

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

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WEDNESDAY
APRIL 11, 2018

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The D.C. Housing Authority Board of Commissioners met in the auditorium at Greenleaf, 203 N Street, S.W., Washington, D.C., at 1:00 p.m., Neil Albert, Chairman, presiding.

PRESENT

NEIL ALBERT, Chairman
KENNETH D. COUNCIL, Commissioner
FRANK LANCASTER, Commissioner
JOSHUA LOPEZ, Commissioner
JOSE ORTIZ GAUD, Commissioner
KEN GROSSINGER, Commissioner
FRANSELENE ST. JEAN, Commissioner
AQUARIUS VANN-GHASRI, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT

TYRONE GARRETT, Executive Director
ALETHEA McNAIR, Manager of Board Relations

COMMISSIONER(S) ABSENT

WILLIAM SLOVER, Vice Chairman
BRIAN KENNER, Commissioner
NAKEISHA NEAL JONES, Commissioner

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

12:59 p.m.

CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Good afternoon, everyone. Can you hear me? Good afternoon, everyone. I'm going to ask you to take your seats. We're going to get our meeting started. Good afternoon, again. My name is Neil Albert.

I'm the chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority, and I'm calling this meeting to order. If you're coming in the door, come in quickly and quietly and get seated. This is the regular monthly meeting of the District of Columbia Housing Authority being held today, April 11, 2018, at Greenleaf. The time is 1:00 p.m., on the dot.

I want to remind you and ask you again to please silence your phones and other electronic devices. I want to remind you and ask you again that you observe the decorum that we expect during these meetings. Allow people that are speaking to get their thoughts out without interruption. If you signed up to speak, we will call you in the order

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1 that you signed up, and we will give you the same
2 courtesies that we ask that you give to others. It
3 is our customer, at these Board meetings, to have
4 a moment of silence. At this time, I want to ask
5 you to pause wherever you are as we observe a moment
6 of silence.

7 (Moment of silence.)

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. I'm
9 going to ask for a roll call to determine if we have
10 a quorum.

11 MS. MCNAIR: Thank you. Commissioner
12 Council.

13 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Present.

14 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Grossinger.

15 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: Here.

16 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Kenner.

17 (No audible response.)

18 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Lancaster.

19 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Here.

20 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Lopez.

21 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Here.

22 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Neal Jones.

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1 (No audible response.)

2 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz Gaud.

3 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: Here.

4 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner St. Jean.

5 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Here.

6 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner
7 Vann-Ghasri.

8 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Present.

9 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Slover.

10 (No audible response.)

11 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Albert.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Here.

13 MS. MCNAIR: You have eight
14 commissioners present; you have a quorum.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
16 Today's agenda is our regular agenda. As is our
17 custom, we're going to invite the public to come
18 before the Board twice, once to discuss any issues
19 related to resolutions that we are discussing
20 today, and then a time for any personal issues,
21 after we go through the agenda, related to housing.

22 As usual, we provide a little bit more

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1 time to our residents, five minutes to our
2 residents and three minutes to our non-residents.
3 No one signed up to speak on the resolution. We
4 only have one resolution on the agenda today. This
5 is Resolution 18-05. We will get to public
6 comments after we discuss the resolution. We do
7 have two minutes of two Board meetings to approve
8 today, the minutes of the March 14, 2018 meeting
9 and the March 26th Special Board of Commissioners
10 meeting. I'm hoping that Commissioners took the
11 time to read the minutes. At this time, I would
12 entertain a motion for approval. Is there a motion
13 to --

14 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I move that
15 the minutes be accepted as is. I have no further
16 amendment at this particular time.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: It's been moved. Is
18 there a second?

19 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Second. All in
21 favor say aye.

22 (Chorus of ayes.)

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Any opposed?

2 (No audible response.)

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Great. The minutes
4 are approved. At this time, I'm going to turn it
5 over to our executive director, Tyrone Garrett, for
6 his report.

7 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
8 Commissioners, I just want to refer you to the
9 dashboard that we're utilizing if you haven't all
10 had an opportunity to look at it. Remember we're
11 going to a dashboard system of reporting each month
12 to make it systematic and efficient for not only
13 yourself, but also for the staff. It allows us to
14 be able to create metrics, which then will create
15 accountability. I want to bring you to Page 9 of
16 the booklet -- I'm sorry 8. It should be 8 of 14.

17 That talks about job placements by
18 ward. That's something that we're going to begin
19 to do each month to show you exactly where our job
20 placements are being -- by ward, throughout the
21 District. It also will allow you to gauge if we're
22 meeting our commitment to economic development

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1 within our communities directly impacting our
2 residents.

3 That's something that we're striving to
4 do. That leads us into the fact that over the last
5 six months, it's been an opportunity for myself,
6 my office, to develop, have an understanding of
7 where the Agency is at, but also, it's allowed us
8 to go into our third-quarter 90-day action plans,
9 now, to develop actual strategies. I'm still
10 continuing to go out to the complexes, to Town Hall
11 meetings, continuing to have the one-on-one
12 meetings with residents directly. From that,
13 we're going to be able to gauge and create exactly
14 the strategy that we want for the next three years.
15 That's the intent of the organization. That's the
16 intent of these action plans. We'll be able to
17 further monitor and measure our accomplishments,
18 and also identify where we're falling short. Does
19 anyone have any questions for me?

20 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: I just
21 wanted to commend the news report on -- was it the
22 Business Insider -- about your economic

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1 development activity was extraordinary. This is
2 a really important piece of work, and it's gotten
3 on in a really strong way. I just wanted to say
4 thank you.

5 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Commissioner.
6 I have one other piece, Commissioners. As always,
7 we always attempt to recognize our employees for
8 their outstanding service. I'm going to walk up
9 and get started on that. We have a few more
10 employees that we're going to recognize this month.
11 It was a big month for us, a lot of things going
12 on. We kicked off our Modified Apprentice
13 Program. That was something that is very
14 encouraging. That is what leads to our numbers for
15 the economic development and employment by ward.
16 That's what you're looking at when you look at Page
17 8. Normally, we recognize possibly one, possibly
18 two residents -- well in this case, we will be
19 recognizing residents -- but employees each month.

20 We're going to do it differently. We
21 have approximately 20 people that we're going to
22 be recognizing today for their efforts on behalf

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1 of DC HA and the residents. First, we have our
2 first customer service award for the quarter ending
3 March 2018.

4 The customer service award recognizes
5 and rewards employees for exceptional customer
6 service and performance resulting in a high level
7 that can be measured, a high level of customer
8 service that can be actually measured. That's
9 what's most important to me.

10 I'm pleased to recognize Edwina
11 Chisholm, housing quality assurance specialist in
12 the Housing Choice Voucher Program. Let me tell
13 you what happened. Good Friday, we were not off.
14 The executive director decided to let everyone go
15 at approximately 12:30, which was -- everyone ran
16 out the door. Edwina, though, a situation came up
17 and we needed her service. We needed her help and
18 her assistance. She turned around and came back
19 to the office to assist this resident that was going
20 to be need and needed to be housed that weekend.
21 Because of her service, there was a resident that
22 was given the opportunity to move into a unit.

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1 If it had not been for her, it wouldn't
2 have happened. That's our dedication, and that's
3 our commitment to our residents, so I'd like for
4 her to come up to receive her --

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. GARRETT: Ron tells me she's ill.
7 I thought she was standing outside. We go to our
8 next set. Next, we have our employees of the
9 month. Remember, Edwina was with customer
10 service. Now we have our employees of the month.

11 My commitment, as the executive
12 director, over the last six months, is to improve
13 the quality of life of our residents, identify
14 economic opportunities for DC HA residents and
15 program participants in any way that we can. This
16 is why we developed the Modified Apprentice
17 Program. I call it Modified Apprentice Program.
18 Everyone else calls it the Property Management
19 Apprentice Training Program, which is too long for
20 me, so they cut it down to ATP, too many acronyms
21 to remember. This is a six-month program, as you
22 know, that we were trying to get individuals job

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1 skills, so that they can go off into the workforce
2 and develop themselves, become viable individuals
3 in the community and viable residents that we need
4 to continue to encourage.

5 But without assistance from our staff,
6 without individuals who are dedicated, and without
7 individuals who buy in to a new system -- and that's
8 what's most important, buying into a new system.
9 An individual comes on board. He or she decides
10 that they're going to change the game just a little
11 bit and he needs an army. He needs a group of
12 individuals that are going to back and support him
13 and push through, even when they don't necessarily
14 agree with everything.

15 I think we've developed that type of
16 team. It took a team to put together the Job
17 Training Program from across all departments,
18 whether it be operations and management, human
19 resources, ODC, everyone participated in some way,
20 shape, or form, to the development of this
21 particular program. It's a testament to the
22 program, itself, and the good start that we've had

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1 because people are calling every day, asking can
2 they still participate. We're not turning anyone
3 away. We're keeping their names for the next
4 opportunity that we're going to develop for the
5 residents.

6 It gives me pleasure to acknowledge 16
7 individuals today from the Department of Property
8 Management, Operations, Human Resources, and the
9 Office of Resident Services, who displayed a high
10 level of interest, a high level of dedication, not
11 only to DC HA, but definitely to our residents.
12 I'd like to call them up right now.

13 Mr. Moody, Douglas Moody. Willy
14 Stent. Ronald Powell. Herbert Johnson. Jose
15 Arears. Edward Bell. Ronnie Facet. Stephanie
16 Jackson. Jamal Bryant. Byron Fig. Rashad
17 Thomas.

18 Hannah Corner. Elsie Sinot. Stefen
19 Baker. Rian Harris. Ron Fisher. I want to thank
20 you guys, really, because this is real serious
21 business that we're trying to attempt to do. We're
22 trying to impact lives in a positive way. We're

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1 also showing our residents, and other employees,
2 that accountability is very important. Without
3 you, none of this would happen.

4 I appreciate you taking the idea and
5 putting it together and getting it and putting it
6 into play. Implementation is always important.
7 One individual that's not up here with you that I
8 did want to recognize is Bob Campbell, from the
9 Human Resources Department. I understand. I
10 appreciate it. Thank you.

11 I don't want to let Edwina, leave her
12 out. Is she here? I want everyone to see you.
13 She deserves a round of applause, also.

14 Out of the 55 employees that started our
15 apprentice program on March 12th, there are three
16 who actually stepped up over the last month and
17 shown that their interest, their will, and
18 commitment to what we're trying to achieve, and
19 also their commitment to themselves in trying to
20 develop into individuals that can go out into the
21 actual workforce, taking the skills that our staff
22 and our team are providing with them. It's very

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1 important. What we need to do is encourage them.
2 I know Chelsea said --- you know, if we had all 55
3 employees could be employee of the month if they
4 really pushed. She backed down off of that, but
5 there can only be so many at a time. We thought
6 that there were three individuals, though, that
7 really pushed through in this first month and did
8 exemplary on behalf of their neighbors, on behalf
9 of their families, and on behalf of DC HA.

10 I'd like ask Mr. Snites, William
11 Snites. We have William Snites. Marcus Graham.
12 Quin Brunson. Thank you for indulging me. I
13 appreciate it.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Does that conclude
15 your report?

16 MR. GARRETT: Yes, sir.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Great. We're going
18 to move into Resolution 18-05, which is to
19 authorize the execution of a contract for
20 professional consultant services for the Job Order
21 Contracting Program. I'm going to ask the
22 executive director to give us a highlight and

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1 description of the program, and then we'll take
2 action on it.

3 MR. GARRETT: Okay. Commissioners,
4 the Gordian Group is the group that we've selected
5 to assist us with continuing our job program. The
6 idea is that they contain the software and hold the
7 software that we utilize to procure, as we put out
8 RFQs or RFPs for selection of job contractors to
9 deal with some of our issues, in terms of
10 maintenance and rehabilitation and preservation of
11 our public housing units.

12 This particular group offers a service
13 to us that we cannot do ourselves. They give us
14 a perspective of cost analysis that comes across
15 throughout the industry, an industry standard,
16 actually. It's something that we utilize to
17 ensure that when we're budgeting for these
18 particular endeavors and these strategic plans,
19 especially when we're dealing with the
20 rehabilitation and construction costs, it keeps us
21 in line.

22 This is an organization that we have

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1 utilized before, over the last five years, and
2 they've serviced us well. If you have any further
3 questions, we do have staff available. Mr. Brown
4 is here to go over a couple of other items, if you
5 do have questions.

6 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: From my
7 understanding, the Gordian Group has been with the
8 Housing Authority since 1999, up until present.
9 Many of the staff cannot account to some of its
10 incentives that it may or may not -- this company
11 may or may not have assist in empowering residents.

12 As we speak today, before renewing this
13 contract, as you know, I have some issues with it.
14 I understand that it's going to do Section 3, but
15 for \$25,000, money has gone up from 1999; however,
16 my constituents seems as though they're still at
17 a standstill with the JOC, job order contracting.

18 Several years ago, when I first came on
19 this Board, I had asked the previous directors to
20 incorporate residents who already have their own
21 businesses or have acquired an EIN number to be able
22 to participate as subcontractors with the job

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1 ordering contracting.

2 With that said, whether or not that will
3 be written in language, and we'll be moving forward
4 with that, with you, Mr. Garrett, being from your
5 background, and that one of the priorities that
6 you've had in your background is working with
7 residents who, No. 1, already have an EIN, have the
8 desire for entrepreneurship -- this Housing
9 Authority is far behind. For us to be a move to
10 work housing authority, trying to acquire our
11 national model back, this would be one way that I
12 would see, with us being a municipal corporation,
13 not even the state, to give the residents of the
14 Housing Choice Voucher Program, and the residents
15 from public housing, the opportunity to share in
16 the economical dollars that this Agency make with
17 us. Now, tell me, with that said, how is all this
18 going to benefit my constituents?

19 MR. GARRETT: Commissioner
20 Vann-Ghasri, the reality is with the apprentice
21 that we just rolled out over the last month and the
22 acknowledgment of the members of the community that

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1 are actually participating in it, that's our first
2 step.

3 I have rededicated our staff,
4 especially the Office of Capitol Programs, to
5 encourage not only Section 3 resident
6 participation, but also participation from local
7 contractors and any endeavor, any opportunity that
8 we may have on the construction side. This is just
9 another way to do it. We have lists of contractors
10 who we will be vetting and identifying for
11 opportunities that come up when using the JOC
12 program. In addition, Mr. Brown also has
13 discussed and talked about how some individual
14 groups that were local organizations that did not
15 necessarily have all the capacity, at 100 percent,
16 to do some of the work with us have grown from being
17 subcontractors to actual contractors, themselves.

18 It's our hope that we'll utilize the
19 Office of Resident Services to identify not only
20 candidates who might be able to create their own
21 businesses, but also put candidates with other
22 organizations that may be already established, so

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1 there can be economic development growth from the
2 top to the bottom.

3 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: How does
4 the fee structure, how does that impact my
5 constituents, or even the Agency?

6 MR. GARRETT: The fee structure allows
7 us to save money, in essence, as an Agency. But
8 when you talk about your constituency, the
9 constituency will benefit with opportunities with
10 the contractors that we identify. We encourage
11 everyone -- and we're going to strongly continue
12 to encourage people in the contractors that we
13 identify or utilize -- to pick up local employment
14 for our residents. That's the whole idea.

15 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: We always
16 say that, but what I don't actually see is who -- I
17 know you're saying about wards. We have all these
18 contracts that are always saying Commissioner
19 Vann-Ghasri-Ghasri, we do respect you. We know
20 you like the Section 3. Here is the problem,
21 though.

22 I have never -- I'm serious. I get

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1 around D.C., and I haven't met but two people that
2 ever said to me that they benefit from it. That's
3 one of the issues that I have. When a company says
4 we're going to apprenticeship, but they're not
5 specific. Residents of the District of Columbia
6 public housing, I'm going to say it again, we have
7 degrees.

8 Unfortunately, many of us never had the
9 opportunity to exercise those degrees. Now here's
10 the time that we can take those degrees off of our
11 shelf and make sure that the residents who are on
12 the lease, who are unemployed, with a degree, a
13 certification for higher learning, with their
14 skills, properly be trained. The recommendation
15 is now that we have a new director in this center
16 right here, we need flexibility. This center
17 needs to be open on Saturdays, from 9:00 to 5:00,
18 where residents have the opportunity to come in
19 here and be able to apply for these jobs.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner, thank
21 you so much. Do you want to respond?

22 MR. GARRETT: Commissioner

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1 Vann-Ghasri, I have a short response. The Office
2 of Resident Services is moving in that direction
3 very rapidly and quickly. If you know, recall, we
4 did a pop-up job fair two weeks ago, in Ward 8, at
5 three different sites, simultaneously, meaning
6 that we held three pop-up job fairs at three
7 different sites at the same time, utilizing the
8 Office of Resident Services.

9 In addition, how you will know that
10 we're moving forward and we're growing in the
11 program and we're engaging residents in their
12 obtaining jobs is by holding me accountable to Page
13 8 of the dashboard, which identifies, again, how
14 many jobs we're placing on a monthly basis. That
15 metric will hold me accountable and hold the team
16 accountable to our mission to provide economic
17 opportunity for our residents in the community.

18 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Thank you
19 so much. With that said, this is my last remark.
20 A resident that works on this property, who's also
21 a resident that works for DC HA, she and I had a
22 talk. This was a recommendation that I want to be

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1 put on record.

2 Not only can the residents use this
3 facility to upgrade their skills, but we have
4 employees that can never get to go to school
5 anywhere because all of that is no longer existing.

6 If we have this center open on
7 Saturdays, even the employees would have -- when
8 I say employees, I'm not talking about 13 and 14s.
9 I'm talking about lower grade employees. They
10 could have the opportunity to come here and uplift
11 their skills, as well, so we could be a working
12 team.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Commissioner
14 Vann-Ghasri, I really want to echo your comments,
15 mostly on the Section 3 opportunities. I think
16 Director Garrett has actually put measures in
17 place, so that we can hold him accountable for
18 delivering on those. I encourage all of us to read
19 his monthly performance dashboards. If we don't
20 feel as though he's making the measures that he's
21 committed to, we have the responsibility to hold
22 him accountable.

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1 I also want to agree with you on the
2 utilization of a wonderful space like this for the
3 community. I don't know what kind of resources
4 need to be -- additional resources need to be put
5 into it, but I would encourage the executive
6 director and his team to figure a way to completely
7 utilize this facility, particularly for job
8 training opportunities for folks who need it. Any
9 other comments from any other commissioners? I
10 just want to thank you, Commissioner Vann-Ghasri,
11 for those comments.

12 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Mr. Chair, if
13 I may. Like you said, I think we need to find a
14 source of income or money stream to come into this
15 facility to keep it going in the direction that it's
16 going, to enhance it, get the necessary equipment,
17 computers, whatnot, that they need. What are the
18 tools they need to keep it afloat? When people
19 come in here to learn and re-hone their skills, I
20 feel like they shouldn't have to sit around and wait
21 to find out how long it would take to get enrolled.
22 If someone was an entrepreneur with an ID number,

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1 might have low capital to work with, have someone
2 to set aside and explain to them how they go about
3 enhancing their capital, that they become a
4 entrepreneur to get on some of these contracts. I
5 think we need a subdivision to help them with that,
6 if it's possible.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you,
8 Commissioner. Comments from other commissioners
9 on this resolution? Hearing none, I will
10 entertain a motion for approval.

11 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: So moved.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Is there a second?

13 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Second.

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

16 (Chorus of ayes.)

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Any opposed?

18 (No audible response.)

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: The ayes have it.
20 Do we still need a roll call? We still need a roll
21 call. Old habits die hard.

22 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner

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1 Vann-Ghasri.

2 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Yes.

3 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner St. Jean.

4 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Yes.

5 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Ortiz Gaud.

6 COMMISSIONER ORTIZ GAUD: Yes.

7 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Lopez.

8 COMMISSIONER LOPEZ: Yes.

9 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Lancaster.

10 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Yes.

11 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Grossinger.

12 COMMISSIONER GROSSINGER: Yes.

13 MS. MCNAIR: Commissioner Council.

14 COMMISSIONER COUNCIL: Yes.

15 MS. MCNAIR: Chairman Albert.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes.

17 MS. MCNAIR: You had 8 yes. The
18 resolution is approved.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you. Now,
20 we're going to go to our public comment section.
21 We're going to start with our residents who have
22 signed up, and then we'll go to our non-residents.

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1 Residents have five minutes; non-residents have
2 three minutes to talk about any subject or topic
3 of your choice. Let's start with Michael Lee.
4 Michael, you're up first this time.

5 MR. LEE: Thank you, Mr. Albert. I
6 want to thank Councilman Norton and the mayor.
7 This is Emancipation Week. Michael A. Lee, a
8 veteran. Eight thousand soldiers have been killed
9 in Iraq and Afghanistan -- since 2003, I forgot to
10 mention that. We have 8,000 homeless people here
11 in Washington, D.C. This is Emancipation Week.

12 We have the World Bank, International
13 Monetary Fund, and the Inter-American
14 Developmental Bank. Eight thousand soldiers been
15 killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. We have 8,000
16 homeless people here in Washington, D.C. I'm
17 trying to understand this logic. I wanted to speak
18 up for the -- I think we've got 8,000 people with
19 public housing, 11,000 people in the Housing Choice
20 Voucher Program, and I think about 50,000 people
21 on the waiting list.

22 The point I'm trying to make, 250 years

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1 of free labor, another 100 years before we could
2 ride in the front of a bus. I don't play the race
3 card, but racism, prejudice, discrimination,
4 bigotry, hatred and oppression, genocide. My
5 point is 8,000 soldiers been killed in
6 Iraq/Afghanistan, way over there. We have 8,000
7 homeless people here in Washington, D.C., and then
8 we have 8,000 people on public assistance, public
9 housing, 11,000 Housing Choice Voucher Program,
10 and 100,000 people below the poverty level. Are
11 these people innocent? That's my question.

12 Are these people innocent? The people
13 who are on these -- the 8,000 people -- why is there
14 so much poverty here in Washington, D.C.? The
15 8,000 people with the public assistance, 11,000
16 people, are these people innocent?

17 I don't know what I was going to say,
18 but for me, talk about injustice, wrongdoing,
19 unfairness, corruption, poor leadership,
20 mismanagement, negligence, incompetence,
21 cynicism, conspiracy, scandal, lies, trickery,
22 deception, deceit, hypocrisy, Democracy.

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1 Still, my point is this is Emancipation
2 Week. Why do so many poor people here in
3 Washington, D.C. -- they all just happen to be in
4 Ward 7 and 8. Then we have corporate crime,
5 corporate waste, corporate welfare. One thing
6 I've learned through experience, the poor people
7 and the homeless people are the easiest people to
8 take advantage of. If any of you all was in my
9 shoes the last seven years -- I'm just
10 trying -- brilliant person. You have the ability
11 to change. I knew you before, when I was in the
12 shelter. You're a brilliant person. I thought
13 you was a lawyer all these years.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: There are brilliant
15 people that are not lawyers.

16 MR. LEE: I thought you was a lawyer.
17 Sometimes, I don't speak as clearly as I sing. I
18 just came here -- then we have 200 to 800 people
19 sleeping on the streets. Some of these people are
20 not that healthy. Some of these people I know. We
21 have, I think it's 1,000 people with the public
22 schools are homeless. Then I think there's total

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1 about 7,000-8,000 homeless people. They're a
2 perfect example.

3 These public schools have been
4 dysfunctional for over 20 years. You can't talk
5 about God, and you can't talk about Jesus. I think
6 we need -- what the United States -- truthfully
7 speaking -- if you were in the White House today,
8 and if you can't help 8,000 homeless people in D.C.,
9 how can you go another state and try and do
10 something? I'm just trying to convince you
11 all -- some of the stuff, it's just right in your
12 face. But this is Emancipation Week. Why are we
13 still celebrating this? Why is there going to be
14 so many people and everybody don't care about this.
15 I'm just hoping to convey to you, the 8,000 people
16 in public housing, maybe they're innocent.

17 The 11,000 people, maybe they're
18 innocent. Mr. Albert, lay down the
19 foundation -- No. 1 are ones for Heavenly Father,
20 No. 2, the trillion-dollar team, No. 3, let there
21 be light, and No. 4, the billion dollar plan, No.
22 5, to save a life, No. 6, prevent people from dying,

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1 and No. 7, with God and Jesus.

2 America's best business plan, the
3 supreme business plan. America's superior
4 investment firm, your very best investment,
5 knowing a good investment, making -- America's best
6 small business.

7 Invest in these people the same way that
8 we invest in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the World
9 Bank, the International Monetary Fund, they're
10 helping the Communists around the world, but we
11 can't help the poor right here. It doesn't make
12 any sense. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You're welcome;
14 thank you. Debra Jones.

15 MS. JONES: Good afternoon. My name
16 is Debra Jones. I'm from Kentucky Courts. I'm
17 here to speak. I do think you all --

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you speak into
19 the mic?

20 MS. JONES: I'm here today to speak
21 about what happened last time when I came. I do
22 thank you all, on the Panel, for Ms. Carrington

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1 returning back to our property. The tenants
2 signed a card, and they really appreciate her
3 coming back.

4 PARTICIPANT: Bring the mic closer to
5 you, ma'am.

6 MS. JONES: Thank Ms. Carrington for
7 coming back. Last night, I went out and talked to
8 a lot of tenants on the property. They was signing
9 a letter. When I went in, they showed me all the
10 work that was done due to Ms. Carrington coming
11 back. She had took pictures of things that
12 happened inside their units. They explained that
13 to me and showed it to me. The maintenance had been
14 doing a wonderful job the time that she came back.
15 They really appreciate her coming back. Ms.
16 Carrington has a contract that's coming out to do
17 the grass and grounds and stuff like that. We
18 really appreciate you all letting her come back.
19 They're really happy, and I have something here
20 from all the tenants signed a letter for Ms.
21 Carrington, if you want to pass it to her. Thank
22 you so much.

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1 One more question. For resident
2 council, they want to thank Ms. Bell, Rashad and
3 Ms. Bell for the wonderful job that they've been
4 doing for the resident council, everything that
5 they've been ordering been coming on the property,
6 activities and games and food, programs and
7 everything, they're coming on the property, which
8 I've been seeing they're very happy to see our
9 property going to enforce as moving about what
10 we're complaining about. I came here and yes,
11 they're doing a good job with that.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
13 We appreciate those comments. Next up is Mary
14 Davis.

15 MS. DAVIS: Good evening. My name is
16 Mary Davis. I've never been here before and never
17 spoke before, but once at the Wilson Building. Put
18 me up there -- no, they didn't. I'm telling a
19 story. Anyway, I'm from Barry Farm. I see my
20 manager is here, Ms. Watson. One thing I'd like
21 to say, the store that we have in Barry Farm needs
22 to be closed. Those people need to be put out.

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1 The owner of the store, Mr. Oh
2 (phonetic), he got angry at one of the workers
3 because they're fixing stuff up. The man, his
4 water was \$3 one week. When he came to purchase
5 the water for the construction workers, it was \$5.

6 I went on and got my two liter of ginger
7 ale and my two-liter Pepsi and paid, and he gave
8 me my change. He took the Pepsi and busted me in
9 my -- I had to go to the hospital, busted my lip
10 wide open. I got a witness. She was there. Ms.
11 Davis, your lip is bleeding. I said I know.

12 I had to do everything in the world to
13 keep my little son from going down there because
14 he's in the -- I said you don't mess up you job.
15 Let us deal with it. My daughter's dealing with
16 it. We're going to sue him. Now, that's that. I
17 wanted to get that out. That store definitely
18 needs to be closed. He don't need to be in there.
19 He don't know how to treat us, and his stuff is too
20 high to be in the projects, as you all like to call
21 them that. I call them low and middle-class homes
22 because it did me well. My discussion is we know

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1 the place got to go because it been fixed up so many
2 times.

3 I hate to say it, because I'm Black,
4 too, but our race don't know how to take care of
5 nothing because really, the projects should never
6 have to go nowhere because they've been remodeled
7 a little bit over 20 times. Because they moved me
8 down here -- because I stayed down here until they
9 remodeled it, then I went back.

10 It's disgusting and waste of money. I
11 know HUD deal a lot with -- it's a waste of money,
12 keep doing something we don't take care of it. I
13 have to say I do appreciate my home, and I take very
14 good care of it. Plus, I like yards, because I love
15 flowers. You can gather I'm not from here.

16 I'm from South Carolina. I like to
17 farm. That means I love flowers. I just like
18 beautiful. I'm a beautiful person. I love
19 beauty. I like to see beauty in everything I look
20 at, everything, the yard, where I live, my
21 neighborhood. I like to beauty. It's a big
22 property, and it should be a beautiful place to

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1 live. It used to be back in -- I moved over there
2 in '71. All my kids was little children. I asked
3 one lady -- we didn't have no fence or nothing
4 around. I asked Rebecca Holton, I said can I put
5 a fence? You know what she told me? She said do
6 anything to beautiful the place, they'll tear it
7 down. I lived up to her word and never tore nothing
8 down. Thank you all.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
10 Paulette Matthews.

11 MS. MATTHEWS: Hello, everybody. How
12 are you all doing? I was listening to the
13 conversation you all was having about the training
14 and job placement being done here on Saturdays. In
15 that thought process, I thought of the fact that
16 there's a lot of people right now that's at home,
17 maybe not at home, but basically at work or at
18 school, in training.

19 Therefore, a lot of times, they're not
20 able to attend these meetings that you all have at
21 this particular hour of the day, for forever. This
22 is what you all do. There's a lot of voices that

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1 need to be heard. Sometimes people have to come
2 and speak for other individuals who would prefer
3 to be here. As far as Barry Farms, like Ms. Davis
4 said, it's not always the people; it's the type of
5 materials that are put in the household, as well,
6 and if it's not properly maintained on both ends,
7 that can cause a problem. In my unit, it's swell.

8 I really don't have too many problems.
9 But the fact of the matter that to move from Barry
10 Farms to go to a place that might not be better than,
11 or the job going to eventually come for, and you
12 have to go through that mental stress all over again
13 about packing your stuff and moving here and moving
14 there, take a voucher, do this, or do that or that.

15 You don't understand the mental stress
16 it is and the physical burden it is on an
17 individual. I'm here to speak on behalf of those
18 people who have moved. I know that I have to
19 eventually go through that process.

20 When you obtain a lot of stuff, some
21 things is trash. Some people's trash is treasure.
22 Some people have had things for a long time, so if

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1 you move into an air-conditioned unit, you probably
2 have to throw your air conditioners away. We get
3 charged \$7 for every conditioner that's in our
4 units. You have some D.C. Housing Authority
5 properties that have air conditioners, and I don't
6 know whether they pay for them or that's included
7 in their rent. I don't know how that all is done.

8 The fact that you make the decision to
9 move in a location, and you get there and you find
10 out it really is not what you expected. I don't
11 really know what time of day they be going.

12 I think a person should go day, middle
13 day, night and all that, and I think you should
14 check the back door, security doors, all of that,
15 lighting, all of that because no one should have
16 to call to keep reporting to get it fixed. If
17 you're a single mom or whatever with a daughter or
18 whatever, now your sons are grown and gone, this
19 is just some things that need to be considered.

20 To live somewhere for 15 or 20 years and
21 be given five days or something to move all your
22 stuff out of there is stressful. Understand that.

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1 That's very stressful. You have to go through
2 papers. Five days is not enough. To be told if
3 you're not out by five or four days, you're going
4 to be charged for every day that you're in your unit
5 afterwards is ridiculous. Some people might need
6 their stuff in a unit. I get them saying it's a
7 \$300 fee if you leave stuff in that unit. I get
8 that. But some people don't have family or enough
9 money or whatever to move that stuff out as quick
10 as possible because their family members might be
11 at work, a whole lot of different things.

12 To be putting on that burden on you
13 already having to get used to another environment,
14 maybe still used to the same -- how the D.C. Housing
15 Authority do it, whether it's good or bad. All of
16 that is a lot going on in a person's mind, world,
17 whatever. People need to really take that into
18 consideration when they're doing and saying things
19 to people or wanting this process to move smooth.

20 How can you expect it to move smoothly
21 if you've got a whole lot of chaos and confusion,
22 and your mind is in rush hour traffic, trying to

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1 make a whole lot of decisions about your lifestyle
2 or what's going on, and your child's safety at the
3 same time. Because even though you're saying
4 we're going to move you from here to here to there,
5 some neighborhoods, it's a coffin, and not a
6 welcome mat for your child to come to. Everybody
7 has to be mindful of these situations. People
8 should not just take for granted we're moving them
9 out of there, so we can do this, and they're going
10 to be okay. No, it's not as simple as it may seem.

11 Then you all put in complications on top
12 of it is another issue within itself that hopefully
13 will be addressed. These meetings I've been
14 coming to for a long time. I've asked that they
15 come to Barry Farms.

16 I know we're probably down to 100
17 families now, but we still need your presence in
18 the building, not just to come and tell us about
19 the redevelopment and how it's going to be done and
20 what we have to do, but these same type of meetings.
21 You all did it once before when I asked.

22 Because I asked you all last year, and

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1 when you all did your program, you all did not
2 include it, so I have a problem with it because you
3 said yes, you all would, but no, you have not. But
4 you continue to do this redevelopment spread and
5 knock on doors. I'm thankful that I mentioned the
6 harassment that I felt from the relocation team.
7 Since that time, I have not had that problem. I
8 would appreciate if you all can consider the
9 thought of other people's thoughts and feelings and
10 what emotional stress that you're taking them
11 through, through the process.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you very much.
13 We will get to Barry Farms. Nicole Odom.

14 MS. ODOM: Good afternoon. My name is
15 Nicole Odom. I'm a resident of Barry Farm, and I'm
16 with Empower D.C. I have a couple of questions
17 today. Right now, my question about the right to
18 return. Everything, as far as the redevelopment
19 and moving off the property seems to be -- is
20 happening. Do you have anything written up yet,
21 as far as notices to residents, about right to
22 return? Do you have any drafts of that?

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1 MR. GARRETT: We're following 16-06,
2 correct? Yes, we're still following 16-06.
3 Resolution 16-06 is the guideline for relocation
4 and return.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Do you know how to
6 get a copy of that?

7 MS. ODOM: Excuse me?

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Do you know how to
9 get a copy of that?

10 MS. ODOM: Yes, I do. Thank you.
11 Also, through doing some research on my own about
12 the different properties that are being offered for
13 relocation, I saw -- I came across HUD's website,
14 and I saw that there have been, from 2015-16,
15 physical inspection scores.

16 A lot of these places that we're being
17 relocated to or offered to go or told to go, they
18 have some pretty low scores. My concern is per the
19 DC HA, you know that we're in poor condition. Why
20 would you have us move to properties with lower
21 scores than Barry Farm, which was scored at 56
22 percent?

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1 The redevelopment in these types of
2 communities have a history of not going as planned.
3 A decade could go by before building starts. I
4 don't want to be housed somewhere with terrible
5 conditions for that long, or at all. That's also
6 my biggest concern, too. I've been to these
7 properties myself. To me, I don't want to move
8 somewhere that's the same or lower quality of life.

9 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Have you been
10 to the Meet and Lease?

11 MS. ODOM: The Meet and Lease? No.

12 COMMISSIONER ST. JEAN: Last week,
13 they held one in DC HA. We should be having one
14 next month, so we'll have more information on that
15 for you, okay? Ron McCoy, can you explain about
16 the Meet and Lease?

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We're just asking
18 Ron if he can explain what the Meet and Lease
19 Program is. You can take my mic.

20 MR. GARRETT: Just for clarification,
21 that was held at the Barry Farm Recreation Center,
22 I think, approximately three weeks ago. Residents

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1 were invited, and many residents did participate
2 in that particular program.

3 MR. MCCOY: The Meet and Lease
4 initiative was a partnership that the Housing
5 Authority initiated with our landlord partners,
6 where we reached out to our landlords. More than
7 30 landlords opened their doors and actually
8 minimized a lot of their screening criteria for
9 families, specifically the one that we had at Barry
10 Farms for families who were relocating with
11 vouchers. There were more than 100 units that we
12 pre-inspected. Those landlords came to the
13 recreation center at Barry to offer those units to
14 those families who attended, who actually came.
15 Many of the Barry families -- I think on that day
16 we may have housed 12 or 13 families that day. We
17 followed up on April 6th and had 33 landlords to
18 show, again, with more than 100 units throughout
19 the entire -- throughout the city.

20 More than 300 families, including some
21 families from Barry, also attended, where we
22 matched up and did some lease ups there. The

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1 ongoing effort is to actually reach out to
2 landlords, understanding some of the impediments
3 that our families face, and working with our
4 landlord partners and bring those resources to you.

5 MS. ODOM: I'm not taking a voucher, so
6 I don't know what that means for me.

7 MR. GARRETT: That's fine.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You may continue,
9 Ms. Odom.

10 MS. ODOM: I just wanted to ask those
11 two questions right now. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
13 Linda Brown. Ms. Brown, Linda Brown. She didn't
14 come in yet? Call her name again. Schyla
15 Pondexter-Moore.

16 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: Good afternoon,
17 everyone. My name is Schyla Pondexter-Moore.
18 I'm 41 years old, I think, 41 or 42. I'm from D.C.
19 I've been here my whole life. I have four
20 children, a son, 22, a daughter, 17, a son, 16, and
21 a daughter, 14, and we all live in public housing
22 at Highland Dwellings.

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1 I'm going to talk to you about a
2 timeline of events that happened to me. In summer
3 of 2017, the summer just past, cameras began to go
4 up in our community. We woke up to people drilling
5 on our homes and installing surveillance cameras.
6 We never once had a meeting about it. We never once
7 got a notice about it.

8 We never once got communicated to about
9 it. We never once got notification about it.
10 They simply came and started drilling and
11 installing surveillance cameras on our homes, not
12 in the common areas, on our homes. This was in the
13 summer of 2017. It wasn't until November 15, 2017
14 that the first mention of the cameras was said
15 something. They said something to us about the
16 cameras at our resident council meeting in Highland
17 Dwellings. Several residents were asking
18 questions. What is it? What's going on? We were
19 told that 80 plus cameras were being installed in
20 our community, on our homes -- 80 plus, 80
21 cameras -- and told us that we had no choice in the
22 matter, and that we would be watched 24/7 by the

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1 Metropolitan Police Department, the D.C. Housing
2 Authority police, the rental office, and other
3 people.

4 They told us that we were going to be
5 watched 24/7. Several residents were asking
6 questions. Where was the meeting? Why weren't we
7 consulted? What is this? Are we under
8 investigation? Why are you doing this? Mind you,
9 this was November. They told us they had 25
10 turkeys for the community, but 80 cameras -- 80
11 cameras, but 25 turkeys.

12 On December 5th, I received a letter to
13 my house saying that they wanted to enter my home
14 to continue to finish installing the cameras, that
15 they had to enter our homes to install a power box.
16 I refused. I said I didn't want this to happen.
17 I had questions. What is this camera? Can the
18 camera hear us? What can it see? Can it see
19 through the window? Why do we have to have 80
20 cameras, especially on our homes? I had questions
21 about it. They tried to enter my home, after I got
22 that letter on the 7th of December. I told them

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1 no, I'm not letting you enter my home until I get
2 answers about this.

3 They tried to, again, attempt to enter
4 my home again on December 8th. I was not home, but
5 my 17-year-old daughter was home alone. The
6 property manager came to my door with law
7 enforcement, with two armed law enforcement,
8 trying to enter my home, with my daughter home
9 alone.

10 Luckily, my daughter slammed the door
11 in his face, and she called me right away. She said
12 no, you're not coming in here. January 9th, I was
13 issued a 30-day notice because I would not let them
14 in my home. They said that I was violating my
15 lease.

16 January 25th, I went to the rental
17 office and I talked to Ms. Barker about it, the
18 property manager. I told her I wanted a grievance
19 form because I wanted to file a grievance about
20 this. She just kept saying you've just got to do
21 it. You don't have any choice. I got the
22 grievance form. January 30th, another contractor

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1 comes to my house again and begins to drill on my
2 house at 9:00 in the morning, while I'm trying to
3 make a sandwich for breakfast. I hear zzz, zzz,
4 zzz. I go outside. I say sir, can you please stop
5 doing that. I'm in the process of challenging
6 this.

7 He said he was going to call the
8 property manager to come talk to me. Nobody ever
9 came. Then he left. I went and I filed the
10 grievance because I hadn't actually filed it. I
11 had just gotten the paperwork. So that day,
12 January 30th, I went to the rental office.

13 I said please stop coming to my house.
14 You all have a million other houses you can work
15 on to install this camera. Stop coming to my
16 house. I'm challenging this. This is being done
17 illegally. There was no PSA announcement. There
18 was no discussion, no vote, no nothing.

19 I filed my grievance January 30th.
20 January 31st, the construction worker came back
21 again. I went outside; I said sir, can you please
22 stop coming here? I'm in the process of

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1 challenging it. Then, out of the blue, a DC HA
2 police officer came from behind the trash can and
3 ran over to me and said you're going to let him
4 install this camera. You have no choice in the
5 matter. You don't have any rights here in public
6 housing. It's not your property. How you think
7 you're going to have something to say about this?
8 I said sir, you're wrong, and I'm challenging this.
9 He was very aggressive, Officer Green.

10 I called 911 because he was scaring me.
11 All of this is happening and the man is still
12 drilling in my home. I said sir, stop it. I went
13 to grab for the drill to tell him to stop drilling.
14 I'm a person. Don't you see all this? You're
15 still drilling.

16 The officer tackled me down and he put
17 handcuffs on me and told me I was going to jail.
18 My son came out the house and he was like what are
19 you doing to my mother? They took us to jail.
20 They charged us with assault. We had to spend a
21 night in jail.

22 So you're sending police officers to

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1 people's homes to intimidate them into getting
2 surveillance cameras that are not even supposed to
3 be put up in the first place. This is illegal.
4 This is wrong. This is how you treat you
5 residents? We sued so you all wouldn't do this at
6 Highland Dwellings, and then you turn around and
7 you do whatever you want anyway. You never had an
8 announcement. You never had a meeting, no public
9 comment, no PSA, nothing. You just came and
10 thought that you could install 80 plus cameras on
11 our home. I have pictures if you would like to see
12 them.

13 Then you want to take me jail because
14 I spoke out against it? She never responded to my
15 grievance. I never got responded to anything. I
16 got sent to jail. Now the whole community is
17 divided. You've got half a community that say we
18 want the cameras. They're keeping us safe.

19 You've got half the community saying
20 they don't want it, but you already put them there.
21 Housing Authority, you keep doing this. You
22 decide to make a decision before consulting

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1 anybody, and then you ask for our opinions after
2 you've already done it, which splits the community
3 down the middle.

4 You know what you're doing. This is in
5 your playbook. You're going to make the decision
6 first, ask for your opinions after you've already
7 down it, and now the community is split down the
8 middle, when you didn't even do it legally in the
9 first place. You did it illegally. Where do you
10 read about anywhere in D.C. where you can put up
11 80 cameras in somebody's community with no meeting,
12 no public comment, no PSA, no nothing, no vote, 80
13 cameras watching us 24/7, and you're saying it's
14 keeping us safe?

15 How is a camera going to stop a bullet?
16 How is a camera going to stop me from getting
17 robbed? You don't put cameras like that. You can
18 put them in a common area, you can put them in some
19 parks, but on 80 plus houses?

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Schyla, you said
21 that you sued and the action was stopped?

22 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: No, we

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1 sued -- when renovations were done at Highland
2 Dwellings, with private money, we, the
3 residents -- Google it. Highland Together We
4 Stand sued to make sure that this will remain under
5 the same rules and guidelines as traditional public
6 housing.

7 Because we know that when public
8 housing is renovated and redeveloped with private
9 money and private entities, our rights as public
10 housing residents go out the window. We don't have
11 a resident council. We can't file grievances. We
12 don't have any say in what happens. The private
13 entity has the control, so we lose a lot of our
14 rights. So we sued to make sure that did not
15 happen, and we won the settlement. We won. Then
16 they turned right around and do exactly -- it's like
17 we were visionaries.

18 We knew what was going to happen because
19 we've seen it before. Then we sue, and we won, and
20 then they turn around and do exactly what we sued
21 about. You couldn't do that in Barry Farms. You
22 can't do that nowhere else, just put up 80 cameras

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1 with no talking to none of the residents, no
2 meeting, no vote.

3 Where's the resolution? So I have some
4 questions before I wrap this up. The questions I
5 have is where is the resolution that was created
6 or passed for the contractor vendor to install 80
7 plus surveillance cameras on our homes?

8 If there is a resolution, I want a copy
9 of it. Where are the RFPs and the resolutions
10 impacting work being done at Highland Dwellings,
11 and can I have a copy of that? Were surveillance
12 cameras included in the contract, and did this come
13 before Board? If it did, I want a copy of that.
14 Where is the overall maintenance plan for Highland
15 Dwellings? I want a copy of that. Because what
16 you did is illegal, and it's wrong, and I'm not
17 going to stop. I'm going to fight it. I want that
18 camera equipment off my house. Really, I want it
19 off of all the property until you do it the right
20 way, which you did not.

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you leave a copy
22 of those questions with us, please? Thank you for

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1 your comments.

2 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: Here's the
3 pictures of the cameras, all of the arrows is just
4 some of the cameras. Can you all see this? This
5 is what they want to do in public housing. They're
6 going to send the police to your house with guns
7 to make you do it if you resist. Was I targeted?
8 Yes, I was, for the whole neighborhood to see that
9 if you fight back, this is what's going to happen
10 to you.

11 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.

12 MR. GARRETT: Commissioners, we'll
13 address --

14 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: I'm available
15 for any questions if you have any before I go sit
16 down.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Do you have your
18 contact information someplace? You don't have to
19 give it to me now, but give it to me before we leave
20 today.

21 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: Yes, I'm open to
22 anything.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay, thank you so
2 much.

3 MR. GARRETT: Commissioners, I just
4 want to make you aware that the administration --

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can we give our
6 executive director a chance to respond?

7 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, Commissioner.
8 I just want to make note that I was invited to a
9 resident meeting at Highland through Councilman
10 White, that I attended. The purpose of that
11 meeting actually -- and it was this half of the
12 year, approximately February, I believe it was.

13 It was directly related to the cameras
14 that were placed in Highland. What I brought with
15 me were actual information on the cameras, the
16 actual hardware of the cameras, because there were
17 questions from residents in reference to exactly
18 what was being installed. We held that meeting;
19 we answered all the questions that were
20 available --

21 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: But you didn't
22 give it to us beforehand.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you allow him to
2 finish?

3 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: You always do
4 stuff after, and then say how do you all feel about
5 it --

6 MR. GARRETT: Ma'am --

7 (Simultaneous speaking.)

8 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: -- community.
9 What about before?

10 MR. GARRETT: Ma'am, this is the first
11 time that --

12 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: What about
13 before?

14 MR. GARRETT: Okay, ma'am, this is the
15 first time that I met you.

16 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: Because you all
17 took me to jail behind this shit. You locked me
18 and my son up behind this because it was resisted
19 it. We asked for information. We asked to be
20 treated like humans. We were told by -- they came
21 to my house with riot gear for me to ask questions.

22 MR. GARRETT: Commissioners, that was

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1 the step that my office took.

2 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: Now you want to
3 tell us after the fact, like you all always do.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay, thank you.

5 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: No, thank you.
6 I'm not done by far. You'll start me up again.
7 I'll try to chill out and let the other people
8 handle this, but you all keep messing with people
9 and messing with people and messing with people.

10 I'm trying to live my life in peace and
11 you all come drilling and installing cameras and
12 saying I don't have no rights, I don't have no say
13 in it -- (applause) -- and pull a gun on me. How
14 do you think Barry Farms going to go down. If it
15 happened to us over there, it's going to happen to
16 everybody. You all think it's sweet. They're
17 going to pull guns on you and force you to get
18 surveillance cameras on your house to watch you
19 24/7.

20 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
21 We've got to continue. We've got to move on.

22 MS. PONDEXTER-MOORE: I'm fighting

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1 this. I'm fighting you all every step of the way
2 about this. You all know I don't back down at all.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You have a right to
4 do so. We appreciate that. Yvonne Sweptson.

5 MS. SWEPTSON: Hi. Good afternoon,
6 everybody. I'm a minister for the Lord. I'm very
7 concerned right now because I never attended your
8 meetings because I had other concerns. What I'm
9 wondering is Greenleaf Senior, I lived there for
10 two years. I just decorated the inside of my
11 apartment. I'm wondering are you all planning to
12 tear down Greenleaf Senior? Can you answer?

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Do you want to
14 respond?

15 MR. GARRETT: Ma'am, there is -- we
16 actually held a meeting in reference to that a few
17 weeks ago with Councilmember Allen. We invited
18 all the residents of the community of Greenleaf to
19 participate, and we explained the process.

20 We did put out what they call an RFQ for
21 potential developers to show their interest in
22 possible redevelopment of Greenleaf. That's the

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1 only step that we're at right now. That's just
2 step one. What we'll continue to do is have
3 information and dialog with the residents
4 throughout the whole entire process, as we take
5 each step in each phase.

6 MS. SWEPTSON: Okay. Do you know how
7 long that would take?

8 MR. GARRETT: Right now, no. I know
9 that in the next week or so, we are going to put
10 out an RFP, which is a request for proposals from
11 potential developers. That process will probably
12 take about 45 to 60 days, but we'll have community
13 meetings within that time frame and give you
14 additional information as we go along.

15 MS. SWEPTSON: Do you know if we have
16 to be located and will be located?

17 MR. GARRETT: We haven't made that
18 determination yet, ma'am.

19 MS. SWEPTSON: Okay.

20 MR. GARRETT: As we do --

21 MS. SWEPTSON: We won't be stranded,
22 will we?

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1 MR. GARRETT: No, ma'am, you will not
2 be stranded. The way the process is going to work,
3 the community is going to be involved all the way
4 through the process.

5 MS. SWEPTSON: Thank you. I'm going
6 to make your meetings.

7 MR. GARRETT: Thank you, ma'am.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Next up is Evelyn
9 Abiodun. Evelyn.

10 MS. ABIODUN: Hello. Good afternoon.
11 My name is Evelyn Abiodun. I want to speak on --

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Evelyn, can you pull
13 the mic a little closer to you?

14 MS. ABIODUN: My name is Evelyn
15 Abiodun. I know about what you was just telling
16 the young lady. I've been going to the meetings.
17 I just want to know, until then, what are we going
18 to do about all the bed bugs that's infested in our
19 building, and the rats, and the insulation, and the
20 air quality in our unit that's making me ill?

21 MR. GARRETT: You remember in the
22 meeting that we actually held, that did come up in

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1 the meeting, when we were talking about
2 development. We talked about some of the
3 initiatives that we're going to take. Within the
4 next 60 days, we're going to be getting out to many
5 of the properties, many of the units. I remember
6 that the air quality was one of the issues that you
7 brought up, so we're going to address those. We're
8 going to start looking into it and create a strategy
9 to deal with not only air quality, but the rodent
10 infestation. Bed bugs will be included in that.
11 We're looking at all the strategies that we can take
12 and create awareness program not only for you, but
13 an awareness program on our side, as the staff, to
14 be very, very creative in our solutions to the
15 issues. Haven't forgotten it; we just need to
16 develop a strategy.

17 MS. ABIODUN: I'm so scared because
18 it's not just in people's units; it's also in the
19 laundry room, and it's also in the community room.
20 I go wash my clothes; you're scared to wash your
21 clothes because they're crawling in there. It's
22 awful because you'll bring it back in your unit.

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1 MR. GARRETT: We'll continue to do the
2 normal remediation and normal extermination as
3 quickly as possible when issues are identified, but
4 we're looking at something -- we're trying to
5 develop something that's more comprehensive, that
6 will actually rid the buildings and the complexes
7 of the problems and issues for the long term versus
8 temporary fixes.

9 MS. ABIODUN: Okay, thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you, Ms.
11 Abiodun. Next, Dolores Wilt. Come closer to the
12 mic. You can go ahead.

13 MS. WILT: I just wanted to know why --

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can we keep it down
15 in the audience, please, and give her the respect
16 she deserves?

17 MS. WILT: I want to know why you all
18 keep doing a lot of apartment buildings and no trees
19 because when apartments --

20 (Simultaneous speaking.)

21 PARTICIPANT: Ma'am, speak into the
22 mic. They can't hear you. Speak into the mic.

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1 They can't hear you.

2 MS. WILT: The apartment buildings
3 that's growing up, there's no air coming in. We
4 don't have no trees. Now they're getting ready to
5 do another one up here by Safeway, another
6 apartment building. I want to ask you something.
7 Is apartments for us or for the rich people?
8 That's what I want to know. Why do we always have
9 to get the bad? Why can't we get something nice?
10 We always get the bad. We was born and raised here.
11 When the foreigner comes in, they're taking
12 everything from us. They get good apartments and
13 everything. We don't get them. You know what?
14 I'm going to say one thing. The apartment I'm
15 living in, I think it's nice, but still, when them
16 new apartments going up, why can't we get something
17 like that?

18 Why do you got to throw us to the curb
19 and say you're on low income. So what? We're low
20 income, but don't treat us like we're trash. We're
21 human. We got feelings. I'm tired, every time
22 you turn around, they're putting up new buildings

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1 for the people that's got money, and you don't give
2 it to us. We never have nothing good. We get the
3 leftover, like garbage. I want to know what's up
4 with this.

5 MR. GARRETT: Ms. Wilt, at the meeting
6 that we held, we talked about the process. You're
7 going to be part of the process of whatever's
8 developed. If we move with a redevelopment
9 process for Greenleaf, the residents are going to
10 be part of that.

11 MS. WILT: Yes, because it's like I was
12 born and raised over here, but every time you get
13 on Section 8, they put you -- every time they put
14 you on Section 8 or something --

15 MR. GARRETT: Hold up, Ms. Wilt --

16 MS. WILT: Every time they build
17 something new up and you think you're going to get
18 it, when you go look at it, and the landlord said
19 okay, you could go look at one, and it's so nice,
20 then she's going to ask you how much income you've
21 got.

22 Then when you tell them, oh, no, you

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1 don't have enough money. It makes us bad because
2 we're not low class. Maybe we don't have that
3 much, but we do need something nice. Give us
4 something nice, please. That's all I'm asking.

5 MR. GARRETT: Yes, ma'am.

6 MS. WILT: Give us a luxurious
7 apartment. Do that for us.

8 MR. GARRETT: Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. WILT: Don't treat us like we're
10 garbage because we're getting the leftovers.
11 That's not right.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much for
13 your comments.

14 MS. WILT: That's all I got to say, and
15 you all have a very blessed day.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You, too. Next up
17 is Leonard Watson.

18 MR. WATSON: Good afternoon, Chairman
19 Albert, members of the Board of Commissioners for
20 DC HA. My name is Leonard Watson, Sr. I'm a
21 community activist in Ward 8, advisor to the Ward
22 8 councilmember, and I'm a former ANC commissioner

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1 of AD01, which abuts the Skyland Township
2 Development.

3 I'm here mainly because I had a chance
4 to look at your Special Board Meeting of March 26th.
5 I was appalled with that. When I look at this Board
6 meeting, it made me go back to your bylaws, which
7 was amended on March 9, 2011.

8 When I look under Article 2, Section 1,
9 it said no commissioner may delegate his or her
10 power or authority. That's No. 1. When you go in
11 Section 4, it speaks to -- no section governing
12 special meetings is in your bylaws. Your bylaws
13 speaks to emergency meetings.

14 You had a meeting on March 26, on which
15 time you had Commissioner Lopez chair the meeting.
16 Commissioner Lopez had only been on this Board two
17 months. He has no authority to chair that meeting.
18 He's not the vice chair, and he had no delegated
19 authority from you, as the chair. Now when you go
20 in Section 4, Section 4 speaks to your emergency
21 meetings. It speaks that an emergency meeting of
22 the Board may be called for the purposes of

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1 transacting any business of an urgent nature,
2 whenever deemed appropriate by the chairperson or
3 upon written request of your four elected or
4 appointed commissioners, as the principal office
5 of the authority.

6 When I read this, you, as the chair, has
7 the authority to assign duties, but when I looked
8 back to the minutes of your special meeting of March
9 26, when Alethea McNair, your managing board of
10 relations, she spoke to the issue that you had a
11 quorum, meaning you had five present and five not
12 present. You were not there.

13 You was telephonically pulled in, along
14 with four others, which means five commissioners
15 was present, five was not present. It speaks to
16 the fact that when you have a special meeting,
17 there's certain duties and responsibilities. You
18 have to notify each one of these commissioners by
19 mail or telephone 24 hours prior. I'm assuming
20 that you did, but I'm not conceding that you did.
21 But at the end of the day, I'm dealing with the fact
22 that -- I'm not getting into the pseudointellectual

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1 politics of this Board. What I am concerned with,
2 and I want to address this fact of your Board
3 approval at this special meeting, relieving the
4 developer, William C. Smith, of his obligation to
5 build 30 ACC units in the public housing area which
6 is now Hope VI, Arthur Capper/Carrollsborg.

7 No amount of money -- I saw where
8 Director Garrett seemed to be caught up in the
9 gymnastics of finances, and he will stand to gain
10 \$6.4 million, and you're going to punish him \$12
11 million if he don't fulfill his obligation. But
12 at the end of the day, your 30 ACC units that's
13 supposed to go online in Arthur Capper area, no
14 amount of monies should be given to a developer to
15 pull out a contract when 30 units are going to be
16 displaced.

17 When you look at talking about putting
18 them in Ward 8, hopefully you're not putting them
19 in the town center. I hope you're not talking
20 about that because if you're talking about that,
21 you're truly mistaken because that's not Ward 8.
22 That's Ward 7. At the end of the day, when you look

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1 at the miniatures, those 30 units should remain in
2 Ward 6, not Ward 7, not Ward 8. We don't have
3 anything to accommodate those 30 families. You
4 have the Wharf. You have the Arena Stage. You
5 have the baseball stadium. You're building the
6 soccer stadium.

7 Hopefully, the children will live to
8 see that stadium being built and played upon
9 because most of the youngsters in this area,
10 Southwest in particular, are wearing masks because
11 of the environmental concerns that are not
12 alleviated with the soccer stadium.

13 But more important than that, I think
14 that these 30 units should remain in the quadrant
15 of Southeast. Find somewhere else to put them at.
16 I'm saying this as a former commissioner that abuts
17 the town center, if you're talking about putting
18 them that.

19 More importantly than that, you're also
20 looking at a young man who's a Vietnam vet. I have
21 a degree in management that didn't come out the
22 bubblegum machine. We're in a situation whereby

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1 we have no amenities. Twenty years my family lived
2 in Woodland Terrace. I have a home on Wagner
3 Street, been there 18 years. It didn't come from
4 the Housing Authority. I'm a Vietnam vet.
5 Therefore, one would ask the question why are you
6 down here at Greenleaf? Because I have an undying
7 love to represent those who cannot represent their
8 self. The more I know, the more I'm responsible.
9 I'm going to move out on that premise.

10 But at the end of the day, I think you
11 need to rethink that because at the end of the day,
12 \$12 million for him to -- if he reneges on his
13 obligation. He's already reneged in the past so,
14 therefore, I have no confidence that he's going to
15 do right this.

16 Money is no object to William C. Smith.
17 He's a multi-millionaire. Therefore, he don't
18 care nothing about poor people. I read the article
19 said you want to give the advantage and the
20 perception that you're going to build a building
21 with low income housing. That's a misnomer. I
22 resent it.

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1 I don't want to say it's bordering on
2 racism, but more importantly, Mr. Chairman, I'm
3 appealing to you, as the chairman of the Board, and
4 Mr. Garrett, who I spoke to at the council. I
5 stated clearly before the council that he was new
6 on board. I would give him the benefit of the
7 doubt. I'm hearing some good things across the
8 city about him and how he's trying to move this
9 Agency forward. But more importantly, nothing is
10 more important than these 30 ACC units to remain
11 in Ward 6.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much for
13 your comments.

14 MR. GARRETT: Mr. Watson, don't go.
15 We're on the same page. I think one thing that was
16 missed in translation was that those 30 units are
17 still going to be built on the Hope VI footprint.

18 MR. WATSON: Yes, but you're talking
19 about two and a half years down the road. Excuse
20 me for cutting you off, Mr. Garrett. At the end
21 of the day, everything you've done on that March
22 26 hearing, at a special hearing, not an emergency

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1 hearing, are fruits of the poisonous tree. I'll
2 be watching that, and I'll be dealing with that.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Appreciate that.
4 Thank you so much. Margaret Dwyer. Danielle, did
5 you want to speak today? Okay, Ms. Dwyer.

6 MS. DWYER: Good afternoon. My name
7 is Margaret Dwyer. I live in Ward 3. I'm here
8 representing SURJ DC. SURJ stands for Showing up
9 for Racial Justice. We stand in solidarity with
10 Empower DC and the Barry Farm Friend and Allies
11 Association. We're 2,000 members strong across
12 the District.

13 They're mostly young and working, and
14 I'm the old retired one, so I get to be the one to
15 come and speak to you all during the day. I wanted
16 to address a couple of questions directly to
17 Executive Director Garrett, if I could, please.
18 Last month, I was at the oversight hearing.

19 I've been doing this work for two years
20 with my friends at Barry Farm. In those two years,
21 never before had I heard anyone simply,
22 unequivocally say that the 428 families who had

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1 been displaced from Barry Farms have the right to
2 return.

3 That's what you said, in sworn
4 testimony, to the oversight hearing. I have to
5 tell you thank you. It filled me with hope, and
6 I really appreciate how directly and just simply
7 you said it. Then I got the report, the follow-up
8 report that you had forwarded to Commissioner
9 Bonds. Back in the document is the language of
10 opportunity to return, instead of right to return.
11 I'm assuming that this was a left hand/right hand
12 clerical error, because this was under oath that
13 this testimony was given that these folks have the
14 right to return. I have three questions.

15 One, which is it, right to return or
16 opportunity to return? Two, the councilmember
17 asked for an urgently designed plan to provide
18 immediate relief to residents about vermin
19 infestations.

20 The points that I see made here -- I'm
21 just a layperson, so maybe I'm missing something,
22 but when I look at Point 2 in the follow-up

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1 comments, it looks like a description of what has
2 always been done, unless I'm missing something.
3 Where is the urgent plan?

4 Three, I really appreciate the efforts
5 that it seems that you have put into place to
6 communicate with people and to be accessible. I
7 think it's so important that happen. I'm at a
8 loss, as a non-resident, to know how best to avail
9 myself of your openness. I emailed you and
10 followed up with a phone call and didn't hear back
11 from you about my questions. Believe me, I get
12 that you have a million plates spinning and that
13 you have a lot going on, but I wonder how best
14 non-residents can also communicate with you.
15 Thank you, sir.

16 MR. GARRETT: We can make an attempt to
17 set up something. Rick will raise his hand. If
18 you'll turn around, he's right there, or he'll grab
19 you when you walk out.

20 MS. DWYER: Okay.

21 MR. GARRETT: I hate playing the
22 semantics game with the resolutions and the right

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1 to return versus the opportunity to return. I'm
2 committed to having residents return. That's my
3 commitment. I don't know -- this is probably my
4 nativity, to some degree. Opportunity to return,
5 in my mind, means returning. It doesn't mean
6 anything different. Ms. Matthews --

7 (Off-microphone comments.)

8 MR. GARRETT: Because you ran up to me
9 the other day and wanted to talk. Remember? You
10 called my name.

11 MS. MATTHEWS: I sure did. I called
12 you on the phone.

13 MR. GARRETT: Okay, copy. I'm
14 committed to ensuring that residents have the right
15 to return. That's my commitment.

16 MS. DWYER: I'm sorry; will you say
17 that again?

18 MR. GARRETT: I'm committed for
19 residents to have the right to return.

20 MS. DWYER: Sir, are you going to
21 correct this document, where it says opportunity?

22 MR. GARRETT: We'll talk to OGC and see

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1 what we can do.

2 MS. DWYER: OGC? I'm sorry.

3 MR. GARRETT: General Counsel. I'm
4 sorry; Office of General Counsel. We'll have
5 discussions.

6 MS. DWYER: I'll be able to follow up
7 with your associate on the follow through on that?

8 MR. GARRETT: Yes. You had one other
9 point that you wanted to make.

10 MS. DWYER: Yes, Councilmember Bond
11 had asked for this urgent response --

12 MR. GARRETT: Oh, the vermin. What
13 we're doing is we're going to be putting together
14 an awareness campaign for a lot of things that deal
15 with not only vermin infestation, but also other
16 environmental issues that we have, that we're going
17 to be addressing over the next few months. The
18 reality of it is that vermin, we've already
19 addressed or already have engaged individual
20 groups for other options for the vermin control,
21 for rodent and pest control, to see what other
22 options we have out there.

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1 We're doing that now. To your point,
2 we are still going through the same process until
3 we find something new that will actually work.
4 We're engaging people. It's not one of those
5 things where we're sitting on our hands and saying
6 we're blind to the fact that we need to try
7 something different.

8 We're doing that. Hopefully, within
9 the next few months, we'll see a difference. We'll
10 see a change, and we'll be able to talk to residents
11 and the community about what we're trying.

12 MS. DWYER: Is this going to be one of
13 the metrics that are on this dashboard? That
14 sounds like a great model.

15 (Simultaneous speaking.)

16 MR. GARRETT: No, I hadn't planned to
17 put it on --

18 MS. DWYER: You're not going to count
19 the rats or anything?

20 MR. GARRETT: No, I hadn't planned on
21 putting it on the dashboard, but there will be
22 another way to address it. I think one of the ways

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1 is through the town hall meeting and gauging what
2 the residents are saying because when we go out to
3 town hall meetings, we hear about the rodent
4 infestation. We hear about those things. You'll
5 know that it's working when you stop hearing it.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Dwyer, can I ask
7 you a few questions?

8 MS. DWYER: Yes, sir.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Since we have a
10 captive audience. Tell me a little bit more about
11 SURJ and what does SURJ do to help improve the lives
12 of people living in public housing in D.C.?

13 MS. DWYER: SURJ is a national
14 organization, Showing up for Racial Justice.
15 We're the D.C. chapter. It's an organization for
16 White people to do our work in undoing White
17 privilege and systemic racism. We do that through
18 educating ourselves, through working with other
19 White people in what we call deep canvassing, to
20 challenge racist beliefs and practices, and we do
21 it through supporting organizations that are led
22 by people of color. We are their allies and

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1 supporters. In this case, I'm here as an ally and
2 supporter of Empower DC. We have a whole team of
3 people in our membership who work with Empower DC
4 and Barry Farm Tenant and Allies Association.

5 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: What are some of the
6 concrete supports that you provide? I'm just
7 unfamiliar.

8 MS. DWYER: We do a number of things.
9 We had a major fundraiser this year and raised, I
10 hope, a bunch of money for them. We work at lot
11 to educate the community about the importance of
12 housing justice and public housing, that this is,
13 in fact, part of our common wealth, that public
14 housing is a treasure that we need to maintain and
15 that we need to hold the line on.

16 We can't have it continue to be torn
17 down and replaced by housing that really isn't for
18 the intended population, now, of traditional
19 public housing. We do a lot of educational
20 outreach. We do a lot of lobbying. For example,
21 our goal this month is to contact -- to have our
22 members contact all of the members of the DC Council

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1 Committee on Neighborhood Revitalization and
2 Housing to support Empower DC's call for \$40
3 million to be added to the budget for repairs and
4 maintenance for public housing. We don't want to
5 stand by and let this valuable resource
6 deteriorate. We're contacting and lobbying on
7 behalf of the budget for DC HA.

8 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Do you also provide
9 for public housing residents to connect with
10 services, job training, etc., or it's just strictly
11 advocacy and support?

12 MS. DWYER: Thus far, we've just been
13 advocacy and support, but we would support Empower
14 in anything like that that they were doing,
15 absolutely.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: But you work through
17 the local partners?

18 MS. DWYER: I beg your pardon?

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: You work through the
20 local entities, like Empower DC?

21 MS. DWYER: Exactly. We have a team
22 that works for Empower DC, a team that works for

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1 One DC, and a team that works for Black Lives
2 Matter, Stop Police Terror Project.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thanks so much for
4 your work.

5 MS. DWYER: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: That concludes our
7 comment period. Are there any announcements from
8 any of our commissioners?

9 PARTICIPANT: Can I comment?

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Yes. Can you state
11 your name?

12 MS. FULLER: My name is India Fuller.
13 I have a letter.

14 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Excuse me for
15 a minute. What did you say your name was?

16 MS. FULLER: My name is Ms. India
17 Fuller. I live at Greenleaf Extensions. What's
18 going on. I'm in court, taking you all to court,
19 civil case. You all been negligent in repairs.

20 Currently, the doctor at Unity said I
21 need to pull a biopsy report because the unit that
22 I'm living in caused my liver to have Stage IV

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1 cancer. That's something that you all know about,
2 that these units are old and stuff. You all have
3 been needing to gut it out long time ago. I've been
4 switching courtrooms and stuff like that. You all
5 were supposed to come in and do some work. This
6 was supposed to be February the 21st and the 22nd.
7 When I came in -- I have pictures. You all came
8 in on the 21st, at 2:00, and did some patch jobs
9 to the wall. In addition to that, you all been
10 covering up the mold issue in my unit that
11 contributed to the cancer. My mother passed away.
12 The doctor is concerned about my health. Now I
13 need for you all to help me and not keep on going
14 around the issues.

15 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: When you say help, be
16 a little bit more specific. What would you like
17 us to do?

18 MS. FULLER: You all need to gut out the
19 mold and stuff that's in my unit because it's
20 contributing to my health. I been coming down here
21 so many times and reporting these issues. You all
22 know what's going on. You all need to give me some

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1 help.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Mr. Garrett, can we
3 connect directly with --

4 MR. GARRETT: We've already engaged
5 Ms. Fuller on some issues, and we can engage her
6 again today, if necessary.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Please make sure you
8 see Mr. Garrett before you leave here today. Thank
9 you so much. Come on up. This is the last. Can
10 you please state your name for the record?

11 MS. BISHOP: Tricia Bishop.

12 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Ms. Bishop, come on
13 up.

14 MS. BISHOP: Good evening. I want to
15 thank the entire Board, and especially Kenny.
16 When I have a problem and I wait hours, I make one
17 phone call to Kenny, it gets done.

18 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: He doesn't even
19 return my calls, so you're lucky.

20 MS. BISHOP: My second thing is that my
21 manager, Ms. Harvell, she was a good manager. She
22 had repeatedly sent emails out about the recycling

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1 bin being empty that's constantly getting run over.
2 My window is on the front side.

3 I can see that truck coming through
4 1200's parking lot, getting the little cans, but
5 that big can we have is not getting emptied. She
6 has sent numerous emails out about it, and I'm
7 asking the Board to let me know right now that you
8 all are going to handle this and make sure because
9 I'm quite sure they're getting paid for it.

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: It will be handled.

11 MS. BISHOP: This gets done every
12 Friday on our property.

13 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: What
14 property might that be, ma'am?

15 MS. BISHOP: 203 N Street.

16 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you very much.

18 MS. BISHOP: One more thing -- two more
19 things. I would like for Greenleaf to be treated
20 fairly, but this relocation/ redevelopment, I
21 don't care to have the problems that other
22 properties are having.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: That only happens if
2 there's constant engagement from the Housing
3 Authority side with the community. The director
4 has committed to having that engagement.

5 MS. BISHOP: I've always spoken to Mr.
6 Tyrone, even when I didn't know who he was and
7 pulled up on his motorcycle. I've always spoken
8 to him because that's who I know him as, the man
9 on the motorcycle pulling up on the premises,
10 before I knew his position.

11 My next thing, I spoke at a meeting
12 years ago, even last year, about this situation,
13 where these young adults are out here working, but
14 head of household gets the beef for the payment of
15 housing back to it because we are head of household,
16 knowing that these young'uns are making this type
17 of money.

18 Not young'uns, but young adults, are
19 making this money, getting their taxes. I have not
20 got a response back to housing because if they're
21 young adults and they're going out there and
22 they're the one making the money and getting the

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1 tax return, for housing to go after them, not head
2 of household.

3 Because we are a lot on limited income.
4 That's another reason a lot of us have lost our
5 homes because we can't pay the market rent, plus
6 a back rent, plus market rent, plus what they're
7 asking in agreement to pay double our rent to get
8 this paid off.

9 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I know that has come
10 up in conversations among the Commissioners a
11 number of time. I've been on the Board for a little
12 over six months. I know the executive director has
13 that on his list of things to deal with.

14 MS. BISHOP: It happened way before he
15 even came here. I spoke when Ms. Todman was here
16 about this same situation and having her take this
17 to her lawyers and change that. I believe that's
18 just a housing law.

19 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: I'm not clear on --

20 MS. BISHOP: That's not a
21 landlord/tenant because we, as the head of
22 household, cannot take that adult to court and get

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1 that money back that we have to be missing out of
2 our pockets.

3 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you give me a
4 couple of months to get to the bottom of it and
5 report back out to you?

6 MS. BISHOP: Okay.

7 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
8 I can make you the last one.

9 PARTICIPANT: No, can you make me the
10 last one?

11 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay, come on up.
12 Two minutes.

13 MS. FULLER: Can I say something, too?
14 In addition to that, you all came in and violated
15 my rights, too. They changed my locks while I was
16 asleep. That's another issue that --

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Okay, well thanks
18 for noting it with us.

19 MS. FULLER: Okay. I don't think
20 that's right, that you all came in and changed my
21 locks and violated my rights like that while I was
22 sleeping.

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1 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Can you state your
2 name?

3 MS. PARKER: My name is Valerie Parker.
4 I just moved here June. June coming will make one
5 year. I live in Greenleaf, Apartment 101. Mr.
6 Garrett, I understand -- I met him a couple of
7 times. He's been here six months. Rome wasn't
8 built in a day. All I can say is Ms. Harvell and
9 her staff where I reside, everything is okay.

10 A lot of things been said today, but
11 everything's not all bad. I just would like to say
12 that I'm pleased and I'm satisfied where I'm at.
13 I know it's a 24-month window, where we would really
14 know the logistics of what's really going on. I'd
15 just like to say I love Ms. Harvell.

16 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: All right, thank you
17 so much.

18 MS. FULLER: And the staff. I have my
19 high school diploma, so I would like to --

20 (Simultaneous speaking.)

21 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: You say
22 Greenleaf. Which part of Greenleaf are you

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1 speaking about?

2 MS. FULLER: Not in the seniors, but
3 where the rental office is.

4 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: I just want
5 to make it definite.

6 MS. FULLER: Okay.

7 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Thank you,
8 ma'am.

9 MS. FULLER: Okay, yes, but 203.

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much.
11 Thanks for the compliment for Commissioner
12 Council. I know he responds timely to his
13 constituents, and I just want to put that on the
14 record. Can you speak your name and where you live
15 for the record?

16 MS. SPENCER: Good afternoon,
17 Commissioners and Mr. Garrett. I'm Christina
18 Spencer. I'm the president of James Creek
19 Resident Council. I've been down --

20 (Simultaneous speaking.)

21 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: That noise you're
22 hearing is the staff wanting to go home, so you've

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1 got to make it two minutes.

2 MS. SPENCER: I'll make it two minutes.

3 (Simultaneous speaking.)

4 COMMISSIONER LANCASTER: Please give
5 her a chance to speak. You all had the chance to
6 speak. Give her the same chance, please. Keep
7 the chatter down.

8 MS. SPENCER: Thank you. I appreciate
9 it. Welcome, Mr. Garrett. We're glad you're
10 here. We hear fantastic things about you. Folks
11 are given shouts out today to our manager. I got
12 to say about Kwante, Mr. Oliver, he's a really good
13 manager, as well. We don't have a lot of issues,
14 like the surrounding properties with all the things
15 that's coming down the pipeline.

16 Our units are not raggedy. They're not
17 falling down. We do have maintenance issues, not
18 like the surrounding properties. I think we're
19 going to be here for a while. What I would like
20 for you guys to assist and help us with here at James
21 Creek, we have a lot of company coming. We have
22 that baseball stadium. It's opening. We have

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1 that soccer stadium that's right here on 1st
2 Street. We want it to look nice when the folks come
3 through our community. That's one of the things
4 that we would actually need help on.

5 Of course, every property has a few
6 maintenance issues, but I think that could be
7 addressed with additional staffing, especially
8 when it comes to the flooring. Our units are not
9 falling apart. We're right here at James Creek.
10 You guys are welcome to come through and look at
11 it. We have a really nice property. We love it.
12 We're invested. We don't want to leave. We're
13 here.

14 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much for
15 your comments.

16 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Mr. Chair.

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: The rule is that you
18 have to sign up before 12:45 to get on the list.
19 I'm violating the rule, but this is an exception
20 today. I just to make that clear. You had your
21 hands up. Come on up, two minutes.

22 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: If you live in

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1 Greenleaf and you want to comment, this is your time
2 to do so, not if you've commented already.

3 MS. BAKER: Good afternoon, everybody.
4 My name is Yodie Baker. I was working with houses
5 16 years. When I got sick, I had to retire.
6 Everybody talk about Ms. Harvell. Ms. Harvell is
7 a good manager. It's up to them to take care of
8 their house because a lot of people can't clean a
9 damn.

10 I still clean my community and I got an
11 appreciation award from Ms. Harvell for my
12 outstanding -- keeping my area where I, hold up I
13 can't get it over. I got an appreciation from Ms.
14 Harvell saying that. That's another thing I
15 wanted to say.

16 We had one neighbor that lived next door
17 to us. Every day, she'd throw trash down there,
18 every day. Then they're going to start
19 complaining about the rats. The only way the rats
20 going to stop coming, you've got to keep your yard
21 clean. Harvell cannot clean your house.

22 (Simultaneous speaking.)

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1 MS. BAKER: It's up to the people to
2 clean your house. Another thing. Sometimes, the
3 residents tear up the houses anyway. I've been
4 working with them 17 years, and I know who can be
5 told and you could tell what's been taken care of.

6 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you for your
7 time.

8 MS. BAKER: You have to appreciate your
9 own house. If you don't appreciate your own house,
10 it's not going to be -- because I worked for
11 housing, I know how to take care of houses. Now
12 you teach those people how to take care of houses
13 and clean the stove and the refrigerator and how
14 you do it. I don't want to hear on that, bye, thank
15 you.

16 (Simultaneous speaking.)

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Before you start,
18 I'm just going to remind folks to please observe
19 our requirements, or we're going to have to ask you
20 to go outside or be removed. It's as simple as
21 that. We gave you the respect of listening to you.
22 I'm going to ask you to do the same for others.

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1 Could you state your name for the record?

2 MS. WHITE: Good afternoon. My name
3 is Wanda White.

4 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We still have
5 someone providing testimony here, so please.

6 MS. WHITE: Good afternoon, again. My
7 name is Wanda White. First of all, I'm glad to see
8 that you are here, present here on our property.
9 As someone who has been involved with resident
10 council years ago, I'm not now because for almost
11 as long as I've been here, I've been a working
12 resident.

13 Your scheduling times make it very
14 difficult for working residents to attend the
15 meetings, which is partly why I stopped my
16 involvement with resident council, as well. I
17 really need for those of us who are working and are
18 trying to continue to work, I really need you to
19 schedule meetings where we can also be involved.

20 Quite often, I find out about meetings
21 when I get home from work, trying to make dinner.
22 A neighbor might knock on the door and say did you

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1 remember the meeting? Are you coming to the
2 meeting? But those ones that happen during the
3 daytime, you're asking me to either take off from
4 work or -- I don't know -- just not show up and not
5 have a voice. I just kind of stopped
6 participating. With the times that we have now
7 ticking down for all of this movement, I really
8 think it's important that everyone is allowed to
9 come to the table, and that we don't have to
10 sacrifice the little money that we do make because
11 we are working, but we are in public housing. That
12 tells you a couple of things.

13 We can't afford to take off from work
14 to go to a meeting, but we want to be heard. I
15 really need you to do something about scheduling
16 meetings like this one, where residents can attend.
17 Just coming here, we were told about the 1:00
18 meeting. I didn't get a notice about the 11:00
19 meeting that happened before that.

20 I still would like to have known that
21 they were here and that we could have come a little
22 earlier, maybe, to get put on that list to testify.

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1 That's all I wanted to say.

2 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Let me just respond
3 in a couple ways. I totally agree with you that
4 particularly for meetings that involve the
5 property that you're on, they have to happen in the
6 evenings, particularly as we talk about the
7 redevelopment of Greenleaf. It can't happen in
8 the middle of the day, and this team is committed
9 to meeting after hours. We work around the clock.
10 You have my commitment that will occur, so that the
11 residents can participate in those conversations.
12 With regard to these meetings, we do post notices
13 on our website. We have to do a better job, because
14 I've heard it a few times, of making sure that those
15 notices are actually --

16 MS. WHITE: So it's on the website?

17 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Not all of us check
18 the website. I should check it regularly. I'm
19 guilty of that. We have to find sort of a low-tech
20 way of letting people know that these meetings are
21 occurring.

22 MS. WHITE: Can I say that we get our

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1 rental statements every month --

2 (Simultaneous speaking.)

3 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: Mr. Chair,
4 however --

5 MS. WHITE: Little things like that --

6 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: I would
7 like to interrupt.

8 MS. WHITE: -- then even our manager's
9 meeting, I understand it happens maybe every third
10 Thursday at 2:00 or whatever the time is. I'm
11 asking that someone accommodate the people who are
12 working because we want to be involved.

13 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: We've got Ray, our
14 communications director back there. He's taking
15 copious notes in his head. I can promise you we'll
16 see some improvement in that area.

17 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: On that
18 note, let me make the record say -- please make this
19 in the minutes. Prior, during the time of
20 receivership, this Board did meet in the evenings.
21 There were times that they had the evening meeting,
22 and they had a day meeting. But in order to have

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1 the evening meeting -- because they was looking at
2 the cost.

3 It costs to keep these buildings open.
4 What we did during the receivership, it'll be a
5 meeting just like this and there's three people.
6 They pilot that by doing it in the evenings. The
7 only people that came out more than anybody was East
8 Capitol. I can show you those statistics because
9 at that time, Wanda, you, yourself, was on the
10 board, during the receivership. You're right, we
11 did have --

12 MS. WHITE: On the resident council
13 board.

14 COMMISSIONER VANN-GHASRI: That's
15 correct. We may need to visit that. I also want
16 to go on the record and say this. I want to commend
17 my colleague. Today, I'm a very proud
18 commissioner. Since I've been on this Board, I
19 have told organizers and I've told residents about
20 Northwest 1. I have mentioned 1,000 times, in all
21 minutes, talking about Sursum Corda.

22 I talked about Wally Court, Bay Street,

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1 Julius Hobson Plaza to all resident councils. Any
2 community that was about to be hit by
3 gentrification -- that's everybody, at one point
4 in time -- and Mr. Perry, who takes the notes, knows
5 this to be a fact.

6 We grew up with Lonnie Doren. Lonnie
7 Doren is one of my colleagues, and I want you all
8 to Google Sursum Corda, Northwest One. I am proud
9 of that. Sursum Corda was a co-op. That co-op of
10 residents, we learned. Ms. Alberta, we wasn't
11 nothing like we are here.

12 When our organizers come into -- I came
13 into Sursum Corda in 1990, with Paul Battle. Let
14 me tell you, those people had meetings. They
15 learned the language. We learned the language
16 through Alberta Munley and Ms. Jeffries. Alberta
17 Munley is living today. If you live in the
18 District of Columbia, stop hating each other and
19 pay attention. The tension is this. Let me tell
20 you what you've got. You have Wally Court, not
21 Kenilworth Parkside. Wally Court was the first,
22 under Bob Moore ownership, on Florida Avenue,

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1 before Kenilworth Parkside. If your community is
2 about to go down, why are you not looking at these
3 programs, these communities that were successful?

4 You had Frontiers on 14th and M. The
5 residents own that. Not only do you have that, you
6 have Julius Hobson Plaza and NOMA. You have women
7 who came out of Barry Farms. I know that because
8 Harriet Kelly was my mother, who came out of Barry
9 Farms. My mother's 80 years old. Today, she owns
10 her condo at Julius Hobson Plaza.

11 When you're talking about a Barry
12 Farms, or you're talking about a Park Norton, why
13 are you reinventing the hat when you have 7 Bates
14 Street? All of these people own. It was the way
15 they did it. We wasn't afraid -- it wasn't copying
16 one another. If the blueprint worked, put it on
17 your shoe, and you better do it in 28th or you will
18 be left behind. Listen to your organizers when
19 they come in your community. You don't have that
20 many in D.C. You only have Time in DC, One DC, and
21 the Latino Economic Development. All you have to
22 do is look at all three organizers, and you have

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1 some -- you have Tanny (phonetic). You have to
2 look at your organizers because every organizer may
3 not fit your community. But guess what? You need
4 them whether you like it or not, so support your
5 organizers.

6 Understand what you're doing. Ask the
7 Housing Authority how you can have a conversation
8 with me when we're not even speaking the same
9 language. How can you sit at a developer table,
10 when you have no idea where the bond's money is,
11 or you have no idea how to even set up a contract.

12 Then you have the nerve to tell people
13 sometimes this is not the time to talk. Right now,
14 in the District of Columbia, somebody has more
15 intellect than you because I meet them every day.
16 Guess what I let them know? I got time to talk
17 because I've got time to listen.

18 Because if I'm going to be a good
19 commissioner, I've got to listen to everything, and
20 I have to take a lot of slack. By that, I want you
21 all to know that this is my last time running as
22 the commissioner on the family commission for the

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1 District of Columbia Housing Authority. When I
2 run this time, that's it. That doesn't mean that
3 I won't be still doing something because I would
4 love to be a director on community visioning, which
5 I helped started, and that, I would like to go out
6 and find money for the residents to go to college.
7 Do not call my house after 2020 unless you're a kid
8 because our kids going to have some jobs and they're
9 going to be going to work.

10 CHAIRMAN ALBERT: Thank you so much for
11 your comments. I'm going to have the last word,
12 which is that our next Board of Commissioners
13 meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 9, 2018, at
14 1:00 p.m., at Fort Dupont/Stoddert, 155 Ridge Road,
15 Southeast, Washington, D.C. With that, our
16 meeting is adjourned.

17 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter
18 went off the record at 2:55 p.m.)
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