

REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SAVANNAH
August 12, 2026

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Savannah met in regular session at the office of the Housing Authority of Savannah, 1407 Wheaton Street – Building B Community Room beginning at approximately 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, August 12, 2026. Chairwoman Dr. M. Ann Levett called the meeting to order and upon roll call those present and absent were as follows:

Present: Dr. M. Ann Levett, Chairwoman
 Michael Holland
 Happi Peavey-Guzman
 Dr. Kenneth Zapp

Absent: Edward Gresham, Vice Chairman, *late arrival*

Also present were Executive Director Evette Hester, Director of Finance Robert Faircloth, Director of Human Resources Shannell Hardwick, Director of Resident Services Kristin Hopkins-Graham, Interim Director of Property Management Selena Kelly, Director of Real Estate Development and Preservation Dr. Jesseca Lightbourne, Interim Director of Assisted Housing Programs Renay Malone, Management Analyst Tammy Brawner, Resident Advisor Tia Brightwell, and Resident Advisor Deborah Bulloch. Attorney Dana Braun of Ellis, Painter, Ratterree, & Adams LLP, and other community members were also in attendance.

APPROVAL OF AMENDED AGENDA

Commissioner Michael Holland made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner Peavey-Guzman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

MAYORAL REMARKS

The Honorable Van R. Johnson, II addressed the Board of Commissioners, thanking them for the important and challenging work that they do in volunteering their service to the Housing Authority of Savannah. The Mayor encouraged progress on the redevelopment of Yamacraw Village; stating that it was time for the community to move forward. The Mayor expressed appreciation for the work begun under former Executive Director Earline Davis and continued under Executive Director Evette Hester.

The Mayor also offered his support for The Salvation Army and requested that the Board of Commissioners approve a reasonable extension for the construction of the Center of Hope facility on the Augusta Avenue parcel that HAS sold to the organization in 2019. Mayor Johnson closed by expressing his appreciation to the Board and Executive Director for the time. Chairwoman Levett thanked the Mayor for his remarks. Commissioner Gresham arrived during the Mayor's address.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW RESIDENT ADVISORS

Executive Director Evette Hester began the meeting by stating that Resident Advisors to the Board of Commissioners had recently been elected by the Housing Authority's Resident Advisory Board. This is an advisory position to the Board to provide insight to the Commissioners from a Resident perspective and the position is for a term of two years. Ms. Hester invited Director of Resident Services Kristin Hopkins-Graham to formally introduce the Resident Advisors. The Commissioners welcomed Tia Brightwell of Simon Frazier Homes and Deborah Bulloch of Pickens Patterson Terrace.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda included the minutes of the June 9, 2026 Rescheduled Regular Meeting; Resident Services Report; Property Management Report; Assisted Housing Programs Report; Real Estate Development Report; and Financial Report. Commissioner Holland made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Gresham seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Hester delivered her report to the Commissioners. Executive Report highlights included:

- Ms. Hester notified the Commissioners that members of the Evaluation Committee for the selection of the master developer for Yamacraw Village, traveled during the month of June to view properties of shortlisted candidates. Ms. Hester briefed the

Board regarding the visit which was productive for the committee and provided a timeline for next steps regarding Yamacraw Village redevelopment.

- The Housing Authority of Savannah has contracted with a consulting firm to assist with the development of a Strategic Plan; the Board of Commissioners all were interviewed to receive input for strategic planning. Ms. Hester updated the Commissioners on planning process thus far. The Executive staff is currently working collaboratively and is expected to have a final product in the fall. The Commissioners will receive the plan for review before it is finalized.
- Ms. Hester provided a report on the Housing Authority's swift response to a power outage and temporary water pump failure at Horace Stillwell Towers. Ms. Hester briefed the board on staff actions and response on site and impacts on residents, as well as next steps to secure the water pump.
- Ms. Hester invited Director of Real Estate Development and Preservation Jesseca Lightbourne to address the Board regarding the HAS's capital improvements project to upgrade stairwells and breezeways at Simon Frazier Homes. Dr. Lightbourne outlined some unexpected delays due to unforeseen concrete slab and stairwell structural integrity issues. Ms. Hester advised the Board that the unforeseen issues will result in additional costs to the overall contract, which will more than likely return that contract to the Board for review.
- Ms. Hester stated that HAS is currently working on a repositioning plan for its real estate portfolio, which will be delivered to the Commissioners in the coming months.
- Ms. Hester briefed the Commissioners on the HUD Public Housing Agency Recovery & Sustainability (PHARS) On-Site Assessment that took place in July. A team of HUD officials was onsite to view and observe operations because of PHAS scoring for FY 2024. Ms. Hester said that HUD would be issuing an assessment report of its observations and HAS would work together with HUD to enter a recovery plan. Preliminary areas for improvement that were shared are related to vacancies and rent collection.
- Ms. Hester noted that HAS recently partnered with Savannah State University to offer a college campus tour for HAS youth. This program offers the Authority's young people an opportunity to receive academic program information and resources and to set a pathway forward for our young people to head to college and become future leaders. Ms. Hester expressed her appreciation to Ms. Hopkins-Graham and the entire Resident Services team for their programming.

Chairwoman Levett thanked Ms. Hester for her report and asked for any comments or questions about the information provided. Commissioner Zapp asked that data points from the consultant for the strategic plan be provided to the Board; Ms. Hester agreed. and some discussion followed. Commissioner Gresham asked Ms. Hester to explain impacts to residents of Yamacraw Village related to the delayed approval of the Section 18 demolition/disposition application. Ms. Hester explained the effect on the number of eligible vouchers received.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION REGARDING YAMACRAW VILLAGE

Dr. Lightbourne read a resolution regarding Yamacraw Village into the record which was prepared to further outline commitments and history of the project and to show that the Board of Commissioners took into consideration the comments from the Annual Plan public hearing in January 2026. A discussion was held regarding the resolution as presented and relocation. After this discussion, Commissioner Gresham made a motion to adopt Board Resolution 08-26-01. Commissioner Peavey-Guzman seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The resolution immediately follows these minutes.

ADOPTION OF REVISED PERSONNEL POLICY

Director of Human Resources Shannell Hardwick addressed the Board regarding proposed changes, and provided a summary of changes, to the *HAS Personnel Policy*. Commissioner Gresham made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Peavey-Guzman, to adopt Board Resolution No. 08-26-02, approving the revised Personnel Policy. The motion passed unanimously, and the resolution follows these minutes.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Zapp asked that the next regular meeting include a public comment period. Chairwoman Levett stated the Board will be reviewing the document counsel created outlining a procedure to receive public comments, for consideration on how to move forward.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At approximately 12:20 p.m., Commissioner Gresham made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Zapp, to enter Executive Session to discuss a real estate matter.

The affidavit of Chairwoman Dr. M. Ann Levett, the presiding officer, is attached to these minutes and made a part hereof. At 3:11 p.m., the Board of Commissioners returned to open session.

There being no further business, the Chairwoman called for a motion to close the meeting. The motion to close was made by Commissioner Gresham and seconded by Commissioner Holland. The Chairwoman adjourned the meeting at 3:18 p.m.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Evette Nelson", written over a horizontal line.

Secretary

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Anna Levette", written over a horizontal line.

Chairwoman

Approval Date: September 9, 2026

RESOLUTION NO. 08-26-01

**RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SAVANNAH BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION OF SECTION 18
DEMOLITION/DISPOSITION APPLICATION TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT SPECIAL APPLICATIONS CENTER**

WHEREAS, in 2019 and 2023 the Housing Authority of Savannah (“Authority”) conducted Capital Needs Assessments (“CNAs”) of all five public housing properties in its portfolio. The CNAs identified immediate and future physical work necessary to maintain the properties over a period of twenty years. The 2019 CNA results were analyzed by the Authority and presented to the Board of Commissioners in three Workshop sessions held between December 2019 and May 2020;

WHEREAS, on June 9, 2020, the Board of Commissioners adopted a Resolution authorizing the Authority to take all actions necessary to advance the Public Housing Repositioning Plan (“Plan”), which included the demolition of Yamacraw Village due to physical obsolescence, as authorized by Section 18 of the Housing Act of 1937;

WHEREAS, on March 8, 2022 and April 10, 2025, the Board of Commissioners adopted Resolutions authorizing the Authority to submit a Section 18 Demolition/Disposition application for Yamacraw Village;

WHEREAS, the Authority prepared a Demolition application that was partially submitted to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) on August 19, 2025, aiming to receive authorization to relocate residents and demolish physical structures;

WHEREAS, a resident council for Yamacraw Village was elected on September 17, 2024;

WHEREAS, the resident council for Yamacraw Village is named and does business as “Yamacraw Residents Council” (“YRC”);

WHEREAS, YRC submitted its formal opposition to the Demolition application to HUD on or around October 22, 2025;

WHEREAS, discussions between the Authority and YRC in relation to the overall demolition plan and terms of resident relocation have taken place and are continuing;

WHEREAS, on January 14, 2026, the Board of Commissioners conducted a duly noticed public hearing, in accordance with applicable HUD requirements, to receive comments from residents and the public regarding its Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Plan, which incorporated the Authority’s upcoming activities, including the proposed demolition of Yamacraw Village;

WHEREAS, on January 16, 2026, following consideration of the public comments received, the Board of Commissioners approved and adopted the Authority's Fiscal Year

2026 Annual Plan, which includes the proposed demolition of Yamacraw Village and related redevelopment activities;

WHEREAS, the Environmental Review for this demolition project has been concluded by the City of Savannah as Responsible Entity under 24 CFR Part 58;

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of Savannah expresses its continuous support of the request to demolish the public housing units in Yamacraw Village with its accompanying plans for relocation; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director is authorized to execute all documents necessary and provide certifications and submit the same to HUD's Special Applications Center for approval, in association with its request to demolish 315 dwelling units and 1 non-dwelling building of the Yamacraw Village property (HUD project number GA00200006)

ADOPTED THIS [REDACTED] 12th day of August, 2026

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SAVANNAH

By: 
Dr. M. Ann Levett, Chair

ATTEST:



Evette Hester, Executive Director

RESOLUTION NO. 08-26-02

**RESOLUTION OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SAVANNAH BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS ADOPTING A REVISION TO HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SAVANNAH
PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL**

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of Savannah (HAS) provides its employees with a Personnel Policy Manual outlining important policies and procedures regarding employment with HAS;

WHEREAS, HAS wishes to amend the Policy as set forth in this Resolution; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the updated Personnel Policy Manual that is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated by this reference is approved by the Board of Commissioners to be effective immediately.

PASSED this 12th day of August, 2026.

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SAVANNAH

By: 
Dr. M. Ann Levett, Chairwoman

Attest:


Evette Hester, Secretary

STATE OF GEORGIA)
COUNTY OF CHATHAM)

AFFIDAVIT

PERSONALLY appeared before the undersigned attesting officer, duly authorized to administer oaths, Dr. M. Ann Levett, who after being duly sworn, deposes, and on oath states the following:

(1) I was the presiding officer of a duly noticed meeting of the Housing Authority of Savannah held on August 12, 2026.

(2) That it is my understanding that O.C.G.A. §50-14-4(b) provides as follows:

When any meeting of an agency is closed to the public pursuant to subsection (a) of this Code section, the chairperson or other person presiding over such meeting shall execute and file with the official minutes of the meeting a notarized affidavit stating under oath that the subject matter of the meeting or the closed portion thereof was devoted to matters within the exceptions provided by law and identifying the specific relevant exception.

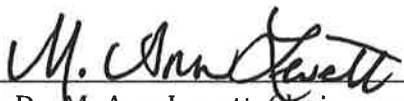
(3) A portion of the meeting held on August 12, 2026 was closed in order to consult and meet with legal counsel pertaining to pending or potential litigation, settlement, claims, administrative proceedings, or other judicial actions brought or to be brought by or against the agency or any officer or employee or in which the agency or any officer or employee may be directly involved; provided, however, the meeting may not be closed for advice or consultation on whether to close a meeting; and, as authorized pursuant to O.C.G.A. §50-14-2(1).

(4) A portion of the meeting held on August 12, 2026 was closed for the purpose of authorizing negotiations to purchase, dispose of, or lease real property as authorized pursuant to O.C.G.A. §50-14-3(6)(b)(1)(B).

(5) No unrelated matters were mentioned or attempted to be offered for discussion during the closed portion of the meeting.

(6) This affidavit is being executed for the purpose of complying with the mandate of O.C.G.A. §50-14-4(b) that such an affidavit be executed.

This 12th day of August, 2026


Dr. M. Ann Levett, Chairwoman
Housing Authority of Savannah

Sworn to and subscribed before me
This 12th day of August, 2026.


Tammy A. Brawner
Notary Public

