

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF EAST
BATON ROUGE PARISH
CENTRAL OFFICE, 4731 NORTH BOULEVARD
Thursday, July 23rd, 2018 @ 12:00 PM**

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority of East Baton Rouge Parish convened in Special Session on Thursday, July 23rd, 2018 at 12:00 pm in the Central Office, located at 4731 North Boulevard.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Invocation: Commissioner Brown

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Commissioner Chris Brown
Commissioner Philip Smith, Jr.
Commissioner Al Barron
Commissioner Helena Cunningham
Commissioner Dianna Payton
Commissioner Tyra Sterling

Members Absent: Commissioner Lamiesa Bonton

QUORUM PRESENT

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

Commission Payton asked if there were any public comments to be made. None were voiced. Public comment period was closed.

**AGENDA ITEM NUMBER 1: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON THE
TRANSITION PLAN FOR THE EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH HOUSING
AUTHORITY AND PARTNERS SOUTHEAST.**

Mr. J. Daniels stated that he, Mrs. Bayham and Mr. Murray had collaborated on several occasions since the last board meeting had been held. He stated that the document before the board today was just a draft and was in no way final. They were looking to other staff members and the board to help make adjustments, so the final document would be a credible guide to assist them in moving forward with the upcoming transition.

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~~The transition would need to be organized and efficient for the continuity of the organization, but also for the residents under the housing authority's management. Mr. Daniels reviewed each step as outlined in the plan.~~

Key components in the transition plan included stakeholder communication internally and externally, orderly transition of leadership roles and responsibilities, the recruitment of the new CEO and effective onboarding for that position. Communication would need to be clear and concise with stakeholders and staff. There needed to be continuity of organizational activities from the board, senior management and to the middle managers working onsite. Leadership development and cross-training were also important within the organization and using that internal talent to promote individuals to various available positions. It had been noted that the communication regarding various topics including the departure of the current CEO was not being done properly. They would be working on this in the future. He did point out that anytime there was a change in leadership, morale was an issue. At some point in time, they would need to convene an all staff meeting to convey the company strategy and vision going forward as well as discuss the transition.

~~He moved on to discuss their residents. He felt they needed to focus on properly serving and communicating with them through this time period. They also wanted to re-evaluate how best to communicate within the agency whether through Dropbox or email or other means available. He also stated that the media communication would also be focused on. They did not want their message to be misunderstood or misconstrued by misinformation.~~

He discussed more in depth about the various firms including Integral, Otey White and their legal firm being fully engaged and helping to execute their mission through the transition period. They wanted to see an easy transfer of authority when the transition occurred. They were also recommending that a board retreat should be held in the near future.

At this point, Mr. Murray asked that the record reflect Commissioner Bonton had arrived at the meeting.

In addition to the board retreat, Mr. Daniels also recommended that the board sit down with the transitioning director, Mr. Murray and ask questions and glean whatever he could offer to them from his 17 years of service. ~~As well, for a director with this amount of service, there should be some type of farewell to him.~~ It could be in the form of a press release, recognition award, or a small gathering. He left the final decision to the board on this matter.

Ongoing projects would need to continue, and two critical initiatives were due in the next 30 days, the RAD application due on September 4th and the CNI application due on September 17th.

He continued to discuss more details in the plan and gave an outline of Partners Southeast activities for the board. The last component was the new ED recruitment. There would be a search committee of 9 members of the community and they were listed in the transition plan. After the work session and retreat, the board should have a good idea what the new CEO would look like to them. He reviewed the proposed schedule which was also listed in the transition plan. July 1st they would receive a revised RFP, August 7th, the RFP would be released for the executive search firm, the proposal would be due on August 28th, and evaluations would be completed on September 11th, the return for board approval would follow as well as the kick off meeting and the job posting would occur on October.

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~~Commissioner Brown felt that they were making a terrible mistake by letting Mr. Murray go. He simply didn't make any sense to him to replace him when he was doing his job well and the staff and residents were unhappy and saddened by the transition. Commissioner Payton thanked Commissioner Brown for sharing with them and thanked Mr. Daniels for the transition plan. She felt it was extremely comprehensive and answered many questions about the process for the transition they would be going through in the near future.~~

Commissioner Smith asked if anyone had access to the master passwords for the programs Mr. Murray had to access. Mr. Murray stated that he was set up as the authorizer and then Mrs. Bayham could also access the programs as well. Mrs. Bayham stated that different positions received different permissions, but each person in the position would have their own secure logins for used. Commissioner Smith recommended that there be an alternate person with access to designated executive programs and logins for the transition period and in the event that the new CEO was not in the office.

~~Commissioner Cunningham asked if there was a timeline of schedule for completing the work listed in the transition. He directed their attention to the last part of the transition plan. She was also concerned about the communication side of it. She felt they needed to work on it. She asked if all the staff understood that Mr. Murray resigned. Mr. Murray stated that in November 2017 the board decided not to renew his contract and he in turn submitted a resignation letter in response to that decision not because he wanted to resign, but to protect some of the benefits that he had in his contract. Commissioner Payton asked if there were any other questions regarding this portion of the plan because she wanted to go ahead and move on to the discussion of the financial portion.~~

Commissioner Bonton echoed what Commissioner Cunningham had voiced that the plan was amazing and the only thing she felt it was lacking was a specific timeline. She felt they needed a deadline put on each of the items in the plan. Mr. Murray added that he did hope as they moved through this process they would exercise patience. He stated that the next three or four months were going to take a heavy toll on staff with the transition plan as well as the numerous projects they had going on right now with deadlines.

Commissioner Payton moved on to discuss the financials. Mr. Murray desired to put the board's mind at ease. He stated that they would have enough money to pay payroll and bills. They would simply need to ~~move some resources around. He urged the board to listen to their suggestions. Mr. Daniels reviewed the numbers within the financial report. It had been asked at the last board meeting that the lack of monies be explained and how the current expenses would be paid for. Mr. Daniels reviewed all the questions that had been asked by the board. There was discussion regarding Gardere and monies that were held up in this project. There were monies owed to the Central office. Monies in the amount of \$443,000 were spent from the Central office. They would be drawn down from the DHAP and sent to Partners, and Partners would then send it back to the COCC. The plan was to wait for the project to close before drawing the funds, but things had changed.~~

Commissioner Payton noted that over the last few years there had been a steady decline in funds and she asked if this could be explained. Mrs. Bayham stated that the decline was that the COCC had funded all the pre-development over the course of the last few years. As well, the projects in the budget were set to close this year but did not happen. They would have received all their reimbursements back if the closings had occurred. Mr. Murray also pointed out that over the last few years, HUD had been cutting their administrative fees for Section 8. Those reductions also had an impact on the funds on hand and they hurt the agency and the budget.

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~~Mr. Daniels then reviewed the current expenditures that were coming up to be paid. Their recommendation was bringing over the loan from the DHAP fund to cover these. There were two things that they should address going forward, aligning organization initiatives with the financial resources necessary and creating an independent pre-development budget.~~

They discussed the cost Integral was charging. Mr. Murray pointed out that all the work done for CNI last year could be resubmitted and save them some money on the overall fee due.

There was some discussion regarding who would be writing the RFP for the search of the new CEO. There was a previous motion made for Mr. Murray to find a firm to write the RFP.

Motion was made by Commissioner Smith to rescind the motion for Mr. Murray to find a firm to write the RFP and make a new motion to allow legal to write the RFP instead and Commissioner Payton seconded the motion. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

MOTION PASSED.

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER 2: PERSONNEL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE TRANSITION PLAN FOR THE EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH HOUSING AUTHORITY AND PARTNERS SOUTHEAST.

Motion was made by Commissioner Cunningham to enter into executive session to handle a personnel matter involving Mr. Richard Murray and Commissioner Sterling seconded the motion. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

MOTION PASSED.

Board entered into executive session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Barron to exit executive session which was held to address a personnel matter of Mr. Richard Murray and reconvene in open session and Commissioner Bonton seconded the motion. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

MOTION PASSED.

Motion was made by Commissioner Barron to enter into executive session to address a personnel matter involving Mrs. Melonie Bayham and Commissioner Sterling seconded the motion. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

MOTION PASSED.

Board entered into executive session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Sterling to exit executive session which was held to handle a personnel matter concerning Mrs. Melonie Bayham and reconvene in open session and Commissioner Barron seconded the motion. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

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MOTION PASSED.

Motion was made by Commissioner Barron to enter into executive session to handle a personnel matter concerning Mr. J. Daniels and Commissioner Cunningham seconded the motion. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

MOTION PASSED.

Board entered into executive session.

Motion was made by Commissioner Barron to exit executive session which involved a personnel matter regarding Mr. J. Daniels and reconvene in open session and Commissioner Bonton seconded the motion. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

MOTION PASSED.

~~Board re-entered regular session.~~

~~Motion was made by Commissioner Smith to place Mr. Murray on paid leave beginning July 31st, 2018 and appoint Mr. J. Daniels as acting executive director of the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing. Mr. Murray requested there be a roll call. Commissioner Brown abstained from voting.~~

Roll Call:

Commissioner Brown	Abstained
Commissioner Smith	Yes
Commissioner Bonton	Yes
Commissioner Payton	Yes
Commissioner Barron	Yes
Commissioner Cunningham	Yes
Commissioner Sterling	Yes

~~Commissioner Payton did inform the individuals present that there would be a staff meeting set to inform everyone of the changes and an email release to be drawn up by Otey White and Mr. Daniels which would be sent out immediately. Commissioner Smith thanked Mr. Murray for his years of service. He did feel that it was in the best interest of the housing authority to move forward with this transition, but with the utmost respect for Mr. Murray and all he had done for the agency while they were doing it. At this point, Commissioner Payton stated if there were no other comments to be made, the meeting would be adjourned. No comments were voiced.~~

MEETING ADJOURNED.

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~~AGENDA ITEM NUMBER 8: DISCUSSION RELATIVE TO DEVELOPING A CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S (CEO) TRANSITION PLAN FOR THE EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH HOUSING AUTHORITY.~~

Commissioner Payton felt that the discussion they had just had was an example of why they needed to start talking about the transition plan for the CEO position and what that was going to look like. They were about 90 days out. The commissioners felt that they should have a list of who was in charge of what and upcoming deadlines. Commissioner Payton felt that they would need a special meeting to discuss only the transition plan. She asked if there could be a target date to have a plan drawn up and then schedule a special meeting to discuss it. Commissioner Cunningham felt that having a transition team would be best.


Motion was made by Commissioner Cunningham to form a transition team consisting of J. Daniels as the lead, Melonie Bayham, and Richard Murray and Commissioner Barron seconded the motion. This team would be responsible for assembling a transition plan and presenting it at a special meeting to be held within the next ten days. J. Daniels as the lead would be responsible for working with Richard Murray and Melonie Bayham to coordinate the process and serve as the point person. No abstentions or oppositions were noted. No further discussion was made.

MOTION PASSED.

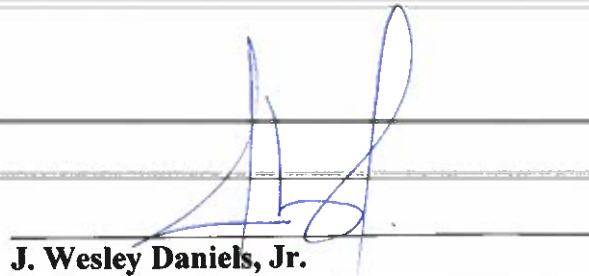
The special meeting was scheduled for July 23rd at 12:30 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED.

APPROVED:



Al Barron
Vice-Chairman
East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority



J. Wesley Daniels, Jr.
Acting Executive Director
East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority

Pursuant to the provisions of State Law, upon a majority of the members present, the Board of Commissioners of the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority may choose to enter into Executive Session, and by this notice the Housing Authority reserves the right to go into Executive Session as provided by law.

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