

CHELSEA HOUSING  
AUTHORITY  
*2012 ANNUAL REPORT*

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“EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY”

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September, 2013

#### MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Chelsea Housing Authority has undergone a tremendous transformation in 2012. With the installation of an entirely new Board of Commissioners, along with a major reorganization, and a renewed spirit of dedication and commitment of the management and staff, the CHA remains focused and dedicated to carrying out our primary mission of providing safe, sanitary and affordable housing for our residents.

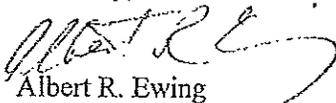
In spite of the many challenges we face, the CHA continues to excel in a number of key areas:

- The Authority has maintained a public housing occupancy rate of 99%.
- The Leased Housing Department maintained a 100% utilization rate of our Section 8 Vouchers.
- The CHA has increased the number of supportive services and programs available to our residents through partnerships with community organizations including CAPIC Inc., the Senior Center, Harbor Cove, Mass Union of Public Housing Tenants, Chelsea-Revere-Winthrop Elder Services, MBHP, The Neighborhood Developers, Chelsea Police Department, Girls Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts, City of Chelsea and many others.

We have instituted a number of new policies which encourage stronger oversight and transparency, such as enhanced internal controls and financial management initiatives. We are working much more closely with HUD and DHCD to benefit from their experience and oversight. We have begun a number of staff training programs which include all aspects of agency management.

Under the leadership of our Board of Commissioners, Chairman Thomas K. Standish, Barbara Salisbury, Bert Taverna, Juan Vega and Don Kingsbury, we will continue to implement the reforms that need to take place in governance and management to restore public confidence, trust, and operational excellence.

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 Board typically meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 4 pm at the main administrative office at 54 Locke Street. 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, Resident	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	Executive Director
Diane Cohen	Deputy Director
Iris Perez-Feliciano	Leased Housing Coordinator
Carmen Torres	Program Representative
Alexandra Jimenez	Property Manager
Jacqueline Matos	Property Manager
Paul Nowicki	Director of Supportive Services/Occupancy
Ineudira Barbosa	Occupancy Coordinator
Heather Birchall	HCV Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator
Monica Fuentes	PH Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator
Iris Rivera	Receptionist/Maintenance Coordinator
Arnaldo Velazquez	Accounting Manager
Jennie Cohen	Senior Accountant
Anthony V. Tiro	Clerk of the Works/Inspector

**Maintenance:**

Richard Russell	Director of Maintenance & Modernization
Gregory V. Beatrice	Maintenance Supervisor & Procurement Officer Supervisor
James R. Granara	Mechanic/Electrician
Damon S. Webster	Groundskeeper Custodian
John Zarni	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	Mechanic/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. The Authority successfully maintained an average lease up rate of 99.5% throughout the year for the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

The department partnered with the Malden Housing Authority and Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership (MBHP) and held two comprehensive landlord workshops. The presentations focused on landlord rights and responsibilities, with a special focus on the housing quality standards and state sanitary codes.

The department commenced direct deposit of landlord rental payments. Registered landlords can easily access information regarding their monthly Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) on the new online HMS PAL system.

Landlords and program participants were introduced to Gosection8.com; a website that provides homeowners with the capability to list vacant units and program participants the ability to view available apartments while in the process of relocating. The website allows for the Authority to complete rent analysis for assisted units and compare to private market units.

The department continues to work united with the Chelsea Police Department and our resident officers. This collaboration encourages greater communication and prompt responses of requests for police and arrest reports and in following up on anonymous tips of illegal criminal activity.

The department has modified the CHA website by downloading many of our standard forms. Tenants/landlords can now facilitate applications, brochures, pamphlets, forms and other documents needed for conducting daily business.

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 [http://massnahro.org/S8\\_Home.php](http://massnahro.org/S8_Home.php). 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.

The Authority submitted its annual Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) reports for fiscal year end December 2012 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. The Chelsea Housing Authority received an overall score of 85 percent for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2012. As a result of this score, HUD designates the Authority as a "standard performer."

## 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 69 units/families/individuals under this program.

## 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 354 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	106
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

## SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AND OCCUPANCY

These services and activities are made up of two departments, the Occupancy Department with the Occupancy Coordinator for all public housing applicants and the Supportive Services Department which includes the ROSS Coordinator and 2 Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Coordinators as well as the Resident Police Officer Program and the Resident Councils.

The Occupancy Department filled 83 vacancies over 2012, with 54 being from the State and 29 from Federal. The total vacancy days were 1,557 which accounted for a vacancy turnaround time of 19 days per unit. During 2012 the Occupancy Department received 662 applications for public housing. We had 469 for State Public Housing, 193 for Federal and in addition there were 53 that were deemed ineligible. In the Occupancy Department we also handle Emergency Applications (216), Add-On applications (48) and Transfer Applications (37) for both State and Federal Public Housing. All of the applications are processed by the department and all applicants receive communication regarding their status. During the process, the Occupancy Coordinator interviews all applicants that are about to enter our pool to determine their eligibility. Over the course of the year, there were 135 applicant interviews and many informal conferences in order for our pool of potential tenants to be deemed qualified and ready to move in. Another very important piece of the Occupancy department is the conducting of informal appeal hearings. When an applicant gets denied, they have an appeal option as part of the entire application process. During 2012 the Occupancy Department conducted 11 appeal hearings and 12 informal CORI hearings to ensure an open, honest and fair process for all applicants.

Under Supportive Services there are 5 sections: ROSS program, FSS (HCV), FSS (PH), Resident police officer program and Resident Council program and all report to the Director Supportive Services/Occupancy.

The Resident Opportunity Self Sufficiency (ROSS) Program is a federally funded program that operates out of the Margolis development. The main objective of the program is to work with elderly residents to improve their quality of life as they age in place and to assist our disabled residents to live independently. At the conclusion of 2012 the ROSS program had 32 participants receiving a variety of services. The referrals that were made to local providers consisted of cleaning, home maker, personal hygiene, cooking, shopping, medication management, mental evaluations, substance abuse, free tax preparation, food stamp assistance,

senior center activities, register to vote and 12 presentations. During 2012, a series of presentations by local service providers were offered to participants on a wide range of topics: fall prevention, cold/flu prevention, gambling, nutrition, blood pressure, diabetes, podiatry, CPR, high rise fire safety, sun safety, nutrition in summertime, and fraud prevention. In addition, the ROSS coordinator organized a health-fair for the residents that included a pot-luck meal and information booths from many health-care providers, Cataldo Ambulance, the WIC program, and local rehab and nursing homes.

At the beginning of 2012 the CHA had one Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program for HCV and it consisted of 21 participants. Fast forward to December of 2012 The CHA was awarded a new FSS program for Public Housing tenants and an extension of the current FSS program for HCV participants. Furthermore, through an outreach program we were able to expand the current FSS HCV program to 26 participants. As we move forward, our goal is to maintain our FSS HCV participants at 25 and build a waiting list and then look to expand. For our FSS PH we begin outreach and education for the residents of Mace and Scrivano with the intention of securing 25 participants and a waiting list.

The enhanced Resident Police Officer Program was adopted by the Board of Commissioners in June of 2012 and was implemented in July 2012. The program consists of Chelsea Police officers who apply and interview for one of the 5 positions as resident police officer. The 5 resident officers reside in our State or Federal developments and are responsible for conducting monthly crime watches meetings, daily walking patrols, coordinate directive car patrols, investigations, tenant on tenant harassment interviews and section 8 tenant investigations. During the ½ a year the resident officers were responsible for assisting the CHA in issuing 14 no trespass orders, 5 warnings for illegal dumping on CHA grounds, 2 warnings for unauthorized motor vehicles, 6 termination hearings and 7 tenant on tenant interviews. The Resident Police Officer partnership has allowed the CHA to better monitor its property and work with its residents in providing a safe environment for all to live.

In 2012, the Executive Director made Resident Councils one of his top priorities to ensure resident participation and empowerment. The CHA is made up of 8 developments, 5 State and 3 Federal. At the time of his appointment there was only one fully functioning resident council. Over the course of the year the Director of Supportive Services with assistance from property managers, resident police officers and interns put together a very thorough outreach plan for the resident councils. The plan included a very thorough informational packet explaining the resident's rights and the nomination and election process in both English and Spanish. Then there were development meetings for all residents to participate and for those who did not show up there was a door to door campaign to ensure all residents were aware and educated on the process. Furthermore, during the process fliers in both English and Spanish were passed out weekly to residents promoting the process and Election Day. At the conclusion of 2012 we have 6 resident councils out of 8, with the remaining two being addressed in 2013. The Director of supportive Services worked closely with all 6 resident councils to coordinate a first time training sessions for all council members with the Mass. Union of Public housing Tenants and the Chelsea collaborative. The trainings were put together to educate the council members on their duties, responsibilities, budgeting, reporting and conduct of meetings. The resident councils were elected for 3-year terms.

## 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.

### Projects Underway in 2012:

- Prattville Boilers: \$299,970 for construction.
- Innes Boilers: \$541,000 for construction.
- Union Park Electrical Upgrade: \$116,953 for construction.
- Margolis Electrical Upgrade: \$166,536 for construction.
- Federal Safety and Security Grant: \$227,500 for construction.
- Prattville Site Upgrade: Scope issues are under review at DHCD.
- Federal Comprehensive Modernization: Scope issues for the planned \$1.3 million construction program are underway.

## MAINTENANCE

There were a total of 8515 work orders during the 2012 year. All 9,058 have been completed and closed out, with an average completion time of 3.34 days.

The maintenance department continued its working relationship with both ROCA and Just-A-Start Corporation. These organizations provide both employment as well as educational opportunities for some Chelsea youths as well as some young men and women from our surrounding cities. This relationship has proved to be rewarding and productive for everyone involved. ROCA has provided cleaning services at our two elderly high rise buildings, moping and waxing the corridors as well as site cleaning services at some of our family developments. This crew was made up from a group of young single mothers on a grant from Roca. A second crew, the Advanced Transitional Employment Painting Crew has worked on painting and cleaning of some of our vacant units. Just-A-Start has been working on converting a computer/classroom space at 29 Guam Rd. back into a three bedroom unit. A second crew has performed such services as interior hallway painting, exterior painting, and sidewalk trip hazard repairs at our federal family sites.

Beginning in March a series of energy audits were conducted by LIMF (Low Income Multifamily) energy retrofits, to assess energy saving opportunities in all of the Chelsea Housing Authority developments. As a result, many cost effective upgrades were implemented throughout the developments. These upgrades range from replacing regular incandescent light bulbs in residents lamps with new compact florescent bulbs to replacing light fixtures in units, common hallways and exterior fixtures as well. In addition to the lighting, an energy audit was performed on all of the refrigerators which resulted in the replacement of 283 old inefficient refrigerators with new energy star appliances at no cost. Additional energy audits are planned for some time in the spring of 2013.

In May, the Chelsea Housing Authority entered into a contract with B&B Pest Control Co. to implement an Integrated Pest Management Program(IPM) at all of our developments. The program included inspections and treatment of every unit two times a year along with all of our common areas and sites. A comparison of resident generated work orders for extermination for the last six month of 2011, before our IPM program with B&B Pest and the last six months of 2012 showed a 25% drop in resident calls for extermination.

In August, New Ecology Inc. conducted a training session for Chelsea Housing Authority staff on Green and Healthy initiatives. The training was designed to improve awareness of such things as energy and water conservation, controlling pests, causes of asthma and preventing moisture/mold.

In November, two- day training was conducted by DHCD's Facilities Management Specialist Unit for Chelsea Housing Authority staff on Inspectional Training Methods to better prepare the staff when conducting inspections of units and common areas. Each employee who took the class and passed the examination was presented with a certificate from the Department of Housing & Community Development. All participants passed.

Annual inspections were completed for all units in 2012. Annual elevator inspections were completed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at the Margolis and Buckley high rise buildings. The sprinkler systems were tested and inspected at these developments as well. The Hartford Steam Boiler & Insurance Co. inspected and certified all of our boilers as required by the Department of Public Safety.

## **FINANCE / HUMAN RESOURCES**

In 2012 the CHA has made several changes within the organization to reduce the cost of all the overall operating expenses without compromising our services, so we may continue to provide great service to our community. With the combination of the Finance Department and the Human Resources Department we continue to make updates and amendments to our policies and procedures. A major change in the department has been the outsourcing of our payroll process to Paychex Inc., with a goal of going to a bi-weekly payroll schedule in the beginning of 2013. The Chelsea Housing Authority has also hired a new Fee Accountant and Accounting Manager to oversee all of our new cost saving functions. These functions include processing

expense checks (Accounts Payable) twice a month, revamping an internal control process for multiple checks and balances within the departments.

**Combined Balance Sheet as of 12/31/2012**

<b>31-Dec-12</b>	<b>Revolving Fund</b>	<b>Section 8 Voucher</b>	<b>MRVP</b>	<b>State 400</b>	<b>MA 16-C (Federal)</b>	<b>Combined Totals</b>
<b>Assets</b>						
Total Cash	370,949	832,396	68,869	100,576	740,673	2,113,463
Total Accts. Receivable	1,103,864	24,195	23,256	325,875	14,569	1,491,759
Total Advances	0	71,800	2,000	305,000	203,000	581,800
Total Deferred Charges	0	7,687	0	80,229	39,222	127,138
Total Land Structure Equipment (Fixed Assets)	0	9,071	0	4,184,469	8,519,437	12,712,977
Total Other Assets	86,496	0	0	0	0	86,496
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,561,309</b>	<b>945,149</b>	<b>94,125</b>	<b>4,996,149</b>	<b>9,516,900</b>	<b>17,113,632</b>
<b>Liabilities &amp; Surplus</b>						
Total Accounts Payable	75,861	725,424	45,833	519,345	222,467	1,588,930
Total A/P, W/H Accts.	14,267	0	0	0	0	14,267
Total Deferred Credits	0	24,291	50,594	42,034	32,592	149,511
Total Surplus	0	195,434	-2,302	4,101,860	9,053,536	13,348,528
Total Accrued Liabilities	889,381	0	0	332,910	208,306	1,430,597
Total Advances	581,800	0	0	0	0	581,800
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Surplus</b>	<b>1,561,309</b>	<b>945,149</b>	<b>94,125</b>	<b>4,996,149</b>	<b>9,516,900</b>	<b>17,113,632</b>

**SUMMARY:**

The Chelsea Housing Authority is pleased 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.