

# THE HRHA NEWSLETTER

News, announcements, and more from the  
Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority



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### Community Advisory Board Amplifying Resident Voices

The Community Advisory Board (CAB) was established in November 2023. Its first meeting served as an orientation, where HRHA’s Executive Director outlined roles and expectations, and members expressed their enthusiasm for the work ahead. By March 2024, the CAB had made significant strides, electing officers and holding meaningful discussions on critical issues, such as the connection between safety and mental health in their communities.

During meetings, CAB members bring their passion and commitment to each discussion, speaking up about the topics that matter most to them. One of their first major initiatives was the REVIVE: Opioid Overdose and Naloxone Education Training, held in collaboration with HRCSB. This event was focused on addressing critical public health concerns. HRHA staff members, Jacques Mushagasha and Natalie Gazzara, act as liaisons between HRHA and residents, explains, the CAB provides a valuable platform for residents to voice their concerns and priorities, fostering a vital communication channel between the community and the housing authority.

# The Garden Grove of Books

As the Garden Grove of Books program draws to a close, HRHA is excited to celebrate the incredible efforts and achievements of the children who participated in this summer's reading initiative. With the support of Little Free Libraries scattered across HRHA properties, participants read an outstanding total of over 256 books throughout July and August—surpassing last year's record of 225 books!

Three grand prize winners were chosen based on the number of books read, the quality of their reading log responses, and their participation in community garden reading events. Thanks to the generous support and donations from Massanutten Resort, Kline's Dairy Bar, and Tropical Smoothie, the winners will receive exciting prizes, including family passes to Massanutten Water Park. HRHA is proud of all the young readers and grateful to the community for making this year's program a success!

## HRHA's Back to School Bash



HRHA was proud to host another successful Back to School Bash this year. To help students start the school year on a strong note, we provided nearly 50 backpacks filled with free school supplies to our Family Self-Sufficiency program participants.

We are deeply grateful to our incredible partners, including the Harrisonburg Fire Department, Massanutten Regional Library, JMU Dining, Faces 4 Change, Harrisonburg-Rockingham Community Services Board, 211 Virginia, and the Virginia Department of Health. Their invaluable resources and information about local services were instrumental in the success of our Back to School Bash. We appreciate their support and look forward to continuing to help our youth as they embark on a new school year!

# Housing Misconceptions

We hope to foster a more informed and supportive community by providing accurate information. It is important to challenge these myths to ensure that all individuals have equal access to the resources they need. Together, we can build a more inclusive and compassionate environment.

## **Misconception:**

*“Once housing assistance recipients receive housing assistance, they never stop.”*

Participation in this program is not a lifetime guarantee. Participants are required to recertify their eligibility on a given basis and report changes in income, family size, or other factors that can affect their continued participation in the program.

This program helps provide safe and stable housing while allowing individuals and families to focus on becoming self-sufficient in other areas, such as work and finances.



# Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority

## Contact Us

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## Website



## Facebook



## HRHA Board of Commissioners

HRHA is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Harrisonburg City Council. The Board establishes the Authority's policies and procedures and appoints the Executive Director.

Board of Commissioner meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00PM. Meeting location/access will be posted prior to meetings and in line with local health guidelines.

+ Michael Wong, (Not a commissioner)  
Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer

- + Kevin Coffman - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2027
- + Luciano Benjamin - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2024
- + Gil Colman - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2025
- + Shonda Green - Commissioner  
Term Expires: November 29, 2025
- + Kenneth Kettler - Commissioner  
Term Expires: February 1, 2028
- + Amanda Leech - Commissioner  
Term Expires: October 13, 2024
- + Janet Awkard-Rogers - Commissioner  
Term Expires: April 25, 2027