4 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Yes.

5 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Neal Jones?

6 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Yes.

7 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz Gaud?

8 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: Yes.

9 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Taliaferro?

10 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Yes.

11 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner

12 Vann-Ghasri?

13 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: No.

14 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Albert?

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes.

16 MS. MCNAIR: You have six yes, one no,
17 and one. The resolution is approved.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. The next
19 resolution is Resolution 18-34. This will adopt
20 priority relations in granting the Violence
21 Against Women Act. I'm going to ask our executive
22 director to describe the resolution. And we know

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1 Debra, Ms. Frazier, actually asked a couple of
2 questions which I hope we can answer as part of your
3 description of the resolution.

4 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
5 First, DCHA is amending this regulation to clearly
6 identify and specify what our action covers. Is
7 it all victims of domestic violence, dating
8 violence, sexual assault, and stalking, regardless
9 of race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation? So
10 that will cover men included, although it does say
11 violence against women. It is covering everyone
12 from this point.

13 And that's what we're asking to amend.
14 Also we want to include that it's specifying that
15 sexual assault is a crime covered by the law enhance
16 the confirmation of the process, also including
17 provisions providing notice of technical
18 assistance for residents and educate them on
19 exactly what the process actually will be, and how
20 they can partake in it, and utilize their
21 potential.

22 Also we're going to identify how to

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1 advise applicants in need of eligible or
2 ineligible. It's one the most crucial processes
3 that we are going to be able to use. And we're also
4 going to clarify the process in which emergency
5 transfer requests are made with the Office of
6 Public Safety.

7 And Ms. Frazier had --- one of the
8 questions was who will enforce the law. It depends
9 on who they report it to. So if it were reported
10 to MPD, then they would also make out individual
11 -- basically they make a request for an emergency
12 transfer.

13 That would come to OPS, our Department
14 of Safety. And then we would evaluate and
15 investigate that to determine whether or not it is
16 possible and necessary to move to the public or to
17 ask for a transfer.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Any questions of
19 Commissioners on this resolution? Commissioner
20 Vann-Ghasri?

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: To adopt
22 the final regulation, if we go through the

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1 documents. And my question is how do you endorse
2 the present for the record. My recommendation
3 would be to forward correspondence to every
4 household. Because we also have a male in the
5 household. And so therefore, just hearing women
6 -- against women would exclude the men.

7 I recommend that the operation, if
8 directed at the right population group, would
9 really give us an idea of same sex, gender, how does
10 it pass them, whether that you --- if it's a couple
11 of meetings going on, come. We need the
12 combination.

13 Number one, we want to see some records
14 of trends to show how many --- first of all, how long
15 does it take for a turnaround that I put in for the
16 Violence Against Women Act?

17 So if that applied to both or to either
18 gender, how long does it take the Housing Authority
19 to add terms for you? That's a question that needs
20 to be answered.

21 Number two, how many residents will be
22 offered when a transfer is made due to any of the

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1 categories which is included to adopt this final
2 regulation in the balance of the Violence Against
3 Women Act?

4 How many single parent household dads
5 are having the reverse situation. And how do the
6 Housing Authority provide some housing for them?
7 We need to see those statistics. Because this is
8 not the first time. We wish it to have before, I
9 mean, which resolution or which program did they
10 refer to as because it seems. So whoever is the
11 President of the United States of America, they are
12 more interested in asking Congress for Violence
13 Against Women Act.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Mr. Director, would
15 you like to respond?

16 MR. GARRETT: Well, Commissioner
17 Vann-Ghasri, thank you. And we need to take a
18 moment as we write this down to know how to better
19 help us assist this program.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Questions or
21 comments from other Commissioners? Yes,
22 Commissioner Slover?

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1 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: I had an
2 observation on --- this is written towards just our
3 federal program? I understand that it aligns to
4 it, but a guideline, is there a reason why we're not
5 pushing it?

6 I know we tried to sort of keep our
7 programs, local and federal, as aligned as
8 possible. Is there a reason why we're not pushing
9 this down as a supplemental program on the DC loans
10 just in that direction? Was there any thought
11 given to that?

12 MR. GARRETT: I can ask OGC whether or
13 not that came up or whether or not we were actually
14 able to do that. It might have been to talk right
15 now or at the end of this.

16 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Well, I think it
17 just dawned on me as I read it. Again, as I read
18 it, it's confined only to the federal program.

19 MR. GARRETT: So the question is did we
20 further discuss utilizing this same mechanism.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Say it again. Speak
22 into the microphone.

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1 MS. MATTHEWS: Yes, he did. And the
2 decision was --

3 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Could you
4 please state ---

5 (Simultaneous speaking)

6 MS. MATTHEWS: -- the agenda was part of
7 the programs.

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: You need to
9 put the mic up to your mouth. You also need to
10 introduce yourself.

11 MS. DUFORD: Apologies. Felicia
12 Duford, Attorney Advisor in DC Housing Authority,
13 Office of the General Counsel. The question was
14 raised regarding whether this program would also
15 apply to persons in a local supplement program,
16 those folks with local vouchers. And it will.

17 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Well, I think
18 that the resolution needs to be clarified and
19 modified. Because I think it didn't make any
20 reference anywhere to a local supplement program.
21 It really only talks about federal programs. So
22 it's hard to actually tell that from the resolution.

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1 So I think it's important, A, so that we memorialize
2 that in the resolution.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Well, I agree. And I
4 think, also to Commissioner Vann-Ghasri's request,
5 that we call out that this apply not just to the
6 women but some men, but also to people, LGBTQ
7 individuals, that would say that we can include all
8 that in the standing resolution. We should do
9 that.

10 MR. GARRETT: That portion of gender or
11 sexual orientation is already --

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Already included?

13 MR. GARRETT: It's already included.
14 And I think.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Any other questions
16 on this resolution?

17 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: I'm sorry where
18 is the --

19 MR. GARRETT: I'm saying it was in my
20 notebook.

21 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Okay.

22 MR. GARRETT: That was what I was

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1 stating.

2 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: All right.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So I would entertain
4 a motion to approve an amended resolution as we
5 discussed today. Do I hear a motion?

6 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Motion.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Is there a second?

8 PARTICIPANT: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Roll call?

10 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you. Commissioner
11 Council?

12 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Yes.

13 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Neal Jones?

14 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Yes.

15 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz Gaud?

16 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: Yes.

17 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Taliaferro?

18 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Yes.

19 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Vann-Ghasri?

20 MS. MCNAIR: Abstain.

21 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Slover?

22 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Yes, as amended.

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1 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Albert?

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes, as amended.

3 MS. MCNAIR: We have six yes, one
4 abstention, resolution is approved as amended.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. So now we
6 --- thank you so much. Now we go to our public
7 comment session. We first start with residents.
8 We have a list of 20 or so residents that signed up
9 and seven non-residents.

10 We give everyone the opportunity to
11 speak for three minutes on any subject of your
12 choice. Today we will strictly enforce the
13 three-minute time limit. So let's start with
14 Gloria James. And the print on this is real light.
15 So if I don't call your name correctly, forgive me.

16 MS. JAMES: Good afternoon, Gloria
17 James with the resident council.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. James, could you
19 move your mic closer to your lips. It's real hard
20 to hear. Thank you. I believe the acoustics are
21 not great in here.

22 MS. JAMES: Good afternoon, my name is

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1 Gloria James. I was voted in as elected resident
2 council member of Judiciary House.

3 Some of the designs that the residents
4 have completed, I submitted a copy. I hope
5 everyone has one, if not I have extras I'm going to
6 share with the speaker.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay.

8 MS. JAMES: I had the opportunity to
9 meet Mr. Garrett early this morning, so we won't
10 take up much time, and we can follow through without
11 major concerns.

12 Number one concern, during the
13 transition of the property managers, we were not
14 able to meet and greet properly our new property
15 manager. We have not held a property
16 manager/resident council meeting as of yet.

17 We would like some assistance on the
18 protocol of when and how we may go about that so that
19 we may properly meet our new manager with the
20 residents -- with the property manager and the
21 residents before coming here.

22 We had published -- we had several

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1 public statements of issues from this morning that
2 were brought up previously over the years. And I
3 spoke with and to -- and I may not be pronouncing
4 this right -- Chief --

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Chief Paulson.

6 MS. JAMES: And he had agreed that he
7 would follow-up with a lot of our concerns as well
8 with the property manager.

9 The main concerns that I've been
10 addressing over the years is that the ceiling in
11 the garage has been cracking in our accommodation.
12 It's unsafe. And I've been saying it for years.
13 Now that they're fixing the property, and they've
14 started drilling, it has caved in on, I believe,
15 Parking Space Number 24.

16 The housing inspectors have been out.
17 They've been working on fixing the building. It
18 has been remodeled. To me, it's patchwork. There
19 are pipes or holes from the sewage lines still needs
20 to be filled. Water's still dripping. They just
21 put new ceiling tiles, paint, floors.

22 All of that's nice, it's pretty. But if

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1 you don't do the foundation, the rats are still
2 coming in through the pipes. The waters are still
3 leaking. Water has leaked on my previous vehicle
4 and my new vehicle. Rats are all down there getting
5 up in the cars, still coming in. So we ask if you
6 all will
7 continue to work with us and help with our public
8 safety issues.

9 The rear door and the front door sensors
10 are not working. And it's hard for disabled
11 persons to open that door. The sensor it's
12 non-functioning. And this has been going on for
13 awhile. The excuses were, because they're doing
14 electrical repairs, that a lot of the --- and it may
15 be so -- but before the electrical repairs.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So do you have a copy
17 of the concerns? We're going to ask the executive
18 director to discretely discuss with you or to point
19 you to the right person that can have a conversation
20 with you immediately after this meeting.

21 There are steps that are being taken
22 immediately, and I'm going to address these issues.

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1 And I do hear your concerns about the effects of the
2 construction, with the, with Parking Space Number
3 24, and you mentioned the serious structural issue
4 occurring. And we should probably get our
5 engineers out there to take a look at it.

6 But, Mr. Director, who can we have
7 follow-up with Ms. James?

8 MR. GARRETT: We've already,
9 Commissioner, we've already had -- staff already
10 engaged with the residents this morning prior to the
11 meeting so --

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, Ms. James, do you
13 know who to communicate with on the number of those
14 assignments?

15 MS. JAMES: I would feel confident it's
16 being looked at I have the phone numbers and so forth
17 to follow up later concerning the situation.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So we don't need to.
19 Thank you so much.

20 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chair. I do want to go on record saying that
22 I am the chair of the resident association. We

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1 refer to the contracts.

2 And we were bad and I thought we had been
3 that limited to the contract. And we were trying
4 to get a pool for retention. I guess it was for
5 about two years, because everybody didn't show up.

6 This is my last two years sitting on this
7 Board. And I do my service. I am so glad to see
8 that you put me on the Resident Services for those
9 questions. Because the question is, number one --
10 and we work on it, we just talked about this morning
11 -- and I had recommended that vouchers, a new person
12 along with navigators or discussion with your
13 property managers or through DCHA and its policies.

14 Because really the policies. And I'm
15 also president of Potomac Gardens Resident Council.
16 And as you all know, I have the ability to run this.
17 But all you all constantly have more and more
18 resident service. And I'm always telling you, you
19 start a program with by-laws. And it's not about.
20 Right now it's not going to work. I've been trying
21 to do it for 12 years.

22 And I tell you Commissioner Taliaferro

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1 accountability, because all the problems I've had
2 in the past were you guys enrolling in order to be
3 fair. Commissioner Taliaferro would take the lead
4 for assignments and really with some of the issues
5 that residents had.

6 Now I ask that all residents come to
7 support me in this. Because you got your own
8 resident Commissioner doing a workshop for CSC
9 contracts. It was brought to your attention to all
10 the leadership that you, as the president, is the
11 agent.

12 So the only questions that I'm going to
13 put on the record for the General Counsel is that
14 my impressions of the Judiciary ceiling whether or
15 not she is the agent and whether or not she receives
16 a monthly income.

17 We do know that SCS's the Panel. But
18 the CUC's. You are the authorized agent. And there
19 is a difference between your executive board and
20 when you first need to find a way that you have
21 bylaws. Because when I've been president, I know
22 we have the most recent by-laws. I said great

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1 because that's who I am.

2 And those most recent by-laws are the
3 by-laws that you would be amending. Most of your
4 residents think of brand new by-laws. But then
5 what happens when you have end service. I'm
6 telling you all, I could change the by-laws because
7 they say print by-laws. They just need to be
8 tweeted out.

9 Now with all that, I did not know
10 resident council were getting stipends from those
11 CSC loans. As long as I been the president of
12 Potomac Garden, I have no idea resident council
13 getting a stipend. Then I see all the records all
14 resident councils pay a fee, whether it's out of the
15 resident's participation funds or whether it's out
16 of the CSC fund.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you,
18 Commissioner.

19 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Chairman Albert?

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes?

21 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Sorry, this
22 actually raises two questions for me. One is

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1 remembering we discussed not long ago and where we
2 are today.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes.

4 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: And now this
5 raises another issue which sounds like it's in the
6 same vein which is it appears we have different
7 parking contracts.

8 This Board needs to better understand
9 the processes for each of these properties, whether
10 it's a uniform process, whether it's site by site,
11 and the continued surfacing of parking tickets and
12 where they're coming from, who's issuing them,
13 under what authority, why is it being issued, and
14 what is the expectation. Are we issuing them, is
15 the city issuing them? Who's giving us all our
16 parking --

17 MS. JAMES: They're coming from the DC
18 Housing Authority, as PO officers that were ---

19 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Right. So I
20 think that the Board --- excuse me, I'm sorry. I
21 think that the Board can talk about our parking
22 policies. And if we can ---

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You know we have to
2 look at that?

3 COMMISSIONER SLOVER: Right. I mean,
4 it just exhibits an issue that keeps cropping up.
5 And I think we need to better understand our policy.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I also think, she is
7 seated over there, her testimony actually speaks to
8 the sort of concerns that I think this Board has had.
9 I've been a part of this Board for the last year,
10 and I think the executive director is doing a good
11 job of trying to bring the accountability to the
12 team that works internally hand-holding site
13 managers accountable and responsible for follow-up
14 in a timely manner.

15 Frankly, you've just got to put some
16 performance standards in place for our contractors
17 that are working in these areas. It's just not
18 sufficient to get a job done if it hasn't been done
19 well and lasts for a long time.

20 And unless we hear the same complaints
21 to suggest we're pouring our resources wastefully
22 down the drain, with my mind that we don't have the

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1 right people doing these repairs.

2 I am looking for accounting. I know for
3 a fact that maintenance is a challenge in public
4 housing. But unless you have people who value what
5 they're doing, they tolerate an attitude that needs
6 to be looked at, I think we, as a Board, has to start
7 looking at these contracts and where are they
8 falling. So we will be doing that shortly. So
9 thanks for raising that to our attention.
10 Commissioner Taliaferro?

11 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: I've got a
12 question. When we're talking, did you all have too
13 many?

14 MS. JAMES: We are --- residents are
15 issued ---

16 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Too many.

17 MS. JAMES: Yes, sir.

18 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Okay. So
19 how is it like there. That's what I'd like to know.

20 MS. JAMES: At the current point in
21 time, the issue is they had 13 original DROIs as
22 parking spaces. They dwindled that down to eight.

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1 Then they had nine DC housing --- approximately nine
2 DC housing residents --- I mean, nine DC housing
3 employees that parked in the garage or on the back.

4 So the residents had to have first come,
5 first serve parking. There are eight, or there's
6 no visitor parking. So a lot of the spaces were
7 taken up between the households, 13 or whatever
8 spaces could be used for visitor parking, as well
9 as the places that had eight that parked.

10 There's not a lot of them in the
11 building, maybe ten, no more than 15 homebound
12 patients with physical dilemmas that really need
13 aids that maybe drive twice out the week or
14 something like that. They really need parking.
15 We have an issue with their receipt in parking
16 passes, period.

17 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: From your
18 management?

19 MS. JAMES: Well, judging from the
20 previous manager, Mr. Albert Williams, is the new
21 manager that's on now.

22 MR. CARTER: These are the conditions

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1 that we're often physically talking about. And we
2 received a letter Friday that said I was just
3 informed that you must refrain from using both the
4 garage parking lot in addition to the rear parking
5 lot. That's no parking a vehicle anywhere, okay.
6 While we're doing maintenance on the rear parking
7 lot and the garage at the same time, okay, my problem
8 is if I can please approach --

9 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Can I ask you
10 a question please? I'm sorry.

11 (Simultaneous speaking)

12 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Okay, did
13 you hear him make that statement, ma'am, make that
14 statement about parking and DC HA. Where's the
15 management of the building?

16 MS. JAMES: We have not received. We have
17 not been properly introduced to our new property
18 manager. We have not been properly introduced to
19 our new property manager. The previous property
20 manager, Mr. Albert Williams, has been working with
21 us diligently, has been doing an excellent job and
22 with the Authority, the Housing Authority, the

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1 residents, or whoever.

2 For some reason, he thought there was no
3 transition or what's going on. So now everything
4 is DC Housing Authority has our funds, DC Housing
5 Authority is the one that knows what is going on the
6 building. Nobody is being transferred about
7 anything. It's like you can't wait. You get here
8 and you do what we say or you'll suffer the
9 consequences.

10 MR. GARRETT: So, ma'am, I believe,
11 when I walked into the building, I stated that I was
12 the person you needed to voice your concerns --

13 MS. JAMES: Yes, you did.

14 MR. GARRETT: So in lieu of that, we can
15 step out and talk to Ms. Hunter or someone from the
16 B&O program about some of the issues, some of the
17 others. These are various departments of Resident
18 Services. And I believe you spoke to Mr. Williams
19 in reference to Resident Services already, correct?

20 MS. JAMES: I spoke to Mr. Rashad Tyle.
21 I have not met Mr. Williams.

22 MR. GARRETT: Okay.

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1 MS. JAMES: Mr. Carter had ---

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Well, regardless,
3 before you --

4
5 (Simultaneous speaking.)

6 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: When I was
7 before you, one of the things I went to the Office
8 of General Counsel to do is, number one, the times
9 for DCHA -- check to see whether or not DCHA is
10 charging you for not having a parking pass.

11 And if those employees aren't parking
12 correct, you're going to take the initiative when
13 you say that they shouldn't be there. So I think
14 we're changing gears for a minute. So I'm saying
15 that those nine times when you put your employees'
16 those facts together, it occurred sometime when the
17 resident council sends out the conversation.

18 And then you need to also make --- and
19 I'm suggesting that you get in touch with Ms.
20 Pattis, who's at Judiciary Square. Tell Ms. Pattis
21 that you spoke to me and that you want to see her
22 documentation.

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1 And now they did the Regency in the
2 apartment schedule for the council to share their
3 success stories so we can all be successful. And
4 what they do is, they give you that promotion
5 because all of it, the way I'm looking at my policy
6 substitution initiative, it describes the council
7 president should be receiving the question of
8 income out of any contract that builds out in the
9 park with Judiciary Square. No.

10 So I'm showing that in the minutes, and
11 I recommend that you legally let Alethea know that
12 you have got these minutes in hard copy.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
14 Thank you so much, Ms. James. Sorry you missed out
15 on your time.

16 MS. JAMES: Thank you all.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We'll call up now
18 Karen Clyburn-Bennett.

19 Can you pull the mic closer. And I'll
20 let you know.

21 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: Good afternoon,
22 Council.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon.

2 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: I'm the resident
3 council secretary for Potomac Gardens. When I came
4 to represent them, I know Mr. Garrett has been to
5 our building, and Commissioner Taliaferro has been
6 to the building, also as well.

7 And the main concern about residents is
8 that people goes up they just replace because
9 there's people in wheelchairs who are being stuck.
10 Elevators, you might be fine one day, the next day
11 it broke. They come back at night once and it
12 broke. And it shakes, because they no longer can get
13 parts for these elevators, because they're so old.

14 So we're on hard time in there. Because
15 one day, it's --- one time it dropped. And the
16 smallest little lady was on it. She was in it for
17 maybe a year or so after she was --- she fell down
18 to the base level.

19 But this time, the rest of them really
20 shakes bad. And pretty soon, somebody else is
21 going to fall down to that lower level, and they're
22 going to die. And all we keep getting from CT

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1 Management is they don't have money in the budget
2 to fix what's going on.

3 Now we've got rats. There's so many of
4 them outside the building trying to get in the
5 building from the cold. And some people had mice
6 and rats, which I just think that someone was good
7 enough to put poison down in our apartment. And I
8 haven't seen them lately, but other people have been
9 seeing them.

10 And the last issue is the heat's
11 breaking down in the building. They haven't had
12 heat. Then they sent on November the fifth a paper
13 stating that on November the 6th the people would
14 be cutting off the water. And it didn't make sense.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: The sent the notice
16 on the fifth?

17 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: Okay. We have
18 put up with a lot of things. We have issues with
19 some of the residents who have disagreements on
20 different things when we all should be working
21 together on making it better on the property itself.

22 And I spoke with Tida and they keep

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1 things quiet because I didn't think that I had
2 enough authority to speak about the man coming back.
3 Because I've been fighting with the housing issues
4 for years.

5 Since I fought and saved two buildings
6 which was under HUD Section 8, by myself. And if
7 I have to do it again for Potomac Gardens, I will.
8 Because you should have lived like this, because you
9 are in a ---

10 (Applause)

11 -- health issues to make up the that we
12 had when we was working up here. Because I have a
13 college education. I've had two semesters of my
14 master's degree, and I still can go back and receive
15 my master's well a little bit of time left. I just
16 turned 66.

17 And then I'm finished with this issue
18 right now for Potomac Gardens. I'm tired of
19 hearing these people telling us these stories about
20 what they're going to do in three years, and what
21 they're going to in four years.

22 If you don't want to do anything, let all

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1 of these people that we live in public housing buy
2 our buildings, like we used to do back in the day,
3 and we do a co-operative.

4 I meant cooperative, because I know all
5 you all got diplomas and master's degrees, you all
6 can do better jobs, you know. Because I'm 66, I just
7 turned on November the 2nd. Well, if I can go back
8 to work, I'm going back to work. Because I can't
9 live under these conditions like this.

10 My mother, she worked too hard to bring
11 us up. Because I was raised right up the street
12 from here in Barry Farms on Wade Road. So I know
13 what it's all about living in the conditions. Some
14 of you all don't. Okay, that's my thing.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes. Let me ask a
16 question. So when you engaged with the Potomac
17 Gardens staff on maintenance issues in your
18 building, what kind of follow-up do you get from
19 ---

20 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: Okay. Since
21 I've been here, especially Mr. Taliaferro when he
22 was there, our resident manager just started

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1 painting the apartments. I've been there 20 years
2 going onto 21. She just started painting the
3 apartments.

4 We're getting ready to get new balcony
5 screens, brand new front doors, because we know
6 we're getting a raise in January, so that rent be
7 going up.

8 Well, Mr. Taliaferro didn't like the way
9 she came in with her attitude and her head up in the
10 air. So she's afraid of losing her position there,
11 or them shutting CT Management down, that every
12 month now she's giving a management fee.

13 You're supposed to have one on the 25th.
14 And she's promised to bring residents not present
15 to court. She didn't have to. And if you believe
16 this or not, the residents showed --- more residents
17 showed up at the management meeting than any of you
18 probably did at the Council meeting.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Really?

20 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: But still, she
21 said she only --- I believe her --- she said she only
22 has a certain amount of money that she can work with.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And I don't disagree
2 that there is a limited pot, we have to do a better
3 job prioritizing life and safety issues. You just
4 talked about the elevator that shakes.

5 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: It's definitely
6 getting ready to break down, both of them.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And the reason we had
8 corrections is to sort of start thinking on your own
9 how we prioritize our maintenance needs. You're
10 absolutely right. We don't have all the money
11 that's needed to fix all needs that we have. But
12 we have to come up with a strategy.

13 And the strategy could be prioritizing
14 life and safety issues, elevators being one of them.
15 It's \$80 to \$100,000. Now it's \$50,000 to \$100,000
16 just to put it in, inspect it, et cetera.

17 So I'm not suggesting that the Housing
18 Authority isn't trying hard enough, I'm just
19 suggesting that we need to find a new and different
20 approach. But I really appreciate you taking the
21 time to talk to us today.

22 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: Well, let me ask

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1 you this serious question, then I'm going to move
2 on to my niece. What happens if somebody gets
3 killed on one of those elevators?

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Well, that's a very
5 relevant question. It's our job at Housing to try
6 to prevent that from happening. And that's why I
7 raised the issue of prioritizing life and safety
8 issues. And it's certainly just thinking out
9 loud.

10 As a member of this Board, I think it is
11 our job to ensure that the staff is thinking that
12 way. So that's why I asked the question earlier
13 about contractors and what kind of accountability
14 system we had in place for contractors.

15 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: Well, you know, the
16 contractors don't mind if it breaks down. Because
17 they're making money.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes, exactly.

19 MS. CLYBURN-BENNETT: And all of this
20 money that's being spent in public housing, at which
21 point, just making these repairs, you're going to
22 -- if you've gotten the right contractors -- you

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1 know they might be expensive -- to do the work, none
2 of these things would probably break down like they
3 do day after day, week after week, month after
4 month. We just ---

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: In some cases that we
6 use about the contractor, in some cases I do agree
7 we can replace, somebody says that, hey, just like
8 me, I say, yeah, with the right systems, I can do
9 the job. Well, my systems break down.

10 And so that's what happens with these
11 buildings, particularly if there's been deferred or
12 neglected maintenance over a period of time until,
13 again, I'm not --- this is not to say that the
14 Housing Authority is bad. We're working as hard as
15 we can. I'm just saying we can't keep coming here
16 every month and hearing the same things.

17 MR. GARRETT: Mr. Chair, I just wanted
18 to say ---

19 MS. JAMES: Well, we're hearing the
20 same things now.

21 MR. GARRETT: Mr. Chair, there is an
22 elevator scheduled. The replacement's here and

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1 all ready for installation.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Well, when you --

3 MR. GARRETT: There is already a
4 replacement scheduled for elevators. Both the
5 Authorities are going through each complex and
6 evaluating.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And on that
8 note, I do have to jump in, Mr. Chair. First and
9 foremost, I have told this Board over and over that
10 every property that is under Access Management be
11 approved

12 You have representatives who are on the
13 Executive Board who do not understand Access
14 Management, have no idea on how to run with these
15 rules. So, I'm going to hand it over.

16 We just had a conversation this morning,
17 and I was really serious. I'm territorial. And I
18 saw the Councilors to be territorial. Because if
19 you're territorial you understand your prize and
20 your duties.

21 You're time to stand up. And they may
22 become territorial. You have to become territorial.

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1 Now, let me tell you exactly what that means.

2 That means in my time I'm the president
3 of Potomac Gardens. And I tried to remove the
4 policy from being reckless. And I have records to
5 prove it from .

6 The residents don't know when you're
7 educated about the policies in which they live on.
8 You will not have an intelligent conversation.
9 That I put on the blame of this Council.

10 Because one of your jobs under 24 CFR is,
11 you have the right to train your residents. Now,
12 I want you to understand this, that I represent the
13 minority, which is M-I-N-O-R-I-T-Y.

14 We have two residents in Potomac
15 Gardens, they're the director of resident service,
16 know for a fact that the majority of the residents
17 of Potomac Gardens do not agree with my platform.

18 I am asking this Board to give those
19 residents, those minority residents that stood by
20 me the opportunity for us to finish our job, and meet
21 some 700.

22 The 12 and 13 Street and I Street have

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1 their own resident councils. This is not a game.
2 And one of the games that is being played is the
3 residents do not get an account of how much money
4 is bid.

5 I am asking you to do a training with
6 Access Management versus DCHA. I have already told
7 my community they're willing. And I'm wanting to
8 be a team player as I lead these last few years. So,
9 you all should be playing.

10 When you turn DCHA back over to Potomac
11 Gardens, make sure that you understand that 700
12 wants to stay in the model of Access Management. We
13 have the trends. And we can show the difference in
14 the money.

15 As a matter of fact, property managers,
16 Mr. Council will tell you, he's on the DCHA. This
17 money and this property, you know, first of all
18 everything that's being done is being done under Roy
19 Koocher's contract.

20 We all understand that when a new
21 director comes in he doesn't make new contracts in
22 12 months. He's carrying out contracts.

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1 I guarantee you, in Potomac Gardens, in
2 just 12th, 13th, and I Street there's 190
3 apartments. Eighty of them didn't pay under my
4 leadership, and the leadership of those who are with
5 me.

6 And no other community can say that.
7 Kenilworth can't say it. Nobody else can say it.
8 And I'm speaking on behalf of the family property.

9 Now, Potomac Garden seniors also need
10 Access Management. They are fortunate enough they
11 have residents to get their rent deducted, by being
12 grievants. Roy Koocher came up with that idea, and
13 fought this Board to get it while it still have a
14 security sitting in the room.

15 (Simultaneous speaking)

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: -- many of
17 our residents --

18 MS. JAMES: Monitored.

19 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I'm not
20 fussing. I'm giving an education. So that it can
21 be on the minutes. So, when you get the minutes I'm
22 putting the facts on the minutes. It's called

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1 setting it up.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner
3 Vann-Ghasri.

4 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: It's called
5 setting it up. And I been told --

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner
7 Vann-Ghasri.

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Wait a
9 minute. I've asked all presidents, stop and give
10 them the wheel. You have Sursum Corda. It's a
11 model. You have Josephine Butler. It's a coop.

12 But what we do is that we hate the
13 messenger instead of listening to the message. And
14 if you have a leader who can be objective, even
15 though she can cuss you out.

16 But if you check my track record on this
17 Board, I know for a fact I have pushed more policies
18 to empower residents. And my problem is DCHA is to
19 train.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: All right. Thank
21 you.

22 MS. JAMES: Excuse me. In accordance

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1 -- I have one more thing to say to her. But this
2 has nothing to do with me being here. I'm coming
3 to represent the tenants because the rent is --

4 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Ma'am, I
5 want to say this to you. Commissioner Taliaferro,
6 he was hearing you. I trained him. Commissioner
7 Taliaferro had the task to go to each one of your
8 senior buildings. Everybody you see up here,
9 contrary to belief, we know how to be a team and stay
10 in our lane.

11 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. So,
12 thank you so much. So, we have to move on. Thank
13 you so much and --

14 MS. JAMES: No. I have one more thing
15 for my niece, who's on the paper.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Real quickly.

17 MS. JAMES: My niece lives in Lincoln
18 Heights.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you put the mic
20 closer to her?

21 MS. HUNTER: My name is Arlinda Hunter.
22 I've been a resident in Lincoln Heights for about,

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1 I'd say seven years. They don't do no maintenance.
2 They won't fix nothing.

3 They charging me rent with no income. I
4 have two letters from the doctors stating that it
5 was me and my daughter, and we're still in there.
6 I haven't had shades. My apartment hasn't been
7 painted. Nothing.

8 I wasn't sick when I moved in. But with
9 the mildew and mold I'm starting to get sicker and
10 sicker. They come in there, the mice have bitten
11 the baseboard in the wall. They patched it up.
12 Bit through that hole again.

13 They paint over the mildew, and it's
14 coming back. I don't know what to do. They won't
15 do nothing. They won't, I have work orders. They
16 won't fix nothing.

17 I called DCRA. I went to court. They
18 gave them a limit of trying to fix stuff. They
19 still won't fix nothing. They started charging me
20 rent. And I have no income.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Is there someone that
22 you're working with here?

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1 MS. JAMES: I don't have anybody. I'm
2 not working with anybody. Only one I'm working
3 with is my aunt. And I have pictures. Behind my stove
4 is burnt where the plastic at. All they did was
5 patch it up.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay. Is there any,
7 let me ask the director --

8 MR. GARRETT: -- Brandy Lynch to speak
9 to the residents before the meeting started. She
10 can follow up with them on that.

11 MS. HUNTER: And I --

12 MR. GARRETT: Brandy, why don't you
13 stand up.

14 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Ma'am, are
15 you presently in court?

16 MS. HUNTER: I'm --

17 MR. GARRETT: Brandy, stand.

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Are you
19 presently in court?

20 MS. HUNTER: Am I presently in court?

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Yes. You
22 just said something about you was in court.

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1 (Simultaneous speaking)

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Are you
3 presently in court?

4 MS. HUNTER: No, ma'am. They gave me a
5 eviction notice when they take the property back in
6 October. They wanted to evict me, yes. They still
7 charging me rent.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, Brandy is
9 sitting, is standing back there. Commissioner
10 Slover.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I just want to
12 know if you have engaged with anybody at DCHA during
13 this process. And if --

14 MS. HUNTER: Yes. I need to --

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Hold on. Hold
16 on, please. And if you have, who has it been? And
17 what has been the result?

18 MS. HUNTER: I'm not sure of his name.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: For us to help
20 --

21 MS. HUNTER: But I'm, you know --

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: This is not just

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1 for you it's for everybody. For us to help you have
2 to come and tell us, so we can figure out where the
3 disconnect was. And so we can try to keep this from
4 happening in the future.

5 MS. HUNTER: I don't know if you all
6 remember Ms. Brown. But I was in communication
7 with Ms. Brown, as well. She was the resident that
8 was there first.

9 I been down to Housing. They turned --
10 I had a gas leak. I was without a stove for two
11 months. And I have a 5 year old child living with
12 me, you know. And that just, that doesn't seem
13 right.

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: We're all in
15 agreement here. We're just trying to figure out
16 how this Board can --

17 MS. HUNTER: I don't know who I talked
18 to. But I been down there several times.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Well, there's
20 somebody that you will talk to today. Please talk
21 to her in the back.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So, the young

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1 lady that's supposed to --

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Look
3 around, so that you can see who to talk to before
4 you leave to help you.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Well, thank you so
6 much. I'm going to ask Bonita Howell --

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Neil, I wanted
8 to add one more thing as a result of this. I think
9 we need to accelerate, or at least get a report from
10 the Executive Director on our present property
11 management globally, moving forward, based on, you
12 know, a lot of these instances of third party
13 management.

14 And then I know we're in a process for
15 looking at that and trying to figure out how to move
16 forward. But I think we really need to start
17 drilling down on that, sooner rather than later.

18 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: The motion
19 that the Commissioner put forth was correct. I
20 been going to some of my properties and I've walked
21 into the same thing. The same thing.

22 And I said to the president, why we don't

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1 we --- what it is is no communication. And nobody's
2 doing nothing, all they doing is saying "Okay."
3 And I been to see a lot of presidents, I seen all
4 of them and the properties And --

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes. We need to do a
6 better job. Ms. Howell.

7 MS. HOWELL: Yes. I currently live in
8 Ward 6, Greenleaf Apartments. I had three backups,
9 sewer backups. I just had everything you can think
10 of come out.

11 It was all in my kitchen, coming through
12 my walls. And I have mold. My husband has asthma.
13 I have two little kids. And I need an emergency
14 voucher to be transferred.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Have you been in
16 touch with anyone at the Housing Authority about the
17 situation?

18 MS. HOWELL: I went down. And they
19 told me I had to contact the property manager.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, Director
21 Garrett, how can we assist --

22 MR. GARRETT: Quantay Oliver is here.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Who's that?

2 MR. GARRETT: Quantay. Quantay
3 Oliver. He's right back there. Okay.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, please talk with
5 him. And then, and if you're not satisfied, just
6 make sure you email the Director. You can email me
7 also. My email address is nalbert@dchousing.org.
8 It's on the website. And you can just, because I'd
9 love to know what happened. Thank you so much.
10 Ms. Nicole Odom.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can I ask a
12 quick question --

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes.

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- to the
15 Executive Director. Is it traditional policy if
16 someone comes in with a complaint to send them back
17 to their property to deal with their problem?

18 MR. GARRETT: How so?

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Because I think
20 --

21 MR. GARRETT: It shouldn't happen.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We've heard that over

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1 and over.

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I know. So,
3 it's a recurring issue. So, maybe -- can you all
4 hold your fire? So, I just think we need a policy,
5 a firm policy. If we have one it's not being
6 followed. And if we don't, we need one.

7 MR. GARRETT: Yes, sir.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, let me ask --
9 Nicole, sorry. If you could hold on a second. So,
10 talk a little bit about what the policy is, and how
11 that policy is and how that policy is implemented
12 throughout the organization?

13 MR. GARRETT: Normally what would
14 happen is we would like for the residents who have
15 a problem to discuss it with their property manager
16 immediately on site.

17 If they don't get any satisfaction we
18 have a set of area managers for each property, four
19 area managers that are set up for each property now.
20 They can contact those individuals with their issue
21 or problem if they don't get satisfaction from their
22 manned office on site.

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1 From there they would move up to Carolyn
2 Punter or myself. So, that's the process,
3 Commissioners, that we are following. If it's not
4 being followed, and the protocol is out of sorts,
5 then they need to go back and ensure everyone's on
6 the same page.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, let me ask a
8 question by a show of hands. And you don't have to
9 say anything. How many people who if you live in
10 one of the properties know about this policy?

11 (Simultaneous speaking.)

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Know the policy that
13 the Director just articulated.

14 PARTICIPANT: No.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, I think it's a,
16 and I'm not doubting that the policy exists. But
17 policies just have to be communicated over, and
18 over, and over, and over, and over, and over again.

19 And I think it's, and I use the word good
20 governance. So, I know once you say you've
21 instilled the policy you expect that it will stay.

22 But I would encourage you, and the

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1 entire team at DCHA, just to make sure that you're
2 communicating vigorously, as often as possible, on
3 every issue as possible.

4 So the people can know what to expect.
5 What to expect from their property managers. Know
6 the protocol to follow. So, I'm going to get off
7 of my soapbox. Nicole, it's your turn.

8 MS. ODOM: Hello everyone. My name is
9 --

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Before it's your
11 turn, a Commissioner has a question.

12 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Just about
13 resident input in the performance of property
14 managers. Do we have a space for residents to give
15 their insight on how the property managers are doing
16 on the property?

17 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Say that
18 again, Commissioner. What is your --

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, she wants to know
20 if there's a format for residents to give input into
21 the performance of the property managers.

22 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: No. There

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1 is no policy. That may be a great start up
2 sometime, to do the survey for property managers.
3 Because we haven't got anything, Commissioner.

4 MR. GARRETT: I'm sorry, Commissioner
5 Vann-Ghasri, no, we haven't done a resident survey
6 of the management, or the site managers.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Yes. Well
8 --

9 MR. GARRETT: What we're trying to do
10 is, when I go on to the properties I try to take all
11 the questions and concerns about -- And a lot of
12 times it is about management, overall management.
13 And it brings that back --

14 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And that's
15 why I'm recommending, Mr. Chair, that you'll
16 advocate that we do at Potomac Gardens ASAP, is a
17 resident academy. This academy is not for nobody
18 to debate or argue.

19 This academy will be an individual
20 providing you the tools to understand how to
21 navigate as a resident through policy.

22 Because when they have that

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1 opportunity, like many people in Massachusetts,
2 Chicago, and California, has had that opportunity,
3 including New York.

4 So, Director Williams, he's been
5 working very closely with that whole committee, so
6 that we can craft some of these things like
7 redundant enhancements. And then we craft that.

8 And we're looking at the academy. Many
9 of you know Claudia, and I reach out to Claudia.
10 Because Claudia and I were starting in 2019 the
11 Commissioner's Academy.

12 So, anybody who is willing to run as a
13 Commissioner would attend that academy. And
14 Claudia has a background basically in zoning. So,
15 it can be objective.

16 Because right now these resident
17 councils are annoying to me because of us being
18 caught up and behind the eight ball. Because we are
19 still in the box with the thinking.

20 We as the Housing Authority, all we have
21 to do is provide the institution. If the residents
22 come, fine. If you don't come, fine. But you have

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1 no one to blame but yourself.

2 Because you have a lot of educated
3 residents who have taken over roles because they
4 don't understand the true responsibility of reading
5 a resolution in a municipal corporation that go
6 along with being on a resident council or the
7 Citywide Advisory Board, or even sitting up here as
8 a Commissioner. It's not a game.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. Nicole,
10 go right ahead.

11 MS. ODOM: Hello, everyone. My name is
12 Nicole Odom. I'm a former Barry Farms resident.
13 I'm here to speak about some residents at Barry
14 Farms that obtained a voucher, that are having
15 trouble with their vouchers.

16 The problem is, during the process of
17 looking for a home their voucher has expired. They
18 have had obstacles with discrimination. And so,
19 that has cost them time with the short amount of time
20 they had with the voucher. Not a full 60 days.
21 Some maybe 15 days.

22 And so, right now they're at a point

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1 where they actually have been approved for a home.
2 And the unit is actually being held for them. The
3 only issue is, the voucher has expired.

4 The need as much as one day, so that they
5 can finalize everything with their home. And
6 they've been told that they can't get it due to the
7 finances behind the voucher is HUD.

8 And so, I was listening to what Mr.
9 Albert said about, we may not be able to change the
10 situation, but maybe we could come up with other
11 ways to go about this.

12 I can't, I don't know about HUD that
13 much. But my thinking is, if vouchers have
14 expired, maybe some vouchers have not even been
15 used. Why can't we get that money back?

16 If they put a deadline on it, they can
17 start a new deadline. Maybe a short one. But at
18 least those people that currently have the voucher
19 can finish with it, and be in a home that they're
20 satisfied with.

21 Elderlies, people that work all day and
22 night, families. It's hard. We stretch our time

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1 as much as we can. This process has taken so much.
2 And the last thing we need going into the holidays
3 is yet another thing.

4 Housing is everything. They need a
5 home for Thanksgiving, for Christmas, and for the
6 rest of their lives. And so, I'm willing to help
7 come up with ideas for that. I'm thinking of things
8 myself. But I think that the money, if it can be
9 taken away, it could still be given back.

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I think --

11 MS. ODOM: It's not etched in stone.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes. I think the
13 Director may have an answer for you.

14 MR. GARRETT: I just want to ask a
15 couple of questions. Did you reach out to someone
16 in the Housing First program, in management?
17 Either Ron McCoy or --

18 MS. ODOM: Oh, I always reach out to Mr.
19 McCoy.

20 MR. GARRETT: Did he respond to you?

21 MS. ODOM: He responds to me in a
22 positive fashion.

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1 MR. GARRETT: No. I was just, this
2 particular issue, did he respond to you about what
3 they're looking at for value, or taking a different
4 route.

5 MS. ODOM: This specific thing I have
6 not reached out to him about. Because I don't think
7 that he has control over that.

8 MR. GARRETT: So, Commissioner, what
9 would be a resolution for this situation?
10 Residents who might be this, under this
11 circumstance there is a process that we can follow,
12 which would allow for an appeal.

13 And an appeal would actually request an
14 extension. So, once you go through that process a
15 determination is actually made. So, that's the
16 process many of these residents are at. They are
17 in the appeal process, actually make a request for
18 an actual extension.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, how long is that
20 process?

21 MR. GARRETT: Usually, they can finish
22 up that process within a week for that resident --

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: And then, so what
2 kind of communication occurs with the residents
3 during this appeal?

4 MR. GARRETT: The residents are aware.
5 The residents are aware. And I can have Mr. McCoy
6 come up here and give you a clearer vision of what
7 has actually taken place over the last few weeks.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So --

9 MR. GARRETT: So, everyone has the
10 understanding that we are not forsaking our
11 responsibility, we are still engaging the residents
12 and the Council. We're trying our best to find an
13 alternative method for them to move forward.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, to Nicole's
15 question, is there some legal route, legal way to
16 --

17 MR. GARRETT: The process would be the
18 appeal.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, there's nothing
20 --

21 MR. GARRETT: We can't just grant, no,
22 we cannot just grant, but we are starting the appeal

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1 process. And then we can make the right decisions
2 on how we move forward. So, we're trying to move
3 us in the right direction on this. But I think
4 we'll have this resolved in the next few weeks.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, Nicole, what's
6 the universe of people that you think are caught in
7 this situation?

8 MS. ODOM: I'm sorry, can you --

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: How many residents
10 are caught up in this --

11 MS. ODOM: I can think of a few. I
12 don't want to name them right now.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes. But, a couple,
14 five, ten, 15?

15 MS. ODOM: Several yes. But I know of
16 three that are working with the Director. And the
17 issue is that a lot of the time was wasted on
18 discrimination.

19 And so, it kept them from moving forward
20 during that time. So, that time I feel is owed back
21 to them at least. But what it comes down to, and
22 the opposing defense is that the finances aren't

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1 there anymore.

2 MR. GARRETT: And, Commissioners, I can
3 give you the actual count. There are nine
4 individuals that are looking to use their Housing
5 Choice voucher.

6 Of those nine, three are cleaning up
7 an appeal right now. They're in that particular
8 process. One is actually awaiting an inspection.
9 Two are actually scheduled to move in on November
10 16th, on Saturday of, no, Friday of this week --

11 PARTICIPANT: Friday.

12 MR. GARRETT: -- or the 18th. And
13 also, two are still searching. Okay. So, and then
14 there's at least one individual that has a personal
15 issue. And we're trying to follow-up with OGC on.

16 But of the nine we have three, like I
17 said, we have three that are in that process, the
18 appeal process. One resident is awaiting an
19 inspection of their unit. Two are scheduled to
20 move in between November 16th and November 18th.
21 And two still have the opportunity to search for
22 units.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, everyone will get
2 a voucher eventually?

3 MR. GARRETT: Yes. Everyone, of that
4 group of nine, those individuals will have the
5 opportunity to utilize their voucher, except, with
6 the exception of one individual, because there's a
7 legal issue.

8 MS. ODOM: So, they were granted an
9 extension past September 30th?

10 MR. GARRETT: There are three people
11 that are going through a hearing right now, as a
12 final determination.

13 MS. ODOM: Okay. Well, I'm glad to
14 hear that. And I'm working with the ones that I'm
15 working with. And I'm going to be fighting with
16 them.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
18 I'm going to call Linda Smith. Linda Smith.

19 MS. SMITH: Good afternoon. My name is
20 Linda Smith. I live at Kentucky Courts
21 Condominiums. I was here back in September. I had
22 a fire in my apartment.

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1 And I'm back again because now it's
2 going on three months now. And I'm still displaced
3 out of my home. And I'm still paying rent at a place
4 that I'm not staying right now. And I'm still
5 concerned about why I'm still not in there.

6 Now, I've been paying rent faithfully
7 for three months. How many of you pay rent for
8 three months faithfully, and not in their unit?
9 Okay.

10 Now, my insurance company called me,
11 asking me why is DC Housing not calling them. They
12 trying to cut a check for the repairs, okay. They
13 calling me, asking me. I said, that's a good
14 question.

15 And they want to know what's a date that
16 I'm going back into my unit. Because they want to
17 move my contents back into my unit. So, I said,
18 well, let me give them a call.

19 So, I been calling. But I been talking
20 to Ms. Hunter. And she been very, very helpful, and
21 very professional. So, I been basically talking
22 with her. I don't care what time of the day, or if

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1 she's in a meeting, she always return my call.

2 But when the insurance company called
3 me, saying it was trying to get in touch with, I
4 guess, someone down in the office, they say it's
5 been delegated through to them.

6 So, I called Ms. Watson in the office,
7 and spoke to her assistant, Ms. Johnson. I said,
8 can I speak to Ms. Watson? She said, well, she's
9 in a meeting. I said, every time I call Ms. Watson,
10 she's never available.

11 Ms. Johnson explained to me that Ms.
12 Watson ignores your calls. She don't want to talk
13 to you. I said, really? And she oversees Kentucky
14 Courts? I said, okay. So now, she don't want to
15 talk with a resident? I have a problem with that.

16 So, something got to be done. I want to
17 get back into my apartment. If she don't want to
18 be bothered with the resident, then she don't need
19 to be over at Kentucky Courts.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, Mr. Garrett --

21 MR. GARRETT: Ms. Smith, we can take
22 care of it. Ms. Hunter's right there. But would

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1 you give the insurance company Ms. Hunter's number?

2 MS. SMITH: Oh yes. I can give it to
3 her here.

4 MR. GARRETT: Okay. So, you don't know
5 if they contacted her?

6 MS. SMITH: I spoke to the insurance
7 person this morning. And she said that she's tied
8 up for.

9 MR. GARRETT: So, someone will contact
10 her directly. Do you have the number for us today?

11 MS. SMITH: Yes, I have the number.

12 MR. GARRETT: Just give the number to
13 Ms. Hunter.

14 MS. SMITH: Okay. No problem. Thank
15 you so much.

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So, Mr.
17 Director, do you think that assignment should go to
18 Ms. Hunter? Or should that assignment go to the
19 Office of General Counsel?

20 MR. GARRETT: Right now, I was talking
21 to Ms. Hunter. And then she'll disseminate it.
22 She'll disseminate it or give it to OGC. But right

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1 now --

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Especially
3 since maybe they need to take another avenue since
4 so she said --

5 (Simultaneous speaking)

6 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And she can
7 call the same office. So then, is Ms. Smith and her
8 insurance company, and an attorney's number in the
9 Office of General Counsel's office, then a dialogue
10 will take place and it may remedy her situation. She
11 would, the insurance company would be calling the
12 staff person, who will still call the attorney's
13 office. So, to alleviate her from her frustration,
14 let's do it, this way it's a recommendation.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Let's --

16 MR. GARRETT: Hang on a minute. I'm
17 going to have Ms. Hunter take it. She feels --

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Because
19 that's three months.

20 MR. GARRETT: If she needs to go to our
21 office, that's fine. But Ms. Hunter's going to
22 handle it.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, you have my email
2 address, if this doesn't get resolved within the
3 next week, please send me an email.

4 MS. SMITH: I'm sorry.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: So, you might, well,
6 if this doesn't get resolved within the next week,
7 please send me an email.

8 MS. SMITH: Okay.

9 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And when
10 you send him an email, please make sure that you
11 inform them that you are wanting your
12 correspondence to go to the General Counsel's
13 Office.

14 MS. SMITH: Okay. I will. Thank you
15 so much.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes. Thank you.

17 MS. SMITH: Have a great day.

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. Thank
19 you. Next we have Lindsay Tiffany Wilkins.

20 MS. SMITH: Oh, I'm so sorry. I'm so
21 sorry. I forgot. One more thing. I forgot.
22 They changed my locks on my door too.

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1 And one thing, the would not inform me
2 why they changed my locks. And I want to know who
3 the person that changed my locks to come over and
4 tell me why.

5 Any time I'm still paying rent, and I'm
6 still, what do you call it, I still have possession
7 of that unit. Therefore, no one from DC Housing
8 should be changing my locks to my unit unless they
9 inform me. They have no business changing my locks
10 in my unit. But I'm letting you know.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right.

12 MS. SMITH: So, but I'm returning to 261
13 14th Street, Unit 8, I will change my locks.

14 Thank you so much.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right. Ms.
16 Wilkins.

17 MS. MILLS: Good afternoon,
18 Commissioners. My name is Kourtney Mills. And
19 Tiffany Wilkins had to leave. So, if it's okay, she
20 left a letter for me to read. Is it okay if I read
21 it to you?

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Sure.

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1 MS. MILLS: Okay.

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: We'll combine
3 your time. That way --

4 MS. MILLS: All right. Good
5 afternoon. I'm here today in support of the Can I
6 Live organization. I'm a resident of the Elkins
7 Row community, through the public housing program,
8 AYBL, Achieve Your Best Life.

9 The program I am in requires full time
10 employment, with a minimum income, credit
11 counseling and repair, and for each of us to
12 maintain communication with a self-sufficiency
13 coordinator to set goals for the five-year
14 residents, home ownership the AYBL program consists
15 of.

16 Currently, I am a Federal Government
17 employee of six years, a mother of four. And I work
18 hard to care for my family. I have struggled to
19 complete my degree, all while maintaining my job and
20 family needs.

21 But the Can I Live organization
22 presented their mission and I have been happy with

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1 them ever since. In my experience I have met the
2 professionals in a rich skill building session.

3 I have had a one on one interest and
4 development session in constant communication.
5 The goal Housing has set for residents is to
6 ultimately come off public housing, and become
7 self-sufficient.

8 My goal is to purchase a home soon for
9 my family through the program, and continue to work
10 with the Can I Live organization to, one, continue
11 my education, which they have already assisted, and
12 all paperwork, so I can return January 1st.

13 Number two, create and maintain a
14 realistic work/home balance in life, continuing,
15 while continuing with my education. Number 3,
16 develop a business plan for my future
17 entrepreneurship goals, attend trainings for
18 business ownership.

19 And finally, four, move towards a
20 resident based business, give back the support the
21 support the District of Columbia Public Housing
22 program.

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1 In my opinion, as a DC Housing resident,
2 a program such as Can I Live allows the expectations
3 and goals set for us by the Housing Authority.

4 I'm grateful to have met the Can I Live
5 team, as they can relate to most of us in the
6 program, which is uplifting, motivating, and
7 reassuring that we can achieve our best life with
8 the proper guidance, support from my peers,
9 planning and accomplishing goals one at a time.

10 I look forward to continuing my work
11 with Can I Live and the next Come Up session. I want
12 to thank the Housing Authority for allowing this
13 team of caring attentive, positive professionals to
14 come in and assist the residents like me.
15 Respectfully, Lindsay T. Wilkins.

16 And I'm here also to speak in support of
17 Can I Live and the ROSS program. It's not my turn
18 now. But I think there is a person that will come
19 up after this. And then I'll present my case and
20 my concerns. Did you guys want a copy of this
21 letter? Did you guys have any questions?

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Sure.

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1 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Let me just

2 --

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Commissioner
4 Taliaferro, just hold on. Hold on. Hold on. Why
5 don't you go ahead and give your --

6 MS. MILLS: Okay.

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- talk right
8 now, seeing as there's four people who are
9 interested about this same program, and your model.

10 MS. MILLS: Oh. So, I have something
11 that I want everyone to see right here. This is my
12 son. He's 12. He'll be 13 tomorrow. He's trying
13 to start a candle business.

14 (Applause)

15 MS. MILLS: If anyone is interested in
16 seeing this --

17 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Would you
18 state your name and your --

19 MS. MILLS: Yes. My name is Kourtney
20 Mills. And I reside at Potomac Gardens. I've been
21 there since 2010.

22 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So, do you

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1 live in Potomac Gardens Family? Or do you live in
2 Potomac Gardens Senior?

3 MS. MILLS: I'm sorry? Potomac, not
4 the seniors, 700 building.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So, let the
6 record reflect that she lives in Potomac Gardens
7 Family.

8 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Could I ask
9 you a question?

10 MS. MILLS: Sure.

11 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: What is the
12 Can I Live, is --

13 MS. MILLS: So, Can I Live is a non
14 profit organization. In my personal opinion,
15 their primary goal is to work with people, to work
16 with residents on an individual basis, to develop,
17 just to kind of like a support, you know, like for
18 whatever you want to do when you just need kind of
19 like support.

20 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Like a
21 support council?

22 MS. MILLS: A support council, exactly.

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1 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Okay. I
2 understand. Thank you.

3 MS. MILLS: So, can I continue?

4 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: How did this
5 organization come to be?

6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Commissioner,
7 can you --

8 MS. MILLS: All right. So, to my
9 understanding they had a partner, they have
10 partnerships with communities, including Potomac
11 Gardens.

12 So, basically what they do is, they kind
13 of, say for example, myself personally --

14 (Simultaneous speaking)

15 MS. MILLS: I've got some questions I --

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I know. I
17 know. But the clock's on.

18 PARTICIPANT: Stop the clock. Clock
19 lady --

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So, can you
21 restart the clock? And then can you give your --

22 MS. MILLS: Okay. So, my concern is,

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1 Can I Live has partnerships with multiple
2 communities, including Potomac Gardens. I was
3 working with counselors. And there was a grant
4 that they had.

5 And there were several people,
6 including myself, that would have benefitted from
7 the program. Because there are a lot of things that
8 I didn't know.

9 I didn't know that entrepreneurship was
10 offered to the Housing Authority. I didn't know
11 that opportunities for me to go to school, a and that
12 kind of --

13 So, their whole thing is, they kind of
14 sit down and work with you, you know, how you're
15 going to come up with this plan. And the reason why
16 I show you this candle right here, is because my son,
17 you know, he wants to make candles.

18 Because since we've been living in
19 Potomac Gardens there's kind of been a rumor going
20 down. They going to tear Potomac Gardens down.
21 They're going to tear Potomac Gardens down. It's
22 like, oh, it's not true. It's not true, you know.

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1 And kids talk. They hear things. You
2 know, ma, what can I do to help you make money? And
3 for the last year he was just like, I got this idea.
4 I'm going to, you know, help you make, I want to help
5 make candles. And I said, okay.

6 I saved \$500 dollars of my own tax money.
7 I ordered a whole bunch of jars, a whole bunch of
8 stickers. And we started, you know, trying to sell
9 candles.

10 And so, basically what Can I Live did
11 through Raquel Williams in the ROSS program. And
12 they take a individual person. And it kind of is
13 like the model, you can teach a man to, you can give
14 a man a fish, or you can teach him how to fish.

15 So, what Can I Live is, is taking
16 individual people, and then teaching them how to
17 fish. I sat down with Raquel Williams and did an
18 assessment. And basically if I want to do
19 entrepreneurship, which I am interested in
20 entrepreneurship for, like I said, my he'll be 13
21 year old son.

22 And also we developed a plan for me to

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1 be able to go back to school, which we already
2 started at. I sat down, there's a lot of things
3 that I didn't know about FAFSA, you know.

4 And so, I had a personalized plan.
5 Everybody has their own personalized plan with
6 their own entrepreneurship, whether you want home
7 ownership, or whether you want an education.

8 And, you know, to my knowledge, you
9 know, I had this grant. And all my papers and my
10 assessments where I'm going to work best with, and
11 the grant was gone, you know. And me and a lot of
12 other residents were disappointed. Why, so why are
13 we losing this money?

14 And so, my question is, when are we going
15 to re-implement this program and programs like
16 this? Because, just like all of you individuals
17 have your personal plans, and you have support from
18 whoever you have support from, that's what Can I
19 Live has done for not only myself, but also my
20 family.

21 I have myself and five children. I have
22 six children. I was able to send my daughter to

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1 college where, you know, she grad -- She was living
2 in Potomac Gardens. She's in college right now in
3 California. And so, it's kind of like -- She's also
4 --

5 (Applause)

6 MS. MILLS: She's also, you know, she's
7 not here, I can't embarrass her. She's a virgin at
8 21, because she said, mommy, I always saw you
9 working hard. And so, I have another successful
10 child in the ranks.

11 And I need the support of Can I Live.
12 And a lot of residents need the support of Can I Live
13 to continue to move forward. And so, my question
14 is, do you -- Am I just left up here to work on
15 myself?

16 Because I'm interested in home
17 ownership. I'm interested in entrepreneurship.
18 And so, where, you know, I just want to know where
19 is the grant, and where is the funding for the
20 program like this? If it was already in place, why
21 don't we start teaching people how to fish?

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you for

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1 ---

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI:
3 Commissioners, I'm going to have to recuse myself
4 from anything to do with Can I Live. Because I am
5 a delegate for Can I Live. And as far as we speak
6 today, I have not been involved with the
7 situation. Nor have any other Commissioners
8 contacted me during the situation.

9 (Simultaneous speaking)

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: We've got a lot
11 of people that want to testify.

12 MS. MILLS: So, my question is --

13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I'm getting --

14 MS. MILLS: Is there going to be
15 funding?

16 (Simultaneous speaking)

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can you,
18 Director Garrett, give us some information on how,
19 you know, it can be implemented at the site, on these
20 sites. And what the involvement was, and why it's
21 no longer funded? And how, you know, this is part
22 of a greater question on wraparound services, and

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1 our plan for them.

2 MR. GARRETT: Yes. Briefly,
3 Commissioners, Can I Live was part of the ROSS grant
4 that we submitted on behalf of the various
5 properties.

6 From that they performed a service.
7 And it's not the service that's in question.
8 Because the service is definitely needed. And
9 that's why we created the partnerships around --

10 MS. MILLS: Absolutely.

11 MR. GARRETT: But what we have run into
12 is an investigation by HUD on the organization.
13 So, the money's still there. Once HUD finishes its
14 investigation we will work to either continue Can
15 I Live, and/or we will redirect that money to
16 resident services. And resident services will
17 carry on, on the remainder of the grant. And that's
18 really all I can say about it at this point in time.

19 MS. MILLS: I appreciate that.

20 MR. GARRETT: Okay.

21 MS. MILLS: Can I have one follow-up
22 question? You said that there was an

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1 investigation. And I had no knowledge of that.
2 Like I said, I'm just a mom with children. And I'm
3 trying to, I promised my kids, I work as hard as I
4 can to make it successful. And I'm on a path of
5 making that a reality.

6 So, with that investigation being in
7 place, where do my services lie? Can I continue to
8 follow-up with my services with Can I Live? Or am
9 I just on hold, you know?

10 MR. GARRETT: I can't actually answer
11 that question. I don't think, Can I Live doesn't
12 have the money to work with you on behalf of the DC
13 Housing Authority at this point in time.

14 MS. MILLS: Okay.

15 MR. GARRETT: I think that's the best
16 way to couch it.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Is there
18 something, I don't want to get into something that
19 we can't talk about. But is there a way we can
20 bridge the gap while we're going through this legal
21 process to, you know, not stop what sounds like a
22 positive -- I don't know if that's possible or not.

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1 But --

2 MR. GARRETT: Yes. Resident services
3 can work with her. And also Director Larry
4 Williams is here.

5 (Simultaneous speaking)

6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So, we'll have
7 to discuss providing whatever we can in terms of gap
8 servicing until we get this worked out?

9 MR. GARRETT: Yes.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: That's the best
11 we can do?

12 MS. MILLS: I appreciate that. And
13 this is the last question. So, it kind of was just
14 like yanked from the funding. I had started my
15 FAFSA. I didn't have any knowledge of --

16 It's kind of, there's a lot of people who
17 don't know it's available to them, you know, that
18 want to go out and do something. It, so, what do
19 I do? It's kind of like, UDC is just like, all
20 right, you put you application through. And I
21 still need the support.

22 And so, and I understand you're saying

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1 resident services. So, where would I continue to
2 -- I particularly need support so I can finish, you
3 know, my entrepreneurship and FAFSA. I'm like dead
4 at the beginning.

5 It was just kind of like, I want to
6 continue doing what I was doing. So, what I'm
7 saying is, I have to ask the, I kind of need like
8 support to follow through, so I can start UDC in the
9 fall. Not in the fall, actually in the spring
10 semester.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right.

12 MS. MILLS: I need somebody that is kind
13 of on my end. Because I was like, oh, I'm only going
14 to have these kids. Is, college is not a
15 possibility.

16 But Can I Live said, actually, this is
17 your reality. You can do it. And I'm going to help
18 you to do this. And I'm going to show you how to
19 do. And so, which is kind of what this
20 investigation, which I had no clue of. So, what do
21 I do, you know? I know that I can't continue to go
22 to UDC --

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1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I think what
2 we're trying to say is that if you could work with
3 Larry Williams --

4 MS. MILLS: Larry Williams --

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Yes.

6 MS. MILLS: -- is my contact person?

7 MR. GARRETT: Yes. He's right here.

8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: While we get
9 this worked out --

10 MS. MILLS: Okay. Thank you. I
11 appreciate that.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So, I
13 appreciate your testifying --

14 MS. MILLS: Yes. Like I said --
15 (Simultaneous speaking)

16 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Excuse me.
17 Excuse me. Excuse me.

18 MS. MILLS: Yes, sir.

19 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: I got a paper
20 here for you, you can take care of college courses
21 at our Southwest Family Center. They got courses
22 from the UDC for all residents, for everybody --

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1 MS. MILLS: Yes.

2 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: To come in,
3 take a course.

4 (Simultaneous speaking)

5 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: They do a
6 good job, do you.

7 MS. MILLS: As a matter of fact I'm with
8 the UDC work program. I took my practice test
9 today, which I did pass. And I'll take my final
10 test next week. I'm in the UDC records. The whole
11 point is, I have a determination letting me slip
12 through. I need somebody -- a plan.

13 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: You need a
14 thing.

15 MS. MILLS: I kind of, okay, this is
16 what you're good at, you know, this is what's
17 available. And these sorts of things. Does that
18 make sense to you?

19 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Yes, yes.

20 MS. MILLS: Because --

21 (Simultaneous speaking)

22 MS. MILLS: The whole motto of Can I

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1 Live is, I'm laying moms off of welfare. And I'm
2 a part of the one million moms off of welfare.

3 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: I
4 understand. You said something. You said you need
5 some kind of guideline, correct?

6 MS. MILLS: Yes. Exactly.

7 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Okay.

8 MS. MILLS: Okay.

9 MR. GARRETT: Hopefully it wasn't --

10 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Mr. McCoy,
11 you can speak with Mr. McCord that I told you about
12 the AYBL program. This is a great opportunity.

13 MS. MILLS: Okay. Thank you. I
14 appreciate your time, everyone.

15 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Hold on
16 Kourtney.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Hold on one
18 second.

19 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Hold on.
20 Raise your hand, Mr. McCoy. The one by the wall.

21 MS. MILLS: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Hold on one

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1 second.

2 MS. MILLS: It's --

3 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: I'm very
4 inspired by you. I think you are awesome.

5 MS. MILLS: Thank you. I appreciate
6 that.

7 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: You're an
8 awesome mother.

9 (Simultaneous speaking)

10 MS. MILLS: I appreciate that.

11 (Applause)

12 MS. MILLS: You know, like I said, God,
13 faith, and hard work. And I got all three of those.
14 So, you know, I'm off.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right.
16 Thank you very much. Christina Coney.

17 MS. CONEY: Good afternoon. My name is
18 Christina Coney. I'm here today in support of Can
19 I Live, ROSS program.

20 Basically, I came upon the site with Can
21 I Live. They had a community event, and I came out.
22 And I met Ms. Raquel Jones. And I gave my

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1 information.

2 And after that I had a one on one session
3 with her. And we talked about education,
4 entrepreneurship program, and home ownership. And
5 basically the conversation I had changed my
6 perspective.

7 I'd been to school. But there had been
8 some issues until, in my Come Up plan. An
9 assistant, well, Ms. Jones was giving me pointers
10 on how to speak with admissions office at one of the
11 schools I was at and help in finding grants. So,
12 I'm in that process now, returning back to school.

13 And then also, I was given the
14 opportunity to work with Can I Live. So, I've seen
15 it from a behind the scenes point of view. I've
16 done some work. I hadn't, you know, been paid for
17 it. But, I mean, that was supposed to be a part of
18 the grant.

19 But I have really enjoyed working with
20 them. I've seen her, Ms. Jones, give a
21 presentation for a lot of the residents at Academy
22 of Hope, referring residents to different services.

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1 And just seeing how many residents have been
2 inspired to do better.

3 Because a lot of times when you're in a
4 cycle, in a holding pattern you just, you should
5 not, you're just used to being a failure. So, I've
6 seen it where residents that don't have their GEDs
7 have been referred. And now they're pursuing their
8 high school diploma or their GED.

9 So, I've just been inspired. So,
10 that's why I wanted to come forward to speak on
11 behalf of Can I Live. Thank you.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: We appreciate
13 your coming forward and telling your story.
14 Questions? Or, I guess a continuation of the
15 previous conversation we had last time.

16 MR. GARRETT: I just want to say, and in
17 lieu of the use of Can I Live, I encourage people
18 to find and use the Southwest Family Center and the
19 resident services department.

20 MS. CONEY: I've been to Southwest,
21 and child development.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you

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1 again. Next we have Misha Pettway.

2 MS. PETTWAY: Good afternoon. My name
3 is Misha Pettway. I too am here to speak in support
4 of Can I Live and the ROSS Grant, as well as other
5 items the first speaker --- Can I Live.

6 Commissioner Vann Ghasri, who is the
7 President of Potomac Gardens, actually introduced
8 Can I Live to Potomac Gardens one night in the
9 resident council meeting.

10 And when I had the opportunity to listen
11 to Ms. Raquel Williams just speak I knew that there
12 was something genuinely special about her. She
13 shared her past with us. And knowing that she stood
14 in some of the same places where I stood, I was able
15 to relate to her.

16 Not only that, Ms. Raquel has become
17 like a life coach to me, with the Can I Live
18 organization as well. I too have heard the very
19 same things that the others who have come forward.
20 However, my situation may be slightly different
21 from theirs.

22 I don't know if anyone here suffers from

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1 any mental health issues or depression, anything of
2 the such. Whereas, I have been. Ms. Raquel saw
3 that in me, and had a special conversation with me.

4 And with that she was able to give me a
5 referral to a organization that has been so, so
6 helpful with getting me the therapy and counseling
7 that I need to help me.

8 I don't know how many of you ever felt
9 like the day was over for you, and you wanted to kill
10 yourself. Well, that was me at one point. But Ms.
11 Raquel saw that, and she was able to help me.

12 So first, I just really thank her and her
13 organization for just being willing to help, just
14 do that much.

15 (Applause)

16 MS. PETTWAY: And then, the next issue
17 I had is, Housing sends out Fire to the Potomac
18 Gardens community for us to call Housing with our
19 maintenance issues. I have done that actually, via
20 online.

21 I got a response via email. But nobody
22 has called me to follow-up to see when, or let me

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1 know when they were going to come out to fix the
2 situation.

3 I called my rental office and spoke to
4 Ms. Berry. Ms. Berry in turn said, well, send your
5 issues to us, and we'll do what we can.

6 So, we may want to work on that issue.
7 If we're going to submit out problems and
8 maintenance requests to you, then that is, it's not
9 working as of now.

10 The next issue I have is security. I
11 did hear Commissioner Vann Ghasri say earlier about
12 700 had their security. Well, not only did I hear
13 her say that 700 had security. But she said 700 has
14 a separate resident council from --

15 She said the 13th Street, 12th Street,
16 and I Street have their own resident council. But
17 we're all inclusive. So, my issue about the
18 security is, 700 has a unarmed security officer in
19 their building.

20 For a number of years I have been asking
21 to have a unarmed security in the other buildings
22 where we have booths. I was told by Lori Patricia

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1 some time ago that it was because of her that we do
2 not have any security anymore in our booths.

3 Unbeknownst to her, or maybe a whole lot
4 of you that live in housing, you don't have to walk
5 out your door to see people unknown to your
6 community on a regular basis. When you have
7 children especially. And so, it's dangerous. So,
8 I will ask again if you will give us unarmed security
9 in our other buildings. The next issue --

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can you go
11 quickly?

12 MS. PETTWAY: Oh, yes. I will. Okay.
13 I'd like to ask if a policy could be put in place
14 for the Commissioners not to be able to run for a
15 president of their community? Because it imposes
16 a problem for the Commissioner to wear both hats at
17 the same time.

18 And it's not fair if you're sitting in
19 one setting, via, and I'll just use the resident
20 council meeting as an example, for the Commissioner
21 to put on her Commissioner, or his Commissioner hat
22 in that meeting, unless there is going to be a

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1 specific question asked of the Commissioner. That
2 is a policy that I would like to add that you all
3 would please consider putting in place.

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. And --

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Ms. Pettway

6 --

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Hold on.

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI:

9 Specifically --

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Hold on.

11 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Be specific
12 with which of your maintenance problems are, you
13 need to be more specific than just maintenance
14 problems. I'd like to know what was going on in --

15 MS. PETTWAY: Oh, sure. So, there were
16 rats eating through my cabinets in my home. And
17 they, I did let the resident manager know. They
18 came out and did a lot of work.

19 However, there was another hole that I
20 saw. And since I had gotten the flier to report the
21 issue to maintenance, that's what I did. I
22 mentioned to your colleague. That's what I did.

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1 But when you all do not respond in a timely fashion
2 --

3 Because I had to steal some bricks from
4 two blocks up the street to brick around the hole,
5 to keep the rats out. I let Ms. Berry know. And
6 she sent maintenance to come and fix it.

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right. I
8 appreciate that. And we'll take, we'll get a
9 response for all of your questions and concerns.
10 And we'll hope to get them resolved.

11 MS. PETTWAY: Okay. Thank you.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Next we have
13 Sherwayne Carter.

14 MR. CARTER: Good evening, everybody.
15 My name is Sherwayne Carter. I stay in 461 H Street
16 NW. The building is called Judiciary Square. I'm
17 not going to take up much of your time,
18 Commissioners. But I'd just like one question,
19 right.

20 Okay. Like she said, I was living with
21 the president of a resident council too. Like, so,
22 the garage that I park my car in, now, my space is

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1 number 14, okay. If you want to see a picture of
2 that, I'll show you a picture of it. If not, it's
3 okay.

4 But my place is okay. I don't have any
5 debris falling on my car. It's not a unsafe
6 position that my car is in, or I'm in, right. But
7 now, my neighbors, you know, they, some of theirs
8 are parked -- I got a picture of a real bad spot too.

9 But now, the resident manager of my
10 building, he has stopped all parking in the garage
11 and on the outside, right. And I just, and I have
12 just one more question. Could anything be done
13 about that pipe now?

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Is that,
15 Director Garrett, what is this? Is this the
16 project management problem?

17 MR. GARRETT: Well, it's my
18 understanding right now that 19 through 23 are
19 blocked off. So, I need to go back and look, and
20 identify if that's the case. Because they are
21 doing repairs in the garage. Because to my
22 understanding only 19 through 23 are blocked off.

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1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So, I guess it's
2 because of the maintenance issue, or --

3 MR. GARRETT: Yes. And can you tell me
4 like, what, do you get parking as far as being --

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Yes, they do get
6 parking, yes.

7 MR. GARRETT: So, each --

8 MR. CARTER: Excuse me. Okay. I park
9 --

10 MR. GARRETT: Each apartment comes with
11 a parking space?

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: As many as we
13 can possibly provide within that building. Based
14 on codes we don't have enough parking spaces for all
15 --

16 MR. GARRETT: And is that an additional
17 cost? Or is it --

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: No.

19 MR. GARRETT: So, I guess we're doing
20 the best we can with parking. And there are certain
21 considerations when we're having to do maintenance,
22 or something? Or did you need to consume some of

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1 that space to park?

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: It sounds like
3 that's what's going on.

4 MR. GARRETT: Yes.

5 MR. CARTER: Right. Right. Excuse
6 me. It says these parts of the garage. Like
7 there's one part that they working on now. They
8 have wood in it.

9 MR. GARRETT: Right.

10 MR. CARTER: So, I can understand.
11 There's not going to be no parking space in there.
12 But now, that place that I'm talking about right
13 over top of that is on the outside.

14 That has been marked off too. But then,
15 he's talking about like at least 20 other spaces
16 that, you know, there are, the resident manager said
17 no parking.

18 I mean, but that's not my concern. My
19 concern is really, can I use my space without me
20 getting a ticket. Because now I raised in the
21 letter this --

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Right. So, I'm

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1 glad you're honest. So, I think part of what we
2 asked during the last testimony is this sort of a
3 review of parking, not just here but at all the
4 properties.

5 And so, I think after this meeting will
6 be a better understanding of your particular
7 situation, as well as the global parking situation.
8 So, I can't give you an answer this very second.
9 But we will get to the bottom of it quickly.
10 Director Garrett will get back to you.

11 MR. CARTER: Okay. That's good.
12 That's good.

13 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Can I add
14 something on that, please, Chairman?

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Go ahead.

16 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: In response
17 to your management, Mr. Williams, it would be smart
18 to let the residents be the first prerogative of
19 anybody coming to that building.

20 They're paying rent. They live there.
21 Respect is due. DCHA do the maintenance, they're
22 going the ones on the street, because that's where

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1 they live at, it's very hard to park. They right
2 downtown. They --

3 MR. CARTER: Right in Chinatown.

4 COMMISSIONER TALIAFERRO: Right.
5 They're going to get a \$200 ticket, you see where
6 they live at. What got me concerned is that the
7 management don't respect their tenants in the
8 building. Maybe, \$200 dollars for everybody
9 there, every month they get a ticket.

10 That's a lot of money. And you people
11 on a budget. So, how you expect them to pay \$200
12 dollars every month, Mr. Garrett. That's what I'm
13 trying to ask.

14 MR. GARRETT: So, we need to
15 investigate and find out exactly.

16 MR. CARTER: So, then --

17 MR. GARRETT: We need to find out who the
18 tickets were actually distributed to and for what
19 reason. If you give me the opportunity to bring
20 that information back, and we'll get back to you.

21 MR. CARTER: Yes, sir.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right.

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1 Appreciate it.

2 MR. CARTER: Okay. Hold on. So, as
3 far as putting myself second, and my neighbors
4 first, right. See I got a picture of it. But I'm
5 talking about at least 20 spaces there is no work
6 being done.

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay.

8 MR. CARTER: Why not use them? How
9 come you don't --

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: That's a good
11 question that we're going to get to the bottom of.

12 MR. CARTER: Well, you -- Okay.

13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- right now.

14 MR. CARTER: Okay. Thank you.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And we will be
16 working now on that. And the Executive Director
17 report back to us as soon as possible.

18 MR. CARTER: Okay.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you for
20 bringing it to our attention.

21 MR. CARTER: Okay.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Joyce Kinard.

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1 Joyce Kinard. Okay. Sandra Brooks. Sandra
2 Brooks. Shonta High.

3 MS. HIGH: Good afternoon, Board of
4 Commissioners, my name is Miss Shonta High, I'm the
5 Resident Council President at Park Morton. I am
6 here to make a few comments.

7 First, when will DC HA implement an
8 electronic method of rent-paying? We're still
9 mailing in our rent. All of the other places like
10 Wells Fargo, a shared cash and all other places have
11 done away with accepting our payment. We need a new
12 form because a lot of people's rent is late simply
13 because of snail mail.

14 Park Morton, and I want to make this as
15 my second point, I want to make this clear, Park
16 Morton wants equity in our redevelopment. Some
17 residents want vouchers so that they may leave DC.
18 They don't want to be here anymore, it's too
19 expensive. We have some people who want vouchers
20 because they just want to move into the private
21 market.

22 We have residents who want to move to the

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1 Bruce Monroe site, and we do have residents who want
2 to own a home in our community at the footprint.
3 Thank you.

4 My next point, be sure, Council, I mean
5 Commissioners, that DC HA that when you put into
6 documentation that you've had a meeting with me and
7 my board, please be sure that you actually had a
8 meeting with me and my board and my residents
9 before. Because I read that resolution y'all was
10 supposed to vote on today, and I was not pleased with
11 the fact that you all mentioned that you had a
12 meeting with me and you had not.

13 Also, Director Garrett, you canceled
14 Park Morton's town hall back on August 9 of 2018.
15 It's three months late, we're still waiting for you
16 to reschedule that.

17 My next point, why haven't the safety
18 issues at Park Morton, why aren't they being
19 addressed? I personally am doing DC HA and MPD's
20 work by putting myself at risk running the junkies
21 and the tricks that everybody has in my building,
22 and I am f'ing sick of it. I am fed up, I am losing

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1 my grip. And when I lose my grip, everybody on the
2 Commission is going to hear from me.

3 All right, my next point, why does the
4 DC HA have a Housing Agent that helps the HCVP, the
5 recipients of the Housing Choice Voucher Program,
6 why don't y'all have a agent in place, some type of
7 realtor or somebody that works closely with DC HA
8 to help residents who receive their vouchers get
9 viable housing without padded situations like this
10 where the vouchers expire?

11 And you guys need to also be helpful with
12 so many application fees and all of this stuff. We
13 work, we are flat broke, y'all taking most of what
14 we got.

15 And my last point, why didn't DC HA help
16 our resident, and I'm calling her by name, Ms.
17 Shanelle Johnson, from 618 Morton St.? She has six
18 children, she is on the Housing Choice Voucher
19 Program. When I came to DC HA for the last Board
20 of Commissioners meeting, I think it was the last
21 week that was at DC HA was like two months ago or
22 something, I went into the Housing Choice Voucher

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1 Program office and inquired about her coming down,
2 because she's on the list.

3 They said they couldn't help her. And
4 when I say they, Mr. Porter said to tell her to come
5 down and see him. And she came down there, and he
6 told her there was nothing he could do for her. I
7 beg to differ.

8 That lady needs to be right-sized. Her
9 and her six children need to be right-sized, and
10 she's on the voucher list. I am asking the
11 Commissioners to step forth today and right-size
12 Ms. Shanelle Johnson with her six children. Thank
13 you.

14 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Miss.

15 MS. HIGH: Any questions?

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: No, but I
17 would like to say to Ms. High that we really
18 appreciate your leadership pertaining to Mr. Saul.

19 MS. HIGH: Yes.

20 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: On that
21 note, I would like for us to take a moment of silence
22 for Ms. Barbara Graves, who is one of our elders and

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1 one of the outstanding leaders from James Creek who
2 is also --. And her celebration of life will be
3 tomorrow, and it will be at Allen AME Church.

4 MS. HIGH: We lost Ms. Regina Early too.
5 She was once our front office assistants when Ms.
6 Dunlap who was at our property.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So I could
8 celebrate our condolences out to James Creek and
9 also to your community and residents. Thank you so
10 much.

11 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: I actually
12 had a question.

13 MR. GARRETT: Commissioner Neal Jones

14 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Yes, I
15 noticed that you come forward and you brought a
16 number of issues, both this time and the last time
17 that you were before us. Do you have a recurring
18 check-in with the team at the Housing Authority?
19 Because it seems that there are a number of current
20 issues that --

21 MS. HIGH: Well, I work with, I have a
22 new navigator now, Ms. Monique, and she and I have

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1 been working closely about trying to resolve some
2 of the issues. But DC HA is not open 24 hours a day,
3 and most of the issues that happen are at night after
4 you all have gone at 4:45.

5 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: So is the, so
6 you said you're working with a navigator. And
7 we're still hearing a number of issues that are
8 brought here. So what would it take for you to
9 regularly check in, like, where does that need to
10 happen so that we can solve the ongoing issues?

11 MS. HIGH: The ongoing issues revolve
12 around DC HA police. If they were more present in
13 our community, if they were actually walking up and
14 down the stairs, running the element out, we
15 wouldn't have this.

16 If we had locks like we did before, we
17 wouldn't have this problem. Because people who
18 live within the building, if they don't want the
19 element in, they won't let them in. They have to
20 have a key to get in. The only time they can ever
21 get in if somebody, they catch somebody coming out
22 and they catch the door, or somebody who lives in

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1 the building is letting them in.

2 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES?: I'm sorry, I
3 hear the concern, and maybe it's the follow up is
4 where that is happening. But I think --

5 MS. HIGH: Well, I'm sorry, excuse me
6 one second. Ms. Monique can only do what she can
7 do, which is relay my information. And once she
8 relays that, her job is done. It's up to you all
9 to pick up from there and do what needs to be done.

10 MR. GARRETT: Commissioners, Ms. High
11 sends a regular email on the issue and conditions.
12 Some of the issues we can address in a meeting and
13 some of issues we are having to deal with. And
14 that's the reality of it. Some issues we aren't
15 able to get on right away in the manner that she
16 would like us to, and some issues we don't
17 necessarily agree upon. But we don't ignore her
18 correspondence.

19 So I can say that. There was an issue
20 with some email last week in reference to the doors,
21 individuals coming into the units or into the
22 stairwells and sleeping. She called in and was

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1 made aware of it, and we discussed what our
2 alternatives were.

3 We believe that door controls are some
4 of the best options at this point in time. We've
5 been trying to lock the doors from within. It
6 wasn't as successful as we wanted it to be, actually
7 it created more problems for us. So we're going to
8 try to increase the patrols, that's on the public
9 safety side.

10 On the issues, many of those issues come
11 directly to me and the members of the staff.

12 MS. HIGH: With all due respect,
13 Director Garrett, when you come out your front door
14 and you see a puddle of urine at your front door,
15 you do not want to have to deal with this every day.
16 I've had to buy my own cleaning supplies to keep my
17 hallway clean because Maintenance is unavailable on
18 the weekend to take care of stuff like this when it
19 happens.

20 And I personally feel that locks would
21 change the situation. The old locks, yeah, you
22 could jam stuff in there. The new locks I'm asking

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1 for, there's no way to jam anything in there.

2 So I would please, implore you to
3 consider giving us locks for our own safety, for the
4 safety of our children, and for the fact that our
5 personal packages are always stolen because people
6 just walk right in the building and take them.
7 Thank you very much.

8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: We appreciate
9 your coming down to us, and I thank you very much.

10 MS. HIGH: Thank you, Mr. Slover,
11 Commissioner Vann-Ghasri.

12 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: A pleasure.

13 MS. HIGH: And all the Commissioners,
14 thank you.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Michael Lee,
16 it's been a while. Where have you been?

17 MR. LEE: Flying my private jet.

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Wow, you didn't
19 invite me.

20 MR. LEE: Zion, Zion, the Sabbath is
21 coming. The Sabbath is coming for the veterans,
22 and Veterans' Day. Pretty much the same position.

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1 Eight thousand soldiers have been killed in Iraq and
2 Afghanistan, but we can't help 7,000 homeless
3 people in Washington.

4 I'm trying to understand the logic and
5 the intelligence that we have 500 people still
6 sleeping on the streets, and now something if
7 people, homeless, did not help, this is a very, very
8 serious situation.

9 And then there's 2,000 people in public
10 schools who are homeless. This is not good. This
11 has been this way for decades. These schools,
12 these public schools have been responsible for 20
13 years or so.

14 So we have 7,000 homeless people, I
15 think it's 8,000 people in public housing, roughly
16 speaking, 11,000 people Housing Choice Voucher
17 Program. 50,000 people on waiting lists, and
18 100,000 people below the poverty level.

19 So if the United States Congress, the
20 United States Senate, the House of Representatives,
21 the Senate, this is poor leadership. No matter how
22 you look at it, after 26 years I've been here now.

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1 And then they have a Congressional Homeless Caucus.
2 They have Congressional Homeless Caucus.

3 So then we have Department of Justice,
4 Department of Health and Human Services, Department
5 of Labor, and Department of Housing and Urban
6 Development. Department of Justice, Department of
7 Health and Human Services, Department of Labor,
8 Department of Housing and Urban Development.

9 The report on law, the report on health,
10 the world book report, and the report on homes. No
11 matter how you look at this, you know, the Attorney
12 General's office called in a meeting. I'm at the
13 bottom, I've been at the bottom for the last 26
14 years. I was born here too. So the Deputy Mayor
15 for Public Safety and Justice, the Deputy Mayor for
16 Health and Human Services.

17 The Deputy Mayor for Urban Development,
18 the Deputy Mayor of Education. Deputy Mayor Public
19 Safety and Justice, the Deputy Mayor of Health and
20 Human Services, the Deputy Mayor for Affordable
21 Housing Development, the Deputy Mayor for
22 Education.

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1 Committee on Judicial and Public
2 Safety, Committee on Health and Human Health.
3 Committee on Human Services, and Committee on
4 Policy and Neighborhood Revitalization.

5 You know, a professional property
6 manager. Professional property manager. A
7 professional property manager, professional
8 property manager. And so once the young people,
9 the poor people, the homeless people, and sad to
10 say, the sick people, the low income senior
11 citizens, and the poor and homeless veterans.
12 These people are innocent.

13 The young people, the poor people, the
14 homeless people, sadly to say the sick people, the
15 low income senior citizens, and the poor and
16 homeless. These people are innocent. And because
17 of all -- that's why you have a job. And you know,
18 if any of you all was in my building the last seven
19 years, you'd be shocked.

20 If any of y'all in my building and then
21 it's like, you know, make sure that people are being
22 treated fairly. To make sure that the veterans are

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1 being treated fairly. What does it take to make
2 sure that poor people are being treated fairly? To
3 make sure that homeless, the veterans are being
4 treated fairly.

5 And Dr. Moore, perfect example, I mean
6 James Stiegel, you know just last Friday, you know,
7 I don't know how many people work for DC Housing
8 Authority. You people have a job, you're being
9 paid so the people who come to you, be kind to these
10 people. I'm talking about you people who work for
11 the DC Housing Authority, when the young people or
12 poor people or homeless people, be kind to these
13 people.

14 Help these people. Lift these people
15 up. That's what you're getting paid to do. Lift
16 these people, lift them up like people. Be people
17 like Mr. Moore, he works belittling me, degrading
18 me. You know, intelligence, leadership,
19 communication, management, education, research,
20 supervision, instruction. Professional
21 responsibility and professional -- very, very poor.

22 You know, and when you look at this

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1 picture, you know something, we got the Department
2 of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, these
3 people are innocent. We got the World Bank,
4 International Monetary Fund, Intermonetary Federal
5 Bank helping around the world. And it just doesn't
6 make up for 250 years of free labor, 250 years of
7 free labor, 100 years before we had any rights.

8 I grew up Barry Farms, that's so
9 degrading, that is so degrading. I grew up Barry,
10 got people boxed like a bunch of animals. This is
11 not fair, it's very, very, very sad. You know, it's
12 public service, public office, public official, the
13 public trust. You're here to serve the people,
14 you're not there to serve you.

15 And why this affordable housing, that is
16 the biggest scam. I mean, that's what they tell the
17 young people, that's what they tell the poor people,
18 that's what we tell, oh, just, well -- that's
19 bullcrap. You've got skyscrapers going all over the
20 city.

21 So the same 250-year, descendant of
22 slavery memorial. Dedicated to our foreparents

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1 who worked those fields. They worked for free.
2 Sold into slavery, brought in boats in chains and
3 shackles.

4 Walking for my foreparents, thinking
5 about my foreparents, what they went through back
6 in the day, I just can't imagine. It gives me shivers
7 to think about that. But we'll tell you, you know
8 something, with Neil Albert running for president,
9 you be trifling.

10 Put Trump in the fight, put these people
11 in check. There should be plenty of money, plenty
12 of money available to help these people who've been
13 here for years. Plenty of money available.

14 So when the United States Congress and
15 even -- for me I say, run for president,
16 vice-president. But then the with the report on
17 law--

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Mr. Lee, I love
19 you.

20 MR. LEE: Anyway. But still, I mean.

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you for
22 coming to testify, I appreciate it. Detrice Bell.

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1 MS. BELT: Good afternoon, everybody,
2 and I'm Detrice Belt and I'm a Barry Farms resident.
3 I'm the Chair of the Barry Farms Tenants and Our
4 Lives. I'll be very quick today. I just, I met
5 with HOU. I'm still here on the property, I met
6 with the HOU relocation staff.

7 The places that they're offering me is
8 not comparable to what I live in now, and I told them
9 I don't want the two options that they gave me. So
10 they said they're going to look, but I haven't heard
11 anything back from them, and it's been over three
12 weeks.

13 I'm not rushing anything. My question
14 to the Board is why are you all rushing? Was there
15 a permit put on Stevens Road? Is there a permit to
16 demolish? When will there be demolition on Stevens
17 Road? That's what I want to know, because most of
18 the residents that are still left on the property
19 live on Stevens.

20 And it's not a rush for me to move. I'm
21 trying to figure out why are we rushing. I don't
22 want to move three days before Christmas, I don't

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1 want to move my whole family, you know, right close
2 to the holidays.

3 It's very depressing seeing residents
4 move out. Daily already, they're like rushing to
5 move, they don't even realize they can stay until
6 like January. They don't have to move like
7 tomorrow or today. They can take their time and
8 spend their, you know, last Thanksgiving or
9 Christmas here in our community.

10 So I'm trying to figure out is there a
11 permit or when is it slated to be demolished on
12 Stevens Road.

13 MR. GARRETT: Commissioners, I don't
14 have the exact timetable for Stevens Road, but I do
15 know the time we started on, the time to complete
16 those, and if at all possible move forward with the
17 total demolition of the site.

18 Relocating the residents right now is a
19 priority, and we are taking into consideration that
20 the holidays are approaching. So we're very, very
21 mindful of that and we're going to work with
22 residents as best as we possibly can. And if

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1 necessary, we'll continue working with the group
2 representing the developer.

3 MS. BELT: So was it already, it is like
4 put in for a permit to demolish Stevens Road?

5 MR. GARRETT: I have to check to see
6 whether or not the permit was put in. I'll get back
7 to you on that.

8 MS. HIGH: Okay.

9 MR. GARRETT: But I'm not 100% percent
10 sure that's, Stevens Road is done.

11 MS. HIGH: Okay.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you for
13 testifying. Gwendolyn Devore, if I've pronounced
14 that correctly. If not --

15 MS. DEVORE: I'm coming.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Help me out.
17 That's not it, or? Okay. That's not you? Okay.

18 MS. DEVORE: Good afternoon, Director
19 and Commissioners. My name is Gwendolyn Devore.
20 And what you see there, that has been my living
21 condition since September. And I went, I was in
22 y'all's meeting in September at 1133 to discuss my

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1 living conditions then. I was assigned to Crescent
2 Village.

3 In front of you is a package containing
4 emails and the result of inspection dated October
5 25, 2018 by DCRA, not DC HA, DCRA. Along with
6 pictures of my current living condition. Mind you,
7 since September, I don't have any water. I'm not
8 able to use my water. The only time I can take a
9 shower, I would physically have to go and turn the
10 water on. When I finish, I would have to physically
11 turn the water off.

12 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Ma'am,
13 could you state the name of the property?

14 MS. DEVORE: It's not a property, it's
15 private.

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: It's a
17 private home --

18 MS. DEVORE: Well, yes.

19 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Funded by
20 DCRA.

21 MS. DEVORE: Yes.

22 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So you're

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1 on a housing choice voucher?

2 MS. DEVORE: No, in March, the original
3 landlord sold the property with me and my family
4 still in it. The problem I --

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Hold on, Ms.
6 Vann-Ghasri, hold on a second.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Well, I'm
8 --- .

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I know, I'm --
10 you testified last month or two months ago?

11 MS. DEVORE: I did, but I wasn't able to
12 say anything last month. As soon as I started, they
13 say, Mr. So and So, get her to check out. And ever
14 since then, nobody has been helping me.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right, so
16 you came, I just remembered, so you came, you tried
17 to testify.

18 MS. DEVORE: Yes.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: You were
20 referred to somebody, and that resulted in --

21 MS. DEVORE: Nothing.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay. And you

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1 are in --

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI:
3 Commissioner Slover, is this a DC RA property?

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: She's in the
5 Housing Choice Voucher Program, as I recall.
6 However, there's some --

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: That's what
8 I asked her, but she did not let me --- .

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Getting there.
10 She's in the Housing Choice Voucher Program, as I
11 understand. And the landlord sold that house or did
12 something. There's some confusion there.

13 MS. DEVORE: The landlord sold the
14 house in March. The new one bought the house in
15 June. This occurred, started occurring in
16 September. So therefore, you know, it's like I
17 don't have, and he's not a, the new owner is not
18 eligible. So therefore, he don't have to, you know,
19 do anything to the house.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So can I get
21 clarification here from the Executive Director?
22 Whose tenant are, I mean in other words, if he's not

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1 part of, Mr. Garrett. If she's not, if her unit is
2 not owned by someone who's in the Housing Choice
3 Voucher Program, where is her payment going?

4 MR. GARRETT: She's one of our renters.

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Yeah, but she's
6 trying to say the landlord, and I'm confused.

7 MR. GARRETT: But she's still one of
8 about Housing Choice Voucher residents.

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay, so who
10 owns the property and why did she not get resolution
11 last time she was here?

12 MR. GARRETT: Well, it's my
13 understanding that we hadn't spoken to her to try
14 and get her to apply two and three bedrooms for her,
15 so.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Ms. Matthews,
17 could you just not participate until you're until
18 up here? Thank you. So I'm trying to get to the
19 bottom of what happened between the last time she
20 was here and now.

21 MR. GARRETT: And I'm trying to put that
22 together. So what we can do is I'm going to take

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1 it back after the meeting and deal with it directly
2 so we can get down to the bottom of it. Because we
3 did meet with her and saw her. So I don't think --

4 MS. DEVORE: Commissioner Slover, is I
5 have been emailing and I have been calling members
6 of DC HA, and they have been telling me, oh, we're
7 going to do an inspection on the 22nd. Because I
8 can't a find a unit in September. They said we're
9 going to inspect that unit on the 22nd. The 22nd
10 of October came and left, so I got so frustrated,
11 because the holidays is coming now, and I refuse to
12 live in those kind of conditions.

13 So I went back to Housing Monday, hey,
14 and to find out what's up with this inspection. And
15 they told me, well, the lease-up package isn't
16 completed. I said yes, it is. And they went back
17 they said, oh, yes, your lease-up package is
18 completed. Oops, our fault. Oops, we made a
19 mistake.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right, so
21 I'm going to do what Mr. Albert did earlier today.
22 And I want this to be taken care of, I think everyone

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1 on the Board would like to see it taken care of.
2 Maybe there's some thing's we're not aware, but if
3 you don't get resolution, I'd like you to email me
4 directly so we can this resolved.

5 MS. DEVORE: But are you going to answer
6 my email?

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I will. I 100%
8 promise you I'll answer your email.

9 MS. DEVORE: Okay, and also if I may
10 say, please, is you all cannot -- and I don't know
11 the situation about the Tuesday walk-ins. Because
12 the Tuesday walk-ins seem to be, was affected.
13 Because now you all cut the Tuesday walk-in out,
14 they're not answering the phones. When people
15 call, they're not answering emails when people
16 call.

17 So Tuesday was like the only day that
18 they knew that somebody was going to come up in their
19 face with their complaint and they had to hear it.
20 You know, so that's, people is, we're lost without
21 that Tuesday walk-in. Don't nobody want answer
22 now, because they don't have to.

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1 They're not going to see us walk up in
2 there, so they don't to answer our calls, they don't
3 have to answer our emails. And that's hard, that
4 is hard. Seeking help and not being able to get it.

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I appreciate
6 your frustration, and we'll try to figure out what's
7 going on there.

8 MS. DEVORE: Thank you.

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you.

10 MR. GARRETT: Ms. Devore, hang on.
11 I'll speak to you right after the meeting.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Rhonda Edward
13 Hines. Debra Frazier. Nancy Evans.

14 MS. EVANS: Hi, my name is Nancy Evans
15 --

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Could you move
17 the microphone closer, and thank you.

18 MS. EVANS: My name is Nancy Evans.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: You need to
20 still get a little closer.

21 MS. EVANS: My name is Nancy Evans.
22 I'm a 60-year-old DC Ward 8 resident, and I used to

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1 be a participant in the Housing Choice Voucher
2 Program. I had my voucher for 15 years and have
3 never had any problem with recertifying until this
4 past year, when I tried to take my last son off my
5 voucher.

6 My son stopped living with me in August
7 2017. I sent in my recertification package twice
8 in 2017, and Housing sent it back to me saying that
9 my package was not completed because I needed to
10 provide more information about my son, who -- I'm
11 sorry, should I start over?

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right.

13 MS. EVANS: Okay, well, my name is Nancy
14 Evans.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right, no,
16 no, I'm going to get it right up there.

17 MS. EVANS: Thank you. My name is
18 Nancy Evans, and I used to, I'm a 60-year-old Ward
19 8 resident, and I used to participate in the Housing
20 Choice Voucher Program. I'm losing my sight, so.
21 I had my voucher for 15 years, and I never had any
22 problem with recertifying until this past year,

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1 when I tried to take my son off a voucher.

2 My son stopped living with me, my last
3 son. My son stopped living with me with in August
4 2017. I sent in my recertification package twice
5 in 2017, and Housing sent it back to me saying that
6 my package was not completed because I needed to
7 provide more information about my son, who no longer
8 lives with me.

9 I thought I had completed everything and
10 done everything how they had asked me for, but they
11 kept sending my recertification package back, and
12 I finally had to request an informal hearing. At
13 the informal hearing in February 2018, they told me
14 that I was just missing one document, a letter
15 saying that I was removing my son from my voucher.

16 They gave me up to 45 days to send a
17 letter. Before the 45 days was up, I sent that letter
18 email to Housing and to my landlord. But now
19 Housing has told me and my lawyer that they can't
20 find a copy of that letter, and that they had to
21 terminate, they terminated my voucher.

22 Now that I have lost my voucher, I can't

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1 pay rent and I can't afford to stay in my current
2 apartment because I can't afford my apartment. So
3 I want to go for my landlord and I had to start an
4 accelerated agreement form to move out. I started
5 a processing move-out agreement with my landlord,
6 and I'm supposed to move out in January.

7 I have nowhere to go. I am going to be
8 homeless. Without my voucher, I'm so scared, and
9 I don't know what I'm going to do. I'm at the point
10 of no return. I suffer from depression, and this
11 whole situation has made my depression worse. DC
12 HA has kicked me out of the voucher program because
13 they say I don't, I didn't turn in one letter.

14 But I did. I turned in the one document
15 that they said I was missing. And as a result, I
16 never should have been terminated from the voucher
17 program. Please help me get my, please save my
18 voucher back to me so that I won't be homeless.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. GARRETT: Commissioner, I don't
21 have all the facts --

22 MS. EVANS: I can't hear you.

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1 MR. GARRETT: It's the first time that
2 I'm hearing about this, so I'll have to look into
3 it personally myself. That's all I'm going to be
4 able to offer at this point in time I'm going to
5 report back to you what the actual outcome is. And
6 if you just stay after the meeting for a few minutes,
7 I'll be able to talk.

8 MS. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right,
10 well, hopefully we'll get to the bottom of that,
11 because, let's hope that's not the case. Paulette
12 Matthews.

13 MS. MATTHEWS: Hello, everybody, how is
14 everybody doing today? My name is Paulette
15 Matthews -- can y'all hear me? Hello, hello, can
16 y'all hear me?

17 My name is Paulette Matthews, and I'm a
18 resident of Barry Farms, but I'm presently getting
19 ready to move. I have been one of those who have
20 chosen to move, in a way by choice and then a way
21 by force. Being as though, what I see around me,
22 I'm still confused by whether or not they have

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1 submitted the necessary stuff to the Court of
2 Appeals.

3 I know personally that we've been to
4 several meetings in these rooms right here, and I
5 haven't seen no more than what I saw the previous
6 times that I was here at all the other meetings since
7 2015 and probably before that. So I'm still just
8 baffled.

9 But what I'm not baffled about is the
10 fact that I can still continue to come into these
11 meetings and I can still be my own voice and someone
12 else's voice. The problem that, it's like several
13 things going on right now. I got here late so I
14 didn't sign up, and I'm thankful to be able to.

15 But then they talked about the
16 Resolution 1833, and how that affects me is the fact
17 that I at one time owed back rent, and I paid. But
18 there was a Catch-22, as always, in that we paid for
19 air condition fees. The rent was paid, but the air
20 condition fee was like a balance of \$2000 and some
21 odd dollars.

22 I went down, you know, I go to a lot of

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1 meetings, so I was at the Housing Authority and I
2 think I brought it up with someone that was working
3 in there. And she said that, oh, well, you could
4 get that taken off. All you have to do is go to your
5 Resident Manager.

6 At that time, Ms. Watson, right over
7 there, she was the Resident Manager. And also now
8 she takes on the position of Mr. Thompson or Thomas
9 or whatever his name was, I always get that
10 confused. But she's now in his position.

11 Between those two individuals I had a
12 conversation with, and they told me that it couldn't
13 be done. Anything is possible to be done. The
14 rent was paid. But what they did was there was a
15 run-in, a raid in my house, which technically there
16 was no, it was dismissed. But between that time,
17 my mind was confused, a whole lot was going on.

18 And when they finally approached me with
19 their little short lady that their lawyer, that had
20 been their lawyer for the minute that's very rude,
21 okay, and I don't know her name either. In the
22 midst of all of that, they wrote my air condition

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1 fee up as rent. And that's not the same.

2 And one thing for certain and two things
3 for sure, you cannot go to Housing Council or
4 nowhere else to get assistance with that. And it's
5 a shame there's such short time, because I have so
6 many other issues that I wanted to address.

7 And the fact that I am moving and the
8 units that, the unit that I'm getting ready to move
9 in I'm thankful, because see, they too gave me a
10 90-day notice. And it was in November, and
11 December is the date I guess I'm supposed to file
12 something. But still that was like I had double
13 Christmas, pre-Christmas gift.

14 And so I made up my mind to do some things
15 for myself. And I'm thankful for Ms. Punter and
16 also Ms. Jeter, Mr. White, and also you, Mr.
17 Garrett, because I'm quite sure you have to sign off
18 on it for the new unit, and which I'm getting ready
19 to move in.

20 I'm thankful because the apartment
21 situations. It's no good going into apartments
22 where you got, because I come to the hearings, as

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1 I say. You hear these horror stories of what you
2 got to endure just to get to your front door.

3 See, that's a setup for me to get killed,
4 because I'm going to say, the first day or week or
5 two maybe, just maybe, I might not say nothing at
6 all. But if I got to constantly keep doing that,
7 I'm going to say something. Now, I know for
8 experience the police over here ain't, excuse me,
9 that's what I'm just going to say, excuse me.

10 And I know also that the DC Housing
11 Authority Police the same, excuse me, okay.
12 They're here on our property now because I've asked
13 several times because we had lighting issues and all
14 of that. You know what they do? They get a free
15 check, just like a whole lot of other people who's
16 getting free checks.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Ms. Matthews --

18 MS. MATTHEWS: Excuse me, Mr. Slover,
19 excuse me, Mr. Slover.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Ms. Matthews,
21 we have a lot of people who need to testify yet.
22 Yes, yes.

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1 MS. MATTHEWS: Okay, fine, I'm going to
2 be done in a minute, Mr., okay, Mr. Slover, I'm going
3 to be done in one second. We got plenty of police
4 officers in this city when we was out here in the
5 dark. You got streetlights that come and don't,
6 the big floodlights, but they're down at the bottom
7 of the hill.

8 Just like these people who are sitting
9 here talking about all their horror stories, this
10 is not nothing new. For y'all to keep talking about
11 oh, I'm surprised, oh, I just heard this. Y'all can
12 cut me off the mic -- it makes no difference for this
13 to constantly go on. This is part of the reason I
14 don't want to -- they're going to probably bar me.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Ms. Matthew,
16 Ms. Matthews, you've had plenty of time, okay.

17 MS. MATTHEWS: It ain't no plenty of
18 time, it's never enough time. When y'all keep
19 getting up there okaying stuff and people are still
20 living in conditions like this.

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I understand
22 you, I heard.

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1 MS. MATTHEWS: Okay, Mr. Slover, go
2 ahead, do what you do, Mr. Slover.

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: What is it that
4 I do?

5 MS. MATTHEWS: There's still people
6 going -- listen, this is not new to y'all. Not
7 make, you know, he kind of have, but he just got it,
8 he really did. Shit, one day or two days should
9 have been enough for him. You been sitting on here,
10 she's the one that got to ask somebody what should
11 I vote when she first came on. He doing what he do.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right,
13 enough.

14 MS. MATTHEWS: All of that.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Enough, thank
16 you. Enough.

17 MS. MATTHEWS: Okay, enough, but don't
18 do that. Y'all sit up here, y'all whatever
19 position y'all have.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: If you have a
21 specific issue, we'd be happy to address it.

22 MS. MATTHEWS: And that's wrong for

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1 y'all to treat people like that.

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: If we have a
3 specific issue.

4 MS. MATTHEWS: No, it's wrong. I'm
5 going through depression and a whole of stuff
6 because of all this shit that y'all do. And people
7 are trying to help themselves and y'all come up
8 with rules daily to put a person down.

9 How you going to have a mixed community?
10 You got people with grills, you're telling people
11 they got to over there and cook.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Daniel, you
13 want to come up? Thank you.

14 MS. MATTHEWS: You want, do you want
15 them to put me out? Do you want the police to put
16 me out and bar me?

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I hope not.

18 MS. MATTHEWS: Shit. Y'all talking
19 about, y'all coming here acting all dumbfounded all
20 the time. Pass a vote, pass this, pass that.

21 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Good afternoon,
22 Commissioners. My name is Daniel Del Pielago.

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1 I'm with Empower DC.

2 Is it on? I've got a couple of things.
3 One of the central things I want to ask Commissioner
4 Garrett and just put out on the table to the
5 Commissioners is that several times now I've heard
6 from residents that we're working with on several
7 different properties have been advised not to work
8 with Empower DC.

9 We are a non-profit, we work directly
10 with residents, we ask tough questions. We don't
11 engage in anything illegal. The Federal
12 Guidelines actually give residents the right to
13 work with us. I could name names, I'm not going to
14 play that game right now.

15 But what's up with that? There's an
16 environment where the Housing Authority wants to
17 centralize power and keep organizations like us
18 that advocate on behalf of the residents away. And
19 I think that's wrong.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can I stop you
21 for a second. Can you answer to that? I hope
22 that's not what's going on.

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1 MR. GARRETT: Can you please give me the
2 names? Because I can't correct it --

3 MR. DEL PIELAGO: What is the
4 gentleman?

5 MR. GARRETT: Is if you can't identify
6 the person who said it. Because it's not a director
7 from my office or --

8 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes, Mr. Friday,
9 who's in the area. Your, somebody from your office
10 with a shaved head. His last I believe is Nigerian.
11 I know he came up, and I don't want to put Margaret
12 on the spot, but he came up to her saying Empower
13 DC doesn't know what they are talking about, they're
14 misleading residents.

15 MR. GARRETT: So but I think what you
16 said though was that we were, someone from my staff
17 was encouraging people not to work with Empower DC.

18 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes.

19 MR. GARRETT: So that was Ms. Friday and
20 the other gentleman?

21 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes, I know he has a
22 shaved head, his name escapes me right now.

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1 MR. GARRETT: Okay, I know Mr. McQueen.
2 So both those individuals --

3 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes, Mr. McQueen.

4 MR. GARRETT: So you're saying both of
5 those individuals said --

6 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes, have directly
7 told residents to not work with us.

8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay, we'll get
9 to the bottom of that, because that's not something
10 we want. Go ahead, go ahead, it's not coming from
11 me.

12 MR. DEL PIELAGO: And then I'm glad to
13 see, Commissioners, I'm glad to see that the
14 resolution to expedite the demo/dispo application
15 for Park Morton is not going to be heard today. But
16 it does lead me to question, if I read it correctly,
17 it was asking to expedite the demolition, to do it
18 all in one phase, and to relocate residents as
19 quickly as possible.

20 We're running out of space. I mean, I'm
21 not the smartest guy on Earth, but I can realize that
22 there is a finite amount of units, a finite amount

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1 of vouchers and a finite amount of property managers
2 who will accept them, because there is
3 discrimination that exists. But what's going to
4 happen? Where are people going to go?

5 Greenleaf is in the pipeline,
6 Kenilworth is in the pipeline, Lincoln Heights.
7 Where are people going to go is my question. And
8 once these demo/dispo applications are approved by
9 HUD, that's it for a property. Barry Farms is being
10 demolished without a game plan of when folks are
11 going to return.

12 I know they've been doing these
13 meetings, but there's nothing, as Ms. Matthews was
14 saying, there's nothing that's on the books that's
15 saying this is what's going to happen. So I just
16 wanted to put that out there to the Commissioners.

17 When that resolution comes up again,
18 there's a lot of questions that you all have to
19 consider, because that's it for these physical
20 units, like literal space where residents can live.
21 That's it for it. Thank you.

22 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you for

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1 your testimony. Racquel Williams-Jones.

2 MS. WILLIAMS-JONES: Good afternoon,
3 everyone. My name is Racquel Williams-Jones, I am
4 the President of Can I Live, Inc., the organization
5 that everybody was, well, the four people was up
6 here talking about.

7 We are the only public housing national
8 resident association in the nation. What makes Can
9 I Live unique is that I was once a welfare mom of
10 four, struggled to make my way out, got out, and was
11 able to pay my way through education and
12 entrepreneurship.

13 I also too, like many of you, was
14 appointed as a commissioner. So I chaired a
15 commission in Raleigh, NC for about four of the nine
16 years in which I served as a public servant. So
17 thank you for your service.

18 I've also worked for a local housing
19 authority, I've trained, consulted with other
20 housing authorities. And I say all of that to say
21 that I could be a tremendous ally. And on April 20,
22 2018, Can I Live -- it was a dream come true to have

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1 a grant that we signed with HUD.

2 So we signed our very first Ross Grant,
3 and Aquarius Vann-Ghasri was very integral in
4 helping make that happen, so I thank you, Aquarius,
5 for that. 9/30, September 30 was the end of our
6 first HUD report. We were really excited to show
7 DC HA so much of the outcomes that we have produced,
8 such as --

9 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: More so, so
10 that we can --- .

11 MS. WILLIAMS-JONES: Okay, so some of
12 the outcomes that some of the young ladies, my
13 trailblazers, we had someone actually start a
14 business. We had someone actually enroll in
15 college, we got four enrolling in the spring. We
16 got five in GED. We got 13 working on a small
17 business plan. And we have hundreds of residents
18 who have been referred to services.

19 So I say that to bring clarity to
20 actually where we are. So on October 1 there was
21 a, we were told that there was an incident that
22 transpired at a meeting that I knew absolutely

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1 nothing about. I know Mr. Garrett said that this
2 was an OGC, so I guess there's some things that can
3 be said and some things that cannot.

4 I just wanted to make sure that I came
5 to approach the Board and the public on public
6 comment just to show the good works that this
7 organization does. And there's two main things
8 that's happening. HUD, DC HA is our contract
9 administrator, which means they provide oversight
10 to us to ensure that we're using and utilizing the
11 grant and performing to the degree has stated it's
12 supposed to be.

13 So there is a letter that DC HA needs to
14 submit to us to show that they've reviewed our
15 expenses. For this one reason, our expenses have
16 been on pause and my contractors have not been paid
17 since August waiting for this letter.

18 So there might have been some confusion
19 as to, you know, who cancelled the grant. DC HA did
20 not cancel our grant, and I just wanted to make sure,
21 you know, that that was for the record.

22 But our services were suspended from

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1 accessing the community. And so what we're looking
2 to make sure that we can at least get an action plan,
3 a meeting to address. We have a partner, Gina
4 Merritt, from the project Community Capital, who
5 has a platform for monitoring outcomes that can give
6 DC HA the information they need when they need it.

7 I just want to make sure that we're able
8 to move forward, work towards, you know, getting
9 residents with their come-up plan, and I'm a
10 partner, I'm an ally, I'm a friend. And so I wanted
11 to make sure I was here to speak of that, and thank
12 you for the hard work that you've done.

13 Because working in a housing authority,
14 I was totally bewildered as to how many fires you
15 got to put out every single day. And so I can't
16 imagine what it's like to have a big agency like
17 this. And if I've learned anything, who you hire
18 and who you have on your front lines makes or breaks
19 your whole mission.

20 So thank you, Mr. Garrett, for allowing
21 us to serve. I hope that we can continue to serve.
22 And I just wanted to make sure and bring clarity to

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1 any questions that the Board members may have had,
2 because you all was asking, I guess Courtney,
3 questions that she couldn't, probably couldn't
4 answer. Okay, thank you.

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you for
6 coming in and testifying. Can I just ask whether
7 we should, I don't know what's going on. I should
8 probably say thank you.

9 MS. WILLIAMS-JONES: Thank you.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can we hold the
11 questions, because there's an ongoing dialog.
12 We're not to engage right now, once that's cleared
13 up and go.

14 MS. WILLIAMS-JONES: Thank you.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Appreciate you
16 coming in. Duane Brown.

17 MR. BROWN: Good afternoon, I'm Duane
18 Brown. And my wife and I have been landlords with
19 the Authority and others for the past 18 years. And
20 when we, if you look in your portal, a I did -- if
21 you look on the portal, as I had a chance to do in
22 the last couple of weeks, you'll notice that we've

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1 not failed any inspections for over five years,
2 either annual or interim. And we take great pride
3 in that.

4 And you would think that that would be
5 a behavior that the Authority would encourage or
6 incentivize. But in fact for the past five months,
7 we've been discouraged by your Inspection
8 Department and their lack of public service, if you
9 will.

10 Let me frame the picture for you real
11 quick. Last January, one of our tenants, a very
12 good tenant, in fact was scheduled for an inspection
13 and we were prepared for an inspection. There's a
14 discrepancy that came about as to whether or not she
15 was home when the inspector showed.

16 She said she was, they said she wasn't.
17 She was scheduled the next month, and the same thing
18 happened. She said she was home, and they said she
19 wasn't.

20 Housing Authority recommended her
21 termination, I suggested she get, file for a
22 hearing. She filed for a hearing in May. The

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1 outcome of the hearing was that she was she required
2 to be at home the next time an inspection was
3 scheduled.

4 The operative word is scheduled. She
5 didn't get a notice, I did get a notice of the next
6 inspection. They just showed up, a surprise
7 inspection in June. It was at that time when that
8 inspector found some violations. She's got four
9 boys, all right, so stuff happens in six months.

10 They found some things that needed to be
11 corrected, I corrected it, and they also required
12 a lead-based paint test. Had that done, came back
13 negative, so I was very happy about that.

14 But I appealed the process, because they
15 didn't follow their own procedure. Your procedure
16 is to send out notice prior to inspection, and they
17 didn't do that. So I appealed the process, not only
18 to the Inspection Director, you have a portal that
19 requires us to go through a portal to file a
20 complaint.

21 There's nothing on the portal that says
22 when somebody's supposed to reply, and therefore

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1 they didn't. They never replied. I
2 hand-delivered a letter to Mr. Garrett's desk on
3 August 2 appealing this process because it was
4 wrong. Everything after them showing up was wrong
5 because they didn't follow their own procedure.
6 Never heard anything back from Mr. Garrett.

7 So consequently, we're going through
8 with, so consequently, on the second visit when he
9 came back, the unit passed, lead-based paint test
10 passed. But on the way around the building, in
11 places inaccessible to the tenants, it's usually
12 locked 24/7, a plumber working in a room that's
13 never open.

14 He, looking for the boiler, walked into
15 that room thinking that was the boiler room, it was
16 not, and saw some chipped paint on the wall and said,
17 well, you got to get this lead-based paint tested.
18 Now, this room has not been used for 18 years, we
19 had no use for it. It's got a big sign on it said
20 storage.

21 We used it for storage periodically
22 years ago, but because a lock had been broken a few

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1 times, we stopped doing that. But they want us to
2 fix this apartment. It's an efficiency that goes
3 from the front of the building to the back of the
4 building, in order for this unit to pass.

5 Otherwise, I'm going through an
6 abatement and this tenant, a very good tenant, has
7 to leave. And all I'm saying is there's something
8 unfair about this. You started the process wrong,
9 nothing after this is going to be right. This room
10 is not accessible to anyone, we've never had it
11 open, it was never been requested to be inspected
12 prior, in the last 18 years, and there should be no
13 need that they inspect it now.

14 For me to finish this space, and we
15 actually went and got some pricing last spring
16 because we're thinking about selling in a couple
17 years. I'm retired, my wife's about ready to
18 retire in a year or two. The lowest price we got
19 was close \$19,000 to finish this space.

20 And that's what the Authority is asking
21 us to do now, in order to pass this inspection, for
22 a room that we're not using. The unit passed, we

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1 passed the lead-based paint test. He just missed
2 the wrong room. He inadvertently went into the
3 wrong room.

4 The only reason that room was open was
5 because my plumber was working in that room because
6 we had an issue with water sewage backup for several
7 weeks and we couldn't figure it out. We figured out
8 later it was on the DC side, so they fixed it. But
9 it was open for only that reason.

10 And I'm simply saying this is unfair and
11 it's cost me, and it's something -- I'm just trying
12 to get some reasonableness in here, and I've not
13 been able to get it from anybody else up to this
14 point.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Is there, you
16 were given a response that the room had to be
17 remediated even though it wasn't part of the
18 property that you --

19 MR. BROWN: Correct, you're correct.

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I mean, you're
21 not renting that part of the property.

22 MR. BROWN: Correct, he told me. I

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1 talked to him. Inadvertently he thought the water
2 was in there. Well, the boiler's --

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: No, I had heard
4 that, so, Director Garrett, does this sound
5 plausible, or?

6 MR. GARRETT: It does sound plausible
7 but I need to check with the inspection staff to make
8 sure that I'm accurate.

9 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay, well, I
10 think that's the best we can do just because
11 someone's going to have to make a decision here.

12 MR. BROWN: Well, I've not got any
13 replies before. That's the only reason I'm here.
14 I've not gotten any response either on the appeal,
15 I've not gotten any response through the portal, and
16 unfortunately as I said, I never heard back from Mr.
17 Garrett. So that's why I'm here.

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And now you're
19 here. Now my assumption is you'll get a response.

20 MR. GARRETT: I think what happened you
21 got an email based on the email or the letter that
22 came, ended up with the re-inspection. But then

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1 after the re-inspection, there was a, the unit
2 failed inspection after that. So I haven't seen
3 anything since that point, but I did --

4 MR. BROWN: No, I have your portal. I
5 have the Excel spreadsheet. The unit passed.

6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay, so as it
7 stands, your position is that the unit, the actual
8 unit in question, where there the occupancy passed,
9 but it's the secondary space that's not part of the
10 actual rental space.

11 MR. BROWN: Correct, it's listed on the
12 portal as passed. I have that. But this ancillary
13 space I'm saying should be waived and just removed
14 out of that altogether.

15 MR. GARRETT: Mr. Slover, I'll deal
16 with it.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay, he'll
18 report back to us. Thank you.

19 MR. BROWN: And I'll expect to hear back.

20 MR. GARRETT: From me.

21 MR. BROWN: Good, thank you all very
22 much.

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1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you.
2 Sorry you had to come down. Robin Thomas.

3 MS. THOMAS: Hello, good evening.
4 Good evening, everybody. I just want to say I think
5 one way to relieve this thing. For what I've been
6 through with the Housing Authority was a mess. I'm
7 still fighting, I'm still standing on the truth.
8 I'm not giving up. But I was here at one of the
9 Board meetings back in July, and Mr. Knox was taking
10 my case, took the case.

11 And we were talking going forward and he
12 said, my birthday was 10/10 and he said that in only
13 like four months he went through all the paperwork,
14 went through all the truth, saw everything, that I
15 was wrongfully evicted. I've been in housing for
16 25 years. He said by my birthday, 10/10, that I was
17 going to have my voucher.

18 So now it's like almost Christmas.
19 I've been going through this for years. And he was
20 like, he don't understand why, you know, this is
21 happening, everybody is doing this to me. This is
22 so wrong. I'm like, it's going into another year,

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1 Christmas.

2 I don't have a place. I work hard all
3 my life, to be taking stuff from me. I don't have
4 nothing, you know what I'm saying? And I work every
5 day, and I always worked. And I lived in a house
6 for 25 years. And all these lies and all this stuff
7 that's going on that's not true.

8 And when I showed them my paperwork and
9 stuff, he's been working on this case, and he said,
10 just last week I talked to him. Taxes and
11 everything he said he needs more money. Working on
12 your case, he's waiting on you all, you know, for
13 my voucher. He said that he's going to comp, y'all
14 are supposed to be compensating me.

15 Now I'm like, well listen up, what is
16 really going on? The runaround again, as I've
17 been, you know, going through the same stuff over
18 and over again. I was ran from this house to that
19 house to this house. They was going to put to me
20 in a house over here, they're going to put me here.

21 And I've been running around doing all
22 that for years, and it's like I don't know what's

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1 going on. But they don't want to be truth and
2 honest about what really happened to me. It's a
3 story that's really sad. It's really like the
4 people that did this to you don't work here longer
5 no more. I said yes, some people still work here.

6 Ms. Lewis she still here, y'all, she's
7 one of them. You know, when they found out the
8 truth about, you know, I owed the money but I didn't
9 owe the money. Then they said when they found out
10 I didn't owe they said I was the biggest drug dealer
11 in the nation's capital. I never sold drugs in my
12 life.

13 So he was like well, they came evict me
14 with no paperwork, no nametag, no badge, no nothing.
15 They busted my door in with nothing. When they saw
16 the truth down at the court, when they saw the truth.
17 And the lady said, well, papers was everywhere.
18 All my documents, all my papers, all over the place.
19 Looking for papers in my unit.

20 There's a lot of stuff that I've been
21 through. When they put me out, they put guns in my
22 face. Who does that? Told me to get out, out of

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1 the unit. And put me out on the street, just like
2 that. And come to find out, so he found out about
3 everything, okay. And he comes to apologize.

4 He said I apologize for them but they no
5 longer here no more. I said yes, they are.
6 Somebody is here. She's the one said, she's the one
7 said it just a couple of years ago. No, Ms. Thomas,
8 you didn't owe no money. You got evicted because
9 they said you was a big drug dealer. What? And
10 this is something new to me. I said, so that's why
11 they came in that fast like that, with no badges,
12 and just threw me out? You know, put guns up and
13 put me out the house.

14 So I wonder what's all that was for.
15 Why would you do that if I owed y'all so much money
16 and stuff like that. I lied on paperwork one
17 minute, I lied on my paperwork after 25 year --
18 really? All of it was a lie?

19 You know, I didn't lie on my paperwork,
20 so then they had to use something and then something
21 else that was wrong about me. So then I said that
22 they said they're still working on my, that I should

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1 get my voucher. Now this is almost Christmas.
2 This is going into another year that I've been
3 fighting this.

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Mr. Garrett,
5 are you aware of any details here?

6 MS. THOMAS: Oh, you're not familiar
7 with it?

8 (Simultaneous speaking.)

9 MS. THOMAS: No, I was in Barry Farms
10 for 25 years. I lived in Barry Farms.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Who have you
12 been working with at DC HA?

13 MS. THOMAS: Mr. Knox been working with
14 this. He said Mr. Garrett --

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Mr. Knox?

16 MS. THOMAS: Mr. Knox.

17 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Mr. Knox
18 involved in this? We're not sure whether Mr. Knox
19 is involved. So let's, can you have someone get
20 with her, and then we can figure out.

21 MS. THOMAS: Remember I was the
22 meeting, I was at the last meeting, remember, in

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1 June?

2 MR. GARRETT: Yes.

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Then we can --.

4 MS. THOMAS: Say what?

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER:

6 MS. THOMAS: I got all this, I got all
7 this, everything.

8 PARTICIPANT: Joe Knox was involved.

9 MS. THOMAS: Yeah.

10 PARTICIPANT: She had an appearance at
11 another meeting.

12 MS. THOMAS: Yeah, but I worked with him
13 before too.

14 MR. SLAUGHTER: Mr. Knox, I'm Ken
15 Slaughter, the General Counsel. Mr. Knox was
16 assigned to follow up on the details. I'll check
17 on his results and report.

18 MS. THOMAS: No, I talked to him. He
19 said that I was supposed to have my voucher by my
20 birthday.

21 MR. SLAUGHTER: I'll talk to him.

22 MS. THOMAS: That was 10/10.

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1 MR. SLAUGHTER: We'll find out and get
2 some advisement.

3 MS. THOMAS: And he said that he's
4 waiting on Mr. Garrett, on you.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Mr. Chair, I
6 would appreciate it if the General Counsel said all
7 of that for the minutes because of his dialog where
8 we were unsure.

9 VICE-CHAIR SLOVER: I think that guy
10 over there, he got it.

11 MS. THOMAS: This has been going on for
12 years.

13 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Did you
14 hear it, sir? You got it?

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right, so
16 we're going to triangulate here and figure out
17 what's going on, okay.

18 MS. THOMAS: Okay, thank you.

19 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thanks for
20 coming in. Felicia Price.

21 MS. PRICE: Good afternoon, everyone.
22 Thank you for this opportunity to speak before you

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1 today, Executive Director Tyrone Garrett and
2 Commissioners of DC Housing Authority.

3 This is my first time speaking here. I
4 am here speaking in reference to my termination of
5 my housing choice voucher. If you remember, Mr.
6 Garrett, I ran into you in front of the Housing
7 Authority. I have friends and a relative that live
8 right there on M Street there that morning. I
9 apologize for not following up.

10 I've just started working again and
11 related to this, I was recently diagnosed the last
12 couple of years with Attention Deficit Disorder.
13 So trying to administrate and keep up with things
14 is something I'm overcoming.

15 I would like to read to you my legal
16 evidence. As I would say to you that my eviction
17 and my termination from my housing choice voucher
18 was a mistake made by the Georgetown DC law students
19 in court.

20 The supervising attorney, Mark Benson,
21 after the trial where the judgement was against met
22 said that he would file an appeal for me, was that

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1 for me to sign it. So they filed the appeal and I
2 signed it. I went down there and filed my appeal.
3 I could not find any representative to help me at
4 that time with the mistakes that they made.

5 Subsequently, I dismissed my appeal
6 after the eviction. My daughter and I have a
7 special needs daughter, who at the time, it was very
8 difficult for her health and my health to try to
9 continue with that legally.

10 So when I reopened it I, again,
11 searching for help, we had been settled through in
12 an emergency shelter on New York Avenue initially,
13 then we moved to Wayne Place out in SE here in
14 Anacostia.

15 So then I reopened my appeal, and
16 looking for help again, I came across Christian
17 Legal Aid. And as I was saying, Mr. Rose had wrote
18 the legal defense is based on my court that he
19 refused my document. Even before I did intake with
20 Christian Legal Aid, I myself submitted documents
21 to the General Counsel, Mario Cuahutle under Mr.
22 Slaughter, who was trying to get me recertified

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1 recommendations through the Recertification Office
2 and it came to no avail.

3 I also on my own submitted letters from
4 my daughter's doctor, her speech therapist at
5 Children's Hospital regarding the instability in
6 her housing. Her Upward Bound at George Washington
7 University, the Director there, who had wrote
8 letters in regard to her being stable in high school
9 and continuing on to go to college through her
10 disabilities and our homelessness, and also SOME,
11 where I was receiving medical care on North Capitol
12 and O Street.

13 So this letter states here, Ms. Felicia
14 Price requests a recertification regarding her HCVP
15 participation.

16 Dear Ms. Jones, as he goes on to say, his
17 name was Robert Rose, I have worked as a Legal
18 Director for the Christian Legal Aid of DC. The
19 purpose of this letter is to respectfully request
20 the reconsideration of Felicia Price's termination
21 from the Housing Choice Voucher Program, or to grant
22 a hearing to her regarding the same.

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1 I understand that Ms. Price has made
2 such a request on two prior occasions to no avail.
3 But neither request was as detailed or explanatory
4 as this one, and DC HA Associate General Counsel
5 Mario Cuahutle encouraged me to feel free to submit
6 a request on Ms. Price's behalf.

7 That being said, I understand that DC HA
8 decision's as to whether to re-enroll Ms. Price is
9 discretionary and not compulsory at this point, as
10 outlined in greater detail below. However, I
11 believe it is reasonable and appropriate for Ms.
12 Price to be re-enrolled, or alternatively be given
13 a hearing on the matter for a few reasons.

14 First, she did in fact submit both the
15 recertification paperwork and then subsequently a
16 timely request for an informal hearing. Second, I
17 believe her failure to recertify was based on
18 excusable neglect, due to a combination of her and
19 her minor daughter's personal circumstances and two
20 confusing and perhaps even conflicting messages
21 from DC HA.

22 Third, less than ten months before DC HA

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1 issued the notice of failure to recertify that
2 ultimately led to Ms. Price's termination from HCV,
3 DC HA had deemed Ms. Price as having recertified.
4 In other words, DC HA intended to have Ms. Price
5 recertify twice in less than a one-year period,
6 although as a rule you have to contemplate that
7 generally recertification is to occur every two
8 years.

9 Again, I realize Ms. Price is
10 essentially at DC HA's mercy in this matter, but
11 please do consider this request, as honoring it
12 would enable Ms. Price, who has been diligent in
13 trying to reach a place of stability with respect
14 to housing and her finances to get back on her feet
15 and move forward.

16 For the reasons stated above and
17 described in greater detail below, I also don't
18 believe it would be unjust to permit her
19 re-enrollment.

20 Background. By the way of background,
21 Ms. Price is a 51 years old and originally from
22 Washington, DC area. Despite her longterm

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1 struggle with various health conditions, Ms. Price
2 currently works approximately 20 hours a week at
3 minimum wage at the National Gallery of Art
4 Sculpture Garden as a beverage server.

5 From 1995 to 2010, Ms. Price was a
6 housing choice voucher holder. From '98 to 2010,
7 she was about to get a property located at 3120
8 Cherry Road NE. In 2010, her voucher was
9 terminated for failure to recertify. Unable to
10 afford the subsidized rent, the landlord instituted
11 eviction proceeding against Ms. Price, who
12 ultimately had no choice but to vacate the property.

13 Therefore, Ms. Price struggled with
14 homelessness before obtaining traditional housing
15 through TCP and Virginia Waylands. They were the
16 facts, event surrounding termination of voucher.
17 In May 29, DC HA sent a letter to Ms. Price advising
18 her that it rescheduled Ms. Price for a final
19 recertification and written termination
20 appointment, 6/11/2009.

21 July 5, 2009, after Ms. Price has
22 satisfied the requirements for recertification, DC

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1 HA sent a letter to her advising that she completed
2 the late recert changes effect 8/1/09, see attached
3 Exhibit A.

4 March 2010, DC HA sent a letter to Ms.
5 Price noting that -- okay, I could forward these
6 papers to you. I know my time is --

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: That would be
8 great.

9 MS. PRICE: Yes, and I --

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: What is your
11 current situation? How long have you been out of
12 the house?

13 MS. PRICE: I was evicted in 2013.

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: 2013.

15 MS. PRICE: Yes, and --

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So you've been
17 trying to be recertified since 2013?

18 MS. PRICE: On my own efforts I filed an
19 appeal, legal papers were sent to General Counsel
20 Office. I couldn't find anyone to help me file my
21 brief. I'm asking for a hearing or
22 recertification, for recertification in regards to

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1 the fact that my --

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Well, I think we
3 can work with you the executive, -- we could work
4 with the Executive Director, Mr. Garrett, to try to
5 figure out whether we could get you a hearing or --

6 MR. GARRETT: And --

7 MS. PRICE: Yes, okay. Thank you, sir.
8 Ms. Terry Acheson was here, but she had to leave.
9 Her baby had to go to the emergency room.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you for
11 coming down. Hopefully, we can get some resolution
12 or a hearing or something for you.

13 MS. PRICE: All right, thank you so
14 much. Have a good afternoon.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Margaret Dwyer.

16 MS. DWYER: Good afternoon, thank you
17 very much for letting me speak. So I just have a
18 brief statement and a question.

19 Last month, Chairman Albert asked me
20 what the SURJ's position on public housing was, and
21 I was at a loss to summarize it briefly in a few
22 seconds. But we had a meeting about it, and we

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1 pulled together the things that we've been studying
2 and learning from residents. And I believe you
3 should have the copy of our position on public
4 housing.

5 I'm sure you're going to want to rush
6 home and curl up with it and read every word of it,
7 because it's really good. And it does represent
8 our best thinking and our hopes for public housing.

9 In a nutshell, the position is simple.
10 We want to see ownership of property remain in
11 public hands. We want the properties to be well
12 maintained. And we want residents to exert real
13 decisionmaking power. And we want to be part of the
14 solution to the challenges in public housing.

15 And to that end, we're committed to
16 continuing to lobby the DC Council for generous
17 allotments and contributions to the maintenance of
18 our public housing properties.

19 And at the same time, we are hoping that
20 the management of these properties is going to
21 become more transparent. We continue to have a lot
22 of difficulties negotiating the three entities,

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1 DMPED, NCI, and DC HA, very confusing.

2 And so to that end, I have a question.
3 Many of our members attended the community meetings
4 that NCI held about the Barry Farm redevelopment.
5 And never did anybody leave with clarity or
6 specificity about exactly the units of public
7 housing.

8 The exact number, the exact
9 composition, like how many one-bedrooms, how many
10 two-bedrooms, etc. The exact size of those units,
11 the exact location of those units, because we
12 understand some of them are running beyond the
13 footprint and some not. And the longevity of those
14 units.

15 Because right now, the public owns those
16 units, and we want to own them in perpetuity. So
17 maybe I'm just missing something and that document
18 exists somewhere, but honestly, I can't find it.
19 Can you help?

20 MR. GARRETT: Ms. Dwyer, based on the
21 legal situation with the plan that was actually
22 proposed, it has to be revised.

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1 MS. DWYER: Right.

2 MR. GARRETT: So that's what we're
3 working on now, to revise it. And so the numbers
4 and the counts that they organized in the
5 composition of units, that's going to be included
6 in the plan when we actually submit again. So we're
7 working towards that.

8 MS. DWYER: Okay.

9 MR. GARRETT: And you were going to
10 those meetings and they weren't able offer that
11 information because it had to be inside. Remember,
12 there was an issue vouchers.

13 MS. DWYER: Right, right, right.

14 MR. GARRETT: And that would impact
15 exactly how those sites laid out in terms of number
16 of units and what's out there is also. So we're
17 still not there. I know everyone wants to be there,
18 we want to be there too at the end so we can get this
19 thing moving and have people return. But we have
20 to come up with a final document in order to get
21 there.

22 MS. DWYER: And --

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1 MR. GARRETT: I can, just want to say
2 one thing about your question about public housing
3 units versus public housing units in affordable
4 housing projects. The way it actually works is
5 that those units have to remain affordable for a
6 extended period of time. Usually what happens is
7 they wait until they are built it's a 40-year
8 covenant, which is an affordable housing covenant
9 for new developments.

10 And then after that, it's only renewed
11 after that 40-year period. Because remember, it
12 will be a 99-year ground lease on the property that
13 will be controlled by the Housing Authority. So
14 the idea of affordability moving throughout, for
15 eternity, is what is going to happen, yes.

16 MS. DWYER: That's what we want, okay.
17 So then how will we be informed of this list, this
18 plan of the number of units and sizes?

19 MR. GARRETT: When we compile it and get
20 it together and finalize it, we're going to continue
21 to have conversations. I don't think that, that
22 was the way to keep everyone engaged and let

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1 everyone know that we were serious about what we
2 were trying to do in our partnership with DMPED.

3 I know that as an agency, we've talked
4 about programs for five years that we may find
5 reliable, it's just getting a sense of what it's
6 right down to the developer of record to have them
7 work with us to include everybody. So --

8 MS. DWYER: So is there a developer of
9 record?

10 MR. GARRETT: Yeah, POAH is still the
11 developer.

12 MS. DWYER: Can you spell that?

13 MR. GARRETT: P-O-A-H.

14 MS. DWYER: Oh, yes, okay. Okay, thank
15 you very much.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So Ms. Dwyer,
17 can I ask you a question about this pamphlet? I
18 probably shouldn't say this, but I can't help
19 myself. Organizing white people in DC to dismantle
20 white supremacy and support racial justice
21 movement. I think you should rethink that.

22 MS. DWYER: So this is a national

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1 organization --

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I'm just
3 telling you that --

4 MS. DWYER: There are thousands of
5 chapters.

6 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: That is not
7 inclusive, and I don't understand it.

8 MS. DWYER: Our belief is that white
9 people created white supremacy and racism, and it's
10 our job to dismantle it.

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I just would say
12 that I think you should, you know, reconsider that.

13 MS. DWYER: I don't think it's up to me,
14 Mr. Slover.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Well, you're
16 affiliating with them, so.

17 MS. DWYER: Yes, and I support it. I
18 really do think this is our work to do. I think
19 white people have a lot of work to do on dismantling
20 racism.

21 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I don't
22 disagree. But I don't --

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1 MS. DWYER: And I think 100% --

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: But I don't
3 think, I think you organize people, not necessarily
4 white people.

5 MS. DWYER: Well, I think that people of
6 color have been doing a disproportionate share of
7 the work for hundreds of years, and it's really up
8 to us to step up and increase our efforts. Thank
9 you.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: All right.

11 Sava Swetzoff, I'm sure I butchered that
12 name. Thankfully they're not here.

13 All right, well, that ends the public
14 testimony and also I think concludes our meeting,
15 which was long. I appreciate everybody coming out,
16 and those of you that waited to the end.

17 Unless there's any comments or
18 questions, the next Board of Commissioners meeting,
19 the annual meeting -- no, actually our annual
20 meeting will be held Wednesday, December 12, 2018
21 at one p.m., DC HA Headquarters, 1133 North Capitol
22 St., NE, Washington, DC 20016.

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1 Mr. Garrett, you can get the gavel for
2 me there. Thank you.

3 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
4 went off the record at 4:18 p.m.)

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