

**August Board Meeting August 27, 2025, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00a.m.**

# Introductions and Instructions

Marsha Oliver, Board Chair

Ms. Oliver opened the meeting by introducing herself and warmly welcoming Josh Martino, the President of Bono’s Bar-b-q, and the newest member of KHA’s Board. Following this, each Board member took a moment to introduce themselves and share a cherished school memory. Ms. Oliver then recognized Jerelyn Allen, the Assistant Director of Grants Management and Strategic Partnership, for her decade of dedicated service to the City of Jacksonville and Kids Hope Alliance.

Next, Ms. Oliver provided agency updates including the more than 16,000 youth who attended KHA-sponsored field trips this summer, a generous $1 million contribution from the Gate Foundation to revive the Mayor’s Book Club, and the 1,000 backpacks, 255 laptops, and school supplies which were recently distributed at the 5th Annual Historic Eastside Back to School Event.

Members Present – Marsha Oliver, Cynthia Nixon, Carson Tranquille, Lawrence Dennis, Josh Martino

Members Absent – Meredith Chartrand-Frisch, Kevin Gay

# Public Comments

Ms. Oliver explained that public comments will be taken now for all items that will be voted on at the meeting. These comments should only be in reference to those action items below. A separate public comment time will be open at the end of the meeting for any general comments to be made by the public.

Mr. John Nooney voiced his endorsement of the Mayor’s Youth at Work Partnership and the grant applications included in this month's agenda. He also championed the establishment of a public park along Pottsburg Creek and emphasized the importance of ensuring public access to waterways throughout Duval County, Florida.

# KHA Board Officers Vote and Committees Discussion

Marsha Oliver, Board Chair

Ms. Oliver asked for a motion to accept the slate of Officers recommended at June’s workshop which includes:

Board Chair – Marsha Oliver

Board Vice-Chair – Cynthia Nixon

Board Treasurer – Carson Tranquille

Board Secretary – Meredith Chartrand-Frisch

Motion: Lawrence Dennis

Second: Cynthia Nixon

Approved: 5-0

# Financial Report

Jessica Pitts, Director of Finance

Mrs. Pitts provided an overview of the following funds:

* Operating Fund with Year End projections
* KHA Trust Fund- Mini Grants
* Criminal Justice Reinvestment Grant WIN 2.0
* SIPPRA
* SAMHSA – ReCAST
* SAMHSA – CREATE
* DOJ- Project RISE

Mrs. Cynthia Nixon asked to include JUMP reports in this review moving forward and Mrs. Pitts agreed to do so.

# Approval of May Minutes

Marsha Oliver, Board Chair

Ms. Oliver asked if there were any revisions to the minutes, to which there were none. She then asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Motion: Cynthia Nixon

Second: Lawrence Dennis

Approved: 5-0

# New Business

Dr. Saralyn Grass, Chief Executive Officer Kenneth Darity, Chief Administrative Officer

* 1. **Community Funding Accelerator In-Kind Support**

Dr. Grass explained that this grant is an in-kind technical assistance opportunity, therefore KHA will not receive direct funding. Instead, the organization will benefit from support in crafting grant proposals and receiving technical guidance. Delivery Associates will collaborate with KHA to prepare proposals totaling up to $18 million, so expect to see us return with grant requests as we progress in this partnership.

Mr. Everett emphasized that achieving success involves tackling the challenge of providing opportunities for youth. In recent years, the number of opportunity youths has risen from 16,900 to 21,000. Most KHA programs conclude at age 18, leaving a gap in support for those who age out. This presents a chance for us to explore funding options to enhance support services for students 18+, facilitating their transition into careers, higher education, or apprenticeships.

* 1. **Youth Travel Trust Fund Application**

Mr. Darity presented a summary of the Youth Travel Trust Fund Application, which has been capped at $10,000 to enable a greater number of eligible programs to access these funds. Previously, the fund allowed providers to receive up to $25,000, a limit that restricted the number of beneficiaries within the program.

* 1. **Mayor’s Youth at Work Partnership Internship Program RFP**

The existing contract with Goodwill of Northeast Florida has reached its natural conclusion after a five-year term. Consequently, we are initiating a Request for Proposal (RFP) with a funding allocation of $1.4 million. This award is expected to benefit at least 300 youth, with $900,000 designated specifically for job salaries. In addition to employment opportunities, the program will provide comprehensive workforce development training and related services.

* 1. **Grant Applications**
     1. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office of Violence against Women

The Department of Justice issued a funding notice over the summer, offering $9.5 million, prompting KHA to proceed with the application due to the impending deadline. Although the grant has not yet been awarded, the Board has the option to withdraw the submission if it decides not to continue.

This grant, along with others, focuses on coordinated prevention and response efforts addressing various forms of violence, as detailed in the accompanying materials. Examples of such violence include domestic violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking. The grant application encompasses a broad age range of 0 to 24 years, aligning well with the populations we serve.

If granted, the funding will total $500,000 over a three-year period. KHA has proposed a cash match of $100,000, which would equate to approximately $33,333 annually, contingent upon receiving the award. The matching funds will be provided from our Special Needs category.

* + 1. Department of Justice (DOJ) Office for Victims of Crime

Dr. Grass indicated that this initiative is closely tied to KHA’s Diversion program, which supports the families of victims. The grant facilitates access to counseling and various services for these family members. KHA is collaborating with Partnership for Child Health, which also serves as a diversion provider.

* + 1. National League of Cities - Southern Cities Economic Inclusion Initiative: Implementation Phase

This grant establishes a recognition program for businesses that implement family-friendly policies, utilizing a tiered certification system. It offers technical support, tax incentives, and funding for childcare initiatives to encourage the adoption of such practices.

While discussing this grant, Board member, Carson Tranquille requested a revision of the Board Action Item template to incorporate Strategic Goals that correspond with the proposed action items. Dr. Grass agreed to do so.

Ms. Oliver asked for a motion to approve the six board action items previously discussed.

Motion: Carson Tranquille

Second: Lawrence Dennis

Approved: 5-0

# Review of KHA Actions

Dr. Saralyn Grass, Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Grass reviewed city council legislation, contract renewals and audit reports reflected on the KHA Actions Report for June 23-August 22, 2025.

# Partner Presentation – Family Support Services

Jada Hunter, Executive Director of Community Reinvestment and Center of Hope

Ms. Hunter presented a summary of the initiatives at the Center of Hope, located at the Emmett Reed Center. The Center of Hope is dedicated to ensuring the safety and stability of children and families in the 32209 zip code. Their efforts focus on reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect investigations, minimizing the number of children removed from their homes, and fostering hope among 60 community residents.

Additionally, they train and mentor at least 100 hope builders within the community to empower and uplift fellow residents, while also enrolling 75 families in the Family Resource Center to enhance the safety and well-being of children and families.

# CEO/CAO/CSO Updates

Dr. Saralyn Grass, Chief Executive Officer Kenneth Darity, Chief Administrative Officer Rodger Belcher, Chief Strategy Officer

Dr. Grass provided an update on the budget and explained that KHA’s operational funds were reviewed by the Finance Committee, leading to extensive discussions regarding program funding, although no formal votes were taken on these matters. A significant part of the conversation centered around KHA’s collaboration with the Jacksonville Journey Forward, which requested $2 million, with approximately $1.9 million earmarked for youth program initiatives. The goal is to keep all children's services under one roof. They also spoke about some direct contracts that were given to the Mayor's office that will also be directed to KHA's budget which will be heard in the Finance Committee on September 16th, and then in the full Council on September 23rd.

Last week, the City Council voted on two significant matters. They included an amendment in their budget bill stipulating that funds cannot be allocated for illegal immigrants or DEI programs, although exemptions were made for children's services and KHA. Additionally, the Council decided to withhold 2% from the budget of every city department for lapsed dollars, placing it "below the line." Should any department require access to this withheld amount, they must seek approval from the DOGE committee to retrieve the final 2%. KHA was also exempt from this budgetary adjustment.

During this budget discussion, Board Vice-Chair Cynthia Nixon requested a Conflict-of-Interest report from Dr. Grass which would detail all the potential conflicts with City Council members and how much funding they are receiving through Kids Hope Alliance programs. Dr. Grass agreed to request this information from the Ethics department.

Next, Mr. Darity announced that this year marks the fifth anniversary of the Field Trip Enhancement Project, which has grown from nine vendors to twenty-one. He thanked Deborah Sibley for her effective management of this project and explained that youth attendance and surveys have been used extensively to strategically reallocate funds, ensuring that the most popular sites receive additional financial support. This strategy allows for an increase in available seats without requiring extra funding.

He also noted that in June, KHA provided services to 7,509 students, reflecting an increase of 267 compared to the previous year. In July, the number rose to 8,505 youths, marking a modest gain of 25 students from last year. KHA’s staff is also diligently working to enhance the efficiency of payment processing for providers. In January, a lean project was initiated to reduce rejections and the duration for reimbursement processing. KHA has established a goal of approving reimbursements within 14 business days. From January to May, KHA staff processed 871 reimbursements, with an impressive 96% rejected fewer than three times. During the period from June to August, the average time taken to approve reimbursements was 7.63 days which is well below the goal of 14 days.

Rodger Belcher provided an update on the PPR report, or Program Performance Review. This will be the next large data infrastructure project to go live. The challenge is how to provide reliable performance measures to make data-driven decisions with a very large number of records, sometimes over 150,000 for one school year while ensuring ease of interpretation. The plan is to use data visualization and intuitive graphics. This impactful work is being led by Cedric Hicks, Director of the Program Effectiveness team.

# Board Discussion

Marsha Oliver, Board Chair

The discussion occurred during the meeting and is documented throughout the minutes.

# General Public Comments

Ms. Leslie Jean-Bart expressed her apprehension about the proposed reductions to the Mayor's budget. Furthermore, she called on KHA to ensure transparency regarding the funding provided to Council President Kevin Carrico's organization, the Boys & Girls Club, by the City of Jacksonville. She suggested that the KHA team create a dashboard displaying the names of each provider along with their respective funding amounts.

Ms. Pat McCollough, Special Assistant to Mayor Deegan, called for increased oversight of the Mayor’s Youth at Work Partnership program led by Goodwill. She indicated that while over 1,400 youth applied for summer jobs, only 160 were successfully placed in employment through this initiative. She believes that a greater portion of funding should be directed towards job placements rather than administrative overhead costs. Ms. McCollough also shared that there were inconsistencies in the notification process affecting all students, regardless of whether they secured employment.

Mr. Trey Ford, the Strategic Partnerships and Programming Manager at St. John's Riverkeeper, announced that his organization offers boat excursions departing from the Burt Maxwell fishing pier, navigating the Trout and Ribault Rivers across thirteen census tracts. This initiative presents a valuable opportunity for KHA to enhance its summer field trip offerings, and Mr. Ford extended an invitation to Board members to join an upcoming tour to experience this educational boat trip firsthand.

Ms. Oliver, Board Chair, responded to these comments by sharing that transparency is a core value for the Board and KHA Staff. This summer, the Board established two committees: one focused on Strategic Services and the other, named GUIDE, aimed at addressing the Duval Doge initiative. The goal for these committees is to enhance understanding and improve decision-making processes related to the work. She expressed her appreciation for the suggestion to implement a dashboard reflecting contract amounts for each provider. She also mentioned that KHA is preparing a report on the Mayor's Youth at Work partnership, and staff has been effective in creating informative charts, graphs, and presentations that reflect the city’s significant investments. Last, she expressed her appreciation for the St. John's Riverkeeper organization and their contributions to the community.

1. **Adjourn**

Ms. Oliver adjourned the meeting at 11:41 am.