

**SUMMARY OF RAB MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARING
2017 AGENCY PLAN**

The Fall River Housing Authority (FRHA), pursuant to Federal Guidelines appointed the City-wide legal representation of the developments—the Fall River Joint Tenants Council, Inc. (FRJTC)—as the Resident Advisory Board (RAB).

The members of the 2017 RAB are as follows:

Joanne Braga, Public Housing
Albert Blanchard, Public Housing
Denise Bailey, Public Housing
Alisa Rosario, Public Housing
Mike Santos, Public Housing
William Walker, Public Housing
Bettyann Lavoie, Public Housing
Bill Jackson, Public Housing
Millie Jackson, Public Housing
Norma Bednarz, Public Housing
Judith Edwards, Public Housing
Kay Gonsalves, Public Housing
Rosemary Cutler, Public Housing
Pauline Travis, Public Housing
Sharon Albert, Public Housing
Shirley Brandon, Public Housing
Ruth Youth, Public Housing
Fran Dailey, Public Housing
Michelle Anglace, Public Housing
Beverly Jones, Public Housing
Lorraine Cabral, Public Housing
Charles Turcotte, Public Housing
William King, Public Housing/FRJTC
Edward Gagnon, FRJTC

Three (3) official meetings were held and the Five Year and Annual Plans were presented to the RAB and discussed at length.

The following are the minutes from each meeting:

RAB MEETING #1
NOVEMBER 22, 2016

Please be advised that the **1st** meeting of the RAB was held on Tuesday, November 22, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. regarding the Authority's upcoming submission of the Agency Plan for 2017.

Twenty (20) participants were in attendance at this meeting, and items discussed were as follows:

Mr. Barrow introduced himself and other staff who would be speaking, and also welcomed all attendees.

The Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act (QHWRA) of 1998 requires public housing authorities to do an annual plan of its operational policies and the spending of its modernization funds.

Mr. Barrow gave a brief overview of what will be discussed over the course of the three (3) RAB meetings and thanked everyone for their participation and input.

Deborah Saba, Coordinator of Housing Assistance, briefly described the Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) (Section 8) to the RAB members and reviewed the following changes to the Section 8 Administrative Plan.

1. Page 39—section on visitors—"a person who occupies the premises for more than three (3) consecutive weeks"—add per year.
2. Page 24 & 25—Income Limits need to be updated to those effective 3/28/16.
3. Page 73—section C—Inspections—Add procedure for bi-annual inspections is as follows: 1 year is by street names letters of the alphabet A-ME, the following year is MI-Z, and then alternating thereafter.
4. Page 126—Change the Payment Standards to new ones adopted by the Board of Commissioners on 10/11/16.
5. Page 52 & 53—Under "No Income" section—add: The FRHA may conduct a credit check with a credit reporting company for participants who have reported "zero" income for more than three (3) months.
6. Under "Reasonable Accommodation", the FRHA may approve exception payment standards up to 120% of Fair Market Rent, without HUD approval, if required as a Reasonable Accommodation.

7. Under “Earned Income Disallowance (EID), the FRHA will limit the EID to two (2) years (24 consecutive months)—100% for 1st year, then 50% for 2nd year for participants who qualify on/after May 9, 2016. For individuals qualifying prior to May 9, 2016, the old rule will apply.

8. Verification of Social Security Numbers (SSN)—Applicants who are otherwise eligible, but do not provide documentation of SSN(s) for each household member (except non-contending) may retain their place on the waiting list, but may not become participants until requirements are met.

If a child under six (6) was added within six (6) months prior to voucher issuance/admission to PH, applicant may become a participant as long as documentation is provided within ninety (90) calendar days of the effective date of the HAP contract/admission to PH.

Kevin Sbardella, Director of Modernization & Development, reviewed the Capital Fund Program (CFP) projects (either completed or ongoing or in design phase) for 2016 by explaining what projects are being done at each AMP/Federal public housing site.

Mr. Sbardella also reviewed the Capital Fund Program (CFP) 5-Year Plan, which is basically the FRHA’s wish-list which is forwarded to the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for review and approval.

Mr. Sbardella explained that the CFP monies are “fungible”, meaning they can be moved around if a need arises in a different year than the project/money is slated for. Capital funds are for overall modernization projects, but smaller jobs are either completed by FRHA maintenance staff or the Authority contracts out if necessary.

A few of the RAB members had questions pertaining to their particular developments, and Mr. Sbardella explained that while the FRHA does the best it can with the CFP funds provided by HUD, there is never enough to do as many projects as the FRHA would like.

Mr. Barrow and Mr. Sbardella advised the RAB members that they would look into the specific concerns raised during this meeting.

Kathleen Povar, Director of Field Operations, reviewed the Deconcentration Policy, Rent Policy, State-aided Public Housing Lease and the Pest Control Policy, as follows:

1. Deconcentration Policy—Ms. Povar explained that the Deconcentration Policy must be reviewed annually to insure income mixing at each Federal family development, meaning that none of the developments should have families with very high incomes or very low incomes residing there. The FRHA calculates the average annual income of all family development households authority-wide; the average of each family development (adjusted for bedroom size); and the income levels of the families on the waiting lists.

As of October 1, 2016, the average family income at all Federal family sites was \$14,705.00, which is within the acceptable range of \$12,499.00 and \$16,910.00 (85% to 115%). Fordney Apartments had an average family income of \$17,672.00, which is a little higher than the others; and Pleasant View had an average family income of \$11,937.00, which is a little lower than the others. The FRHA will keep an eye on them and, if necessary, will make adjustments when selecting applicants in the future.

2. Rent Policy—Ms. Povar went over the mandated changes only, as follows:

Page 3 (B)—Flat Rent—Ms. Povar explained that rent is adjusted at the time of admission and at annual recertification. If a resident's rent goes up due to an increase in income, and it's more than 30%, the resident can opt for the Flat Rent. The Flat Rents are based on 80% of the Fair Market Rents (FMR(s)) set by HUD.

Page 4—Rent for Families Under the Non-Citizen Rule—Ms. Povar explained that HUD regulations prohibit assistance to ineligible family members, that is to say, those without citizenship or eligible immigration status. However, an eligible mixed family who requests pro-rated assistance must be provided pro-rated assistance. A "mixed" family means a family whose members include those with citizenship or eligible immigration status, and those without. Ms. Povar stated that there are fewer than ten (10) mixed families living in public housing at this time.

3. State-Aided Public Housing Lease—Ms. Povar explained that the State lease is made up by the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), and the FRHA must abide by it, but can make minor changes to it by adding Amendments.

Amendment (Page 18) Section IX (K)—4th and 5th bullets have been added, which deal with "FRHA Uniform Standards for Housekeeping" regarding mildew/mold and abatement of same. This information was previously added to the Federal Lease, and will now be added to the State Lease.

4. Pest Control Policy—Ms. Povar explained that our current Integrated Pest Management company suggested that we add the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs to the first section of the policy; and under "Integrated Pest Management Plan", the 2nd bullet was added—"All newly-admitted tenants shall be placed on the assessment schedule within ten (10) days of initial occupancy". The FRHA previously required all prospective tenants to provide the Authority with proof of extermination of all household items PRIOR to being housed in a public housing unit.

Copies of all documents discussed were provided to each RAB member.

Following these presentations, Mr. Barrow advised that the next RAB meeting is scheduled for TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2016 at 1:00 P.M., at which time Ms. Povar will discuss the changes to the Admissions & Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) and Timothy McCoy, Procurement Officer, will discuss some minor changes to the FRHA Procurement Policy.

RAB MEETING #2
DECEMBER 6, 2016

Please be advised that the **2nd meeting** of the RAB was held on Tuesday, December 6, 2016 regarding the Authority's upcoming submission of the Agency Plan for 2017.

Eighteen (18) participants were in attendance at this meeting.

The items discussed were as follows:

FRHA PROCUREMENT POLICY CHANGES—Timothy McCoy, Procurement Officer, introduced himself and briefly explained the changes to the Authority's Procurement Policy. A copy of the changes was provided to the participants, and Mr. McCoy explained that Governor Baker changed some of the State laws, effective November 8, 2016. Mr. McCoy distributed an overview of the changes, as well as a breakdown of said changes provided by DHCD.

Mr. McCoy explained that one of the changes, which will be adopted by the Fall River Housing Authority Board of Commissioners on December 12, 2016, increases the micro purchases threshold from \$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00.

Mr. McCoy answered questions posed by some of the participants.

ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY—Kathleen Pover, Director of Field Operations, briefly explained what the ACOP is and explained the changes to it in detail. A copy of the changes was provided to the participants and were explained one by one. Ms. Pover answered questions raised by the participants.

The next RAB meeting will be held on TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2016.
THE ANNUAL LUNCHEON WILL ALSO BE SERVED.

Please arrive by 12:30 p.m. so we can review the Template, and the luncheon will follow.

RAB MEETING #3
DECEMBER 20, 2016

Please be advised that the **3rd meeting** of the RAB was held on Tuesday, December 20, 2016 regarding the Authority's upcoming submission of the Agency Plan for 2017.

Twenty (20) participants were in attendance at this meeting, and item discussed was as follows:

AGENCY PLAN TEMPLATE—Mr. Barrow distributed copies of the “Template” and reviewed it in detail with participants. Mr. Barrow explained that one of the items on the template was about the new HUD rule regarding “smoke-free” public housing. The FRHA will have 18 months to implement this rule, and meetings with residents and staff will take place in the near future. The template will be submitted to HUD, along with the other policies and certifications.

Mr. Barrow reminded the participants that the Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 4, 2017, 4:00 p.m. in the O’Brien Apartments Community Hall. Coffee and donuts will be provided following the Public Hearing.

In addition, Attorney Michael Sousa, FRHA General Counsel addressed the participants and explained a little about what his role is at the Authority.

Following the meeting, the Annual RAB Luncheon was held. A hot & cold buffet, with dessert and coffee, was provided to the RAB participants and FRHA staff. As usual, the luncheon was very good.

Mr. Barrow thanked the participants for their attendance and input at the RAB meetings and wished everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

PUBLIC HEARING SUMMARY
JANUARY 4, 2017

The 2017 Public Hearing was held on Wednesday, January 4, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. in the James A. O’Brien, Sr. Apartments Community Hall. Twenty four (24) participants were in attendance, including David B. Sullivan, Executive Director; Timothy S. Barrow, Acting Deputy Executive Director of Operations & Technology; Kathleen Povar, Director of Field Operations; Debra Morrissette, Associate Director of Property Management; Deborah Saba, Coordinator of Housing Assistance; Kevin Sbardella, Director of Modernization & Development and Martha Gallagher, Executive Office Coordinator.

Mr. Sullivan introduced the members of the panel, listed above, as well as Ed Gagnon, FRJTC.

Mr. Barrow presided over the meeting, which was conducted in an informal manner.

Mr. Barrow stated that some of the changes to the many policies that were discussed with the RAB over the past three months were regulatory changes that are mandated by the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and some are discretionary changes that are being implemented for the betterment of the residents.

A number of handouts were distributed to the attendees, beginning with the Annual PHA Plan Template. Mr. Barrow reviewed the changes made to this year’s template—briefly touching on the changes made to some of the policies, which were discussed with and agreed to by the RAB over the

course of the meetings; attachments A & B of the Template, as well as some minor changes to the FRHA's Procurement Policy.

Mr. Barrow turned the meeting over to Ms. Povar, who went over the changes to the Admissions & Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP) in detail, and answered questions raised by some of the attendees.

Mr. Sbardella reviewed the Capital fund Program Five Year Plan, which was distributed to the attendees, explaining the proposed capital fund projects for each AMP/sites. Mr. Sbardella explained that the items listed were determined by necessity and resident input, and that the monies provided to the FRHA from the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and earmarked for particular projects are "fungible", and the FRHA has some ability to move capital fund projects arounds within the five-year plan should need arise.

Ms. Saba reviewed the eight (8) changes to the Section 8 Administrative Plan, in detail, and answered questions raised by some of the attendees.

Mr. Sullivan closed the meeting and thanked everyone who participated in the RAB meetings and FRHA staff for their assistance in the preparation of the 2017 Agency Plan.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m., and coffee and donuts were served following the meeting.

TBS:mjg