

## Resident Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2025



**RAC members present:** Alison, Becca, Gary, Jacque, Jerome, Kiara, Lee, Loretta, Mark, Michael, Randall, Roland, Sage, and Vernesta (Virtual)

**CRH staff members present:** Sasha Sobers-Outlaw, Valencia Chambers Manora, Keady Hollingsworth, Andrew Oommen.

**Facilitator(s):** Sasha Sobers-Outlaw, Valencia Chambers Manora

**Public:** Saunatina Sanchez

**The meeting is called to order by Sasha Ife Sobers-Outlaw at 6:00pm.**

### Resident Reflections

Barbara made public comments. She has waited 21 years to have their apartment and will be keeping it for the rest of her life.

### Why did you join the RAC?

Valencia headed off the "WHY?" exercise, for people to recognize why they serve or why they do advocacy with the RAC. Valencia shared her why: Residents deserve safe decent affordable housing, and we get to provide that. She gets to see firsthand how our residents begin to thrive.

Kiara shared her WHY: she loves the fact that they have the opportunity to help other residents without a good income and make the community better for those who live in the community. The mixing of staff and residents makes it so that there are better living conditions for everyone.

Becca: She feels like an outsider in the organizations that she joins. She feels like she must speak up and do something rather than complain.

Jerome: He joined to voice his hardships while his building was out of a manager. Is glad he joined because it gives him a better understanding of things behind the scenes, and to fix those challenges.

Allison: Lived 5 years at Station House. Described herself as a serial volunteer. It gave her an opportunity to contribute in a positive way, because she's been here since her building opened. It is a safe space for her and allows her to leave something positive behind.

Randall: got involved because he has tried to organize a meeting for years, because he goes to board meetings regularly. He hopes that the RAC meetings can represent the tenants and their issues, which will make it better for everyone, including property management. This group has a chance to set an

example that everyone can follow. Peter Gula has moved out of Elizabeth James; neighbors have come to him for years asking him to take issues to CRH staff. He will be leaving CRH because the sale of Elizabeth James is happening. He hopes the RAC will progress to advise the board.

Mark joined because he wanted a space for voices, after seeing people frustrated with their living arrangements. He is also a career volunteer, and wants to be involved in the community, in areas that need it. He wanted to join like-minded individuals that want positive change.

Michael shared that he wanted to start a newsletter for his building.

Lee shared about being hesitant about joining Pride Place. He feels that because he can help people because he has experience and can use that to help people at his building.

Jacque shared that she believes in open communication, dialogue, advocacy, and the right to protest without repercussions. She wants the RAC to get out to all the buildings and tenants, so that they can be supportive when needed, and make the buildings complain less and be more involved in the community. She wants events, programs at the buildings; friendship and communication are a need at buildings; knowing your neighbor faces. Community and knowing your neighbors are a survival need.

Sage shared started out as a tenant who wanted to communicate with staff; curious what the RAC is and what it is doing; began to feel community, trust, and purpose at the RAC. Working with staff there is a sense of collaboration and listening to concerns.

Sasha Ife shared that she feels drawn to people and loves being able to do something powerful for the community. Raised with similar roots in advocacy for yourself and others.

Saunatina is the resident board liaison member; she did not join the RAC because she wanted to take a step back and let the council figure out its own role. Jacque and she started a small tenant council at Centennial. S honored to be pushed to join the board at that point. They wrote a cover letter about the concept of a resident council and their goal will be to continue the effort to establish a concept similar to RAC. S pushed Chris to form the RAC so that residents will have an effective system of maintaining housing. Her big why is that she's proud that there is a group that is working towards resident advocacy. She is here to be loud and start trouble, so that issues get worked out. Cultivating opportunity and hope, creating space for people to discuss policies that CRH operates under.

Loretta shared a why: to help liaison RST + board + PM; hope that being a member of RAC to change resident attitudes towards PM or the board. Actions speak louder than words, hopes people will feel seen, heard, appreciated.

Kiara mentioned that her original manager supported her while she moved to Washington.

Barbara mentioned that security is too relaxed around her building, 18<sup>th</sup> Ave, and no one wants drug addicts to be loitering around their building.

### **Mission and Goals in the Charter**

**MISSION:** The Resident Advisory Council (RAC) at CRH works collaboratively with CRH staff and leadership to give residents voice, improve residents' quality of life and to create a positive living community.

**GOALS:** The RAC focuses on five main areas: Representation, Relationship, Education, Communication, and Advocacy.

**Take break at 6:48 – 7:02**

### **Self-Advocacy**

SSO + VCM setting up advocacy exercise, watching a video on self-advocacy and breaking people up into groups. The groups have 10 minutes to discuss the prompt and then report. The prompt is: Have you ever advocated for a movement before? What was that belief or ideal? What happened because of your efforts?

Group 1: members in this group do a lot of volunteer work for animals and against animal abuse; as well as removing unsafe tenants from the buildings; as well as domestic assault for women and recovery coaching. Becca does advocacy work and reentry into society for foster children, veterans, and former prisoners.

Group 2: More animal lovers; Barbara advocated and fought for animals in abusive and neglectful situations. Jerome is unafraid to step into any environment that has a need. Jacque started a PTA, with opening bank accounts, funding, etc. for her son's school. They sold popcorn for a dollar as fundraising at her son's school.

Group 3: Sage advocate for juvenile delinquents, as well as anti-gun violence. Grandmothers against gun violence. Michael collected donations for food banks, as the produce prices were getting too high. Lobbied for Pike Place market. Spoke on advocating for Vietnam vets. It is also a broad experience to advocate for yourself within the RAC. Alison visited Olympia to support Medicaid expansion program, which was passed while Alison was there.

Group 4: Roland worked in Portland as a volunteer and a worker. Mark had a group of people that studied how food was being wasted at restaurants in Charleston, WV. It was found that staff cooks were making food to steal for themselves. Randall spoke on his experience as a helper within the Elizabeth James House bylaws. He was asked to join because of his experience speaking with the board.

### **Approval of Changes in the Charter**

Item 3.9- Behavioral expectations: Unanimously Approved

Item 3.11- New Member Intake: Becca opposed, and Randall opposed.

Item 4.4a- Minutes from the meeting "due" within one week of the meeting.

Item 4.4b- Agendas + minutes will be posted on the website within the same period hopefully. Agenda to go out one week before the meeting: Becca opposed it because there could be mistakes or misunderstandings in the minutes. Jerome suggested a standardized format for the minutes. VCM will discuss with Pat H.

Item 4.6a- Board Updates: Saunatina to provide announcements from the Board: Approved

Item 4.6d- Board Members: Board members encouraged to attend the Rac meetings.

Jerome mentioned a BBQ or a grilling event for recruiting new members.

VCM passed out the Member Interest Form, and we will attach to minutes when those are sent out. Asked what we should discuss next meeting.

### **Saunatina & Board updates**

The PDA board holds the purse-strings of CRH. Necessary for non-profits, as well so that residents and staff can give organized feedback. Email [board@communityrootshousing.org](mailto:board@communityrootshousing.org) to get virtual RC link, board packet, and agenda.

Minutes are approved at each meeting.

Chris will [...] hereby proclaim the atrium of 12th Avenue Arts to be known as the Frank Chopp Hall of Opportunity.

The Executive Committee nominates Kristin Winkel to join the Committee as Officer, effective immediately. Additionally, the current term of Saunatina Sanchez ended April 2025. The Executive Committee moves her forward for reappointment for her second term as CRH resident Board member.

The Executive Committee would like to move Kelly Price forward to serve on the PDA Board in a Mayoral nominated seat.

Financial Summary: Leslie and Chasten will present the regular report and dashboard through March 2025. Financials were reviewed by the FAM committee.

Executive Session: We will enter an executive session to discuss candidates for board membership pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (h) To evaluate the qualifications of a candidate for appointment to elective office.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 by Valencia Chambers Manora.**