

Meeting Minutes

Homes for Good Housing Agency

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Location of the meeting:

Board of County Commissioners Conference Room, Public Service Building, 125 East 8th Avenue, Eugene, OR, 97401

Phone: 541.682.2506

The meeting location is wheelchair-accessible. Anyone needing special accommodations (deaf, people with hearing loss, language translation, chemical sensitivity needs, and large print copies of agenda), please make your request at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Wednesday, September 19th, 2018

(2:30 p.m.) (Board of County Commissioners Conference Room)

1. #PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

2. COMMISSIONERS' RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR OTHER ISSUES AND REMONSTRANCE (2 min. limit)

None

3. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

4. COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS

None

5. EMERGENCY BUSINESS

None

6. ADMINISTRATION

A. Approval of Minutes: 08/22/2018

Motion to approve minutes: Sid Leiken

Motion seconded: Gary Williams

Motion approved unanimously

B. Executive Director Report

Jacob Fox: We were awarded 33 Section 8 Vouchers that will be targeted to individuals who will be returning from institutions such as prison and mental health facilities. I want to acknowledge Beth Ochs, Amy Cook and everyone on the team that worked on this grant application. We also partnered with LCOG on the writing of the Federal grant application as well.

Pat Farr: When will be able to use the vouchers?

Jacob Fox: I feel confident with the ability to use those vouchers with Sponsors and Laurel Hill.

- We have been working on a partnership with the three other large housing authorities in the State of Oregon to have the State set aside funds to preserve our public housing units and complete subsidy conversions. We needed a 50 million dollar set aside and we got half of that which is a big deal. How those funds will be delivered to us is still an ongoing

discussion we are having with the State of Oregon. It shows the benefit of partnering with other organizations to get things accomplished at the State level.

Jacob Fox: I am continuing job shadowing with Homes for Good staff. I recently job shadowed with Roy Beecham cutting trees and landscape maintenance.

C. **Homes for Good Excellence Award Recipients (estimated time 10 minutes)**

Jacob Fox: We like to Acknowledge the contributions to the staff and presenting the recent Excellence Award winners to the board. Frankie Lee Johnson, Resident Services Assistant, has been with Homes for Good for a year now. She is bilingual and performs very hands-on work with resident services. Frankie helps people thrive in our communities and in the Reading Program. She also helps our residents stabilize and thrive in our communities.

Frankie Lee Johnson: What I love about my job is being able to provide opportunities for people. I enjoy the flexibility to be able to work one-on-one with residents and look forward to expanding resident services. It is about how we serve people and letting them know that they are important and we care. Resident Services is the heart of the agency and I feel good about it.

Pat Farr: What is the age range of people who you read to with the reading program?

Frankie Lee Johnson: This year the age range is 5-12 but we will be expanding to age 13.

Pat Farr: It is a significant tool to help kids learn to read.

Michelle Thurston: Frankie remains a consistent presence at Riverview Terrace and the residents look forward to working with Frankie. A lot of the volunteering at our building has to do with Frankie's leadership. The Senior Brown Bag Program is a meaningful resource at Riverview Terrace.

Beth Ochs: Amy Cook is the Division Analyst for the Rent Assistance program. She is key in providing data for data driven decisions within the Rent Assistance Division. Amy engaged in meaningful process improvement in our voucher program. She wrote procedures for software use and now we have good data on our voucher program. It was a huge amount of work and all our funding going forward will be data driven from HUD, so accurate information is necessary and key.

Amy Cook: I enjoy my position. I love the quality control and data driven decisions. I enjoy making things better for our team so we can better serve the community. I consider myself a puzzle master. This work is where my heart is at.

D. **Order/18-19-09-01H – In the Matter of Approving Contract 18-P-0055 (Architectural Services) for the renovation of the new Admin Building (Steve Ochs, Real Estate Development Director)**

Steve Ochs: In May of this year, we issued an RFP for the remodel and design of the new admin bldg. This is not the typical contract. There is a lot of more detailed questions and Nora is here to answer those questions.

Michelle Thurston: What are discover costs?

Nora Cronin: It is the assessment of our needs of the staff and the building needs and space usage to fit us in the new building. Pivot met with all the division directors and staff to collect that data.

Michelle Thurston: What are the document costs?

Nora Cronin: Taking the design data acquired and putting in a report to submit to Homes for Good.

Jacob Fox: Almost all our current 89 employees have their own office which is not possible going forward. So, we are thinking about how to introduce a new open space for the new building and why we are changing the work environment.

Char Reavis: With an open office plan, how would confidentiality be addressed for resident services work which requires more privacy?

Jacob Fox: There will be breakout conference rooms for conversations that are more confidential. Sixty to seventy percent of the conversations that are had with our clients aren't something other employees can't hear.

Pat Farr: Open spaces can also serve as a learning opportunity. It takes a little getting used to, but it can be a learning environment.

Jacob Farr: I would like the board to know that our managers will also have an open space as well.

Steve Ochs: This is also an opportunity to build a more welcome and open space for our customers.

Pete Sorensen: There was a recent article of the efficacy of an open office. They report on the downside and benefits of it.

Jacob Fox: We have some staff that are open to the idea and some who are struggling with it.

Pete Sorensen: How are you going to deal with confidentiality issues in the new space

Jacob Fox: We are having the architects address this as well as more confidential office space on the 2nd floor. What we have seen often is not having enough office rooms and not the ability to schedule those rooms, but we are at the beginning stages and working on it.

Motion to approve 18-19-09-01H: Sid Leiken

Motion seconded: Michelle Thurston

Motion approved unanimously

E. **Order/18-19-09-02H – In the Matter of Adopting the 2018-2019 Budget and Making Appropriations (Valerie Warner, Deputy Director and Jeff Bridgens, Finance Director)**

Jacob Fox: I want to extend my thanks and appreciation to Valerie Warner who has been with the agency since 2013 and assumed the Deputy Director role in 2015. Funding has been favorable. Real estate development has been able to develop units on the ground. We are expanding resident services and we need more people there to help our clients build better

lives. The complexity of our organization continues to grow. We do need positions that we have not historically had such as Amy Cook's position.

Jeff Bridgens: We want to give you an overview of this year's budget. We used the color coding convention in the document. The major divisions, RA, Development, Housing, Cost Central.

Jacob Fox: Upon deliberation of this budget, we restructured the leadership team. Valerie will no longer be serving as the Deputy Director. The divisions need to start coordinating more. There are annual recertifications for example, we are looking for that function to blend for one team to handle these functions for the entire agency. Energy Services and Resident Service are currently not on a paperless process due to funding requirements. I am going to directly oversee finance. I will continue to oversee Development. There is so much activity and I need to be connected to that. Ela Kubok's role will be expanded. The IT and HR Director will report up to Ela. Human Resource activity is also a large communication function.

Jeff Bridgens: (Presentation of Page 8) – Total Budget \$35M. You can see from a financial perspective a breakdown of that figure toward the center of the page. 2019 will be a large development year. Rent Assistance is the largest division 56%, Housing 22%, and Community Services 14%

- FTE (Page 67): Figures 2017 – 2019, substantial increase expected to support the new positions coming aboard.
- Transfers (Page 68): There are some programs that generate income that need transfer in and out of those funds.
- Long Range Planning Summary: To understand what is going on in each of our divisions more deeply
- Currently we have 55 budgets. We have a new communications budget, new combined Sheldon Village Apt LLC to combine the former SV1 & SV2, and a distinct new admin building budget.

Valerie Warner: The West 13th building budget has to do with us managing it as a commercial property. The development budget is summarized on page 12. Long range planning is on 79.

- Revenue is \$5.9M, \$1.5M in development fees which is great because it will cover expenses.
- \$938K expenses are larger than last year, increased legal, computer, and FTE costs. We are carefully managing those cash flows. We have separate development funds and other funds available to the agency as it needs it.

Jeff Bridgens: Rent Assistance \$19.6M – Housing assistance payments, \$17.7/19.6 budgeted housing assistance payments. FTE growth budgeting for 3 new positions in the rent assistance division.

- PAGE 76 to see the rent assistance division summary in more detail. One of the goals was to streamline to the voucher usage. Beth has steadied that trend. While we are streamlining, the cost of the voucher usage is increasing.

Sid Leiken: Do the rent increases correlate with the voucher usage.

Beth Ochs: We track the rent increase trends. We were seeing rent spikes of \$150-\$200/month. We discovered a lot of landlords offering a rent option. Right now, we don't have a comparison on the private side of housing.

Sid Leiken: When you have Section 8, do you have ceiling on how much rent can increase in affordable units. Are there controls in place?

Beth Ochs: There are initial controls in place on move in. What we were encountering were landlords not wanting to accept the voucher. Right now, we do a comparable rent increase. It can be no more than 40% of a tenant's gross income.

Sid Leiken: There is a huge difference in how housing is currently managed. Previously there were landlords who owned and lived in the city as opposed to now where there are owned by outside entities.

Jeff Bridgens: In 2019 we will be tracking data on specific vouchers. Page 78 HCV program reserves can be seen. We track the admin reserve, HAP reserve and HUD held HAP Reserve.

Valerie Warner: Housing Division Page 8: \$7M expense budget. Housing Division Summary PAGE 28. 12 Budgets, PH.

- Long range financial planning 71-72. There are many bullet points on activities for FY19. PAGE 73-75 charts on PH and PH division. Net income and reserve balances. The total budgeted revenue \$2.9 rent PH 3.9M from the multifamily rent division. We got an increase in the CAP grant which is HUD funds to complete public housing capital projects. The operating budget includes a spend down on reserves. The RAD project has had a significant impact. We will convert more RAD units in 2019.

Jeff Bridgens: Community Services – PAGE 11. 14 different budgets, Page 12 Developments budget. There is a lot of activity. PAGE 80 you can see a pipeline of the specific projects. You can see the projects currently in the works. There are 6 largely federally funded budgets. The revenues are about \$2M on those grants. They are subject to audits as well. Other sources of revenue are from our commercial properties, Heeran Center, W13th, and Signpost. PAGE 27- Homes for Good corporate budget, and unrestricted funds. Out of this budget, we transfer out funds to subsidize other programs.

Valerie Warner: COCC (Central Office Cost Center). Page 55 is a summary. Page 56-66 breakdown. If development can continue to produce development fees that would be good for the COCC reserve. FY19 Budget includes one-time initiatives. We have a lot of complexity to run our overhead and it takes the staff to run the successful program.

Jeff Bridgens: There are a lot of people have put a lot of time and effort. I want to acknowledge everyone who put their time and work into building this presentation.

Sid Leiken: I would like to discuss the reserve policy that at a later meeting.

Char Reavis: It is a great budget document an easy to follow. Thank you for all the time that staff has contributed to this document.

Motion to adopt 18-19-09-02: Sid Leiken

Motion seconded: Michelle Thurston

Motion passed unanimously

F. **Order/18-19-09-03H – In the Matter of Approving the Public Housing Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2018 (Valerie Warner, Deputy Director and Jeff Bridgens, Finance Director)**

Jacob Fox: This order is a prescriptive order where HUD requires a certain format. It is redundant as everything is already in the budget we just presented.

Valerie Warner: HUD does require us to adopt the public housing budget separately which includes the COCC budget. Some of the big things coming up in 2019 are the operational increases we already discussed. We have the RAD Program that will have a significant impact on the public housing budgets. The EPC Program will also have an impact. We are making our first debt service payment in this as well.

Motion to approve 18-19-09-03H Sid Leiken

Motion seconded: Michelle Thurston

Motion approved unanimously

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Adjourn

Please note this is a short excerpt of the proceedings, a full recording of the meeting is available upon request by emailing amccoy@homesforgood.org.