

**Board Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2025**

The Board of Commissioners Meeting for the City of Douglas Housing Authority was held at the Administration Office, 937 Thrash Circle, on the 18th day of March 2025, at 12:00 p.m.

Chairman Clark called the meeting to order and Vice Chairman Nixon gave the invocation. Those present and absent were as follows:

Present

Ernestine Thomas Clark – Chairman
Rosemary Street Nixon – Vice Chairman
J. L. Veal – Commissioner
Irene Murray – Commissioner
LiNetha Munford – Commissioner

Toni Sawyer - DHA Attorney
Clara Graham – Executive Director
Lakisha Gaskin – Office Manager

Absent

Sandy Fillmore – Resident Commissioner
Sandra Gore – Director of Operations

Agenda & Minutes

Chairman Clark asked for a motion to approve the March 18, 2025 Agenda, the January 21, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes, and the February 11, 2025, Special Called Board Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Veal made the motion to approve the March 18, 2025 Agenda, the January 21, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes, and the February 11, 2025, Special Called Board Meeting Minutes and Vice Chairman Nixon seconded the motion. Ayes carried with no questions raised.

Pending Issues

Chairman Clark stated next is the pending issues. There were no pending issues to discuss.

Legal Issues

Ms. Toni Sawyer stated there are no legal issues to discuss. Ms. Sawyer stated to be cautious of the Federal Government with DOGE audits' and moving monies around. Due to prior agendas and trying to do away with HUD the President is being much more aggressive and HUD's funding may be affected so keep this in mind. All Housing Authorities should have a cushion in place just in case something happens with the funding. Ms. Sawyer stated that Ms. Graham has always been good with the funding but Ms. Graham might want to talk with Darnell to see where this money could be strategically placed.

Ms. Graham stated that the damages from Hurricane Helene will take our extra funding because the insurance company is not going to pay all the cost associated with the damages. Now we are starting on part 2 of the work which includes fixing soffits, ceiling work, etc. and based on the insurance pricing the insurance will not pay all of this cost. Ms. Graham stated we can patch what has been affected but I don't believe in patching. We will fix what is wrong and will use our additional money along with the insurance to cover the cost and what is not covered we will put in our next CFP budget that comes out April 1, 2025.

Ms. Sawyer stated some Housing Authorities are pulling out of GHARRP due to this and are stating they are going to bid out their insurance coverage.

Director of Operations' Reports

Ms. Gaskin presented the following information to the Board:

- Leasing Report as of March 13, 2025. DHA had 1 move-in(s), 2 make readies, 2 move-out(s) and our occupancy percentage is 99%. DHA has 44 move-in(s) year-to-date and 48 move-out(s) year-to-date.
- Management Report for February 27, 2025. DHA's total units for Authority 11, 12, & 13 are 381, Total Collections for Authority 11, 12, & 13 are \$85,202.98 and Total Security Deposits for Authority 11, 12, & 13 are \$90,520.00.
- No Charge-offs.

Executive Director

Ms. Graham stated the first thing is the Updated 2025 Utility Allowance effective 6/1/2025. The updated 2025 Utility Allowances stayed the same so there is no changes. The utility allowance is the amount deducted from the tenant's rent to get the total rent amount that a tenant has to pay. Ms. Graham stated the Updated 2025 Flat Rent Rates have changed. The Flat Rent Rates are based on the Fair Market value for our area. In your packet, is a copy of the 2024 Flat Rent Rates to compare them to the Updated 2025 Flat Rent Rates showing you the increase effective 6/1/2025. By increasing the Flat Rent Rates, HUD is trying to remove the higher income tenants out of housing. Therefore, housing will have no income tenants or low-income tenants and this will cut our HUD Funding. Chairman Clark asked for a motion to approve the updated 2025 Utility Allowances effective 6/1/2025 and the updated 2025 Flat Rent Rates effective 6/1/2025. Vice Chairman Nixon made the motion to approve the updated 2025 Utility Allowances effective 6/1/2025 and the updated 2025 Flat Rent Rates effective 6/1/2025 and Commissioner Munford seconded the motion. Ayes carried with Resolution # 25-18-03-678.

Plan Agenda

Chairman Clark stated the next item is to plan the agenda for the May 20, 2025 Board Meeting. No items were presented.

General Discussion


Chairman Clark asked if anybody had anything to discuss and Ms. Graham stated yes. Ms. Graham stated she was out last week due to cataract removal on her eye. The bank contacted Sandra regarding the Housing Authorities Check Account. There has never been any fraudulent transactions on our account since I have been here but somebody intercepted a check that was made out to United Health Care for \$16,000. I spoke with Leah and she told me that they are washing the checks in a solution and the checks look like the original check. They are removing the names from the checks and they write in their name for the amount and sign the back of the check. The bank stated in the history of the Housing Authority, the Housing Authority has never

written out a check to an individual for that amount of money because we deal with businesses. The bank put a stop payment on the check until they could make contact with us. The bank is requesting that the Housing Authority have some fraudulent measures put in place. Once I returned on Monday, I asked Leah what type of fraudulent measures were they requesting because any check over \$500 must have two signatures. The bank is requesting that the Housing Authority go to online banking. With online banking the Housing Authority would check daily to look at the checks that are clearing. The bank requested a decision today so I told them I would bring it before the Board at our Board Meeting today. The bank is there to help with fraudulent activities and with me checking daily it will help with prevention of this. I contacted United Health Care and several of their clients have had this happen to them. United Health Care can send a secure link online to handle payments and will be glad to help walk me through.

Ms. Sawyer stated that the bank is trying to shift the claim on us. You have to be secure because a hacker can set up in your system. Toni stated she doesn't know if a resolution was sent to the bank stating our procedures on how we are set up with our checks. Ms. Graham told Ms. Sawyer that we do have this in place with the bank. Ms. Sawyer stated we need to make sure it is in writing at the bank. Ms. Graham stated it is. It will be up to the Board if you would like for the Housing Authority to start online banking. After some discussion, Chairman Clark asked for a motion to go with online banking. Commissioner Murray made the motion to go with the online banking and Commissioner Veal seconded the motion. Ayes carried with Resolution # 25-18-03-679.

Adjourn

Chairman Clark asked for a motion to adjourn the Board Meeting. Vice Chairman Nixon made the motion to adjourn the Board Meeting and Commissioner Veal seconded the motion. Ayes carried with the Board Meeting adjourning at 12:35 p.m.

 5/20/25

Clara S. Graham
Secretary

Date

 5/20/2025

Ernestine Clark/Rosemary Nixon
Chairman/Vice-Chairman

Date