

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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WEDNESDAY
MAY 10, 2017

+ + + + +

The Board of Commissioners met in the
Riverside Center, 5200 Foote Street, NE,
Washington, D.C., at 1:00 p.m., Terri Thompson,
Chairman, presiding.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

- TERRI THOMPSON, Chairman
- WILLIAM SLOVER, Vice Chairman
- KENNETH D. COUNCIL, Commissioner
- KEN GROSSINGER, Commissioner
- BRIAN KENNER, Commissioner
- FRANK LANCASTER, Commissioner
- M. CLARENCE MOBLEY, Commissioner
- NAKEISHA NEAL JONES, Commissioner
- AQUARIUS VANN-GHASRI, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT:

- NATHAN BOVELLE, Deputy Executive Director
for Operations
- ALETHEA MCNAIR, Acting Board Liaison

COMMISSIONER(S) ABSENT:

- SHELORE FISHER, Commissioner
- JOSE ORTIZ-GAUD, Commissioner

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DRAFT

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

2 1:08 p.m.

3 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Good afternoon.

4 (Chorus of good afternoon.)

5 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: My name is Terri
6 Thompson. I'm Chairman of the Board of
7 Commissioners, and I call this meeting to order.
8 Good afternoon. Good.

9 Okay, this is the regular monthly
10 meeting of the District of Columbia Housing
11 Authority. It's being held today, May 10, 2017 at
12 Riverside Center. The address is 5200 Foote
13 Street, NE, Washington, DC 20019. The time is now
14 approximately 1:08.

15 I would ask that everyone check your
16 cellphones and iPads, and all those other things,
17 and silence them, so that we don't have
18 interruptions throughout the meeting. Thank you.
19 And I would now ask for a moment of silence.

20 (Moment of silence.)

21 Thank you. The Commissioners welcome

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1 constituent input on matters of public concern, and
2 offer you today an opportunity to express your
3 views, including spirited debates of DCHA's
4 decisions by its management and this Board during
5 the public testimony portion of every meeting.
6 However, we require that members of the public who
7 attend our meetings abide by certain rules of
8 decorum to allow the Board to complete the business
9 before it.

10 Members of the public cannot engage in
11 any disruptive conduct, or loud, threatening or
12 abusive language, during Board meetings. This
13 includes loud outbursts or shouting, during times
14 we have not been invited to speak.

15 Anyone who violates these rules will be
16 asked to leave the meeting immediately, and could
17 be subject to arrest for violation of DC laws and
18 disorderly conduct. Serious or repeated
19 violations of the rules may result in you being
20 barred from future Board meetings, for a period of
21 at least 60 days.

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1 We appreciate your interest in the
2 matters before us today, and thank you in advance
3 for abiding by these rules of conduct. And with
4 that, I would ask for a roll call to determine roll.

5 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you Chairman
6 Thompson. Commissioner Council?

7 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Present.

8 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Fisher?

9 (No response.)

10 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Grossinger.

11 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: Here.

12 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Kenner?

13 COMMISSIONER KENNER: Here.

14 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Lancaster?

15 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Present.

16 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Mobley?

17 COMMISSIONER MOBLEY: Present.

18 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Neal Jones?

19 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Present.

20 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz-Gaud?

21 (No response.)

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1 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner

2 Vann-Ghasri?

3 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Present.

4 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Slover?

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Present.

6 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Thompson.

7 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Present.

8 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Thompson, we
9 have nine Commissioners present, we have a quorum.

10 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Great. So as some
11 may recognize, Ms. Todman is not sitting to my
12 left, but we are joined by Nathan Bovelleville, who is
13 the Interim Executive Director, or will be the
14 Interim Executive Director --

15 MR. BOVELLE: June 1st.

16 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: -- on June 1st.

17 Thank you for that.

18 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Let me, if I
19 may --

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Can I finish.

21 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Yes.

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1 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay. So as most
2 of you know, Ms. Todman has stepped down as the
3 Executive Director for the Agency, and so
4 Mr. Bovellet will be stepping in as the Interim
5 Executive Director while the Board searches for a
6 new Interim Director for this Agency, to move it
7 to this next level. With that, Mr. Lancaster.

8 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Yes. I just
9 want to welcome Mr. Bovellet to his first sitting
10 at these Board of Commissioners public meeting, and
11 being that we're satellite day and night at the home
12 office, I think it's a great opportunity for him
13 to get to meet a lot of our constituents, and a lot
14 of the people of the public, away from the main
15 office. Thank you Madam Chair.

16 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay, thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Welcome
18 again. Congratulations, Mr. Bovellet.

19 MR. BOVELLET: Thank you Mr. Lancaster.

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Today's agenda is
21 our regular agenda. There are no resolutions

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1 before the Board at today's meeting. However, we
2 will begin with the Executive Director's Report.
3 Afterwards, we will allow the public to come before
4 the Board to discuss any personal issues related
5 to housing.

6 We have sign-in sheets. The time limit
7 on testimony remains the same, five minutes for
8 residents, three minutes for non-residents.
9 Anyone who wishes to speak and has not yet signed
10 in, if you would please -- who's got the list, other
11 than me. Okay, somebody's got to step up.

12 Can you make -- so if there are any
13 individuals that want to speak and have not yet
14 signed in, if you can sign in, so that we can make
15 those arrangements, that would be appreciated.

16 I had asked for the Commissioners to
17 consider the minutes of April 12, 2017, and the
18 Special Meeting minutes of April 27, 2017. Are
19 there any comments or changes?

20 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I have a
21 question.

1 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Yes.

2 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: A while ago we
3 had a discussion about the minutes, and how some
4 of the members of the Board felt that they weren't
5 necessarily reflective of the degree of
6 conversation around each of the issues.

7 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Yes.

8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And in reading
9 these minutes, I see we've now moved to
10 something -- and my response when asked about what
11 I thought was an appropriate reflection of the
12 meetings, was a verbatim minutes was, I think, what
13 I offered back.

14 What I'm seeing here is that we've
15 shifted to not even referencing which
16 Commissioners asked questions. So it just says,
17 a question was asked. Not which Commissioner. So
18 we've gone from bad to worse, in my opinion, and
19 so I think I would not approve these minutes,
20 because I just don't think that they're reflective
21 of the meeting. And the purpose of these, in my

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1 opinion, is so that downline, if there's a
2 discussion or question about what happened in the
3 meeting, we can actually go and find out what it
4 was and what happened, and this is just is not
5 efficient. This is not sufficient.

6 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you. Any
7 other comments regarding the minutes?

8 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Yes. I want
9 to also speak on the same issue, because
10 Commissioner Vann-Ghasri had made it known many
11 years ago that this should be part of the record,
12 so her constituents would know how she voted for
13 or voted against, or not voted. This way we can't
14 tell who did what and when. And I'd like to see
15 that changed back to the way it was.

16 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay. So for your
17 point, the votes are actually recorded -- and the
18 minutes. So that actually, you would know. I
19 would recommend it being structured differently,
20 but not -- but that --

21 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I accept that

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1 amendment to that, yes.

2 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay, great. All
3 right. So Mr. Slover, would you like to make an
4 motion on the table?

5 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I would
6 actually like to understand if I'm the only one who
7 has this issue. I mean we tend to have
8 discussions, and then we come to no result. So
9 maybe we should take a second here and see if other
10 people have the same issue that I do, that these
11 minutes should be more reflective of the actual
12 conversations that take place up here. Because
13 they really are what we're here for. To have these
14 discussions.

15 And so if other people don't have the
16 same issue, then there's really no point in tabling
17 it, because if we ever come to a vote --

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: No. We're
19 going to table it. I have the same --

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay.

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I think it

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1 should be tabled.

2 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: All right.

3 COMMISSIONER STOVER: I'm just tired
4 of passing the buck, that's all.

5 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I agree that
6 the minutes do not always reflect clearly, or
7 really reflects, the pertinent issues which
8 Commissioners have stated.

9 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: So.

10 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So I have
11 the same issue. Maybe no other Commissioner has
12 it, but I have it. What about you, Commissioner
13 Lancaster?

14 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I just looked
15 on that --

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: So that's
17 three Commissioners. Any other Commissioners?
18 Commissioner Council?

19 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: So can I -- can
20 I --

21 PARTICIPANT: I as well.

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1 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay. So is what
2 the Commissioners are asking for, a transcript,
3 rather than the minutes?

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: We had this
5 discussion about four or five months ago, and we
6 have these discussions, they result in the
7 responses and suggestions, and then nothing
8 happens.

9 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay. So --

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: And so that was
11 my response before, but clearly it wasn't taken up.
12 So I don't -- yes, that would be my preference,
13 because that's actually what happens at these
14 meetings.

15 What's the point of having minutes if
16 they're not reflective of what actually what
17 happened?

18 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Well minutes and
19 transcripts are actually different. It wasn't my
20 understanding that we were asking for them to be
21 transcribed. If we want to have them transcribed,

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1 that's an option that the administration can have,
2 because we do have them recorded.

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So as I
4 understand it, they're right over there, taken, and
5 then they are taken into the Housing Authority, and
6 people alter them, and boil them down. I don't
7 understand why we do that. There's never a real
8 reason to do that.

9 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: They -- so my
10 understanding is what happens, is that the
11 recording is then reflected in minutes, which by
12 their name, are supposed to be very succinct, short
13 summary of what was discussed. We can have
14 transcripts, and that --

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: But Terri, I
16 don't want to get into an argument, but we used
17 to -- we went from naming Commissioners, to now not
18 naming Commissioners. That's a very conscious
19 decision, and it's a change in policy.

20 So if you want to ask are the minutes
21 okay, they're not, because it's a significant

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1 change from policy. And what I would like to do
2 is open the discussion back up to why we don't just
3 have the entire thing published.

4 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay. So there is
5 no reason not to have transcripts, as opposed to
6 minutes, for what we do, and we can -- I'd, and I'm
7 going to namedrop you in that Mr. Slaughter.
8 Mr. Slaughter --

9 MR. SLAUGHTER: Under the DC Public
10 Open Meetings Act, the transcripts of your meetings
11 are available to the public.

12 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Right.

13 MR. SLAUGHTER: The corporate bylaws
14 referred to in your bylaws -- the corporate minutes
15 referred to in your bylaws, have hopefully been a
16 summary of actions and discussions at your
17 meetings.

18 If you desire more detail, you, as a
19 majority, can direct that. The change may be a
20 change in the style of the minute takers, not some
21 big conscious decision to change policy. So we can

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1 certainly take the direction to the Secretary, and
2 get them in whatever level of detail you want. The
3 minutes are -- the transcripts are always
4 available. Let me say that. By law.

5 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: So, as to
6 general --

7 (Simultaneous speaking.)

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: -- can I finish?
9 Because the general counsel can do -- is anything
10 that requires us to have minutes, as opposed to just
11 having transcripts, and leaving it at transcripts?

12 MR. SLAUGHTER: You certainly have a
13 complete report in a transcript.

14 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay.

15 MR. SLAUGHTER: And you could adopt
16 that as your --

17 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Minutes.

18 MR. SLAUGHTER: -- history of minutes,
19 history of the meeting. Certainly could do that.

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you. Yes,
21 Commissioner Vann-Ghasri.

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1 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: He
2 answered the question. Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: All right. So is
4 there a motion to be made today? Or do we want to
5 table this discussion for some other time? If I
6 can --

7 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: If I may --

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Will transcripts
9 resolve your concern?

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Yes. I mean
11 I'd like to be a transparent agency. So B-

12 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay. So I can't
13 make a motion, but you're welcome to.

14 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I'd like to
15 make a motion that we shift from using minutes to
16 publishing the actual transcript in the monthly
17 report to the Board of Commissioners.

18 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Right.

19 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I'll move
20 and second.

21 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: You're seconding?

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1 So it's been moved and seconded. Do we want roll
2 call vote, or can I just go with an all-say-aye?

3 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: It's being
4 transcribed.

5 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay, can you do a
6 roll call vote?

7 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Council?

8 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Yes.

9 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Grossinger?

10 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: Yes.

11 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Kenner?

12 COMMISSIONER KENNER: Yes.

13 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Lancaster?

14 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Yes.

15 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Mobley?

16 COMMISSIONER MOBLEY: Yes. Sustain.

17 Abstain please.

18 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Neal Jones?

19 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Yes.

20 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz -- I'm

21 sorry, Commissioner Vann-Ghasri?

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1 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Yes.

2 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Slover?

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Yes.

4 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner
5 Thompson -- Chairman Thompson.

6 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Yes.

7 MS. MCNAIR: You have eight yes and one
8 abstention. The move to go to transcript instead
9 of minutes is approved. Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: All right, thank
11 you. So we will table the April minutes and ask
12 that they be published, or prepared as transcripts
13 for review by the Commissioners. Are there any
14 other questions or comments?

15 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Comment.

16 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Yes.

17 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Thank the
18 Board for that change and the votes to have it done.
19 I'm thankful.

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Great. Thank
21 you. Next we will have the Executive Director's

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1 Report, which will be delivered by Mr. Bovellev.
2 Again, welcome.

3 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you Chairperson.
4 Good morning -- good afternoon, and welcome to
5 everyone's that here.

6 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Good
7 afternoon.

8 MR. BOVELLE: Good afternoon. We are
9 here at the Riverside Center. It's the first time
10 that our Board has had a Commissioners' meeting
11 here, and we'd like to thank the folks at the
12 Riverside Center for allowing us to have the space
13 here.

14 So I don't believe they're all here, but
15 we'd like to thank Director Steve Coleman, the
16 Center Director, Ashleigh Mitchell, and the
17 Program Manager, Ms. Cordell Fields, for allowing
18 is to use this space.

19 This space sits in the backyard of two
20 of our sites -- Lincoln Heights and Richardson
21 Dwellings -- which are 440 units and 190 units,

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1 respectively, and I would like to recognize the
2 President of Richardson Dwellings, who is here. I
3 believe she's here, Ms. Joyce Simmons. Are you
4 here Ms. Simmons?

5 MS. SIMMONS: Yes.

6 MR. BOVELLE: We'd like to recognize
7 you and thank you for your participation in the
8 meeting. And also Ms. Dorothy Dinkins, who is the
9 President of Lincoln Heights, who I believe is not
10 here, but we'd like to recognize her as well.

11 And we have the managers for both
12 sites -- Mr. Gregory Spriggs and Ms. Lindsey
13 Dandridge -- who are in attendance. Thank you all
14 for being here as well.

15 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And I'd
16 like to add on that we would also like to thank Pat
17 Malloy, who's also the Chair from the communities
18 that meet here every month. And this is history
19 for the District of Columbia Housing Authority,
20 because there's a commissioner that represents
21 both Richardson Dwelling and Lincoln Heights.

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1 For the years I've been on this Board,
2 I have viciously advocated that we meet here, and
3 hope to give the opportunities to my constituents
4 of Richardson Dwelling and Lincoln Heights -- the
5 opportunity to go on record in their own backyard,
6 how they feel about their New Communities meeting.

7 So I'm more than sure that the Housing
8 Authority took the time out to put a flyer on every
9 resident door, and that all the residents were
10 notified. Because as the Chair of the Residents
11 Service, the Resident Initiative Committee, on
12 many times me and my colleagues that are members
13 of that committee, have requested that when we're
14 in the neighborhood of communities -- of the Public
15 Housing Community -- that it would not hurt for the
16 District of Columbia Housing Authority -- maybe
17 with the maintenance techniques -- when they're
18 cleaning up your yard to your hallways -- to put
19 a flyer on the door there so everyone would be
20 notified.

21 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you Commissioner

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1 Vann-Ghasri.

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: You're
3 welcome.

4 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Mr. Chair, if
5 I may. All those names that he called --

6 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I'm sorry. Who?
7 (Simultaneous speaking.)

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Go ahead.

9 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I meant to
10 say Madam Chair. I stand corrected.

11 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I just thought --

12 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: But I
13 was -- actually I wanted to get to Interim
14 Director, Mr. Bovellet. Those names that he
15 called, I would like for those individuals that are
16 present to stand please, if it's possible.
17 Because I think the community should know who they
18 are, so like that, so they get a chance to gather
19 and meet one another.

20 MR. BOVELLE: Okay. Mr. Spriggs, the
21 Manager of Lincoln Heights.

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1 Ms. Dandridge, the Manager of
2 Richardson Dwellings.

3 And Ms. Simmons, the Resident Council
4 President for Richardson Dwellings.

5 Thank you both.

6 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you so much.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. BOVELLE: And keeping with
10 tradition, one of the things that we do at these
11 Board meetings is recognize key staff who sort of
12 rise and go above and beyond the call of duty in
13 the tasks that they do to serve the communities that
14 we serve.

15 This month we'd like to recognize
16 someone from our Eligibility and Continued
17 Occupancy Division. That division is the
18 department that determines the eligibility for not
19 just the public housing program, but also the
20 housing choice voucher program, and our local
21 voucher program as well.

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1 This person is consistent in always
2 asking what she can do more to assist, and she's
3 a team player. She never hesitates to put in extra
4 hours, and to really show her dedication to the
5 people that we serve. Her name is Dalphine
6 Townsend. Dalphine, would you please come forward
7 to be recognized as the employee of the month.

8 (Applause.)

9 The award reads, In recognition for
10 outstanding performance, Dalphine Townsend is
11 presented with this employee-of-the-month award.
12 Congratulations for April 2017.

13 (Applause.)

14 And a little something to also put in
15 your pocket. Thank you Dalphine.

16 (Applause.)

17 MS. TOWNSEND: I want to thank each and
18 every one that's been a team player. I don't think
19 I need that. I'm good on my own.

20 (Laughter.)

21 I want to thank everyone who have

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1 participated and worked with me as a team player.
2 I've been here like 32 years, here you are, and
3 I -- the great reward I get for when clients come
4 in depressed and so forth, and they leave with a
5 smile and confidence that we're going to do the
6 thing right. So I just want to thank everyone, and
7 I appreciate this award. Thank you so much.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. BOVELLE: That concludes my
10 report. Thank you very much.

11 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you. Are
12 there any questions of the Commissioners?

13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I have a quick
14 question. A couple -- in April, or before April,
15 we had two resolutions, 1702 and 1703, that were
16 tabled. Did I lose track of those? Or what
17 happened to those?

18 Did we approve those at some point?
19 They were for the Bruce Monroe offsite, and for
20 project-based factors. I'm just wondering what
21 happened to them.

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1 MR. BOVELLE: So if they go before my
2 meeting, they will be reintroduced at the next
3 Commissioners meeting.

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: If the
5 timeline -- is there no sense of urgency on these
6 things?

7 MS. BLACK KING: I think if we -- we
8 would need the timeline, so we do too. If we are
9 successful and get it out of debt-wide, and bring
10 it to the June Board meeting. We would need the
11 timing constraints on the projects.

12 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Any other
14 questions Commissioners?

15 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Yes. That
16 he would -- being that -- Commissioner, so with
17 that forward, is that the same site as the Columbia
18 Road -- I mean on Irving and Georgia Avenue, we're
19 speaking of?

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: And the

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1 offsite units as they come, you want that same
2 footprint, or is this going to be somewhere else?

3 MR. BOVELLE: I think what we will do
4 Commissioner, is when we go before that mod, we will
5 be giving the intimate details of both of those,
6 and then they'll be presented in detail again
7 before the Board meeting and brown bag, and at the
8 Board meeting for the resolution.

9 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: All right,
10 thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Great. Any other
12 questions, Commissioners? Hearing none, then we
13 will move forward with public comment period. The
14 public comment period permits residents and
15 housing choice voucher program participants who
16 have signed up today, to be the first to present
17 to the Board for five minutes.

18 People who are not residents have three
19 minutes to present. Your name will be called in
20 the order in which you signed in. As your name is
21 called, please come to the table, and speak

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1 directly into the microphone, as the meetings are
2 recorded. So Joyce Simmons, you're on first.

3 MS. SIMMONS: Thank you ma'am. Okay.
4 How you doing? I'm Joyce --

5 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Fine. We also
6 need you to speak into that microphone if you would.

7 MS. SIMMONS: On the table?

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: No, you can have a
9 seat.

10 MS. SIMMONS: Oh I have a seat. Oh,
11 okay. All right, good afternoon. My name is
12 Joyce Simmons. I'm the resident President of
13 Richardson Dwelling. Well it's been a long
14 struggle, and one of my reasons is, I think
15 signage -- we need signage throughout the
16 property.

17 You know, no littering, no loitering,
18 safety zone for the kids. We don't see no signage,
19 and the kids these days, they ignore us. They pay
20 us no mind.

21 Okay, number two, we wanted to change

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1 the sign for OSSE. We want to rename
2 OSSE -- that's another thing missing Gray. We
3 talked to Mike Ellis, and we had to email him for
4 the -- at safety -- at the safety office, let him
5 know that we still intend to do this, but we haven't
6 heard anything. But it's in the making, I think.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Can I say
8 something on that? Here's my recommendation,
9 because OSSE has a history in this town. It also
10 has a history in Richardson Dwelling and Lincoln
11 Heights.

12 And as it stands now, the District of
13 Columbia Housing Authority, along with our own
14 gentrifiers, are dismantling history. So even
15 though we may want to change the name of something,
16 my recommendation is prior to that, to see if
17 Councilmember Gray could come up with some dollars
18 for maybe DC Cable, or somebody could do a history
19 on OSSE. So then it could be archives.

20 OSSE went through not only Richardson
21 Dwelling, but Potomac Gardens, all through the days

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1 of the '70s. OSSE, their workers basically came
2 from Ward 7. Came from Lincoln Heights or
3 Richardson Dwelling.

4 Many of them were boxers. They used to
5 be boxers, and they came in with OSSE, AND OSSE,
6 if you really Google its history, it is also a good
7 model that this housing authority maybe Ms. Hampton
8 even need to find the history of OSSE, and tweet
9 out and bring it up-to-date and use some of its
10 models with today complex issues that we have.

11 OSSE was -- and whether you know it or
12 not, with the name OSSE, and keeping that history,
13 would you be surprised the type of fundraising that
14 you may could do, especially with Denise Rolark
15 Barnes, who definitely knows the history of OSEE,
16 and some of the members who have to hear their name
17 again.

18 So you have to be caution when you want
19 to get rid of something, especially when you don't
20 have economics in your neighborhood like the
21 washing machines, like a lot of the rest of the

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1 communities, and all you have is resident
2 participation funds, and you have to deal with
3 collaboratives, and hope that you can get a
4 mini-grant.

5 So that's my advice to you as your
6 Commissioner. But I'm glad you brought that up to
7 my attention, because I want to let you know that
8 if you don't do it, I'm going to beat you to the
9 punch.

10 MS. SIMMONS: Okay. And another
11 thing, the PSA. I was very, very upset about that.
12 The way they come about PSA -- public safety, who
13 got the most incidents happening -- murderers,
14 whatever -- and we didn't get it.

15 That was the reason -- I don't think
16 it's fair. And another thing. The employment for
17 residents. Hiring residents on the property. We
18 have some -- they're hiring through another
19 program that people that's been incarcerated -- I
20 think it's a program. So why can't they hire
21 residents on a property? That's all I have to say.

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1 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: If I may
2 before you leave.

3 MS. SIMMONS: Yes.

4 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: As
5 Commissioner Vann-Ghasri says, before you decide
6 to dismantle something, it used to be about the kids
7 not listening, and when they was out there with that
8 program, they did a lot of mentoring/tutoring the
9 young folks at that time who turned out to be
10 citizens of this town, and became leaders in other
11 neighborhoods.

12 So if you get the young folks and them
13 together, and do a little dialogue, you might have
14 a big change in your neighborhood.

15 MS. SIMMONS: I think so.

16 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Commissioner
17 Grossinger?

18 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: Yes. I was
19 just wondering, Madam Chair, if the person that
20 administers our Section Three program is here,
21 because oftentimes once we have names, the

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1 Section Three is the -- you probably know -- the
2 regulations in HUD that ask housing authorities to
3 help with employment.

4 And so one question is, who's
5 available, and when? And so I don't know if the
6 staff person is here, or if leadership be
7 responsive.

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: So Mr. Bovellet was
9 actually was going to answer to that question.

10 MR. BOVELLE: Yes, that staff person
11 who administers Section Three is Ms. Hampton, the
12 Director of Resident Services. But I also did want
13 to mention that the housing authority is always
14 looking to hire residents.

15 Typically, we look for positions that
16 they are qualified for. A lot of our laborers come
17 from our resident population. They don't always
18 work at the site where they live, but those job
19 announcements are always on our website, and
20 available for viewing at 1133 in our Human
21 Resources Department, and we do encourage people

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1 to apply.

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And maybe
3 on that note Commissioner Grossinger, those number
4 come through the Resident Service Resident
5 Initiative Committee. The coach here was the
6 bill's -- Commissioner Slover had recommended to
7 Ms. Hampton that every time that we leave, then
8 that is the part of our report where she's showing
9 us the number is Section Three residents.

10 So that's a part of Resident Service.
11 But it could be nice if we put it in the Director's
12 Report, all the numbers. Not only those numbers.
13 All numbers should go into the Director's Report,
14 because everybody is prepping us anyway off the
15 numbers, and can find it off our residents that you
16 hear coming up here struggling, trying to get
17 grants.

18 MR. BOVELLE: Yes. I believe,
19 Commissioner, that Director Hampton does include
20 the Section Three numbers in their report each
21 month.

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1 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Sir, let me
2 say this. I'm the founder of the Resident Service
3 Resident Initiative Committee. It was a standing
4 committee. It just happened it was a special
5 committee, and as long as I chaired my committee,
6 my committee does not with my intelligence.

7 Now I'm the Chair of that committee, and
8 that committee had more commissioners than any
9 other committee, this standing committee of the
10 District of Columbia Housing Authority Committee.

11 The Chair just went on record and will
12 not stutter. That until Commissioner Slover
13 enforced that those numbers be presented to the
14 Resident Service, the Resident Initiative
15 Committee. No members were ever presented to us,
16 even though we requested. I'm going to correct
17 Mr. Lancaster.

18 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: One hundred
19 percent.

20 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Would you
21 like to do roll call, because there's six

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1 commissioners that sits on this committee, and the
2 majority of your quorum that sits up here is
3 members -- original members who have voting rights
4 in the committee.

5 So like I said, I think it may be -- it's
6 only a recommendation -- that those numbers be in
7 the Director's Report.

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: I have one
10 more question.

11 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Sure.

12 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: I just
13 wanted to know how is your community navigator
14 working with you. You mentioned a number of
15 issues. Have you tried working with that person?

16 MS. SIMMONS: Yes. He's helped me a
17 lot, but he's -- I mean as it was told to me, he's
18 had -- he's pulled in so many different places, and
19 he does the best he can, but it's not enough for
20 me.

21 MR. BOVELLE: Noted. Thank you.

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1 12:33:08COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: On
2 that note, Mr. Interim Director, that's another
3 issue that has been going through the Resident
4 Service Resident Initiative Committee, through
5 Karen Settles, who is the Chair of the citywide
6 Advisory Committee, along with a member who sits
7 on that board, Kate Council, who had requested that
8 we look at how the navigators are assigned to
9 properties, and that the navigator is not working
10 out with that President, or that may not meet the
11 needs, because it's not a negative or positive
12 situation.

13 The goal is, Resident Council
14 presidents, contrary to what anybody believes,
15 they have goals too. They have goals, they have
16 objectives, they have short- and long-term goals,
17 and they're looking at those navigators to work
18 with them, not to tell them what to do, because I
19 need to make it very clear for the Chair of this
20 Board, the Interim Director, and also Ms. Hampton,
21 you work for us.

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1 And in working for us, the reason why
2 the Committee redesigned and tried to be engineers
3 so the navigators could work with the Resident
4 Council president, along with being objective, and
5 help us identify our complex issues into numbers,
6 so that the goal would be that you would be writing
7 grants, not for your providers, not for your
8 friends, to come into the community to provide the
9 services in which residents themselves are
10 qualified to do.

11 So if the navigators have some
12 technical skills, they can either: a) go after a
13 Ross Grant, especially for New Communities -- that
14 would go from Barry Farms, Lincoln Heights, and
15 Richardson Dwelling.

16 So that's something we need to look at.
17 Ross Grants for all three of those communities,
18 while we're working to getting them up to
19 self-sufficiency. That's my recommendation.

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you
21 Commissioner. JoeAnn Lewis?

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1 MS. LEWIS: Good afternoon ladies and
2 gentlemen. My name is JoeAnn Lewis. I'm from
3 Richardson Dwelling. I have a question to ask as
4 far as unemployment. I need to know why is it that
5 every time you turn around, housing done hired
6 somebody, even from the drug treatment or
7 something.

8 It's not fair that I live on Richardson
9 Dwelling property, and nine out of ten I keep my
10 court clean. So I want to know why can't people
11 on the property get a job with you all. Why is it
12 so hard?

13 MR. BOVELLE: I'm not sure what you're
14 referring to when you say that we're hiring people
15 from --

16 MS. LEWIS: No, listen to me. I'm not
17 saying they're hiring people. But every time I
18 turn around, we have a different maintenance
19 person, and I'm an ex-drug user myself, so I know
20 when I see one.

21 So only thing I'm asking you all is that

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1 why is it that it be alcoholics, addicts, that
2 housing are hiring, and relatives? And that an
3 outside person that even live on you all property
4 can't even get a job.

5 MR. BOVELLE: Well as I stated before,
6 we do hire a lot of our residents. A lot of our
7 residents do work for us. We typically --

8 MS. LEWIS: Well I'd like to see. I
9 haven't seen it on too many of you all's properties.

10 MR. BOVELLE: Yes. The other thing is
11 that we are operating within a specific budget, so
12 we have a fixed number of employees that we can
13 employ at any given time, and when openings do
14 occur, we actually encourage our residents to
15 apply, and when we have qualified residents, we
16 like to select them.

17 MS. LEWIS: Okay, so when do we, as a
18 resident, hear about you all hiring. Do we go
19 through -- or what's the procedures? Because we
20 don't hear anything.

21 MR. BOVELLE: Yes. All of our

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1 openings are posted on our website. What we can
2 look to do is, when we have some of our positions,
3 we can also have them posted at the property, so
4 that you can see them for folks who do not have
5 Internet access, or who aren't able to make it to
6 1133 to actually view our employment board.

7 We can ask that we start to post those
8 applications -- I mean those requests for
9 openings, at our sites.

10 MS. LEWIS: Well we sure would like
11 that in Richardson Dwelling, because some people
12 do in Richardson Dwelling work, and some do want
13 to work. And I'm one of them ones that I do want
14 to work.

15 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you. And we
16 wouldn't be just Richardson Dwelling, so we have
17 to be fair, and --

18 MS. LEWIS: And I have a lot of
19 certificates from Homes for Hope. But what's the
20 sense in having a lot of certificates if they're
21 not taking me anywhere.

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1 MR. BOVELLE: Yes. What I would
2 suggest is that we will look at posting those
3 positions. But also that you might want to talk
4 to Ms. Hampton, the Director of Resident Services,
5 who has oversight for our Section Three program.

6 MS. LEWIS: Yes sir.

7 MR. BOVELLE: Because also when we have
8 contractors who do work for the Housing Authority,
9 we require that they hire a certain percentage of
10 residents if available to do that work, or to
11 contribute to a fund to help residents to become
12 job-ready. So if you'll speak to Ms. Hampton, she
13 can talk to you about the Section Three program and
14 how you might sign up for that.

15 MS. LEWIS: Okay, thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And in
17 addition to them, into Chair, I highly recommend
18 that Ms. Hampton do a report, and include it in
19 operations, or with the Resident Service Resident
20 Initiative Committee -- one or the other, maybe
21 both -- because it's time for DCHA to monitor and

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1 track the human capital piece of these communities,
2 another issue that I've been constantly at since
3 I've been sitting on this Board.

4 And it took a long time for anybody to
5 understand what I was saying when I constantly was
6 using the proper term, human capital piece. The
7 Deputy Mayor of the city on my right can confirm
8 that there is a capital piece called the human
9 capital piece, that was assigned to Richardson
10 Dwelling and Lincoln Heights.

11 And over the twelve years then of new
12 community, it appears as though Lincoln Heights was
13 getting all of the benefits of new community, and
14 not Richardson Dwelling. And Ms. White has
15 brought that to the attention to this Board many
16 years ago, that we have not resolved, and it's still
17 on the table.

18 So maybe at this point in time, being
19 that we're rebranding ourselves, we will tweak that
20 back, and we need to get back to this resident, and
21 we need to let her what's the duties and

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1 responsibilities of Homes for Hopes, and maybe we
2 need to do a trend to see the difference when the
3 collaborative was Richardson Dwellings' human
4 capital piece, versus Homes for Hope.

5 Because the money that is geared is
6 money that's geared targeted only to those two
7 communities, and we do not want to be guilty or in
8 violation of any federal restrictions that we may
9 be in letting the -- because we're not balancing
10 that fund, so keeping a real good narrative of it.
11 So I think that's something we need to look into.

12 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you.

13 MS. LEWIS: Okay. And I have one more
14 question. Why is it always that Lincoln Heights
15 and Richardson Dwelling, but Lincoln Heights got
16 more than what Richardson Dwelling have? Now we
17 have some in Richardson Dwelling don't want
18 nothing, but we have a lot in there that do. I'm
19 one of them.

20 I want something. I don't want to live
21 in housing all my life. I want to pay you all and

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1 move on. So why is it that Richardson Dwelling got
2 nothing? I want to know. If Lincoln Heights got
3 a grant, then shouldn't it be for Lincoln Heights
4 and Richardson Dwelling?

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: You know
6 what? My recommendation is that you have the
7 Deputy Mayor sitting here to the right, and maybe
8 what you can request at this present time through
9 your president, and lock him in, I recommend that
10 Richardson Dwelling begin to have focus groups and
11 discussions.

12 And this is what focus groups and
13 discussions are. To make sure that in the new
14 community rule, that you get different people to
15 come back out, and to do workshops with you to
16 update you, so that you can understand whether or
17 not you are operating under the same contract of
18 new community, a new contract of new community.

19 I don't even know what contract you're
20 operating under new community, that if is not in
21 writing, it doesn't exist. So your president of

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1 your Resident Council, they have a book, just like
2 I have a book in front of me, and it should say,
3 New Communities, Richardson Dwelling, and it's
4 telling you the mission, the goals, the objectives.
5 What have they put out. Follow the money.

6 MR. BOVELLE: The other thing,
7 Ms. Lewis, is right in this very room there are New
8 Communities meetings that are held, and I would
9 suggest that you come to those meetings, so that
10 you can bring those concerns to the committee that
11 meets here, so we can have someone give you the
12 dates and times of the New Communities meetings.

13 And you can also bring your concerns in
14 that location. That's the correct environment
15 that you'd want to have them address.

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Well what
17 I'm telling you is don't come to the New Communities
18 meetings. I'm telling you, they had New
19 Communities come to your house. And your house is
20 your Resident Council office.

21 And your Resident Council President has

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1 the right to contact the governing Mayor, think
2 about what you want to do, tell him where you want
3 the person to come, what time, and what issues you
4 want to have a workshop on. It's just simple as
5 that. Follow those instructions.

6 MS. LEWIS: Yes ma'am.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Thank you.

8 MS. LEWIS: Thank you so much.

9 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Jennifer Speight?
10 Jennifer Speight?

11 MS. SPEIGHT: Good afternoon.

12 MR. BOVELLE: Good afternoon.

13 MS. SPEIGHT: I'm Jennifer Speight.

14 I'm a --

15 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Pull the mic
16 closer to you please, because I can't hardly you.

17 MS. SPEIGHT: Is that better?

18 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Yes. Thank
19 you.

20 MS. SPEIGHT: I'm actually here to talk
21 about some issues that I've been experiencing ever

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1 since last year -- me and a fellow neighbor who left
2 DC General at the same time. We both signed our
3 lease the same day, moved in same time, and have
4 the same property management.

5 Property management has been
6 unresponsive over the last year. I've had
7 meetings with property management at my current
8 residence now in regards to issues I've been
9 experiencing within my home, and with my neighbors.

10 It's been very disruptive. I've been
11 harassed and berated on a weekly/daily basis, my
12 daughter and I. Just as recently as this morning,
13 leaving to go take her to school, and my neighbor
14 comes out the door yelling and cursing me out, and
15 screaming at me in front of my daughter.

16 I've contacted property management
17 last year. We actually had a sit-down meeting with
18 Dora Taylor, myself -- Dora Taylor with DHS,
19 myself, the owner of the property, and the property
20 management's lead managers, if you will.

21 And ever since then property management

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1 has been unresponsive. I got a phone call this
2 morning with threats of being sent to court for
3 eviction, because the neighbor that I'm having
4 issues with has been calling, flooding the office
5 with calls about issues of noises and other things
6 going on, and I'm not even up there. I'm at work.

7 I followed up with police reports. My
8 property -- my house was broken into a couple of
9 weeks ago. TV was taken, a couple of other private
10 items, personal items. Property management has
11 never followed up with me.

12 Besides the raccoon still living in my
13 ceiling, and mice eating away into my unit, I'm now
14 having to fight everyday with a neighbor that does
15 not like me. She's bang on the walls, she'll yell,
16 she'll scream, play music loud all hours of the
17 night, calling the police does not help.

18 It seems to be a tit-for-tat kind of
19 issue. I have followed up with Mr. Coy, and seem
20 to hopefully get some resolved there, but I'm just
21 speaking on this because I believe that how

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1 property managers deal with voucher holders is not
2 kind, and it's in a way that it's belittling and
3 it's degrading.

4 I'm a single working mother. I didn't
5 work hard for my voucher. I work hard to provide
6 for my daughter. Right? But the fact that I am
7 on a voucher, I don't expect to be penalized or to
8 be belittled, or to be spoken to other than what
9 you would talk to an adult.

10 And I'm not sure what Housing Authority
11 has lined up, but I feel like some type of
12 sensitivity training, some type of follow-up with
13 management that is unresponsive to issues to
14 maintenance requests, to -- and also how to respond
15 to other issues that residents are having.

16 I have followed up with housing
17 authority with mediation. That has not worked.
18 I've tried that several times. I've kind of done
19 that for about three or four months, and that has
20 not garnered any response at all.

21 And the fact that I got a phone

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1 call -- threats from property management -- is
2 really disgusting. And it's almost as if, if I
3 wasn't here, if I haven't used the contacts that
4 I made, I'd be stuck, and I would be in fear of being
5 displaced, or being no longer housed -- fear for
6 losing my voucher, because -- well the system
7 allows residents to kind of feed into, and I feel
8 like if there were better systems in place for
9 residents that don't work, that are on vouchers,
10 to prioritize or occupy their time in a better,
11 healthier manner, I think a lot of these issues
12 wouldn't even occur.

13 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

14 MS. SPEIGHT: Thank you.

15 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Excuse me,
16 what property do you live on?

17 MS. SPEIGHT: The property management
18 is managed under Urban City Management. I've
19 spoken with them several times, called them. I
20 used to call them on a weekly basis. I don't even
21 call anymore, because they don't respond.

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1 I follow up with -- I actually just go
2 to the office, and even with management being in
3 the office, they will not come out and speak with
4 me. So -- but they have no problem calling my
5 phone and threatening me with eviction.

6 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Where is your
7 property located?

8 MS. SPEIGHT: 5350 --

9 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: We have that
10 information.

11 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: I'm sorry
12 ,Terri. It's hard to see you, so I don't know
13 what's going on down there. I just wanted to -- I
14 think you deserve a response from us about this
15 issue, and I didn't know what you were doing with
16 moving on or responding. But I was hoping that
17 Nathan could respond.

18 MS. SPEIGHT: I do appreciate that
19 Commissioner. This is my third time reporting on
20 this issue with the Board in particular-- so a
21 response would be --

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1 MR. BOVELLE: I know
2 that -- Ms. Speight, that you had some
3 communications with Mr. McCoy, who is the Director
4 of the Voucher Program. I know that he meets with
5 his landlords on a regular basis, and reach out to
6 landlords to make sure that they're addressing the
7 concerns of our residents.

8 I know that you have the ability, I
9 believe, to apply for a transfer voucher, which you
10 can do, and Mr. McCoy is the correct person, which
11 is -- I know that you communicated with him before
12 the meeting, so he will definitely address your
13 concerns, and we can report back to the Board and
14 how they are addressed.

15 MS. SPEIGHT: Thank you.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Could I ask
17 that you do that before the next meeting? I mean
18 if someone has to come here and testify three times
19 and we haven't resolved their issue, then maybe we
20 need to do something different.

21 And so instead of waiting until the next

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1 meeting, maybe we can have a sooner report out about
2 then particular issue. Because she just went
3 through pretty lengthy series of attempts she's
4 tried to make to resolve her issue, and it seems
5 that there's not much left for her to do, and it's
6 really is only what we can do for her.

7 MS. SPEIGHT: That's exactly right.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

10 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: If I may --

11 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can I get some
12 agreement that we'll do that, Mr. Bovellette? Can
13 you agree to do that?

14 MR. BOVELLETTE: Yes. I believe it
15 would -- yes. Yes.

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: If I may, I
18 want to commend you for what you said earlier. You
19 work for you and your sibling's child, not the
20 voucher.

21 MS. SPEIGHT: Yes sir.

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1 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Even though
2 you were under the voucher program, and I applaud
3 you for that, because that is very important. I
4 hope that we have data on her complaints with this
5 authority. We can't do too much about the other
6 side of individuals' behavior, but I think as
7 Commissioner Slover said just a moment ago, and as
8 the Interim Director has said, we will look into
9 it, and you shouldn't have to come back again with
10 this. We should be bringing something to you,
11 hopefully very soon.

12 MS. SPEIGHT: Yes sir. Thank you.
13 And I just want to get this on record, property
14 management's response was, this is a managing of
15 people, and they're not in a business of managing
16 people. So I have to figure it out myself.

17 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Ooh. Okay.
18 Thank you. Mr. McCoy took note of that statement.

19 MS. SPEIGHT: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Great. Thank
21 you. Paulette Matthews?

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1 MS. MATTHEWS: Hello everybody.
2 How's everybody doing today?

3 MR. BOVELLE: Good afternoon.

4 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Good afternoon.
5 How are you?

6 MS. MATTHEWS: Oh good. I have a host
7 of different issues here. I'm just sitting here
8 listening to everybody talking, especially about
9 the jobs for residents on the property. I believe
10 it's called the Green Team. You all can correct
11 me --

12 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Excuse me
13 before you go further so there won't be any
14 interruptions. With your name and your property.

15 MS. MATTHEWS: My name is Paulette
16 Matthews, and I live in Barry Farms.

17 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Thank you
18 ma'am.

19 MS. MATTHEWS: Far as the jobs with
20 residents on the property. As I sit here and
21 speak, a couple of months ago I spoke on the same

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1 thing, and fortunately my son was chosen to be in
2 the first group of people who worked, and I believe
3 it's called the Green Team. Am I correct in the
4 term?

5 MR. BOVELLE: Clean Green.

6 MS. MATTHEWS: Clean Green? Okay.
7 Clean Green.

8 MR. BOVELLE: Clean and Green.

9 MS. MATTHEWS: Clean and Green. And
10 I'm thankful for that, and as I sit and I observe,
11 I'm assuming that you have gone through the
12 complete cycle for the residents in Barry Farms,
13 because of the mere fact I see a gentleman who
14 started two weeks after -- two weeks within the
15 same program time of the three months that my son
16 had started.

17 I see him back out there. I, even
18 myself as a resident, submitted paperwork to do so
19 for the three months, but I haven't gotten that
20 opportunity or that call yet. One of my questions
21 also, is will my son -- and I think I asked you guys

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1 at the last meeting and you told me to refer to
2 Ms. Watson, which I have in reference to my son
3 coming back, but at the same time, to make the
4 circle go around and they keep going back.

5 The question will be, will they be
6 higher, and will they have to go to in-street, or
7 do this job training that you're speaking of, when
8 you can physically see within a three months' time
9 span, how good a person is as a worker, and could
10 you all make the decision to place people on those
11 job sites after the cycle has gone past, instead
12 of going to N Street, getting training, and all of
13 that? Is that incorporated in how you all go
14 things, or you have to go online, or either go to
15 N Street, to be able to be hired on a site that you
16 live on?

17 MR. BOVELLE: So just for
18 clarification for members of the Board and the
19 audience, there is a special program at Barry Farm,
20 where we have several positions that are temporary
21 positions, but we hire laborers to assist with the

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1 cutting of the grass and the cleaning of the
2 grounds, because Barry Farm is a site that's, with
3 the exception of Wade Apartments, is mostly
4 townhouses, where residents are usually
5 responsible for taking care of their own yards.

6 With the high number of vacancies that
7 we have at Barry Farm due to the upcoming
8 renovations that are going to take place, there are
9 no residents living in some of those houses, so they
10 can't take care of the yards, and we've hired some
11 staff from the resident population at Barry Farm
12 to assist in that effort.

13 What we do is, we are cycling through
14 residents who apply, and they have three-month
15 terms to work at Barry Farm. As you and I spoke,
16 I believe last Thursday, if you're interested in
17 cycling again, or your son, to please work through
18 Ms. Watson. They're temporary employees, but
19 they come through the management office at Barry
20 Farm.

21 For all of our permanent positions

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1 outside of those, you would have to actually apply
2 through our normal course of action, through 1133
3 at the Human Resources Department, and as we stated
4 before, we'll start making those
5 applications -- those openings, available to be
6 posted at the management office, so if there is a
7 permanent position, folks can apply.

8 When we do have tenants that work with
9 us and they submit applications, we do know their
10 work history and their work ethic, and it does help
11 us to make selections.

12 MS. MATTHEWS: Okay. And my last
13 concern is, I think it was a month ago, I was at
14 a meeting, and at the end of that meeting is when
15 I actually found out and heard for the first time,
16 that they're going to incorporate H Streets into
17 the Barry Farms redevelopment.

18 And when I hear H Streets, I actually
19 hear displacement, because at this point and time
20 I feel as though even though they're saying, I think
21 they need to send someone else out to evaluate

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1 things.

2 But H Streets, like I said, will mean
3 displacement, because there's no way around it.
4 With us trying to have it where as though you
5 rebuild in place. As you stated before, there's
6 a lot of vacant units within Barry Farms.

7 A lot of people have gone different
8 places, and have been promised to be able to come
9 back after the redevelopment. But the money that
10 they will use for the H Streets, wouldn't it be more
11 feasible -- I don't know, I'm just throwing out in
12 the atmosphere -- because there's been a lot of
13 residents that lives in Barry Farms that are
14 seniors that have been told that they will not be
15 able to come back to Barry Farms.

16 And when I sit here and I look at the
17 Wade Road apartment building that you just spoke
18 of, the money that they would use for the H Streets
19 could be possibly -- if you're really wanting
20 people to come back, and especially seniors,
21 because once they get scattered all around, there's

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1 really not nobody that can check on them careful
2 or whatever -- they can extend that and make that
3 like a senior building for the seniors, because yes
4 their children might have gone on, but they still
5 might have grandkids or whatever, and are more
6 familiar with the neighborhood.

7 Could that be considered in the
8 replanning of the redevelopment of Barry Farms,
9 instead of the H Streets?

10 MR. BOVELLE: Barry Farm is still in
11 the planning process.

12 MS. MATTHEWS: Yes, that's why I'm
13 asking to be reconsidered.

14 MR. BOVELLE: One of the things that I
15 will state, is that the way affordable housing was
16 developed 40, 30, 50 years ago, is different than
17 what we do now, and we try to make it so that the
18 neighborhoods that we have are inclusive of the
19 rest of the community, and try to promote a
20 community of inclusion.

21 So in the past, when we had lots of

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1 one-way streets, lots of cul-de-sacs, lots of
2 dead-ends, that's not the way that we look to build
3 public housing now. We look to have public housing
4 that's integrated into the rest of the community,
5 which is why we are, when we do our development,
6 whether it's Barry Farm or Highland, or Park Morton
7 or any of the others, eliminating those
8 cul-de-sacs, those dead-ends, and those one-way
9 streets.

10 I think that if you're concerned with
11 what the final plans are, then the proper venue to
12 address is not here, but along the Barry Farm
13 meeting, similar to the way we have the meetings
14 for Lincoln Heights here, the New Community
15 meetings in this building. We also have those
16 regular meetings at Barry Farm.

17 MS. MATTHEWS: Well we haven't had one
18 in a long time, and so -- and then that was maybe
19 a year ago, I'm not certain. And I was the first
20 one I've ever seen since I've been there, so my
21 question today also was going to be when will you

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1 all have another one at Barry Farm, because of the
2 mere fact a lot of people like -- I don't know how
3 many people are here at this present time from the
4 properties that are surrounding this area, because
5 you don't get the information that you should get
6 to know about them.

7 And then a lot of times people just feel
8 like, oh well, they're not going -- I've been to
9 these meetings, and it's still going on. You know
10 what I'm saying? So it becomes a conflict where
11 people coming -- and then people are trying to work
12 and get into some of these job trainings and stuff,
13 and get their credit together because of what's
14 coming to pass, and these hours are not feasible
15 for people to come and say what they got to say
16 outside of not getting the information that they
17 need to be able to come here.

18 If I wasn't in the fight to
19 fight -- because it really is not about Barry
20 Farms. I just feel as though that we're getting
21 pushed out of the District of Columbia, and I was

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1 born and raised here.

2 It doesn't really matter to me where I
3 live in the District. I just want to live in the
4 District. And everything is just to outrageously
5 high, and being as though right now there's where
6 I live, I would like to be able to come back.

7 My kids are grown and gone, and my
8 grandkids are 17 and 18-years-old, so I know I'll
9 probably eventually be in like a one-bedroom. But
10 you just have to accommodate all people of all --

11 MR. BOVELLE: Right. And I'm going to
12 invite you to have a conversation after the meeting
13 with Kimberly Black King, who's our Chief
14 Development Officer. You can also talk to your
15 manager about when the meetings are.

16 We are doing one-for-one replacement,
17 and part of what we do with these redevelopment
18 sites, is we look at the needs of the community as
19 it exists, so there's been lots of discussion about
20 do you build back the exact same number of bedroom
21 sizes that you have there? Do you build back the

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1 number of bedroom sizes to accommodate the people
2 that are there now?

3 MS. MATTHEWS: Because that's real
4 replacement.

5 MR. BOVELLE: So I would invite you to
6 have a conversation with Ms. King.

7 MS. MATTHEWS: Okay.

8 COMMISSIONER KENNER: Ma'am, I would
9 also like you said, I appreciate your comment about
10 senior housing in particular. We are still in the
11 planning process as it relates to Barry Farm, and
12 so that is something you can absolutely take back,
13 so I appreciate that.

14 MS. MATTHEWS: And another thing.
15 When you were speaking about the one-way streets,
16 when I came here you had access. There were not
17 one-way streets. You could go either way you
18 wanted to go.

19 And then they put this little -- they
20 made it so people couldn't go a certain way, and
21 I don't understand that either. Nobody really

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1 would like to take responsibility for that, but
2 it's there --

3 MR. BOVELLE: I don't quite understand
4 it either Ms. Matthews, but it was part of the
5 development.

6 MS. MATTHEWS: Yes, and if you go
7 through there, you're subject to get a ticket. I
8 mean it just really doesn't make any sense to me.
9 But all of those things were not done up
10 through -- maybe because of the residents, I don't
11 know.

12 Or maybe just because of the
13 government, it was done the way it was done. But
14 I have further more things to say, but as time
15 permits I have to leave. But it's just something
16 to consider.

17 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you.

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Can I ask a
19 clarifying question? I've heard now twice that
20 the development, or the planning, is still going
21 on with Barry Farm.

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1 Has there been a decision made
2 regarding clearing the site, or developing -- what
3 we call developing-in-place, because there's been
4 a lot of discussion about that over the years, and
5 I'm kind of lost on where we are.

6 So that might help inform some of these
7 discussions.

8 MR. BOVELLE: Yes, we're still looking
9 at that Commissioner Slover. I know that
10 Ms. Todman has even reported that the underground
11 infrastructure at Barry Farm is very different than
12 it is at other sites, and the team is taking a look
13 at -- from a construction standpoint -- of how
14 challenging it would be to build in place, as
15 opposed to vacating --

16 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: So I take from
17 your answer that there has not been a decision made
18 with regards to either clearing or building? So
19 that decision hasn't been made?

20 MR. BOVELLE: That's correct.

21 MS. MATTHEWS: Okay.

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1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: When will you
2 anticipate that decision being made. I mean we are
3 pretty far into this thing. I mean at some point
4 we're going to have to make a decision. I actually
5 thought there was one made, to be honest with you.

6 MR. BOVELLE: Yes, I'll have to get
7 back to you on that.

8 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Ms. Black, do
9 you have anything? Do you have anything on where
10 we are on this?

11 MS. BLACK KING: On the update, come to
12 my --

13 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Are we going
14 to -- has there been a decision made with regards
15 to clearing the site, or developing in place, as
16 we call it?

17 MS. BLACK KING: Yes. So --

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Can you
19 come to the mic?

20 (Simultaneous speaking.)

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Come to the

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1 mic, because a lot of people want to hear you.

2 (Simultaneous speaking.)

3 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Well, that's
4 the way we used to do things, by the way. So --

5 PARTICIPANT: Can't hear in the back.

6 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Well will
7 she come up after I --

8 MR. BOVELLE: I think the challenge is
9 that the ultimate decision does not sit with
10 Ms. Kimberly Black King. There's a committee with
11 the Housing Authority, and they're just reviewing
12 this.

13 We have to get together to make sure
14 that we have an answer that is suitable, and don't
15 want to make an answer off the cuff right now.

16 MS. MATTHEWS: She could have come and
17 said that.

18 MR. BOVELLE: I just said it.

19 MS. MATTHEWS: But my question, when
20 will you have a meeting at Barry Farms? When will
21 that take place so we can address some of these

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1 issues, and maybe she'll have an answer to that
2 question. Because I feel as though --

3 MR. BOVELLE: Ms. King can give you
4 that information.

5 MS. MATTHEWS: -- I feel as though you
6 all still need to hold this there.

7 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Ms. King, do you
8 know when the next meeting is scheduled for Barry
9 Farm?

10 MS. BLACK KING: Yes. We're planning to
11 go out this Monday.

12 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Can you do that in
13 the microphone?

14 MR. BOVELLE: She said that we're
15 planning to go out this Monday.

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: That's
17 very disrespectful. Paulette, she can come up
18 there and sit with you because while she's sitting
19 back there, you're -- she's not being on record.
20 You are. So she needs to come and sit next to you,
21 or don't answer.

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1 MR. BOVELLE: I can speak for --

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Because
3 that's disrespectful.

4 MS. MATTHEWS: Is there a Resident
5 Council at Barry Farms?

6 MR. BOVELLE: There is a Resident
7 Council at Barry Farm. But regarding the meeting,
8 Ms. King will make sure that -- and your
9 manager -- make sure that the flyers are put out
10 throughout the property too, and that's when the
11 meeting is, later this month.

12 MS. MATTHEWS: Why we haven't been
13 having any meetings?

14 MR. BOVELLE: They have been having
15 meetings.

16 MS. MATTHEWS: Where have they been
17 held?

18 MR. BOVELLE: At the Academy. So
19 Ms. Black King will --

20 MS. MATTHEWS: I've been to resident
21 manager's meetings --

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1 MR. BOVELLE: -- speak with you after
2 this --

3 MS. MATTHEWS: -- I haven't been to
4 Resident Council meetings. I'm just saying. I
5 just thought about it.

6 MR. BOVELLE: Okay. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

8 MS. MATTHEWS: You're more than
9 welcome.

10 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Gloria James?

11 MS. JAMES: Good afternoon.

12 (Chorus of good afternoon.)

13 MS. JAMES: My name is Gloria James.
14 I'm a current resident at the Judiciary Dwelling.
15 I also have some concerns for Ward 7, for the
16 Kimball School reconstruction. I don't know what
17 public housing you all have there, but
18 they -- Kimball has a two-year reconstruction
19 program that will end in the fall, and the kids will
20 be relocated to Davis.

21 So I wanted to know who is the housing,

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1 or the commissioner person, for contact, because
2 they have an upcoming meeting this Friday at 5:30
3 at Kimball? So if someone can give me -- I can
4 be -- after the meeting, or this is assembled.

5 Someone can contact me to give a contact
6 person, and someone from housing dwelling would be
7 at the meeting this Friday at Kimball, would be of
8 great participants for the resident concerns, for
9 the relocating, especially the pre-K, the K, and
10 the kindergarten kids, will be transported to Davis
11 Elementary. So that was one concern that I have.

12 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Go ahead and read
13 through your other concerns, and will respond in
14 one.

15 MS. JAMES: The other concern I have is
16 dealing with public safety at Judiciary House. As
17 the Secretary for the Resident Council board,
18 we've had several meetings with Public Safety, and
19 we've had several transitions, and I know as well,
20 the Housing Authority.

21 One was, when will the cameras

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1 be -- when will workable, needable, and updated
2 cameras be installed -- interior as well as
3 exterior -- for resident and community safety?

4 The other question or concern I have,
5 is when or how soon will the SBO officer onsite
6 be -- the replaced SBO officer be onsite?

7 And then I had a financial concern.
8 Some of them has been addressed, and I want to know
9 what is the protocol, or the proper chain of
10 command, when we have financial matters dealing
11 with judiciary dwelling funds?

12 The Resident Council services has been
13 working with us. The property manager has been
14 working with us. Our new property manager is
15 working with us. But somehow or another -- and I
16 understand you all's transition -- but somehow or
17 another, funds have not been allocated to Judiciary
18 House, and I would like to -- and I was informed,
19 addressed, and even scrutinized, about my approach
20 for standing up for what I believe.

21 This is not the only housing board I've

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1 been on. I'm going to say is publicly, I do not
2 want to overstep Housing Authority and go straight
3 to HUD. But that was my next goal.

4 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Let me ask
5 you a question about your issue? Is it your CSC
6 funds, or your RFP funds?

7 MS. JAMES: All of them.

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Okay.
9 Well put this on your calendar, because they
10 disrespects me too. So to the end of the
11 month -- this Thursday -- all of the resident
12 leadership with the CSC, we will be discussing that
13 with the Resident Service Resident Initiative
14 Committee.

15 I don't know whether or not you attended
16 the other meetings that we had, but we've had two
17 meetings, and from my understanding, you all were
18 notified like maybe 48 hours before the meeting,
19 and in some cases, two before the meeting.

20 And each time that we've had this
21 meeting, there has been a consensus of the

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1 leadership that attended. So today we hope that
2 you all will be notified by Office of Resident
3 Services, in a timely manner, which means ASAP,
4 because when we leave -- one thing about our
5 Committee, when we leave that Committee room that
6 day, we already know what our next issue is.

7 And so therefore, the Housing Authority
8 is notified. They have 30 days to organize, or to
9 reach out to who we're inviting to these issues.
10 So now you've already been notified, and you can
11 bring those issues with you, and we would ask -- and
12 I'm asking Mr. Bovellet to understand -- that we
13 would like Mr. Gerard present, and Mr. Miller.

14 They both need to be present so we would
15 no longer have this conflict, because our Committee
16 I breaking barriers through policy. And we're
17 under the impression that the policy has been going
18 through the polity process.

19 So at the same time, we need a list of
20 showing us all the policies that our Committee had
21 them pack through this Housing Authority from the

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1 time it exists, before Director Todman actually
2 walk out the door, so somebody can be held
3 accountable.

4 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you. I'm going to
5 answer your questions also I believe, in reverse
6 order. So one of the things I know that's ongoing
7 right now is that the Office of Resident Services
8 is working with the Office of Financial Management,
9 to issue the PUI funds -- the Per Unit Income
10 funds -- to Resident Councils for this year. So
11 those should be coming shortly. You can talk to
12 Director Hampton about the date of those.

13 You did mention that Officer Strother
14 left. Chief Maupin is actively recruiting another
15 officer to come in -- move into Judiciary House,
16 and we can let you know when that's going to happen.
17 We actually do an outreach to MPD, as well as to
18 our Office of Public Safety officers, to find a
19 suitable candidate as a replacement.

20 We are taking a look at the cameras. I
21 know that there have been several senior buildings

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1 that have requested additional cameras, for
2 example, to put in the stairwells and in the
3 hallways, and additional cameras to the building.

4 We are using and taking a look at the
5 funds that the city has given us from the unspent
6 LRSP funds, to see if we can supplement some of the
7 cameras at those sites. It's very challenging for
8 us to place cameras in stairwells, because they
9 have a lower ceiling, and we have struggled with
10 vandalism when we have placed them there.

11 But we'll take a look at the technology
12 to see if there's something else that can work for
13 that.

14 You mentioned -- and I'm not familiar
15 with what you were talking about with Kimball
16 School and the school moving. If it's affecting
17 residents there in public housing, Ms. Hampton can
18 talk to you about what services, or what
19 interventions, we might be able to assist with in
20 that effort as well.

21 MS. JAMES: I just wanted to bring that

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1 attention because I don't know who in Housing, or
2 what properties that are located around that area
3 of Kimball School, but I wanted to inform this body
4 that there is an upcoming meeting this Friday at
5 5:30, and if someone from Housing can be present
6 to represent the residents for the -- or the
7 concerns that they have, as far as the housing is
8 concerned --

9 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: They were
10 always --

11 MR. BOVELLE: Right. And what I'll
12 ask is that Ms. Hampton has community navigators
13 who act as the service kind of intermediaries for
14 the sites that are affected. So if you can get with
15 her, she can have one of the navigators look to
16 attend that meeting.

17 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And there
18 should always be a concern, because with the
19 District of Columbia Housing Authority, in every
20 ward the city is the housing choice voucher
21 program, even if there's no public housing or

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1 senior community.

2 So anything that impacts
3 transportation, schools, that is an impact with all
4 of our constituents in one way or the other, because
5 many of the seniors take opportunities to go to a
6 lot of these schools to participate in their
7 after-school programs, and a lot of them do have
8 that for seniors.

9 MS. JAMES: I just wanted to make sure
10 that someone from Housing would be represented,
11 because we are having other leaders throughout --

12 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: What date
13 and time is it?

14 MS. JAMES: This Friday at Kimball
15 School at 5:30. They're having a
16 reconstruction -- I believe it's going to be the
17 contractors, or someone that -- okay.

18 MR. BOVELLE: Ms. Hampton will have
19 someone there.

20 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I have a
21 previous commitment, but your Commissioner for

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1 Judiciary Square is Commissioner Lancaster

2 MS. JAMES: No, this is not at
3 Judiciary Square.

4 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: No, what
5 I'm telling you, is that your Commissioner --

6 MS. JAMES: Okay.

7 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: -- the
8 Commissioner for Judiciary Square, would be
9 Commissioner Council, who's At-Large
10 Commissioner, and Commissioner Lancaster, which is
11 the Senior Commissioner. Out of the family
12 Commissioner.

13 And if I didn't have that obligation,
14 I would be there. But you have members of
15 Empowerment DC here, and one of them -- if they
16 could raise their hand -- would make sure
17 that -- okay. So you need to talk to them.

18 MS. JAMES: One last concern. The
19 alley in the back between Judiciary House and the
20 other two condo buildings needs cement or concrete
21 laid down, instead of that asphalt. We have

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1 large -- extra large potholes that consume rats.

2 So how soon can Housing assist with
3 whatever other agency, to aid us in the rodent area
4 of paving the alleyway for public safety? They're
5 tearing up the cars, they're all in the cars, we
6 can't park in the back.

7 I park in the garage, they're all in the
8 garage. They're just everywhere. And then
9 they're even in our walls. So they need to pave
10 that alley, and get rid of them. They're building
11 up around that area, because they're building up
12 with the sewage over the freeway, and they're
13 running rampant through Chinatown.

14 MR. BOVELLE: But I know that you have
15 a challenging effort in that regard because of all
16 the restaurants and everything that exists in
17 Chinatown. The city owns that alley. It's not a
18 housing authority-owned alley. We can talk to the
19 city about that, but I would also encourage you and
20 other residents to call 311 and see if that helps
21 to become a squeaky wheel to get that alley.

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1 MS. JAMES: This has been an issue
2 ongoing. And since I've been on the Council, the
3 city says it's Housing issue because it's
4 on -- most of the holes are really on the side where
5 we park, belonging to Judiciary House.

6 They linger out, but most of the
7 rat-infested holes are along where we have our
8 parking spaces. So Housing had funds, and the
9 manager even said, well that's management issue.
10 It's not Judiciary -- I mean not Resident Council
11 issue.

12 But this is the problem. If we have RFP
13 funds, if we had whatever kind of funds, Housing
14 issue versus resident funds. Get the money, pave
15 the alley concrete, and whoever, whatever agency
16 that needs to work to get it done, get it done.
17 Please.

18 MR. BOVELLE: Yes. What we can do
19 Ms. James, is take a look at the survey for that
20 property, and if there's --

21 MS. JAMES: Thank you.

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1 MR. BOVELLE: -- something that's on
2 our land, we will certainly take care of it, and
3 will work with the city to take care of what's not
4 ours.

5 COMMISSIONER NEAL JONES: Is it
6 possible to do a walkthrough with Housing Authority
7 and the city there at the same time?

8 MR. BOVELLE: Yes. I think it would be
9 prudent for us to do the survey first, to make sure
10 that we are aware of what we have to address. And
11 then we can bring the other matters to the city's
12 attention.

13 MS. JAMES: So should I take upon the
14 initiative to contact the City Council as well, to
15 have them in on it too, so that whoever
16 needs -- wherever the money needs to come from, so
17 won't nobody drop the ball, or no -- or Housing
18 Authority, just because it's Judiciary -- just
19 because we're residents speaking out?

20 So I think it's a citywide issue really,
21 because you're dealing with a lot of electricity,

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1 you're dealing with a whole lot of development, and
2 it's a major historical area. So whoever I need
3 to work with, other than the Housing Authority, I'm
4 willing to take the leadership and get whatever
5 done to assist our dwelling, as well any other
6 dwellings that need holes paved in their alleys.

7 MR. BOVELLE: Absolutely. KaShamba
8 Williams is the Director of Property Management
9 Operations. She can work with you. Raise your
10 hand Ms. Williams. And I do encourage any citizen
11 of the District of Columbia to call 311 for issues
12 that affect the city. They will give you a
13 national control number to record your request for
14 work, and they can use that number when you want
15 to follow up on what's happening.

16 MS. JAMES: Thank you.

17 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Just a moment
19 please. If I may --

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Commissioner?

21 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: -- Madam

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1 Chair. Interim Executive Bovellet, once before
2 I've asked about our cameras -- high-definition
3 versus the ones that may be obsolete, out of style,
4 or whatever the case may be -- and I have never
5 gotten that report. How many of those cameras were
6 hot, how many of them need to be replaced.

7 At my next finance committee meeting,
8 I would like to have that report, because that is
9 very important. To have those cameras hot as
10 possible. Because I understand you speaking about
11 the ceilings in the stairwells being low, and
12 people can vandalize those cameras.

13 I remember one time we even had cameras
14 somehow propped on the elevators, and they
15 discontinued that for whatever reason I don't know,
16 because it had it set up also in the cable system,
17 so that the residents, on some of the channels on
18 their TV, they could turn to certain channels, and
19 see who was in the laundry room, if they wanted to
20 go down to see if it was crowded, or the rec room,
21 or whatever the case might be.

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1 Those extra eyes were safety for
2 everybody on the property. But we discontinued
3 that. If we put that back in place, I think we
4 could solve a lot of the problems that we have on
5 our properties, and also in the neighborhood,
6 because some of those exterior cameras also take
7 up a lot of viewing up and down the alleys, side
8 streets, and we would be able to cut down on a lot
9 of the other elements that we don't want on our
10 properties, versus that we don't want in our
11 building, versus that we'll have to see our
12 resident be safe at all times, 24/7.

13 I would like to have the report. If not
14 at our next meeting -- community meeting -- but as
15 soon as possible.

16 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you sir.
17 Thank you.

18 MS. JAMES: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Detrice Belt?

20 MS. BELT: I'm Detrice Belt. I'm the
21 Chair of the Barry Farms Citizen Allies. Hello

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1 everybody here today.

2 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Good
3 afternoon.

4 MS. BELT: I'm a resident at Barry
5 Farm. Just a couple of concerns from the residents
6 I spoke with. On Stevens Road there's a man who
7 lives there, and he was wondering about the lights
8 are not coming on at night. Stevens Road is one
9 of the streets that has most of the residents still
10 there on the property, and I've seen for myself that
11 some of the lights do come on. I guess they're on
12 a time. But all of them do not come on at the same
13 time, or there are some that are not coming on at
14 all, and it's a lot of -- right where the vacant
15 units are on Stevens.

16 So the resident is very worried about
17 that, if somebody can check that out. Also, I
18 wanted to know if the paint in the Barry Farms
19 houses are -- is it lead-based paint? And when was
20 the last lead test, because I've been there for four
21 years in my unit, and we didn't have one. I'm just

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1 curious.

2 Also, the residents don't want to hear
3 anymore excuses about building while residents
4 remain on the property. There's enough room to
5 build. There's enough vacant units throughout the
6 property. We believe that it's enough room to
7 build while residents remain in place.

8 And also there is an anniversary coming
9 up soon for the Barry Farm anniversary, and the
10 BFTAA wants to make sure that we can be able to have
11 an event on the property, because we are residents.
12 And in the handbook, I thought it said that we could
13 meet and have meetings with other residents on the
14 property, without being harassed by Housing
15 Authority police, or any type of police. We do
16 want to have an event, and we don't want Ms. Watson
17 coming out asking, who is these people, and just
18 harassing the residents that live there.

19 We're not causing any conflict, or
20 there's not any violence. So we would really like
21 to have something for this anniversary coming up

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1 soon. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

3 Connie?

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Maybe you can
5 write the Board for them.

6 MR. BOVELLE: No. They won't pass it.

7 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Connie McEachin?
8 Connie McEachin? Or McEcken? McEachin? Oh I'm
9 sorry. Okay. I'm going to get this. Maka
10 Taylor? Did I say it correctly?

11 MS. TAYLOR: It's Maka. You were very
12 close.

13 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Okay. Maka.
14 Yes, okay.

15 MS. TAYLOR: Good afternoon. Thank
16 you for your service and your time.

17 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Good afternoon.
18 Thanks.

19 MS. TAYLOR: So I am here today, and I'm
20 speaking on behalf of the Potomac Gardens
21 Grassroots Youth Media Group, and I did have a

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1 packet, but bear with me. None of my printers were
2 working. So one second while I pull up my text.

3 So greetings to you all, and thank you
4 for your time. My name is Maka Taylor, and I'm here
5 on behalf of Potomac Gardens Family Community
6 Programs. I am a pro bono consultant, and I'm a
7 pro bono consultant for the Potomac Gardens
8 Grassroots Youth Media Group -- PGGYMG.

9 The initiative of the group -- the
10 initiators of the Group are Commissioner Aquarius
11 Vann-Ghasri, and Corey Arnold. The
12 group -- excuse me, I can't get it big. Bear with
13 me one second while I try to get this thing
14 together.

15 The group, at its core, is filled with
16 youth innovation and creativity. Corey is only
17 11 years old. From this initiative we were able
18 to mobilize 13 youth who are now -- excuse me. We
19 were able to mobilize 15 youth, and are now serving
20 five to 13 stem enthusiasts every Friday at the
21 Potomac Gardens Family Recreation Community

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1 Computer Lab.

2 We will operate throughout the summer,
3 training, coaching, and developing, Potomac
4 Gardens' youth ambassadors and teachers. PGGYMG
5 is currently unfunded. I would like to note that
6 from 2011 to present, Potomac Gardens Family
7 Community Programs were narrated as a per-item
8 budget.

9 Working to build youth, leadership, and
10 create safe spaces, for stem enthusiasts to be
11 encouraged, and practice the art of
12 cyber-education, Potomac Gardens Grassroots Youth
13 Media Group requests the program be appropriated
14 as a per-line budget in this fiscal year.

15 All required documentation and
16 projections can be submitted by May 31st.

17 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: You know
18 what that's saying Mr. Chair, is that in Potomac
19 Gardens in my membership as the President, Iris,
20 who is the community navigator, in my years, have
21 always been a workshop, and that workshop is a

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1 per-line item budget under the federal compliance
2 housing for redevelopment.

3 Each year our budget went to Resident
4 Service, went through the proper process, and as
5 the President of Potomac Gardens, I also went
6 through the process of any and every time I was
7 blocked to allow every complaint, every issue, and
8 every concern, to go through a proper process,
9 being that I am the Chair of a committee, and I don't
10 want to excuse myself when that was an issue with
11 Potomac Gardens.

12 We have special projects, and the
13 former director had a meeting with us, and a
14 recommendation should have been down the pike which
15 was called Special Projects.

16 That has never happened. And I'm
17 putting you on notice that Ms. Taylor, along with
18 Corey, who is 11-year-old guy in Potomac Gardens,
19 who told me I need to be on time on Fridays -- that's
20 why I can't accommodate nobody on Fridays anymore,
21 because he text me at school, got in trouble with

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1 his cellphone at 8:30 in the morning, to tell me
2 to be there on time on Friday.

3 So I'm putting you on record that we're
4 not going to be stopped while we go through this
5 election, with programs not only in Potomac
6 Gardens, but in any community where there is
7 program activities going on while we're undergoing
8 an election, which you as the Interim Director, you
9 will make sure that these programs continue, so
10 that MPD won't be at our doors.

11 MS. TAYLOR: So I also, if I may, I
12 wanted to talk about Section Three, if I could.
13 Bear with me. So I've been on the housing choice
14 voucher program. I've been in D.C. going on ten
15 years this year.

16 I was not informed about the
17 Section Three program until maybe two or three
18 months ago. And when I tell you I am an
19 entrepreneur, and it has been my -- I have held over
20 70 jobs, and every time I went into a certification,
21 I said I don't need that job. I don't need that

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1 program.

2 What I need is a program to help me build
3 my capacity, and I have never been offered that.
4 Had I not met Commissioner Vann-Ghasri, I would
5 have never known. Not only that, I consider myself
6 to be pretty savvy in locating information, and
7 just for the record, I have been invited to the
8 White House twice.

9 So that's just to say, that even though
10 we are on these programs, there are those of us who
11 take this time, talent and our resources, and what
12 we're doing is using this to benefit our
13 communities, so we're taking the personal losses
14 that come with that in making the sacrifices.

15 And I really want you all to understand
16 I am super-affiliated in Washington, D.C. I am
17 super-networked, and what I do is I deliver the work
18 specifically for the demographically and
19 historically marginalized. And there are several
20 documentaries that show -- including back to the
21 Pruitt-Igoes -- the exact nature of how Project

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1 Housing came about, and how it filters through.

2 So what I would like to offer, is that
3 if there -- and I'm still not sure Section Three
4 is right for me, because I'm at a certain level
5 where I'm pioneering efforts. I've already
6 authored a book, and I work to push out programming
7 that will assist with empowering individuals to
8 understand they have what they need right now if
9 they're willing to take full willingness,
10 accountability, sacrifice and negotiation, and
11 pair that with proper programs and support.

12 That is what I would like to say.
13 Because I still have -- I've called, I've called
14 for two months. So not two months straight, but
15 off and on trying to get general information about
16 the Section Three program. I am yet to even be able
17 to find a white sheet that can direct me as to, this
18 is where you start, this is what you do. Or even
19 just to overview the program.

20 And that's what I tend to do. I tend
21 to like to read information. I kind of absorb it,

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1 and then I go back in, see how I can access it, see
2 how I can be an asset, and further on.

3 So I just think that whatever
4 Section Three is, it has been truly, truly, to some
5 extent, hidden, and I would like for there to be
6 more outreach in that department.

7 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you. And I do
8 invite you to speak to Director Hampton. She
9 oversees the Section Three program, and also looks
10 at all the Resident Councils, the services that
11 happen at our sites, and may be able to assist with
12 identifying with funding.

13 So if you will meet with Ms. Hampton
14 after the meeting, she can guide you in the right
15 direction.

16 MS. TAYLOR: Ms. Hampton needs an
17 assistant. Does she have one? She got a lot on
18 her plate.

19 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: She does.

20 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Excuse me.

21 MS. TAYLOR: Yes sir.

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1 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: If I may
2 Madam Chair --

3 MS. TAYLOR: I would like a plan. You
4 see I'm worthy.

5 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: You said you
6 authored a book already?

7 MS. TAYLOR: Yes I have authored a
8 book.

9 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: What's the
10 name of it?

11 MS. TAYLOR: 7 Steps to Kill My Nigga.

12 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Thank you.

13 MS. TAYLOR: You didn't want to ask any
14 more questions?

15 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: No.

16 (Laughter.)

17 MS. TAYLOR: You sure?

18 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I just wanted
19 to know what the book was.

20 MS. TAYLOR: You can find it on
21 Amazon.com. Thank you.

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1 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Corliss Lowery?

2 MS. LOWERY: Good afternoon.

3 MR. BOVELLE: Good afternoon
4 Ms. Lowery.

5 MS. LOWERY: I'm Corliss Lowery. I am
6 from Hopkins Apartments, and Mr. Sover?

7 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Slover, yes.

8 MS. LOWERY: Slover. I'm here to
9 challenge you on what you just said. That there
10 shouldn't be anyone coming here after three times,
11 and not being helped. So in my three years of
12 coming, and I'm still coming from the same issue.

13 No, my disability has not been met.
14 I've already dealt with Mr. Bovellet. I started
15 with him in 2013. He knows me. Ms. Hambrias was
16 not pregnant when I started this. She has now had
17 a baby. Wow. This is interesting.

18 Last time I was here, I asked Ms. Todman
19 and the Board, if she couldn't help me, who else
20 could? She assured me she was going to help me.
21 Here I am again, a couple of months later, because

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1 I always give her time. I call, I call, I talk to
2 everybody. I should be very well known, but here
3 we are again.

4 I went through some issues. I don't
5 want to say that I was harassed, or tried to be
6 intimidated. I won't go through that issue the
7 last time I was here, of what happened. Having to
8 go to court and different things.

9 And I'm like, wow. How did all this
10 come up? But we won't go into that. I'm just
11 here, once again, about my same issue. My
12 disability has not been met. I've called HUD.
13 HUD says you all can do what you want with the money.
14 You all have the choice.

15 I've talked to everybody in the world
16 and they said they couldn't meet my disability at
17 that time. We still have not in 2013, starting
18 with Cheryl -- not even Ms. Cheryl Smith. I can't
19 even remember the young lady before her.

20 So I went through all the channels. So
21 here I am again in 2017, asking again, why hasn't

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1 my disability been met? I only need a three
2 bedroom, two bath. So I've asked. So Housing
3 said they can't meet my disability. They don't
4 have the proper three baths. They give me two
5 baths -- they can give me two bedrooms if I want
6 to go down on what I have.

7 So I asked could I just be put on the
8 voucher program, because I talked to HUD, and I
9 said, well can't you give me a Section 8 voucher
10 where I can go look for my own place?

11 And so every time I ask that, oh no, no
12 no no, you can't do that. But HUD says you can do
13 what you want to do. I'm not understanding why my
14 disability has not been met, and it says if you
15 cannot meet my disability, switch me out to another
16 program. Why is that so hard that I cannot be
17 switched out to a program?

18 MR. BOVELLE: I believe, Ms. Lowery,
19 and good afternoon. I understand your
20 frustrations. Without going into specific
21 details, I know that you've been in contact, or our

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1 ADA program has been in contact, with you regarding
2 a modification to your reasonable accommodation.
3 The issue with the steps?

4 MS. LOWERY: Yes. But listen. Those
5 same issues with the step is when I applied for
6 this.

7 MR. BOVELLE: Okay. Your rental --

8 MS. LOWERY: And it was on there. It
9 was on there when I first got housing. So I don't
10 need to update my information. My information, it
11 stands what it is. I still need the same thing that
12 I asked you for when I came into the program.

13 So then, after I keep coming here, you
14 tell me I have to update my disability information.
15 And yes, so what happens is, you call me a month
16 before you have these meetings, say, oh Ms. Lowery,
17 we need the information from your doctor.

18 That's been two months since I came here
19 before, that you had not even contacted my doctor,
20 because I called my doctor, told him what I needed,
21 we already set up a date. I came down there for

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1 the signing the paper. Then you finally do send
2 her the paper -- the document.

3 I finally do see her. The paperwork is
4 updated. I'm here to ask, once again, why does it
5 have to be updated for the same thing that I already
6 applied for over and over and over again? And why
7 is it that my disability has not been met? Nobody
8 is answering that. So are you telling me -- I've
9 updated my paperwork. Now what?

10 MR. BOVELLE: Your original
11 accommodation was for a three-bedroom with two
12 baths.

13 MS. LOWERY: B minimum stairs, the
14 original accommodation when I first came in and the
15 lady told me, she said, oh -- and they told me I
16 was approved, and the lady said, oh, you take
17 disability off because you're going to wait so
18 long.

19 I took disability off. Then I came
20 back and I put the disability back on, after she
21 told me to take it off, because I really needed it.

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1 And that's what I did in 2013. I went back and put
2 it back on. So I'm saying, it's the same issue as
3 when I applied sir. The issue has not changed.

4 MR. BOVELLE: Okay. From my
5 standpoint, your original approval was for a
6 three-bedroom, two baths. I understand that that
7 might not have been what your needs were.
8 We -- now I believe we have updated that to include
9 the -- either no stairs, or limited stairs.

10 Because we did make offers to you before
11 that --

12 MS. LOWERY: Right.

13 MR. BOVELLE: -- for the few units that
14 we had that had steps that you could not negotiate.
15 We do have a property that's just come back online
16 that does have a three bedroom with two baths.
17 It's not ready yet, but it should be in the next
18 probably week or so, that Ms. Williams for you to
19 take a look at.

20 It does have several stairs, so you can
21 take a look at that unit, see if it meets your needs,

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1 if it doesn't, then we can have conversations with
2 you about what other options might be available.

3 MS. LOWERY: Okay.

4 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Why is the need
5 for the three bedroom, two bath? I get the steps,
6 but --

7 MR. BOVELLE: I don't think that we can
8 ask her that.

9 MS. LOWERY: It's personal.

10 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I mean --

11 MS. LOWERY: It's personal. I need a
12 personal bathroom. I have two children.

13 MR. BOVELLE: She has an approved
14 accommodation for that request.

15 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: Okay.

16 MS. LOWERY: And the doctor has
17 approved it.

18 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: I mean she
19 keeps coming and not getting answers. So I'm
20 just --

21 MS. LOWERY: Right. Exactly.

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1 VICE-CHAIRMAN SLOVER: -- trying to
2 figure out how to get some answers.

3 MS. LOWERY: So I mean I could put my
4 personal business out. The another thing. I'm
5 having an issue with -- and this has nothing to do
6 with my building per se, because they're good. But
7 I want to know, what are they doing the bathroom
8 with, because I've never lived anywhere in my life,
9 and I've had to have my tub reglazed as many times
10 as I've had to have it now.

11 I meant to take a picture and bring it
12 to show you all the holes that's in it. Every six
13 months I'm having my tub reglazed. Shall I tell
14 you that I'm going back to the doctor for that too?
15 That's a little too personal, right?

16 Come on. The mice. I hear everybody
17 talking about the mice. The mice are terrible.
18 I'm not here for that, you know?

19 MR. BOVELLE: Ms. Williams will let
20 you know when the unit we spoke of will be available
21 for you to see.

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1 MS. LOWERY: All right. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Mary Morgan?

3 Mary Morgan? Leonard Watson?

4 MR. WATSON: Good afternoon Chairman,
5 Commissioners, community people, residents,
6 leadership, Sibley, and Highland.

7 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Good
8 afternoon.

9 MR. WATSON: I'm smiling because I'm
10 looking at Keisha. I'm very pleased to see you
11 sitting right there. Keisha and I have both have
12 a long ways. She has really grown. I'm pleased
13 to see that.

14 My issue is really simple. I'm here to
15 talk about the directorship. I understand that
16 you all had, or supposed to be having in place, a
17 Commission to deal with this issue. Supposed to
18 be a search committee, if you will.

19 But I checked you website. I see
20 nothing that speaks to the qualifications as to
21 what this director would look like, or whatever.

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1 But at the end of the day, to make a long story
2 short, I'm here to support. And I'm a community
3 activist. My name is Leonard Watson. I'm a
4 community activist in Ward 8, and citywide.

5 And I'm here to support, and I'm putting
6 my arms around Nathan Bovellev, who is Interim
7 Director. I think he is the right man, at the right
8 time, for this job. And I know that I've been on
9 the Housing Authority Commission. I've helped put
10 this Board together.

11 So therefore I know the history of all
12 this. But at the end of the day, you only had two
13 directors since receivership. You had Michael
14 Kelly, and you had the current director, Adrienne
15 Todman.

16 So therefore, I've been Nathan for 15
17 years. He's a native Washingtonian, he graduated
18 out of Duke Ellington, he come out of --

19 MR. BOVELLE: School still without --

20 MR. WATSON: Well I said Duke
21 Ellington. That=s the same thing to me. But at

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1 the end of the day, he also came, and he graduated
2 out of Howard University. So therefore, I've
3 watched his matriculation throughout the Housing
4 Authority. He came to Rock Creek 1, he was in
5 Resident Services, and I watched him advance all
6 the way through the ranks, to be the Director of
7 Housing Management, and then when they broke up
8 into regions, came to be a director.

9 I'm not here -- he has not asked me to
10 solicit his testimony. I'm here because I've
11 watched his growth and development. I've been
12 watching him, along with McCoy. Also watched
13 Quentin Randolph. These three young brothers are
14 fine young brothers, and I think that they can move
15 this agency forward.

16 I'm asking this Board, and I'm
17 challenging this Board, I know eight of these
18 Commissioners up on this Board. I'm challenging
19 this Board to give my man Nathan the same support
20 that you gave Michael Kelly, the same support that
21 you gave Adrienne Todman.

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1 I understand his challenges. They
2 both had challenges. I understand there's
3 challenges. But at the end of the day, I'm quite
4 sure that if you give him the support that he needs,
5 wrap yourselves around it with his senior staff,
6 and of course, yes he don't know everything. I'd
7 be the first to tell you.

8 And I'm going to say -- and I'm going
9 to end with this. I can recall when Nathan was the
10 Director of Housing Management for Rock Creek 1.
11 I was the only man manager in Rock Creek 1 at the
12 time, and I recall very clearly, I had two evictions
13 that day.

14 One was on Half Street, and one was on
15 First Street, and I -- the Marshal was supposed to
16 come there at 8 o'clock. I had an eviction at
17 8 o'clock and 10 o'clock. The Marshals got slick.
18 They came at 8 o'clock, but the young lady had
19 already moved. So they tried to move, so, well
20 we're going to go to the next eviction.

21 I said, well you can't do that. They

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1 have until 10 o'clock. And the young lady at the
2 time, her grandmother was a resident of Potomac
3 Gardens. I said, oh you can't move now, until
4 10 o'clock. I said this young lady's grandmother
5 have given me her word that she'll make sure this
6 rent is taken care of.

7 So what I did, I appealed to Nathan.
8 Nathan was kind of shaky at first. I said, Nathan,
9 I've been a manager for a long time. Trust and
10 respect my judgment. I know this young lady's
11 grandmother. I know she's going to make this thing
12 whole, it's going to be right. I said, and at the
13 end of the day, if she do not have the money, I will
14 take \$650 out of my pocket and set it aside as rent.

15 And Nathan told me, said, okay Leonard.
16 I'm going to go with it. And at that time I knew
17 that Nathan had the compassion. He could think
18 outside the box. He made a decision, even putting
19 his own job on the line, because at that time, he
20 was not authorized to make that decision. He
21 probably had to go to the Regional Director.

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1 So he made that decision. I supported
2 that decision. The young lady came within the
3 timeline. She paid that rent, and I told Nathan,
4 I said, we have satisfied two things. We stopped
5 an unlawful eviction, so therefore we stopped the
6 Housing Authority from getting a suit, and we also
7 satisfied a grandmother who lived in the Gardens
8 for a long time.

9 And I'm going to say in closing, I'll
10 be remiss if I don't name the pioneers that went
11 before this Commission. You're talking about the
12 late Kimi Gray. We're talking about the late Dante
13 Farrell. We're talking about the late Jackie
14 West. We're also talking about Phoebe Scott.
15 We're talking about Abby Waters.

16 We're talking about Ms. Carter. We're
17 talking about Ms. Cunningham. We're talking
18 about Mr. Brown. And I know if anybody that I
19 miss --

20 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Are we
21 talking about Tyrese Dudley?

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1 MR. WATSON: Yes. I said -- I was
2 going to get to that. Anybody I missed, I'm quite
3 sure that -- going to fill in the gap. We talking
4 about the late Mr. McMartin. We're talking about
5 Bobbie McMahon.

6 So therefore, I'm asking this
7 Committee, do the proper thing and cut out your
8 mission of safe, decent, affordable housing, to
9 protect and respect the tenants of public housing,
10 because some of you well know a lot of your great
11 leaders came out of public housing.

12 So at the end of the day, I'm here to
13 support Nathan. He didn't solicit my testimony,
14 I have broad shoulders, I have a citywide reach,
15 and you have my commitment. Just do the right
16 thing.

17 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you
18 Mr. Watson. Alicia Vicks? Ms. Vicks?

19 MS. VICKS: Good afternoon.

20 MR. BOVELLE: Good afternoon.

21 MS. VICKS: I may --

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1 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: If you can pull the
2 mic.

3 MS. VICKS: Oh sure.

4 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: They just turned
5 the air back on.

6 MS. VICKS: Good afternoon everyone.

7 MR. BOVELLE: Good afternoon.

8 MS. VICKS: It's a divine honor to be
9 before such a distinguished Commission group, and
10 I am from City Gate, and I have been working at
11 Richardson Dwelling as a service provider for at
12 least nine years. It has been wonderful to work
13 with the youth there, providing out-of-school time
14 and summertime camp activities.

15 Over the past eight years, it's been
16 pretty good working there and having enough funding
17 to be able to provide the services for the youth
18 there. However, within the past year we have been
19 experiencing just a great influx of violence and
20 substance abuse, and a lot of this takes
21 place -- this traffic takes place in front of the

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1 OSSE that we talked about earlier, that the
2 President -- Resident -- Richardson Dwelling, for
3 Resident Council spoke about.

4 I got two issues I want to share. I
5 want to kind of comment back on the issue that the
6 President of Resident Council brought up in
7 reference to changing the name for the center.

8 Being a service provider there for
9 long, I had no idea, until Commissioner Vann-Ghasri
10 had shared the rich history of the OSSE, and the
11 only reason that it came about for the name change,
12 had to do with the tenure of Eleanor White, who had
13 been the President for more than 40 years.

14 And the Community wanted to commemorate
15 and just kind of memorialize her memory and her
16 service there. So we had come up with the Eleanor
17 White OSSE Center. So we kind of wanted to keep
18 the name of the OSSE, because everyone knows that
19 center to be the OSSE.

20 So I did want to bring that to your
21 attention and let you know exactly what the origin

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1 of that was.

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI:
3 Ms. White -- and Ms. White is one of the first
4 people, as you know, there for life, of Richardson
5 Dwelling, is the one who created -- so they're like
6 husband and wife. So you keep that building,
7 because you take the housing -- well I'll just say
8 it the way I'm saying it.

9 You have the communities, you have the
10 Deputy Mayor. So when you get a vacant house,
11 maybe you want two vacant house. Fix it up, make
12 it the Eleanor -- you remember Ms. White, and put
13 her history there, because she has a very rich
14 history herself, and we need to do that.

15 And while we're on that subject,
16 residents -- who live in public housing, I'm not
17 doing that campaign, that campaign is a petition,
18 so that when you tear down our neighborhoods and
19 build up these new communities, our leaders= names
20 need to be on those streets.

21 MS. VICKS: Yes ma'am. I am in firm

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1 agreement with you, and again, that has a lot to
2 do with why the community had come together to want
3 to make the -- change the name to the OSSE.

4 In addition to that subject, I'd like to go
5 on and talk a little bit about my concern about the
6 funding that has been removed from the Richardson
7 Dwelling site, because of the change of the PSA,
8 and that has strongly affected our programs there,
9 because I have been working towards making sure
10 that the children have off-campus experiences.

11 Whether it be with the science,
12 technology, engineering or math, or the cultural
13 arts. My background is the arts, so I have a love,
14 and of course I want them to be exposed to that.
15 Not only the children, but also it's an opportunity
16 to bring parents together with their children.

17 I'd like to say as a service provider,
18 that it is has been wonderful working there in the
19 past eight years, because I have had the pleasure
20 of working in concert with management. We work
21 together as a team, and so I don't really have a

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1 lot of problems with whatever it is that I need to
2 make happen for the OSSE for the youth there, but
3 I'm very concerned about the drug trafficking that
4 takes place in front of the center daily.

5 There have been some steps here
6 recently taken that hopefully will help that
7 situation out. The people in the community, I feel
8 like they trust me, and they trust me with their
9 children.

10 And so I feel responsible for making
11 sure that I come before you to 1) talk about the
12 funding around the PSA and the change there, and
13 not really having an answer as to why that was done
14 in an environment where we have a strong level of
15 violence and substance abuse, and the children kind
16 of being left out of that.

17 In the times past, City Gate has
18 provided many services for the adults and children
19 there. We make sure that we are an open site every
20 summer for summer feeding program. We provide a
21 lot of field trips where our children go out into

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1 the community.

2 We work with Urban Hands Groups that
3 come from all over the country, and they come to
4 help with the children, where the children will
5 have one-on-one supervision when we are on field
6 trips, so a lot of that funding that was taken when
7 the trust was dissolved, those funds have been
8 moved to the Urban Hands -- I mean is it Urban
9 League? But -- ma'am?

10 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: United Way.

11 MS. VICKS: United Way. Thank you.
12 Thank you. All the U's, thank you. I just want
13 to say that I know my organization knows where some
14 funding is. But I'm just trying to understand why
15 the funding was moved out of our PSA and placed over
16 at Lincoln Heights, and just focusing on Lincoln
17 Heights and Richardson Dwelling, just kind of being
18 erased out of that funding process.

19 I have been in contact with the Deputy
20 Mayor's office, and spoken to a couple of
21 people -- Mr. Ellis -- and he has referred me to

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1 various different funding sources. But they again
2 were not in our PSA.

3 So if the Commission could please share
4 that information with Resident Council, so they can
5 get a better understanding as to how they can help
6 their service providers, or what it is that we can
7 do to get more funding, to make sure that our
8 children are safe, and have a safe, healthy
9 learning environment at Richardson Dwelling.

10 That is my main concern. Those are my
11 babies. I've been there, and I have seen three to
12 four generations of children grow up to become 18
13 and go on to college. So I'm just really
14 concerned, and I appreciate the opportunity to be
15 able to share this information with you. Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Well
19 somewhere the problems are, I think you had
20 selected June or maybe July. The Resident Service
21 Resident Initiative Committee will have all of DCHA

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1 onsite providers at our meeting, and it's going to
2 be like a listening forum, where we want to listen
3 to see how we can assist you to assist us.

4 We've had that once before. However,
5 the last time we tried to do this, we did it through
6 the office of Resident Service, and I'm vain. I'm
7 going to be honest. I work really hard, and I'm
8 vain.

9 Not only do I like to be recognized for
10 the work that I do, but for the work of all of the
11 Commissioners that sit on this Board. And
12 usually, for real, if you take a test throughout
13 the District of Columbia, nobody knows who we
14 are -- not even the residents -- they don't know
15 who we are, they don't know what we do, they're
16 going through the providers, they go for
17 organizers, but this is the Board that makes it
18 possible for you to be an onsite provider, or this
19 is a Board that makes it possible that organizers
20 can even go into the community. But the organizers
21 don't know about us either.

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1 Some people don't care about us either.
2 So it's not so much that anybody don't know about
3 us. Some people don't care about us either. But
4 I would really -- my goal is for everybody to know
5 about us, hear about us, and know that we are a voice
6 to be reckoned with, because we work very hard
7 breaking various new policies.

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

9 MR. BOVELLE: And just -- just to be
10 clear, the funds that you're talking to aren't
11 Housing Authority funds. Those are funds that are
12 administered by the city. Our Director of
13 Resident Services, Ms. Hampton, is aware of that
14 reallocation, and she's working with the city to
15 identify some additional funds for Richardson.

16 MS. VICKS: Thank you for sharing that.
17 I am the type of service provider where I am -- I
18 believe in collaborative work. I work with
19 Lincoln Heights youth. I work with Richardson
20 Dwelling, and all of the surrounding youth. I
21 don't discriminate.

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1 I appreciate you sharing that about
2 Resident Services, and I am in contact with that
3 office, and our navigator pretty much keeps us
4 up-to-date on what it is that we need to know.

5 Ms. Hampton has been wonderful with
6 sharing information as well. I'm not slamming
7 anyone. I'm just interested in understanding
8 exactly what was the thinking around changing the
9 PSA, and if you could shed some light on that, but
10 everyone's shaking their head, so -- I've been
11 shaking my head for a month.

12 MR. BOVELLE: And we can't shed the
13 light, it's because it was not our decision.

14 MS. VICKS: So did that come from the
15 Deputy Mayor's office, or was that in concert with
16 Metropolitan Police Department? How did that
17 decision come about?

18 MR. BOVELLE: I can't opine on that
19 right now. But we can certainly look into it, see
20 if we can get some more clarity for you, and
21 Ms. Hampton can report back to you. The other

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1 thing I will mention, is that --

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: My
3 recommendation for you is to write this down. You
4 can Google Ross -- I'm asking you to write it down
5 so you can Google it. It's called Ross, R-O-S-S,
6 Grant, and it's under Housing and Urban
7 Development, maybe as an onsite provider, and we
8 have a great relationship with Richardson
9 Dwelling.

10 It's a possibility that you may could
11 do the Ross Grant, or Richardson Dwelling. You
12 have a model. The model is James Creek. James
13 Creek is the only Resident Council who went out of
14 the box and was innovative, and had a provider to
15 do their Ross Grant. So maybe you could look at
16 that as an alternative.

17 MS. VICKS: Thank you Commissioner
18 Vann-Ghasri.

19 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: You're
20 welcome.

21 MS. VICKS: Very, very helpful

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1 information, and I will look into that. And again,
2 I thank you for allowing me to share.

3 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you. Kevin
4 Copeland?

5 MR. COPELAND: Good evening everyone.

6 MR. BOVELLE: Good evening.

7 MR. COPELAND: I just first want to
8 thank you guys for the work you do. I tell you,
9 just listening to all of you, the things that go
10 on here, you guys got a lot on your plate.

11 So first things first, I just want to
12 let you know that I'm a retired D.C. police officer
13 for the Metropolitan Police for the last 28 years,
14 and during my tenure with the police department,
15 I took an oath, and that oath was to serve and
16 protect.

17 Ten of the years, I did a lot of
18 protecting. The last 18 years, serving. So I've
19 been serving D.C. because I'm a Washingtonian.
20 Again, my name is Kevin Copeland, and I grew up in
21 Southeast D.C. So a lot of the work my wife and

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1 I have put together an outreach ministry.

2 I am a coordinator -- outreach
3 coordinator. So we've done a lot of work in a lot
4 of the public housing area, and one of the areas,
5 Potomac Gardens specifically. And we have
6 partnered with Ms. Aquarius in regards to a lot of
7 the events. We had approximately four events over
8 there in the job fair.

9 So what we want to do is to continue
10 this, but with your help and your support, so that
11 we can continue to move forward. Again, retired
12 Metropolitan Police officer, see the
13 re-gentrification going on in our city. I'm
14 disappointed in what's going on. But we have to
15 somehow help our youth in our community.

16 We have to build them up, strengthen
17 them, we have to supply their needs -- the
18 community. And they're yelling out. The
19 community is yelling out. I patrolled these
20 streets for 28 years, from Northwest to Southeast,
21 to Southwest to Southeast. So I see the

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1 re-gentrification going on in our community. I
2 see the have and have-nots.

3 So my question to you guys -- the
4 Commissioners -- the change that's coming, or the
5 change that's been coming, will it continue to
6 affect the people who've been here for years?

7 MR. BOVELLE: What I can tell you for
8 public housing and assisted housing, is that our
9 commitment is to preserve affordable housing in the
10 District of Columbia. When you hear us talk about
11 gentrification and redevelopment, when we do our
12 redevelopment, it's on a one-for-one replacement
13 basis, so we are not looking to displace our
14 residents into Prince George's, Montgomery County,
15 Virginia, to facilitate our redevelopment.

16 Our voucher program is constantly
17 growing. Probably ten, 15 years ago, we had about
18 3,000 on our voucher program. Now you have what,
19 14,000 people, 15,000 people, and it's continuing
20 to grow.

21 So our commitment is to try to keep

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1 affordable housing available to those who need it
2 in the District. We're not meeting the need. The
3 need is huge. But we're doing everything that we
4 can to attempt to meet that need.

5 MR. COPELAND: Well I thank you for
6 that. And I thank you for the work that you guys
7 are doing, and will continue to do. So again, I
8 just want to let you know that we're in Potomac
9 Gardens, and we're doing a lot over there when it
10 comes to working with Ms. Aquarius, and trying to
11 really change. Change is not what you say.
12 Change is what you truly do. And I just believe
13 that we have to be truly boot- -- I hear people use
14 the word, boots on the ground.

15 Boots on the ground means that you're
16 out there actually doing the work. That you're
17 actually meeting people where they are, and you're
18 meeting their needs. Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

20 MR. BOVELLE: Thank you for your
21 ability to serve after your retirement.

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1 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Margaret Dwyer.

2 MS. DWYER: Good afternoon. I'm
3 Margaret Dwyer, Ward 3, member of SURJ DC, Empower
4 DC, and the Barry Farm Tenants and Allies
5 Association. I'm really -- we've been really
6 busy. The past month we've been at oversight
7 hearings for DCHA, we've been at budget hearings
8 for DCHA. Dozens of us have testified as to the
9 need for a greater funding for DCHA, for repairs
10 and maintenance, and for vouchers.

11 We're cautiously optimistic that we're
12 going to get that funding. We hope that
13 everybody's going to call Anita
14 Bonds -- Councilmember Anita Bonds -- and repeat
15 those requests to her.

16 At those hearing, there were also calls
17 for increased accountability at the Housing
18 Authority. And I'd like to pose three questions
19 to the Board about that area.

20 First of all, I don't know if you see
21 the documents that are turned in by the Housing

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1 Authority to oversight hearings. I was surprised
2 to read the one that was turned in, in response to
3 the questions of the Chair of the Committee.

4 It was very skeletal, compared to other
5 organizations, other departments' reports, like
6 the libraries. It was kind of embarrassingly
7 skeletal compared to the library's report, for
8 example. And I didn't see where circles were being
9 closed.

10 So for example, here today we've had
11 questions of accountability about whether or not
12 residents receive leaflets about this meeting.
13 Who's responsible for that, and who follows up? We
14 have a commitment to post jobs at all the DCHA sites
15 right now, and who's going to be responsible for
16 that, and who's going to follow up? How are we
17 going to close these circles, and how are we going
18 to report and hold ourselves accountable to a
19 higher standard?

20 My second question is, what's the
21 process for hiring the new Executive Director?

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1 What's the timetable? And where's the opportunity
2 for stakeholder input?

3 And my third question is, is there a
4 non-negotiable expectation that the successful
5 candidate for the Executive Director will have a
6 proven track record at setting and meeting
7 databased accountability goals for performance
8 improvement. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I can't
10 speak for everybody. But I can speak -- okay --
11 I can't speak for everybody, but I was on the search
12 committee, and this is my second time being on the
13 search committee. I live in public housing, and
14 I have a constituent base. And I'm very proud of
15 that constituent base.

16 First and foremost, the constituent
17 base I'm from, number one, don't nobody make
18 decisions for us. Nobody select what our issues
19 and concerns are. We know what our issues and
20 concerns are.

21 Number one, if I test you and half the

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1 people in this room, and this concludes the
2 employees in the Housing Authority, how many
3 Move-to-Work Housing Authorities are there?
4 Answer right away.

5 Where are we at? How did the District
6 of Columbia Housing Authority become a
7 Move-to-Work Housing Authority? What is the
8 impact of the District of Columbia Housing
9 Authority being a Move-to-Work Authority.

10 Nobody care, nobody know. But guess
11 what? Get a director and you don't know where the
12 Move-to-Work Housing Authority is. Get a
13 director, and they don't know what they're doing
14 with a Move-to-Work Housing Authority. You and
15 nobody else would be sitting in this room having
16 any type of conversation.

17 That's the first thing we need, is a
18 director who understands what a Move-to-Work
19 Housing Authority is. To be one of 38 Housing
20 Authorities that's not a state in the United States
21 of America, who knows how to get monies out of new

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1 tax credit income. How many of you know about
2 that? Where do you think the money come from?

3 And then sitting on this Board as a
4 resident, it is -- and I sits on the DCHA Board.
5 And I find it very interesting how the money comes
6 down from Congress. How everybody likes to fight
7 and stand up at the Housing Authority, but I'm the
8 only person walking the halls of The Russell
9 Building, and the Senate Building. That's where
10 it all begins. It's all about money. And it's
11 about land.

12 Now the next thing you need is a
13 director -- and I'm not going to say who is the best
14 director, who's not. But I know this. I know that
15 you wouldn't want a surgeon representing you on
16 your murder that you've been caught. I know that.

17 I know that you want somebody that has
18 certainly -- first of all, the director definitely
19 have to be sensitive to the needs and the time of
20 the residents. And then there's a lot to 24 CFR
21 that this Housing Authority don't even enforce.

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1 Not only do this Housing Authority
2 don't enforce it, believe it or not, half the
3 housing authorities in the United States of America
4 don't even know what 24 CFR is, and do not use what
5 is had from that book. We don't even know what part
6 is deleted, what part has been amended.

7 You never know until it happens to you.
8 So it's a lot that goes into this job when it comes
9 to me. And I can tell you now, I'm an elected
10 Commissioner. I know who vote for me. I know who
11 don't vote for me. I know who I spend five and six
12 hours on the phone with. I know who strikes me.
13 I know who don't invite me on their shows. I know
14 who invite me on their shows.

15 I know why people don't want me to speak
16 at their community meetings. The whole nine
17 yards. So now you got to ask yourself, who vote
18 for me? Because it's definitely not the
19 residents. Who have lived in the District of
20 Columbia Housing Authority. Who have been
21 President for 40 and 30 years, and you can do the

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1 numbers.

2 And I put a flyer on every door. And
3 I go to just about any meeting that I can attend.
4 I put out papers, I give it to organizers, but guess
5 what? I don't see no organizers, nobody passing
6 the literature that I pass out, that empowers
7 residents through legislation.

8 Until I see that done on a whole,
9 everybody needs to get together. But first,
10 remember. Whether you're an organizer or not, you
11 work for us. You come into our community. What's
12 in it for you? Everybody is scared to tell the
13 truth. When you come into our community, what's
14 in it for you?

15 Because when I come into your
16 communities, I tell you what's in it for me. It's
17 a vote. I want your vote. I've earned your vote.
18 I've done the work. That goes for my enemies and
19 my friends. I protect everybody rights up here.

20 I protect more of my enemies, and ones
21 hate me more than people vote for me. So I just

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1 can tell you about me.

2 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you
3 Commissioner.

4 MS. DWYER: What is the timetable?
5 And what is the process? I don't know what the
6 process is and what the timetable is of hiring of
7 a new Executive Director.

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: So we have begun
9 the process, and there have been outreach meetings
10 to the community, of which community organizations
11 were a part. So I'm a little actually surprised
12 that you aren't aware of the earlier meetings.

13 MS. DWYER: Yes, I didn't know.

14 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: And so we are now
15 going through the process of -- the position
16 description has been posted, and we are not looking
17 for candidates to respond to this posting.

18 Once we get a bank of qualified
19 candidates, then we will start processing,
20 interviewing those candidates.

21 MS. DWYER: And is there an expectation

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1 that -- is one of the requirements in the posting,
2 that the person will have expertise in setting and
3 meeting accountability -- databased
4 accountability goals?

5 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: There is language
6 that syncs similar to that. I don't know if those
7 are the exact words.

8 MS. DWYER: Great. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Mm hmm. Have a
10 good day. Parisa Norouzi? And when you come
11 forward, if you can say your name for me please.
12 I apologize.

13 MS. NOROUZI: That's okay. Good
14 afternoon, almost evening. Thank you to the
15 Commissioners who are still here. My name is
16 Parisa Norouzi. I'm the Executive Director of
17 Empower DC, and I just wanted to touch on a couple
18 of things.

19 Empower DC is a community organizing
20 group. We've been in the District doing this work
21 since 2003, membership-based.

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1 A lot of our members live in public
2 housing, and right now, of course we're working
3 most closely with our leaders in Barry Farm and
4 Greenleaf and Syphax, and some other communities
5 that are impacted by gentrification, displacement.

6 And our core purpose of Empower DC is
7 to build political power, so that the people in our
8 communities can have an influence in the decisions
9 that are being made, and not just an influence, but
10 ideally, have real government accountability to
11 the needs and desires of the people.

12 I was really happy to hear earlier that
13 redevelopment in place in Barry Farm is still on
14 the table. That's what I heard said here. It's
15 what I heard said at the Housing Authority budget
16 hearing recently.

17 And since it's still on the table, I
18 think it would be great if the Board would consider
19 passing a resolution -- or you know best what
20 vehicle would work best -- but to make your voice
21 known that you would support that. That you desire

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1 that.

2 That you think it's a worthy endeavor
3 to allocate the funds necessary to deal with
4 whatever the infrastructure issues are to build in
5 place.

6 It's a right that's being afforded
7 every other public housing community under
8 redevelopment right now, except Barry Farm. Barry
9 Farm is the only community where redevelopment in
10 place is still in question.

11 And that is extremely troubling on a
12 number of levels. I don't need to tell you the
13 history of Barry Farm, the fact that this is a
14 repeat of history of people being pushed off of
15 lands that, as far as I'm concerned, belongs to
16 them. It's their community. It's their home.

17 This is the 150th anniversary this year
18 of the original Barry Farm settlement. Let's not
19 be repeating history. Let's actually be making
20 sure that we do things different, because we know
21 the model that's been implemented has a lot of

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1 problems.

2 It causes displacement and people don't
3 come back. It's not actually solving poverty.
4 It's not actually improving many people's lives.
5 Very few people are getting into these new
6 communities.

7 So let's do it different, and let's
8 start with redevelopment in place in Barry Farm.
9 I hope that you will consider making your voice,
10 officially through a resolution or some other
11 vehicle, heard. To DMPED, to the city-at-large,
12 that yes, you want to see that happen.

13 My fear is that there's a lot of
14 political pressure happening here with, especially
15 Deputy Mayor Kenner on the Board, and DMPED driving
16 the New Communities program.

17 And so what I want to encourage and work
18 in support of you on, is you -- the Housing
19 Authority and the residents -- controlling the
20 terms of these redevelopments, and not a deputy
21 mayor's office who is committed -- because the

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1 Mayor is committed -- to gentrification.

2 She's committed to -- I mean there's a
3 lot of lip service to affordable housing, but you
4 look at the budget that she's proposed, for
5 instance, for next year, and there's hundreds of
6 millions of dollars for gentrification projects.
7 For St. Elizabeth, the Wizards facility, for
8 Streetcar.

9 There's not a dime for public housing.
10 And we know that it's a dire need. Right? And it
11 becomes more so every year as the federal
12 government continues to cut the budget. So we as
13 a city have to embrace public housing as our city's
14 housing.

15 It's not the federal government's
16 housing. It's our city's housing, and we need to
17 invest in it locally. And that money, if the Mayor
18 was really committed to affordable housing, she
19 would be funding public housing.

20 And then I just want to also encourage
21 us to not even settle for one-for-one replacement.

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1 That is not enough. Right? We have
2 thousands -- as you know -- tens of thousands of
3 people in need.

4 How about two-for-one replacement? We
5 actually are building much higher density in these
6 communities, but we're building for higher income
7 people. Those needs are being met by the private
8 market.

9 What we need to do in public land and
10 with public resources, is build as much housing
11 where people pay one-third of their income, no
12 matter what that is, as possible, and make the
13 subsidies available through the budget that we
14 have. You guys know, right? We got \$13.8 billion
15 in the city budget. That's a big budget. You got
16 nothing in it for public housing, and that's
17 criminal.

18 The one other thing I wanted to mention,
19 is that some of the housing that -- some of the
20 replacement units are not permanently affordable.
21 It doesn't make any sense. There's no -- if

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1 there's no one-for-one replacement, if there's a
2 length-of-affordability issue where it may term
3 out, even if it's in 40 years, or 60 years, it should
4 be permanent.

5 That's one of the hallmarks of public
6 housing. It's permanently affordable housing.
7 And then lastly, I just wanted to mention that at
8 the hearing recently, somebody spoke up who is on
9 the community board for the Greenleaf
10 redevelopment project, and she said that she had
11 just, the day before, received a final plan from
12 the Housing Authority about Greenleaf.

13 I don't know if you all have received
14 it yet. I'm very concerned about Greenleaf. Of
15 course the commitment was made to build first in
16 the neighborhood, but the city has not made moves
17 to acquire the property necessary. So that's
18 something we need to make sure happens.

19 And then also in Syphax and Buzzard
20 Point, this area is being surrounded by high-end
21 development with the baseball stadium, and now the

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1 soccer stadium, and a billion dollars' worth of
2 development coming to this peninsula, where
3 predominantly black people live, lower income
4 people live, and now they are at risk of
5 displacement.

6 So how can we not partner with DMPED,
7 not partner with the city, until it's clear that
8 that partnership will result in the investment
9 needed to preserve the public housing too. You
10 know what I'm saying?

11 We can't just build around it and
12 facilitate all of that, and not invest in Syphax
13 having a renovation that they need, or whatever
14 other dollars are necessary to sustain the public
15 housing.

16 My point in general is just that our
17 city needs public housing. I thank you very much
18 for all that you guys do, and definitely hope that
19 Empower DC can be a partner in making sure that our
20 city begins to give more money and more resources
21 and more priority to preserving public housing.

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1 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

2 MS. NOROUZI: Thank you.

3 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Ruby Steigerwald?

4 MS. STEIGERWALD: Thank you. Good
5 afternoon. I'm Ruby Steigerwald.

6 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Good
7 afternoon.

8 MS. STEIGERWALD: I live in the Fifth
9 Ward. I'm here to speak in favor of development
10 in place of Barry Farms, from the perspective of
11 being a teacher and a youth worker. I haven't
12 taught children who live in Barry Farms, but I've
13 taught -- I've been a teacher for 20 years, and I've
14 worked with youth for over ten years before that.

15 If I'm wrong about this, residents can
16 contradict me, but in my experience, moving is very
17 disruptive and very stressful. Asking families to
18 move, and then come back again, is a huge disruption
19 to kids, and I've seen over and over again, when
20 children have to move -- especially when it's not
21 their families' choice, it really makes success in

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1 school difficult.

2 There's just a lot of reasons why it's
3 stressful to kids. Families are stressed, parents
4 are stressed, so that stress comes out in children,
5 and in their performance in school. When families
6 move, sometimes often children miss school. When
7 they miss school, they have extra work to catch up,
8 and extra stress on that.

9 Often when families have to move, they
10 have to -- they wind up living with relatives, or
11 living with friends, and children don't have the
12 privacy that they need, or they don't have a
13 reasonable place to sleep, and they come to school
14 tired. That also causes -- makes it hard for them
15 to be successful in school.

16 Sometimes when families move to new
17 neighborhoods, parents don't know that
18 neighborhood, they don't know whether they can let
19 their kids out to play, to get exercise, so kids
20 come to school with a lot of energy, and that makes
21 it hard for them to succeed.

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1 There's just a lot of reasons why moving
2 causes stress on children and makes it hard for them
3 to do well in school. And as a teacher, that's just
4 a critical issue for me, and I assume for anyone
5 else here who cares about kids.

6 Let's see. Some children can recover
7 from stresses like that. And for some children,
8 it really has a long-term negative impact on their
9 educational outcomes. And so for that reason,
10 among others that I'm sure you know of, I really
11 would like to advocate for development-in-place
12 for Barry Farms.

13 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

14 Daniel --

15 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Don't even try the
16 last name.

17 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: I'm not even going
18 there.

19 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you. If you
21 would state your name for the record please.

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1 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Good afternoon. My
2 name is Daniel Del Pielago. I'm the Organizing
3 Director with Empower DC. Recently, at the DCHA
4 oversight hearings, Councilmember Robert White
5 asked, what is the cost to rebuild-in-place at
6 Barry Farm.

7 Director Todman said that Ms. Kimberly
8 Black King had that information. Recently
9 contacted Councilmember Robert White's office, and
10 he said he did not have that information. In lieu
11 of this, that there is no decision in place yet,
12 I think it'd be great to have that information, as
13 residents have been asking for that.

14 We know that the relocation for
15 residents is, there's an estimated cost of
16 \$6 million. We know that the city, or the Housing
17 Authority, is selling the land for Barry Farm at
18 \$16 million. That's a drop in the bucket when you
19 talk about the lives of the residents of Barry Farm.

20 So we know that it is doable. We keep
21 on being told the reasons of why they can't do it,

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1 but we don't see any dollars associated to that.
2 So we believe that the interests are being held for
3 the developers. Interests are being held before
4 the residents.

5 So we really do need to know that cost,
6 and as several people have said, let's make that
7 happen. There's more than enough land there
8 ready. So we just need to make that happen. We
9 need to know that cost.

10 We've been asking for years now, and
11 nobody has told us that, although we've been told
12 that that is something that is known. That is
13 known through DMPED, that is known through the
14 Housing Authority.

15 So we would love to know that cost, so
16 we can just to ahead and move ahead, and
17 stop -- residents are very scared. I interact
18 with residents almost on a daily basis, and folks
19 know that they're not necessarily going to go
20 anywhere better. The vouchers are a risk,
21 especially with the federal government, and the

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1 cuts they are most likely going to make.

2 So residents want to stay in place.
3 They don't want to lose -- they don't want to move
4 from their historic neighborhood.

5 Also something that is very concerning
6 that we've learned, is that when the federal
7 government actually provides to residents whose
8 properties are going to be demolished, the right
9 to actually purchase their land -- we know that the
10 Housing Authority chose not to provide an
11 opportunity, based on some exception.

12 However, the residents were never made
13 aware of that. I could provide you these
14 documents, everybody on the Board, if you share
15 your emails with me, or with Commissioner
16 Vann-Ghasri, I can provide this documentation.
17 But that is known information.

18 TOPA is much stronger than this
19 federal -- the District tenant opportunity to
20 purchase that is much stronger than this federal
21 guideline. So why aren't tenants being given that

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1 right?

2 Lastly, we know that the developers are
3 being told, per the contract, that the property
4 only has to remain public property -- excuse me,
5 public housing -- for 40 years. After that, they
6 can essentially do whatever they want. Thirty
7 years for any affordable housing -- so-called
8 affordable housing.

9 We keep hearing at the oversight
10 hearings, and at the budget hearings, that it runs
11 with a ground lease, but that goes against what
12 these HUD documents that we have in our possession
13 tell us. So we're very concerned that in 40 years,
14 which is, once again, a drop in the bucket, we will
15 lose the most affordable housing that we have in
16 the District of Columbia.

17 Lastly, I would like to remind
18 Commissioner Vann-Ghasri, thank you for inviting
19 organizers to come out and help, and distribute
20 flyers and information that's pertinent to what's
21 happening on the properties.

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1 I was recently at Barry Farm. The
2 resident manager there told me I could not hand out
3 flyers on the property. I am a part of the Barry
4 Farm Tenant and Allies Association. They were
5 documents that have to do with the redevelopment,
6 what we found out through these HUD documents, and
7 I was told I could not be there.

8 I would imagine that this most likely
9 happens on many other properties. I would remind
10 you that HUD provides --

11 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: That's a
12 violation of 24 CFR --

13 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes ma'am --

14 COMMISSIONER

15 VANN-GHASRI: -- residents have the right to
16 organize.

17 MR. DEL PIELAGO: -- so I would hope
18 that you would remind all of your resident
19 managers, or property managers, that organizing
20 can happen on the property.

21 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: That's

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1 correct.

2 MR. DEL PIELAGO: It doesn't have to
3 happen on the sidewalk next to the property, but
4 it can actually happen on the property. Thank you.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: This is
6 very interesting for you to bring that to my
7 attention, because sitting on this Board from the
8 day that I've sat on this Board, there's always
9 been, this is the recommendation.

10 Flyer on every door. I do it. I do it
11 at Potomac Gardens. Flyer on every door. That
12 way residents are notified. Now if they don't
13 come, they don't attend, that's okay, as long as
14 you have the reputation of putting the flyer on
15 every door.

16 And it's an insult to me for you to sit
17 in front of me today Danny, to inform me that a
18 District of Columbia Housing Authority property
19 manager stated that no flyers can be put out.

20 That's an insult, because now that
21 would become a national issue, which I don't want,

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1 because I'm not a developer on the Board. I'm not
2 a landlord on the Board. But I'm a certified
3 organizer on this Board.

4 MR. DEL PIELAGO: That's right.

5 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And I was
6 trained by one of the best. And one thing I don't
7 do -- even with me, even with residents of Potomac
8 Gardens -- I may bring to the Chief, but they may
9 say they're going to do to me what they're going
10 to do to me. But guess what, I'm still their
11 commander right?

12 They have the right to still meet their
13 rep.

14 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes ma'am.

15 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Whether
16 they talking about me or not. So I hope that this
17 Housing Authority, has a meeting with managers, and
18 then somebody train them on 24 CFR, to at least
19 don't violate the right to organize. Because
20 nobody got that one confused.

21 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Especially at

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1 properties like Barry Farm, where there's so much
2 going on. And I appreciate -- and as I mentioned,
3 I will forward these documents to you in hopes that
4 you can share them with the rest of the Board. I
5 thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: And make
7 sure you tell Trayon White. He's a Councilmember
8 on the Hill.

9 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Yes ma'am.

10 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Trayon is
11 an organizer.

12 MR. BOVELLE: And what I'd like to say,
13 and I want the record to be really clear about this.
14 That when we talk about Barry Farm and the
15 redevelopment of all these sites, and
16 building-in-place, can you do it, can you not do
17 it.

18 Anything's possible if you throw enough
19 money at it. What we have to do with this city,
20 and with this Housing Authority, is look at, what
21 is the best use of the limited funds that we have.

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1 So the Housing Authority and DMPED are
2 very closely looking at what makes the best sense
3 to use those funds? What's going to get us to where
4 we need to be? Barry Farm is not the only
5 redevelopment site that we have that's going
6 through the New Communities Initiative. There are
7 three other sites that are doing the same thing,
8 and we're using limited funds for this.

9 So regarding building-in-place, what
10 we're going to do within this Housing Authority,
11 is Ms. King will be sending to our Board, along with
12 the Deputy Mayor's office, what the plans are
13 currently, because things are evolving every day.

14 We'll share that with the Board, and
15 then we'll be prepared to make an official
16 statement about building-in-place at our next
17 meeting, and give an update on that.

18 MR. DEL PIELAGO: Commissioner Slover
19 has told us that you guys are not lacking money.
20 He says he needs to be shown where -- why you guys
21 are lacking money. There's no lack of money, and

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1 if you talk about using dollars wisely, Park
2 Morton, there's plenty of other properties that
3 aren't as bad off -- if we want to use that
4 language -- as Park Morton.

5 So I think we'll probably get into a
6 back-and-forth, but that's where I'll leave it.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN THOMPSON: Thank you. So
9 that is the conclusion of our public comments. And
10 so with that I will make the announcement that the
11 next Board of Commissioners meeting will be held
12 on Wednesday, June 14, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. It will
13 be at the D.C. Housing Authority headquarters,
14 1133 N. Capitol Street, NE, Washington, D.C.
15 Thank you.

16 (Whereupon the above-entitled matter
17 went off the record at 3:37 p.m.)

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