

McAdoo to retire | The Suffolk News-Herald

By Tracy Agnew

After about 20 years with the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, its executive director and chief executive officer is retiring.

Clarissa E. McAdoo will leave in August. She gave 19 months' notice of her departure, she said.

McAdoo, 60, is retiring to focus on her family.

"I got married this past summer, and I have young children now as a result of the marriage," she said. "I want to be a little more present in the parenting of those children, as I was with my own when they were young."

McAdoo came to work in Suffolk in 1996 after four years with the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, where she had started as a senior planner and gotten promoted. She came to Suffolk as the executive director.

"The need for affordable housing hasn't changed," McAdoo said. However, there have been other shifts in the work of providing affordable housing.

For example, the economic downturn that has taken place in the last 10 years means the clientele have changed a bit.

"It's not just individuals who, one would think, are low-income, limited education, limited job opportunities," McAdoo said. "We saw a number of people who had education, had once had means, but the situations in the world around them put them in a situation where they needed assistance. That became a real difference for us, but we still wanted to be able to provide them with the affordable housing they needed."

The SRHA also has begun administering the housing choice voucher program in Isle of Wight County and Smithfield, as well as Suffolk, which has increased the number of vouchers SRHA is administering from 684 to 1,021 since she started, McAdoo said.

In addition, tax-exempt revenue bonds have allowed all Virginia housing authorities the opportunity to create affordable rental housing, About 8,995 have been done in the state, with about 400 in Suffolk, McAdoo said.

One innovative program McAdoo has initiated is the first National Night Out celebration held at Cypress Manor Apartments. National Night Out has become a citywide recognition of the international crime-fighting event.

Under McAdoo, SRHA earned 61 national, regional and local awards, including the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Commendation.



“Clarissa E. McAdoo has been a very strong leader, only the fourth executive director and CEO in the organization’s great 45-year history, and one who has managed the organization through challenging times and housing industry transitions,” said Branch P. Lawson, chairman of the SRHA Board of Commissioners. “The Board is grateful for her innumerable contributions to SRHA and her distinguished tenure as executive director and CEO over the last 20 years.”

McAdoo said a transition team will be created, and an internal and external search for a replacement will get under way soon. A consultant has been hired, at a cost of about \$20,000, to help with the process, McAdoo said.

Lawson will lead the search committee, and a job announcement will be released in the coming month.



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