

**Summer passes into autumn in some
unimaginable point of time,
like the turning of a leaf.**

~ Henry David Thoreau



**GCRA Board Meeting
September 24, 2024**

October 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Fairview Townhomes Grand Opening 9:00-11:00 am	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Administration Committee meeting, 12:30	9	10 Operations Committee meeting, 12:30	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Board meeting, 12:30	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

November 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Veterans' Day (Office Closed)	12 Administration Committee meeting, 12:30	13	14 Operations Committee meeting, 12:30	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 Board meeting, 12:30	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Thanksgiving Day (Office Closed)	29 Day after Thanksgiving (Office Closed)	30

**GCRA Board Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, September 24, 2024 – 12:30 p.m.
GCRA Board Room**

- 1) Call to Order Chair Charlotte Osmer
- 2) Invocation
- 3) Special Guest, Harold Carey, Retired Executive Director of Greenville Housing Futures
35 Years of Developing Affordable Housing in Greenville
- 4) Introduction of New Staff Member, Levi Chesney
- 5) *Approval of the August 27, 2024 Board Minutes (Pages 5 – 7)
- 6) *Approval of the Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Report (Presentation)
- 7) Administration Committee (Pages 8 – 10)
 - a) *Approval of Organizational Chart Changes
 - b) *Approval of Fiscal Year 2025 Consolidated Budget
 - c) Financial Highlights – KPI (Page 11)
- 8) Operations Committee (Pages 12 – 14)
- 9) Other Business
 - a) Greenville Revitalization Corporation Update
 - b) Executive Director Updates
- 10) Executive Session. When necessary, the Board convenes in Executive Session for the discussion of negotiations incidental to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the Redevelopment Authority of a claim, or other matters authorized by the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.
- 11) Adjournment



Minutes
Greenville County Redevelopment Authority
Regular Session
Tuesday, August 27, 2024

Board Members Present: Charlotte Osmer, Chair
Lawson Wetli, Vice-Chair
Allen White, Treasurer
Amy Coleman
Barry Coleman
David Doser
Denise Ernul
James Hammond
Jane Kizer
Walter Moragne
Diana Weir

Board Members Absent: Robert Julian

Staff Members Present: Joe Smith, Executive Director
Pamela Proner, Finance Director
Meg Macauley, Project Coordinator

1. **Opening and Roll Call.** The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 12:30 p.m.
2. **Invocation.** The invocation was offered by Mr. Doser.
3. **Approval of the July 23, 2024 Board Minutes.** On a motion by Ms. Weir, seconded by Mr. Moragne, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the July 23, 2024 Board meeting as presented.
4. **Administration Committee.**
 - a. **Approval of Program Year 2024-2025 Cost-of-Living Increase for Employees.** Ms. Coleman stated that the Committee approved the four percent cost-of-living increase for employees.

On a motion by Mr. Moragne, the Board unanimously approved the proposed four percent (4%) cost-of-living increase for staff for program year 2024-2025.

5. **Financial Highlights – KPI.** Ms. Proner reviewed the financial report for the month of June. Cash and Net Income have declined, which is indicative of the activity the agency is performing. Unrestricted Net Assets have increased by six percent, and the Rental Portfolio shows \$22,659. In three months, the Local Government Investment Portfolio (LGIP) made \$140,373 in interest. Ms. Proner has been in conversation with an investment advisor, who in light of decreasing interest rates is recommending that we consider longer term US Treasury investments in addition to the LGIP. Discussion ensued regarding interest rates, projections, and the mechanics of moving GCRA cash. Even “long term” investment only means one to two years maximum, with the only potential drawback being the forfeiting of a small amount of interest if cash needed to be accessed early.

Ms. Proner provided additional updates regarding June financials; our largest project is the Fairview Townhomes, with one to two more draws remaining to be paid. Shelter outreach is GCRA’s second largest activity. We are still awaiting the \$200,000 from the County. GCRA’s audit will be complete soon, and a full report will be made at the September Board meeting.

6. **Operations Committee.** Mr. Coleman stated that there were no approval items presented at the August Committee meeting.
7. **Other Business – Executive Director Updates.** Mr. Smith provided updates as follows:
 - a. **Project Drive-In.** Mr. Smith reiterated that the County Finance Committee had tabled the discussion at their last meeting until questions could be answered regarding the re-zoning process; no further updates have been provided.
 - b. **Project 43/Greenville Housing Futures.** Mr. Smith shared that the closing for transfer of properties from Greenville Housing Futures to GCRA had taken place the previous Friday. GCRA staff have already been in communication with tenants and all units have been inspected; comments have been positive, and staff are developing a good rapport with the tenants. Mr. Smith responded to questions about cash transfer and leases; any remaining funds from GHF will be transferred to GCRA, and clients will be transferred gradually from GHF leases to new annual or month-to-month leases with GCRA.
 - c. **Fairview Townhomes Grand Opening.** Mr. Smith shared two potential dates for the event; ultimately, the date was set as October 1st, with additional details to be announced. It is hoped that City of Greer and HUD representatives will be present to speak at the grand opening.
 - d. **Upcoming Board Application Period.** Mr. Smith reminded the board that Greenville County’s application period for boards and commissions is the entire month of September and noted that staff will prepare talking points regarding GCRA’s accomplishments over the past three years, for those seeking reappointment.

- e. **Staff Vacancies.** Mr. Smith stated that a new Project Manager has been hired and will start August 30th; he will be introduced at the September Operations Committee meeting and then at the full board meeting. The job posting for Program Manager has been placed on several websites, and interviews have begun. Mr. Smith thanked those who were able to attend the farewell event for Ms. Nwobodu last week.
 - f. **Upcoming Requests/Approvals.** Mr. Smith shared that he plans to seek approval from the Administration Committee and full board in September for adjustments to the organizational chart to more accurately align job titles with staff responsibilities. Ms. Ernul inquired about the changes; Mr. Smith shared that there would be no drastic alterations and that the same three departments remain, but title changes and a reduction in direct reports will be presented. A memorandum and full organizational chart will be provided in the August Committee packet.
8. **Adjournment.** There being no further business, on a motion by Ms. Coleman, seconded by Ms. Weir, the meeting was adjourned at 12:54 p.m.

Secretary



Memorandum

To: GCRA Board Members
From: Amy Coleman, Administration Committee Chair
Re: Administration Committee Meeting, September 10, 2024
Date: September 10, 2024

- 1. Opening and Roll Call.** The Administration Committee met on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 12:30 p.m. Committee members present were Robert Julian, Charlotte Osmer, Diana Weir, and Allen White. Amy Coleman and Jane Kizer were absent. Staff present were Joe Smith, Executive Director; Pamela Proner, Finance Director; Meg Macauley, Project Coordinator; Beverly Robertson, Human Resource Manager/Assistant to the Executive Director; and José Reynoso, Associate Community Development Planner.

Action Items: The following items which were considered by the Administration Committee must be approved or ratified by the Board.

- 2. Approval of Organizational Chart Changes.** Mr. Smith referred to the memo and organizational chart in the packet and presented the proposed changes.

Ms. Osmer shared questions submitted to her by Mr. Doser; Mr. Smith responded regarding the supervisory and reporting structure of the Executive Assistant/Office Manager position and several Operations Department positions, and the moving of Human Resources/Payroll under the Finance Department. Ms. Osmer inquired about last year's compensation study and how these changes will align with that and within GCRA's budget; Mr. Smith responded that the same consultant (with Find Great People) has worked with staff to provide updated job descriptions and salary ranges. Ms. Proner noted that when taking into account the open Operations Director position, the reduction from Program Director to Manager, and other vacancies, there is actually a savings in salaries in the current budget even after the four percent salary increase approved last month. Discussion ensued regarding board versus Executive Director oversight of personnel decisions. Mr. Smith reiterated that the proposed changes are intended to align job titles with actual staff responsibilities.

On a motion by Ms. Weir, seconded by Mr. White, the Committee unanimously approved the organization chart changes as presented.

3. **Approval of FY 2025 Consolidated Budget.** Ms. Proner referenced the memorandum and budget on pages 7 and 8 of the packet and presented the Consolidated Budget, explaining that while the Annual Action Plan is more project-focused, this assigns numbers to the broad categories. The Consolidated Budget consists of the Carryforward Budget, which represents any unspent funding as of June 30th, and the Annual Action Plan Budget, which represents the funds allocated to GCRA by HUD for the current program year. The Consolidated Budget is comprised of all funding sources, including federal (CDBG, HOME, ESG, MLF, HOME-ARP) and program income, as well as Greenville County's contribution, the Greenville County Affordable Housing Fund, and unrestricted funds. Total expenditures for the Consolidated Budget are \$26,674,699.

Ms. Proner stated that the budget increased for the coming year, noting large projects including Fairview Townhomes and Gridley Place. She stated that the largest budget categories are for new construction, infrastructure, housing partners, and shelter outreach, and noted that the HOME-ARP program is expected to draw to a close but could be extended. Ms. Proner explained that Net Proceeds from issuance of long term debt, at \$452,330, is the balance on our bank loan for Fairview. She responded to several questions; LGIP dollars are interest income which is part of unrestricted income under the Carryforward Budget, and rental income falls under miscellaneous.

On a motion by Ms. Weir, seconded by Mr. White, the Committee unanimously approved the Fiscal Year 2025 Consolidated Budget as presented.

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Please review the following items of business discussed at the Administration Committee meeting. These items will not be discussed in the Board Meeting unless there is a question or comment about them.

4. Administration Reports

- a. **Subrecipient Report.** Mr. Reynoso presented the Subrecipient Report for August. He stated that almost all agencies have expended 100 percent of their allocated funding for program year 2023-2024; staff are in conversation with them to determine if any further reimbursement requests can be submitted.
- b. **HOME-ARP Subrecipient Performance Report.** Mr. Reynoso presented the report, stating that all funds have been allocated for the year. He and Ms. Conley have been in conversation with several agencies regarding reimbursement requests. Mr. Reynoso explained that some agencies tend to submit their requests at the end of each year, but we prefer monthly submittals. Mr. Smith and Ms. Conley are scheduled to visit several subrecipient agencies on September 18th.

5. Financial Reports

- a. **Financial Highlights – KPI.** Ms. Proner reviewed the financial report for the month of July; as the new fiscal year has just begun, the month and year-to-date numbers are identical. The cash balance decreased slightly from the prior month but is not a concern. Total assets and net position remained relatively unchanged. The largest expenditure for the month was Mercy Housing through AHF at \$138,000.

GCRA's balance in the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP) is \$9,174,857, representing 76 percent of total cash. \$43,490 in interest was earned in July, at an average interest rate of 5.5 percent. Ms. Proner will meet with a financial advisor on Friday to discuss moving some of GCRA's cash to a long-term investment vehicle.

- b. July Financials.** There were no questions posed for Ms. Proner regarding the financial statements.
- 6. Other Business – Executive Director Updates.** Mr. Smith provided updates as follows:

 - a. Project Drive-In.** Mr. Smith stated that the County Finance Committee approved the ordinance that will grant permission to deed the approximately 15-acre parcel off Fairmont Avenue in Greenville to GCRA for development of a signature affordable housing project. The ordinance now moves to full County Council for a first reading on September 17th, with second and third readings to follow.
 - b. Project 43.** Mr. Smith stated that the closing to transfer ownership of the properties took place on August 23rd. Mr. Harold Carey, retiring Executive Director of Greenville Housing Futures, will be recognized at GCRA's September Board meeting; we will thank him for giving us the properties as well as for his many years of contribution to affordable housing in Greenville.
 - c. Fairview Townhomes Grand Opening.** The Fairview Townhomes grand opening event is scheduled for October 1st from 9:00 to 11:00 am; a calendar invitation will be sent.
 - d. Staff Updates.** Mr. Smith stated that Levi Chesney has been hired as GCRA's new Project Manager; he will be introduced at the Operations Committee on Thursday and at the full board meeting this month. Mr. Chesney is already proving to be highly motivated and capable. Interviews for the Program Manager position have been conducted; we continue to seek qualified candidates. The job posting will remain on GCRA's website, the municipal and planning websites, and Indeed.com through the end of the month.
 - e. Potential LIHTC Project Partnership.** Mr. Smith stated that he met recently with leadership of the Greenville Housing Fund (GHF) regarding a potential LIHTC project on which GCRA could partner. GHF are seeking a soft commitment of \$500,000 in funding from GCRA, which will help bolster their LIHTC application; they will still be required to apply for funding through GCRA's usual process in the spring.
- 7. Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

GCRA Financial Highlights
Month at a Glance July 24

Government-Wide	Month	Change from Prior Month	%	Change from FY24 (FYTD)	%
Cash	12,090,811	Decrease	-2%	Decrease	-2%
Total Assets	40,733,749	Increase	0%	Increase	0%
Notes Payable	3,129,743	Decrease	0%	Decrease	0%
Debt-to-income			3%		3%
Net Position	34,320,978	Increase	0%	Increase	0%
Net invest. in capital assets	9,054,465	Decrease	0%	Decrease	0%
Unrestricted net assets	25,266,513	Increase	0%	Increase	0%

Governmental Funds	Month	YTD	Change from Prior Month	%
Revenue	593,628	593,628	Increase	23%
Expenditures	568,676	568,676	Decrease	-36%
Net Income (loss)	24,952	24,952	Increase	-106%

Rental Portfolio	Month	YTD	Change from Prior Month	%
Net Income (loss)	1,614	1,614	Increase	-114%

Local Government Invest. Pool	Month	FYTD
LGIP Balance	9,174,857	% of total cash: 76%
Interest Earned	43,490	Avg Interest rate: 5.50% 43,490

Notes:

GCRA is still waiting on the \$200,000 FY24 Budget balance to be received from the County



Memorandum

To: GCRA Board Members
From: Barry Coleman, Operations Committee Chair
Re: Operations Committee Meeting, September 12, 2024
Date: September 12, 2024

1. **Opening and Roll Call.** The Operations Committee met on Thursday, September 12, 2024, at 12:30 p.m. Committee members present were Barry Coleman, Chair; James Hammond, Vice-Chair; David Doser; Denise Ernul; Walter Moragne; and Lawson Wetli (virtual). Staff present were Joe Smith, Executive Director; Beverly Robertson, Human Resource Manager/Assistant to the Executive Director; Meg Macauley, Project Coordinator; and Levi Chesney, Project Manager.
2. **Invocation.** The invocation was offered by Mr. Doser.
3. **Introduction of New Staff Member.** Mr. Smith introduced GCRA's new Operations Project Manager, Levi Chesney. Mr. Chesney provided some background about himself and his work experience. The committee members then introduced themselves.

Please review the following items of business discussed at the Operations Committee meeting. These items will not be discussed in the Board meeting unless there is a question or comment about them.

4. **Operations Reports**

- a. **Home Sales and Rental Property Report.** Mr. Smith presented the Home Sales Status Report for August. Staging is nearly complete at 311 Lion Heart Lane and preparations are underway for the Fairview Townhomes grand opening.

Mr. Smith also presented the Rental Report for August. The closing for transfer of the "Project 43" units from Greenville Housing Futures to GCRA took place on August 23rd; the properties are now included in the report, and currently have an occupancy rate of 91 percent.

The Rental Delinquency Report in the packet showed a past due balance of \$22,266; this figure was reduced to under \$20,000 since publication. Discussion ensued regarding clients who remain chronically late in making payments. GCRA staff always ensure rent amounts are affordable for each household based on income calculations, and work diligently with individuals who encounter issues

resulting in financial problems and late payments. The committee and staff discussed life skills and life choices; monthly inspections of units; rental and homeownership mindset differences; and what might be helpful in changing bad patterns.

- b. **Operations Activity Report.** Mr. Smith presented the Activity Report for August. Home repair projects have been on hold due to ongoing research and discussion regarding new radon testing requirements conveyed to staff by HUD representatives. Staff have since ascertained that testing of individual projects will not be necessary, and repair program activity can now be resumed.

Mr. Smith showed pictures of the lot next to GCRA's Annex property, which has been completely cleared of all overgrowth in the past few weeks. Staff have thanked Code Enforcement department officials for their assistance in prompting the owner to clean up their property.

- c. **Public Works Report.** Mr. Smith presented the Public Works Report, noting updates and progress on several projects. GCRA's engineer has submitted plans for the Gridley Place Townhomes to the Greenville County Land Development Department; the project should be able to be bid by the end of the calendar year. Mr. Smith has contacted CoTransCo representatives to determine why the Iola Wilson Street project has not started and is awaiting a response.

5. **Other Business – Executive Director Updates.** Mr. Smith provided updates as follows:

- a. **Project Drive-In.** Mr. Smith stated that the County Finance Committee approved the ordinance that will grant permission to deed the approximately 15-acre parcel off Fairmont Avenue in Greenville to GCRA for development of a signature affordable housing project. The ordinance now moves to full County Council for a first reading on September 17th, with second and third readings to follow.

Assuming the transfer is approved, once GCRA receives title, a master plan will have to be developed, followed by a long-term financing plan; this will be a signature project requiring several years of planning and development.

- b. **Project 43.** Mr. Smith stated that the closing to transfer ownership of the properties took place on August 23rd. Mr. Harold Carey, retiring Executive Director of Greenville Housing Futures, will be recognized at GCRA's September Board meeting; we will thank him for giving us the properties as well as for his many years of contribution to affordable housing in Greenville.
- c. **Fairview Townhomes Grand Opening.** The Fairview Townhomes grand opening event is scheduled for October 1st from 9:00 to 11:00 am; a calendar invitation has been sent to all board members.

- d. Staff Updates.** Mr. Smith stated that interviews for the Program Manager position have been conducted; we continue to seek qualified candidates. The job posting will remain on GCRA’s website, the municipal and planning websites, and Indeed.com through the end of the month.
 - e. Potential LIHTC Project Partnership.** Mr. Smith stated that he met recently with leadership of the Greenville Housing Fund (GHF) regarding a potential LIHTC project on which GCRA could partner. GHF are seeking a soft commitment of \$500,000 in funding from GCRA, which will help bolster their LIHTC application; they will still be required to apply for funding through GCRA’s usual process in the spring.
 - f. Greenville Revitalization Corporation Update.** Mr. Smith stated that Ms. Robertson is working with McKinley, Cooper & Co. (CPAs) on the final tax return for the Greenville Revitalization Corporation; a recommendation will be brought to the board before year-end regarding formal closure of the inactive nonprofit. If at some time in the future GCRA wants to establish another nonprofit for the purposes of receiving tax-deductible donations, that can be discussed as needed.
- 6. Adjournment.** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

Commentary: What can be done to make SC housing more affordable?

BY GERALD P. DWYER JR.

SEP 10, 2024



Gerald Dwyer

Rents have increased in South Carolina's major cities since 2020. According to one estimate, apartment rents have increased 40% in Charleston, 36% in Columbia and 21% in Greenville. Over the same period, consumer prices increased by 21%, indicating that rents in Greenville merely kept up with inflation through August and rents adjusted for inflation increased quite a bit in Charleston and Columbia.

What can be done about it?

The obvious solution is to increase the supply of apartments in Charleston and Columbia. While this is the solution in some ways, it will not lower rents on the Charleston peninsula due to limited land area, its attractiveness as a place to live and building restrictions to preserve the peninsula's character. Still, building in other parts of the city can lessen the inevitable increases in rents on the peninsula and provide less expensive alternatives.

Another way to lower the increases in rents is the simple, classic one: impose government controls to limit increases in rents, which the Biden-Harris administration recently proposed on older properties. However, a review of empirical studies of rent controls from 1967 to 2023 found that while rent controls do reduce rents on rent-controlled units, they also reduce the overall supply of rental units, which hurts the very people the policy's advocates intend to help. Furthermore, the quality of rent-controlled units falls as landlords reduce maintenance to partly offset the lower rental income.

Moreover, rental units with uncontrolled rents, such as new units in the Biden-Harris proposal, will end up having higher rents than they would otherwise. This makes those who do not live in rent-controlled units worse off.

As an additional means of lowering housing costs, the Biden administration supports banning landlords' pricing algorithms and is supporting a lawsuit from its Department of Justice, in which the DOJ is alleging that landlords' pricing algorithms have contributed to these rental price increases.

Commendably, S.C. Attorney General Alan Wilson did not provide support for this suit when asked. He made the right decision because the use of algorithms has not increased rents in South Carolina.

While the increase in rents in Charleston and Columbia since January 2020 has been extraordinary, that increase was not driven from landlords using pricing technology. It was driven from a record demand for housing in our state. With the number of rental units now increasing, these extraordinary increases will not continue.

In fact, rents in our state are already declining. While they rose about one percentage points in all three of the largest metropolitan areas in South Carolina last year, rents fell about two percentage points when adjusting for inflation.

Landlords and renters alike would be wise to worry that rent caps, whether through the Biden administration's rent control proposal or through its ban on algorithms, will lower potential returns from building new rental units. Consequently, fewer units would be built in South Carolina and rents would actually rise.

In summation, increasing the supply of housing is the key to lowering housing costs in South Carolina. Rent caps, on the other hand, will reduce the housing supply, which will raise rents and make us all worse off than we were before.

We can hope that our elected representatives will ultimately hand the keys to this housing affordability dilemma to builders and entrepreneurs instead of the regulatory state. It's the only path forward to adequately solving this problem.

Gerald P. Dwyer Jr. is senior fellow at the American Institute for Economic Research. He also is a professor emeritus of economics and BB&T Scholar at Clemson University.

A Great Big
THANKS
To All of You

GCRA BOARD MEMBERS

You are so very nice!

It has been a pleasure
working with you, all these
years. Thank you for everything.

Best always
Imma