

Minutes of Meeting of
The Housing Authority of the City of Galveston, Texas
Walter Norris Jr. Island Community Center Community Room
4700 Broadway, Galveston, TX 77551
October 27, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Galveston, Texas (GHA) met as stated above. Chair Pat Toliver called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and declared a quorum was present. She further clarified that the meeting was duly posted. The following commissioners were noted present: Chair Pat Toliver; Vice-Chair Betty Massey; Brax Easterwood; Brenda Hall; and Paula Tobon.

Commissioners Absent: None

Others Present: Mona Purgason, Executive Director
 Gus Knebel, Legal Counsel

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Commissioner Tobon stated she had a conflict in any discussion of St. Vincent's House utilizing space at 4700 Broadway and would recuse herself from that discussion.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

Commissioner Hall made a motion to approve the September 29, 2025 Board Meeting minutes and Commissioner Easterwood seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Financial Statements

Ashland Ray, Interim Finance Director, reported the following for September, 2025:

Total Operating Revenue:	\$ 8,124,188
Total Operating Expense:	\$ 7,488,070
Net Income:	\$ 636,118
Total Liabilities & Net Assets:	\$ 186,694,624

Action Items/Resolutions

Resolution 3018 – Approval of Collection Loss Write-Offs – Ms. Ray stated this was to write off uncollectable balances totaling \$15,883.89 as of September 30, 2025.

Vice-Chair Massey moved approval and Commissioner Tobon seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion Items

Discussion Regarding Definition and What Constitutes Commissioner Conflicts of Interest

– Gus Knebel of Mills, Shirley, Legal Counsel, outlined the contents of a memo he had written at the request of the Board. Mr. Knebel stated there is not a general per se conflict of interest when someone serves on more than one volunteer board. He further stated the specific codes related to conflict of interest come from Chapters 171 and 176 of the Texas Local Government Code, with chapter 171 dealing with conflicts of interest of Board members of a governmental entity (including the Housing Authority), when one of those members has a substantial interest in a matter that is before the Board. Substantial interest is defined as owning 10% or more of a business entity that is seeking to do business with the Board, owning \$15,000 or more of the entity's value, or receiving more than 10% of the member's gross income from the entity. Mr. Knebel stated the third one is why Commissioner Tobon abstains from discussions or decisions regarding St. Vincent's House. He stated a board member declares the conflict or potential conflict and then removes themselves from participation. He stated Chapter 176 deals with vendors.

Mr. Knebel further stated that GHA is also subject to Federal conflict of interest regulations because of receiving Federal funds. He also stated as far as what has been presented so far, he does not see a conflict.

Chair Toliver asked if there is any conflict in the future for Vice-Chair Massey if the Moody Foundation participates in putting homes on the land. Mr. Knebel explained that if an entity provided more than 10% of Vice-Chair Massey's income, and if that entity were benefiting (in this case the Mary Moody Northern Foundation), she would have a conflict. In the case of a foundation or entity to which the Moody Foundation donates funds, unless Vice-Chair Massey benefits financially from the transaction, he didn't see a conflict.

Strategic Planning for the Property Encompassing 4700 Broadway – Vice-Chair Massey stated that this discussion item was an outgrowth of a discussion on whether St. Vincent's House could purchase some land at 4700 Broadway to build a new facility. She stated the bigger question regarding the special asset of the land at 4700 Broadway, is if GHA was sitting on an asset that could be used to benefit GHA's clients and other low income Galvestonians. She stated Commissioner Easterwood had suggested a process where GHA does master planning for the property. She stated some uses include space for other non-profits, or a garden park or green space. She stated she would like to move forward with a master planning process which would include potentially placing St. Vincent's House somewhere on the property.

Commissioner Easterwood asked how had a master planning process taken place in the past. Chair Toliver stated when it was done before the community wanted to leave it the way it was because the parking lot was used for the non-profits in the building as well as for hurricane evacuation and recovery. She further stated she felt like it was a waste of time to keep going over and over this when the community had already stated what they wanted.

Vice-Chair Massey stated until GHA goes through a process of exploration the answer to what the community wants is not known. She further stated that it was put in the Five-Year Plan that GHA would explore other uses for 4700 Broadway. She asked if there were firms that assist Housing Authorities in exploring options.

Commissioner Hall suggested that the Board hear from the community before any money is expended on a master planning process.

Public Comments

Linda Rutherford, Chair of the Board of St. Vincent's House, stated she was glad GHA was considering strategic planning, and reminded the Board of the GHA mission statement. She stated it was her belief that there was not another service provider in Galveston better than St. Vincent's House to provide services to GHA's residents. She later stated that if St. Vincent's House were located at the 4700 property it would not impede FEMA coming to help in a disaster situation.

Dr. Philip Kaiser, CEO of Galveston County Health District, stated they were tenants of the Walter Norris Jr. Island Community Center. He stated post-Covid they had done a lot of analysis and data showed that the average age of death in the census tract on which the building sits is the lowest in the area at 62. He stated the rates of 911 calls, overdose deaths, and homicide were higher. He stated it was that community that needed the services of the clinics where people can be seen regardless of ability to pay, including St. Vincent's House.

Tarris Woods stated he wanted it on the record that Vice-Chair Betty Massey had brought this issue up before and that in a previous meeting he heard Betty Massey make a statement expressing that she wanted to sell the land. He further stated Betty, Mills and Shirley, and Gus were all members of Vision Galveston. He stated the definition the attorney gave of Conflict of Interest came out of local government code but we operate off Code of Federal Regulations. He stated this building was built for the people and because the Wharves Board is bringing more cruise ships to Galveston they are interested in the land where St. Vincent's has their current building. He further stated he suspects their goal is to take over the entire building.

Priscilla Brown expressed her thanks to the Board of Commissioners, as well as GHA staff. She commended staff for how they work and communicate with the clients. She stated with the economy, food distribution is more important than ever, and those distributions take place twice a month on the side of the building. She further stated certain clients of the services in the building use different doors, and deliveries use the back doors. She stated mobile screening for breast imaging uses the parking lot once a month. She suggested a possible expansion to create additional space to be used by other organizations.

Lillian McGrew stated it was had already been established that the building was not going to be torn down. She stated she agreed with finding out what the community wanted, and what all goes on in the building.

James Brooks stated the building is not meant to be torn down. He stated the elevation at the 4700 property was built higher to help prevent flooding. He stated the whole island depends on St. Vincent's.

Linda Rutherford stated St. Vincent's House had never been approached by the Wharves Board about selling their property.

Secretary's Report

Development – Deyna Sims, Director of Real Estate Development, reported that MBS had included a written update on inspections, maintenance, and repairs at the Oleanders, highlighting the plan of inspecting every unit and all the common areas and addressing any issues.

Public Housing and Resident Services – Odelia Williams, Director of Public Housing, stated lease-up was at 94% as of the end of September, and has improved since the reporting period, which will be reflected on next month's reports. She further stated activities at the sites included National Night Out and a luncheon to thank the maintenance staff.

HCV – Maria Godwin, Housing Director, stated HCV was leased up at 99% for the month, there were 44 voucher holders searching for housing, 105 DV-Ike vouchers, and 218 outgoing ports, including 162 to Texas City.

MBM Lease-Up -- Oleanders and Villas was 91% occupied and Cedars was 90% occupied.

Human Capital Report – Dr. David Fuller of Urban Strategies stated at the Cedars and Villas, 83% of households were participating, and at Oleanders 60%. 34 FDPs and IDPs were closed with a positive outcome, and 51 new ones were developed. There were 29 referrals made and connected with basic and emergency services. The average annual income year to date was \$24,571 at Cedars/Villas and \$23,861 at Oleanders.

Commissioners' Comments

Vice-Chair Massey asked that the discussion item regarding a strategic plan for 4700 Broadway be referred to the Development Committee, who would meet before the next Board Meeting and come back to the Board with a plan on how to get community input and the cost and scope of getting professional services to assist with the potential planning.

The Board Meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.