

**CHELSEA HOUSING  
AUTHORITY**

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***2011 ANNUAL REPORT***

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**“EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY”**

**54 Locke Street  
Chelsea, MA 02150  
(617) 884-5617**



**FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:**

April 2, 2012

To the People of Chelsea:

As you are aware, the Chelsea Housing Authority has undergone tremendous changes in the last several months. With the new Board in place, the good work that the Temporary Receiver has accomplished, a major reorganization, and a new spirit of dedication of the staff, I pledge, as the new Executive Director, to never waver in carrying out our primary mission of providing our residents with safe, sanitary and affordable housing.

Thank you to HUD Housing Director Robert Cwieca. Special mention to our invaluable HUD liaisons, Dwight Hebert and Ellen Bradley. Thanks to Public Housing Director Lizbeth Heyer, Chief Counsel Deborah Goddard, and thanks to all the staff at DHCD during this difficult transition.

In spite of the issues facing us, the CHA continued to maintain its high level of achievement:

- The Housing Authority has maintained rent collections of 100%.
- The Authority has maintained the vacancy turnaround rate of less than 10% and a turnaround time of less than 10 days.
- The Leased Housing Department maintained over a 98.26% utilization rate.

The entire staff deserves congratulations and thanks for these accomplishments.

The Authority continues to rely on outside support, and will need this assistance in the upcoming year. We wish to thank City Manager Jay Ash and his staff. The CHA thanks Representatives Gene O'Flaherty and Kathi-Anne Reinstein for their support in our state programs. Special thanks to Congressman Michael Capuano for his support at the national level. Thank you to Robert Repucci of CAPIC for his tireless advocacy work. Thanks to Jim Cunningham of CRW, and Tracy Nowicki, Chelsea's Director of Elder Services for their outstanding work serving seniors. Thanks to Commandant Michael Resca, Stanley Troisi and the staff of the Soldier's Home for the very, very special work they do for our heroes.

Thank you to Ann Houston of Chelsea Neighborhood Development for her work. Thanks to Helen Zucco from Chelsea Restoration Corporation. Thanks to Just-A-Start for their work in converting excess space into dwelling units at the CHA.

The Chelsea City Council has been very supportive of our innovations and efforts, for which we offer our deep appreciation to Council President Leo Robinson and Councilors Dan Cortell, Paul Murphy, Calvin Brown, Brian Hatleberg, Christopher Cataldo, Matthew Frank, Paula Barton, Joseph Perlatonda, Giovanni Recupero, and Clifford Cunningham. We are sorry for the loss of Mike McKonnen Tsegaye.

We have relied on and received help from a variety of outside agencies to assist our residents – especially in times of crisis – including CAPIC and the Red Cross. The Chelsea Fire Department and the local Civil Defense have responded professionally and efficiently when needed. We have a very strong relationship with the Chelsea Police Department, and have a number of different programs that stress crime prevention. Thank you. Thank you to Resident Officers: John Bruttani, Dustin Chodrick, Sammy Mojica, Jose Ramos, Paul Koolian, Greg Walczak and Paul Bright, Resident Police Officers at our

apartment complexes; their work has made a tremendous difference. Special thanks to Chief Brian Kyes and Lt. Rico Tyree.

Thank you to Mass NAHRO and New England NAHRO, and to Tom Connelly, Director, and to Donna Brown, as well as to staff members Michael Lazdowsky and Jennifer Polito for their efforts and continuing support.

I wish to extend a warm and heartfelt thanks to Judy Weber, the Court-appointed Temporary Receiver, who steered us through the obstacles of this transition with intelligence, energy, good humor, resilience, optimism and style. Thanks, Judy.

Finally, I wish to most humbly and graciously thank our new Board of Commissioners, Tom Standish, Barbara Salisbury, Bertram Taverna, Juan Vega and Don Kingsbury for taking on this task of building a new Chelsea Housing Authority, and I and our staff will work hard with you and for you to implement the changes that need to take place, and restore public confidence.

Sincerely,

  
Albert R. Ewing  
Executive Director

## ORGANIZATION:

Organized in 1946 to address the housing needs of Chelsea's returning veterans and low and moderate income residents, the Chelsea Housing Authority (CHA) is "*a public body politic and corporate*" duly organized and authorized by Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Chapter 121B, s.3. The Authority receives its funds from the State and Federal government to assist our clients with their housing needs. Although the Authority does not receive any local funding, five unpaid Chelsea residents compose the Board of Commissioners. The City Manager appoints four of these board members and one is the Governor's appointee. Each member serves for a 5-year term. The Board is responsible for the overall operation of the Authority. The day to day responsibility is delegated to the Executive Director.

The new Board will be meeting regularly. Currently, the Board Members and their term of office are as follows:

Thomas Standish, Chair	Term expires 10/17/16
Barbara Salisbury, Vice-Chair	Term expires 11/8/15
Bertram Taverna, Treasurer	Term expires 2/28/16
Juan Vega, Assistant Treasurer	Term expires 4/7/14
Donald Kingsbury, Commissioner	Term expires 2/28/15

## STAFF:

The Board contracts with an Executive Director who manages the day-to-day operations of the Authority. Within State and Federal guidelines and other budgetary limits, the Executive Director hires the supporting staff necessary to achieve the goals and responsibilities of the Authority's programs. The Executive Director, Albert R. Ewing, is in a five-year contract that expires January 31, 2017.

### Administration:

Albert R. Ewing	Secretary and Executive Director
Diane Cohen	Deputy Director
Iris Perez-Feliciano	Leased Housing Coordinator
Carmen Torres	Program Representative
Alexandra Jimenez	Property Manager
Jacqueline Matos	Property Manager
Nyomi Pena	Property Manager
Paul Nowicki	Director of Supportive Services/Occupancy
Ineudira Barbosa	Occupancy Coordinator
Iris Rivera	Receptionist
Vitus M. Shum	Chief Financial Officer
Jennie Cohen	Senior Accountant
Keir Bordner	Director of Security and Technology
James Fitzpatrick	Director of Modernization & Procurement
Anthony V. Tiro	Clerk of the Works/Inspector

### Maintenance:

Richard Russell	Director of Maintenance
Gregory V. Beatrice	Maintenance Supervisor
James R. Granara	Mechanic/Carpenter
Damon S. Webster	Groundskeeper Custodian
John Zarni	Groundskeeper Custodian
Jose Toro	Groundskeeper Custodian
Mario Cruzado	Maintenance Mechanic
Edward Cole, Jr.	Maintenance Mechanic
Eric Montefusco	Maintenance Mechanic
Angelo Zirpilo	Maintenance Mechanic
John Faulstich	Mechanic/Plumber
Ibro Omeragic	Maintenance Mechanic
Denise Ferdinand	Groundskeeper Custodian
James Krasco	Mechanic/Carpenter
Song Suong	Groundskeeper/Custodian/Mechanic
Robert P. Hamilton	Mechanic/Painter
Wayne Brooks	Painter
Sean D. Landry	Groundskeeper Custodian

## **AFFILIATIONS:**

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)

Massachusetts Chapter of National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (MassNAHRO)

New England Regional Council of National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NERC/NAHRO)

Section 8 Administrators Association (S8AA)

North Shore Housing Executive Directors' Association (NSHEDA)

## **LEASED HOUSING**

### **Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV)**

Under HUD Section 8 programs, the Authority provides assistance to lower income families in renting privately owned dwelling units in decent, safe, and sanitary condition. There are 515 units/families certified under the Housing Choice Voucher program. The nature of the programs is that the Authority acts as an administrative agent to bring private landlords and qualified low or very low-income tenants together to create a leasing contract. Under this agreement a contract rent is established. The tenant portion of the contract rent is based on a predetermined formula and is paid by the tenant to the landlord. The difference between the contract rent and the tenant paid portion is the amount subsidized by HUD and provided to the Authority to pay to the landlord.

Currently the wait list for our Section 8 Program is open. We now participate in the centralized wait list program initiated in December 2002 and administered by Mass NAHRO. Applications are available at our administrative office or online at [www.mnahro.org](http://www.mnahro.org). An application can be downloaded from that site and submitted to *any* agency participating in the centralized wait list program. There are currently over 85 member agencies taking part in that joint process. At present there are almost 100,000 families on this waitlist with waiting times for assistance quite long.

The Authority submitted its annual Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) reports for fiscal year end December 2011 to HUD for review and subsequent scoring. The purpose of SEMAP is to measure public housing authority performance in key areas of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program management. It is a tool used by HUD to effectively monitor and assist PHAs. It is our pleasure to report that the Chelsea Housing Authority received an overall score of 100 percent for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2010. As a result of this score, HUD designates the Authority as a "high performer."

### **Section 8 Mobility**

The term "mobility" refers to the process of leasing a dwelling unit with housing voucher tenant-based assistance outside of the jurisdiction of the PHA that initially issues the family its voucher (the Initial PHA). Program regulations covering where a family may move and the responsibilities of the Initial PHA and the Receiving PHA (the PHA with jurisdiction over the area to which the family moves) are found at 24 CFR sections 982.353 through 982.355.

## **Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS)**

The program is maintained to assist participants in acquiring skills necessary to become gainfully employed and independent of all government aid.

## **MRVP/AHVP**

Similar to the Section 8 program, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides funding for low-income families and individuals in renting privately-owned dwelling units. The CHA has 70 units/families/individuals under this program.

# **MODERNIZATION & PROCUREMENT**

## **Capital Fund (CFP)**

Under HUD's Comprehensive Grant Program guidelines, the Authority must develop and submit every sixth year a Comprehensive Plan and an annual plan for improving the HA's public housing facilities. The grant provides funding for HA physical and management needs. The Plan is developed in consultation with the Authority residents. The program is the primary funding source for physical improvements to the Authority's properties.

## **State modernization**

Similar to the CFP, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides modernization funding for physical improvements to the state developments.

## **2011 Projects completed**

- Boiler replacement at Union Park at a cost of \$218,596
- Site improvements at Fitzpatrick and Innes at a cost of \$152,500
- Federal Stimulus Project #1:
  - 16-1 Scrivano window headers and lintels, brick waterproofing
  - 16-2 Mace dryer venting system
  - 16-4 Margolis roof replacement, including rooftop heaters and air-conditioners replacement, and brick waterproofing, at a cost of \$1,112,663
- Federal Stimulus Project #2:
  - 16-1 Office re-roofing, exterior skin repairs, Scrivano HVAC work
  - 16-2 Mace boilers replacement, 16-1, 2, 4 (Scrivano, Mace, Margolis), exterior lighting upgrades, weatherstripping, faucet aerators
  - 16-4 Margolis new roof entry doors, caulking/weatherproofing 13<sup>th</sup> floor, new trash compactor unit and boxes, new insulated garage door, elevator repairs/upgrades at a cost of \$558,863

## **Projects Underway in 2012:**

- Prattville Boilers: The design contract has been awarded.
- Union Park Electrical Upgrade: The design contract has been awarded.
- Prattville Site Upgrades: Scope issues are under review at DHCD. State Formula Funding: The balance of the DHCD Capital Improvement Plan is in development, working on scope issues.



## **MAINTENANCE**

There were a total of 9,058 work orders during the 2011 year. All 9,058 have been completed and closed out, with an average completion time of 4.32 days.

The CHA Maintenance staff worked with three different organizations over the course of the year that provided both employment as well as educational opportunities for some Chelsea youths as well as some young men and women from our surrounding cities. Several high school students from Chelsea participated in a summer work program sponsored by The Chelsea Collaborative. The YouthBuild Just A Start program has begun working on converting a computer lab at 29 Guam Rd # A into a new 3 bed room unit. In October The Chelsea Housing Authority and ROCA entered into a contract to strip, wash and wax the common hallways at our two elderly high-rise buildings.

A 2010 elevator inspection uncovered some severe shortcomings with our emergency generator for the Buckley building. With the help of Jim Fitzpatrick in Modernization a plan was put into place that culminated in a new emergency generator that is now in place and fully functional.

## **TECHNOLOGY & SECURITY**

- The Department of Technology and Security has made a remarkable effort to provide a surveillance system that provides the Chelsea Housing Authority a marvelous tool for protecting our tenants and our property. In 2011, we continued the process of troubleshooting and repairing the largest and most labor intensive component of the Video Surveillance System, the wiring.
- Again this year I am happy to report that the DVRs have been functioning with less than three (3) percent downtime in 2011.
- There were a total of 58 investigations completed in 2011. This does not include a number of minor inquiries made by internal departments and external agencies, such as the Chelsea Police Department. This has proven to be extremely valuable to Chelsea Housing Authority and a number of law enforcement agencies.
- All repairs, updates, preventative maintenance, and new computer builds are completed in-house. Other than routine upgrades and preventative maintenance our workstations have experienced zero downtime.
- We recently started to design a new website. We are hoping it will provide our tenants, residents and applicants a fresh and efficient way to access resources delivered by the Chelsea Housing Authority.

## **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES/OCCUPANCY**

The department filled 89 vacancies for public housing in 2011. Over 178 applications were processed for federal public housing compared to 261 applications for state public housing. Due to the large volume of applications, our family waitlist have been closed since December 29, 2009, with the exception of emergency applications. In addition, the department processed 260 emergency applications and 77 applications for AHVP.

The CHA was awarded a three-year ROSS grant from HUD to provide federal elderly and disabled residents opportunities for self-sufficiency. Many informative programs were presented to the families as well as case management services offered.

## PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

### Federal Low Income Public Housing (LIPH)

Under HUD Annual Contributions Contract for Low Income Public Housing Program (sometimes referred to as Low Rent or Conventional Housing Program), the Authority owns and manages 356 family and elderly dwelling units. A tenant who rents a unit under the LIPH program pays his/her rent directly to the Authority.

### State Consolidated Program

Similar to LIPH Operating Fund, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides subsidy funding for 560 units of family and elderly housing.

Federal Family Developments	Number of Units
Scrivano	108
Mace	96

Federal Elderly/Disabled Developments	Number of Units
Margolis	152

State Family Developments	Number of Units
Fitzpatrick	70
Prattville	128
Innes	96

State Elderly/ Disabled Developments	Number of Units
Union Park	56
Buckley	210

The Chelsea Housing Authority is proud to provide this information to you. Anyone interested in obtaining an application for any of our housing programs: elderly/handicapped housing, state family or the Federal Section 8 Rental Assistance Program, should contact the authority at 54 Locke Street or by calling the office at (617) 884-5617.

