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Burlington Housing Authority
Minutes from the Regular Board of Commissioner Meeting
August 25, 2026

Call to Order of Regular Meeting

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to order at 9:08 a.m. on August 25, 2026, via Zoom and in person at 245 Pine Street, Burlington, Vermont by Board Chair Jane Knodell. The following commissioners were present: Bill Schrecker and Kirby Dunn. Also in attendance were Executive Director Steve Murray, Director of Operations Jeff Metcalf, Director of Rental Assistance Stephanie Bixby, Director of Housing Retention Crystal Jones, Director of Property Management Susan Carp, Director of Human Resources Melissa Farnham (Zoom), Chief Financial Officer Nicholas Hibbard, and Controller Eric DeBlasio.

Decker Towers Resident Council Secretary Catherine Foley (Zoom) was also in attendance.

1. **Changes to the Agenda**

   Jane Knodell added a Personnel Matter to the Executive Session.

2. **Forum: Residents of BHA Properties/General Public**

   Catherine Foley was in attendance and is saving comments for the security update.

3. **Resident Council**

   There were no comments from Resident Councils.

4. **Board Actions**
   a. **June 30 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes**

      Kirby Dunn made a motion to approve the minutes, as presented. Bill Schrecker seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.

   b. **SEMAP Certification**

      Stephanie stated that the SEMAP Certification is the internal audit of the HCV Program. BHA is not hitting our usual benchmark, but there is a reporting issue. We believe it has to do with Mainstream being reported under HCV. We are trying to figure it out and have a meeting with HUD this afternoon. We are trying to get a report to figure out what families are missing.

      Kirby Dunn made a motion to approve the SEMAP Certification, as presented. Bill Schrecker seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.

5. **Executive Director Report**

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Steve Murray was able to take a two-week vacation and got no phone calls or emergency requests. He was very happy with his leadership team and praised them for how great they are.

He also met with Diane Meyerhoff about the newsletter and needs to have discussion about email list about first newsletter. Jane Knodell also stated Brian Lowe will look over the newsletter before sending it out.

Steve Murray also reported that we have new HUD State Director, Katherine Blanchard, and have very good relationship with her. He spoke with her Monday about having a meeting with Valley Vista and Treatment Court. They also spoke about getting HUD involved with neighborhood watch at our properties. If they can get funding and training from HUD, it will go a long way.

He also met with Michael Banks, who wants work requirements for all vouchers. BHA feels this is a bad idea. This would hurt landlords because it would take vouchers away if the tenant does not make the work requirement. They are just a public figure for HUD and cannot make this a mandate unless they make it a law.

Steve Murray also reported that one of the tenants got new status that was affected by immigration and will be receiving a voucher going forward. Jamaica is still working with the other two, one of which is having hearings.

Stephanie Bixby met with Treatment Court about how to fill out local preferences. BHA also has an invitation from Judge Griffin about Treatment Court and Valley Vista. Valley Vista is right when they get out and they have hands-on services. Vergennes is more hands-off service for 60 more days. After Vergennes, they are set up to some sort of housing whether temporary or permanent. Steve Murray would like to work with the EDs in the State to give local preferences to those coming out of Treatment Court. Crystal Jones believes the State model could work because it would allow people to get away from the situation they came from.

Steve Murray thanked Crystal Jones and Alyssa Peake for meeting with the residents at South Square. It looks like they might be forming a Resident Council. Crystal Jones reported they are in the early stages of the process. It was also reported that the Decker Towers Resident Council has created their own website. Crystal Jones stated that there might be some transition and movement in the Wharf Lane Resident Council as people attain more knowledge of what is involved in it.

Josie Curtin, Director of Property Management at CHT, asked for advice about safety and security at their properties. They are doing almost everything we are doing except for resident engagement.

6. **Consent Agenda**
   a. **Housing Retention**

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Crystal Jones thought it would be nice to let the Board understand referrals and how they are processed. Hoping to make it efficient, use resources effectively, and make relationships stronger with our partners. Jane Knodell asked about CHT Triage. Crystal explained that is just sitting there waiting to be assigned currently. Steve Murray wanted everyone with one of our vouchers to meet with our retention team. Crystal Jones is concerned that if the person does not get the service they need from a partner, we would not have enough time to help. As of now, we are staying with what we have, but thinking about referring to CHT, since they have a retention team.

b. Rental Assistance

Kirby Dunn asked about FMR and Payment Standards. Stephanie Bixby said that we get to set Payment Standards based on 90% to 110% of the FMR. Sometimes we go above and sometimes we go below the FMR based on our funding. We would go lower because we do not have the money. If we raise the Payment Standard, it will mean every landlord under the program would ask for a rent increase. Winooski, Vermont State, and Burlington try to stay consistent with each other. Landlords are going to increase rents outside the range of the payment standards so participants cannot rent their apartments.

c. Property Management
d. Asset Management
e. Building Operations
f. Human Resources

Bill Schrecker made a motion to accept the Consent agenda, as presented. Kirby Dunn seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.

7. June 2026 Financials

Nick Hibbard stated that there is nothing substantially different from throughout the year. Maintenance and turnover costs were high. We were doing higher cost turnovers because we upgraded the quality. There were a lot of flooring and painting expense as those were not capital. Utilities went over quite a bit. Income was quite a bit higher than anticipated. Write offs were slightly higher than anticipated. Going into next year, maintenance costs will likely be similar with a lot of the same and we want to do a lot of deferred landscaping and general interior projects and painting.

Kirby Dunn asked about the maintenance and electric costs at Franklin Square. Jeff Metcalf said there is an electric water heater. They have put in electric heat pump water heaters. They are not really optimal for us. Riverside is heated by Rinnai heaters which are 88% efficient. Supplemental heat is electric. Tenant education is the best for us. Using dryers and taking multiple showers is going to drive the

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utilities up. There is also an unusual amount of high-water usage which we do not find out about until the bill comes in.

Bill Schrecker made a motion to accept the June 2026 Financials, as presented. Kirby Dunn seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.

8. Safety & Security Updates – BHA Properties

Jeff Metcalf stated we have a couple units we are watching at Decker, Dettman, Wharf, and South Square. Catherine Foley said they are seeing an uptick in traffic that seems to be to certain apartments but cannot tell if it is drug related. They are also seeing an uptick of homeless people trying to stay in the building. As we wind down the summer, we will take another look at this and will look to see if we need more Sheriff sweeps. Sweeps will start soon for staff and Decker residents. The Dettman camera upgrade should be going in soon and install should go quick which was funded by the DOC Grant. Kirby Dunn asked if they were seeing an uptick, shouldn't we try to get security now? Jeff Metcalf does not believe it would benefit that much right now, but staff sweeps and resident sweeps will. Catherine Foley agrees that the Sherriff is not needed at this point. The police are also responding when they are calling them.

9. CY2026 Housing Choice Voucher Funding Update

Stephanie Bixby said the President wants to cut the program by 13%. We will be lucky if we are level funded. We will have over $1 million in HUD Held Reserves for next year. We will be giving up a lot that we were given this year. If it doesn't look that bad going into next year, we will lease up the way we want to, and we will look into shortfall for next year, if needed. The voucher waiting list is very healthy. The yearly purge is also very helpful.

10. Executive Session – Legal Matters & Personnel Matter

Jane Knodell invited Steve Murrary, Nick Hibbard, and Susan Carp to join for the Executive Session Legal Matter and Steve Murray for the Personnel Matter.

At 10:13 a.m. Bill made a motion to enter the Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Matter. Kirby seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.

At 10:55 a.m. Kirby Dunn made a motion to exit the Executive Session. Bill Schrecker seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.

11. Other Business

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Jane Knodell would like an update about the evaluation of properties for the November meeting.

There will be an update on Strategic Plan in the December meeting.

Jane Knodell and Kirby Dunn will be spending time with Nick Hibbard and Crystal Jones reviewing grants. A discussion about Grants will be added to the September meeting.

There being no other business, Kirby Dunn made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 a.m. Bill Schrecker seconded the motion. There was unanimous approval.

DocuSigned by:
Steven Murray
Secretary