

**Minutes of the  
BOARD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
March 10, 2025  
10:24 AM  
Virginia Housing Center  
4224 Cox Road  
Glen Allen, Virginia**

Members Present

Louie Berbert, Chair  
Sylvia Bryant  
Cindy Davis  
Bill Garrett  
Lynne Goldberg (Remote)  
Jenna Goodman (Remote)  
Abigail Johnson (Remote)  
Keith Johnson  
Roger Jones, Vice Chair  
Aaron Osleger  
J.M. Snell  
Scott Stosser  
Mark Trostle

Members Absent

Tammy Neale

DHCD staff present for all or part of the meeting:

Lyndsi Austin, Associate Director  
Justin Bell, Assistant Attorney General  
Jeff Brown, Deputy Director of Building and Fire Regulations  
Catherine Farnsler, Policy Analyst  
Cameron George, Policy Analyst  
Bryan Horn, Director  
Trisha Lindsey, Policy and Legislative Services Director  
Andrew Malloy, Sr. Policy Analyst  
Tory McGowan, Program Manager  
Sandra Powell, Senior Deputy Director of Community Development and Housing  
Sulaiman Safi, Board Coordinator  
Chase Sawyer, Policy Manager  
Todd Weinstein, Chief Deputy Director

Call to Order

Mr. Berbert, Chair of the Board of Housing and Community Development, called the meeting of the Board to order at 10:24 a.m.

Roll Call                      The roll was called by Mr. Sawyer. Mr. Sawyer reported that a quorum was present.

Remote Participation Mr. Sawyer reported that Ms. Goldberg (personal matters), Ms. Goodman (personal matters), and Ms. A. Johnson (personal matters) had been pre-approved by the Chair to participate in the meeting remotely.

A motion was made by Mr. Trostle and seconded by Mr. Stosser to confirm the Chair's decision to approve the remote participation of Ms. Goldberg, Ms. Goodman and Ms. A. Johnson. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Berbert, Bryant, Davis, Garrett, K. Johnson, Jones, Osleger, Snell, Stosser, Trostle; NAYS: None). Ms. Goodman stated that she was participating from Roanoke, Virginia, Ms. Goldberg stated that she was participating from Alexandria, Virginia, and Ms. A. Johnson stated that she was participating from Bologna, Italy.

Public Comment                      Mr. Berbert opened the floor for public comment.

Mr. Andrew Milliken, representing the Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) Codes and Standards Workgroup, spoke in opposition to returning to 2018 Virginia Construction Code regulations related to NFPA 13R sprinkler systems for group R-2 and R-3 buildings for safety reasons. Mr. Milliken shared that the VFSB workgroup supports the 2024 International Building Code (IBC) language related to 13R sprinkler systems (including in the 2024 Virginia Construction Code) and supports addressing the unintended issues related to Group R-3 buildings by developing consensus language with homebuilders to provide relief.

Mr. Andrew Clark, representing the Home Builders Association of Virginia, associated himself with the comments of Mr. Milliken. Mr. Clark elaborated on the unintended issues of the 2024 IBC language related to 13R sprinkler system requirements for Group R-3 buildings, specifically the higher costs these requirements have created for homebuilders.

After seeing no other speakers, Mr. Berbert closed public comment.

Approval of Minutes	<p>A motion was made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Mr. Stosser to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2024 meeting of the Board. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Berbert, Bryant, Davis, Garrett, Goldberg, Goodman, A. Johnson, K. Johnson, Jones, Osleger, Snell, Stosser, Trostle; NAYS: None).</p>
Report of the Codes and Standards Committee	<p>Mr. Jones, Chair of the Codes and Standards Committee, asked Mr. Sawyer to provide the report. Mr. Sawyer reported that the Codes and Standards Committee approved a recommendation to the Board to authorize staff to initiate regulatory action by preparing and publishing Notices of Intended Regulatory Action (NOIRAs) for the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), Statewide Fire Prevention Code (SFPC), Industrialized Building Safety Regulations (IBSR), Virginia Amusement Device Regulations (VADR), Manufactured Home Safety Regulations (MHSR), and Virginia Certification Standards (VCS). This recommendation came as a standing motion to the Board. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Berbert, Bryant, Davis, Garrett, Goldberg, Goodman, A. Johnson, K. Johnson, Jones, Osleger, Snell, Stosser, Trostle; NAYS: None).</p>
Industrial Revitalization Fund Program Guidelines	<p>Mr. Sawyer presented proposed changes to Industrial Revitalization Fund (IRF) program guidelines for FY2026. Mr. Sawyer shared that four changes were proposed by program staff: 1) adding language clarifying the intent and purpose of the IRF program, 2) adding clarifying language that IRF loans must be repaid and cannot be forgiven, 3) adding clarifying language regarding site remediation funds being used for program match requirements, and 4) updates to loan interest rates to for-profit developers.</p> <p>Mr. Horn spoke to the work being done by the IRF program including converting derelict and abandoned industrial buildings to useful purposes, such as childcare, mixed-use, housing, and commercial.</p> <p>Board members discussed the IRF program and Mr. McGowan answered programmatic questions.</p> <p>A motion was made by Ms. Davis and seconded by Mr. Stosser to approve the IRF program guidelines update for FY2026. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Berbert, Bryant, Davis, Garrett, Goldberg, Goodman, A. Johnson, K. Johnson, Jones, Osleger, Snell, Stosser, Trostle; NAYS: None).</p>

Consolidated and Annual Action Plan Update	<p>Ms. Austin gave a presentation on the Consolidated and Annual Action Plans. Ms. Austin reminded the Board that the Consolidated Plan is part of the US. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) requirements to assess housing needs in Virginia and is submitted once every five years. Additionally, Ms. Austin noted that DHCD submits an Annual Action Plan every year, which includes a needs assessment, strategic plans, and annual goals covering the funds DHCD spends from federally funded housing programs. Ms. Austin stated that the final draft of the 2025-2026 Annual Action Plan will be posted and made available to the Board and public in May, before being presented to the Board for approval at its May meeting.</p>
Private Activity Bonds	<p>Mr. Weinstein shared an update on Private Activity Bond (PAB) applications. Mr. Weinstein noted that DHCD is responsible for the portion of Virginia's PABs set aside for local housing authorities and set aside for the state allocation. Mr. Weinstein provided a recap of the Board's actions in 2024 that changed the PAB application process from "first come first serve" to a competitive scoring process. Mr. Weinstein shared DHCD has allocated funds based on the first round of applications and will open a second 30-day application window on April 1, 2025. A third application window may be announced Summer 2025 if needed.</p>
General Assembly Update	<p>Mr. Sawyer updated the Board on the agency's efforts to track legislation and budget items during the 2025 General Assembly Session. Mr. Sawyer offered that there will be a more detailed update at the next Board meeting on the bills of significance that are signed into law.</p>
Technical Review Board Request	<p>Mr. Brown provided information on the State Building Code Technical Review Board's (TRB) request that the Board consider a solution to address an identified issue with the NFPA 13R sprinkler requirements.</p> <p>Board members discussed the TRB request and the issues surrounding the NFPA 13R sprinkler requirements in the 2021 Virginia Construction Code, specifically as they relate to overburdensome requirements on Group R-2 and R-3 occupancy buildings. Mr. Berbert permitted relevant stakeholders who were in attendance to share their perspectives and provide additional information regarding this issue. Board members discussed different options for addressing this issue. Board members expressed their desire to adopt new consensus regulatory language as quickly as possible.</p>

A motion was made by Ms. Davis and seconded by Mr. Trostle to direct staff to coordinate with relevant stakeholders and prepare the appropriate regulatory documents to address the Technical Review Board's request and present the documents to the Board for approval at its next meeting. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Berbert, Bryant, Davis, Garrett, Goldberg, Goodman, A. Johnson, K. Johnson, Jones, Osleger, Snell, Stosser, Trostle; NAYS: None).

Virginia Fire Services  
Board Report

Mr. Snell shared that the last Virginia Fire Services Board (VFSB) meeting was cancelled due to snow. Mr. Snell shared that the next meeting of the VFSB will be March 27, 2025.

Virginia Housing Report

Ms. A. Johnson shared that the Virginia Housing Board is tracking how changes in the federal government may impact federal housing tax credit programs. Ms. Johnson shared updates on Virginia Housing's Workforce Housing Investment Program.

Report of the Director

Mr. Horn welcomed the newest member of the Board, Mr. Aaron "Hank" Osleger. Mr. Horn congratulated Mr. Keith Johnson on recently being awarded "Fire Chief of the Year" by Governor Youngkin. Mr. Horn shared that Mr. Jeff Brown was promoted to Deputy Director of Building and Fire Regulations at DHCD.

Mr. Horn provided an update on recent funding announcements of the Affordable and Special Needs Housing program. Mr. Horn provided an update on DHCD efforts to "close the digital divide" in Virginia with broadband expansion programs.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business to be discussed.

New Business

There was no new business to be discussed.

Board Matters

Mr. K. Johnson shared that while he will continue to serve on the Board, he will be retiring from his position as fire chief of Loudon County.

Board members congratulated Mr. K. Johnson on his retirement and thanked him for his years of service.

Mr. Bell provided an update on an appeal filed by the Serria Club regarding the adoption of the 2021 Uniform Statewide Building Code.

Future Meetings

Mr. Horn shared that the next meeting of the Board was scheduled for May 12, 2025, and the Board may meet in the interim to consider regulations related to NFPA 13R sprinkler requirements.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Mr. Stosser to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Berbert, Bryant, Davis, Garrett, Goldberg, Goodman, A. Johnson, K. Johnson, Jones, Osleger, Snell, Stosser, Trostle; NAYS: None). The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.