

# MINUTES

Homes for Good Housing Agency



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### Location of the meeting:

This meeting will be conducted via public video call and conference line (see details below).

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**Wednesday, May 20th, 2020 at 1:30pm**

Due to the current Stay at Home order, to prevent the spread of COVID-19 Homes for Good will be conducting the May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Meeting will occur via a public video call with dial-in capacity. The public will be able to join the call, give public comment, and listen to the call:

### Join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone:

<https://www.gotomeet.me/HomesforGoodAdministration/homes-for-good-may-20th-board-meeting>

### Dial in using your phone:

United States:

+1 (872) 240-3311

**Access Code:** 165-646-229

## 1. PUBLIC COMMENTS – 20 Minutes

(Maximum time 20 minutes: Speakers will be taken in the order in which they sign up and will be limited to 3-minutes per public comments. If the number wishing to testify exceeds 10 speakers, then additional speakers may be allowed if the chair determines that time permits or may be taken at a later time.)

*No Public Comment was Given*

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

## 3. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

## 4. COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS

**Commissioner Farr is excused after 2:30pm for another meeting.**

**Joe Berney:** Brings up an email conversation that had been forwarded to the entire board. He explains his intentions with sending the email to Jacob, and his wish for Jacob to reach out to the individual, and that subsequently got forwarded to the entire board, without added context. He explains that he was hoping to calm a pot instead of stirring one.

**Jacob Fox:** Mentions that Joe and himself have talked since, and that they agreed upon calling and

discussing some of those matters via phone conversation instead of email to understand intentions. Jacob talks more about the River Road situation and some context with the negative engagement with the neighbors which has caused him to take a more defensive stance. Jacob mentions that his past practice has been to forward entire communications to the Board so that they are aware of what has been going on, and he is open to suggestions of whether that should be the practice going forth with the board.

## **5. EMERGENCY BUSINESS**

### **6. CONSENT CALENDAR—** Estimated 2 Minutes

(All items listed here are considered to be routine by the Board of Commissioners and will be enacted by one motion in the form listed below. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If discussion is desired, that item will be removed from the Consent Calendar and will be considered separately.)

BEGINNING OF CONSENT CALENDAR\*\*\*\*\*

1. Approval of 4/22 Minutes

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR\*\*\*\*\*

**Commissioner Berney requests to pull the 4-22 Minutes off the Consent Calendar for further discussion.**

#### **4-22 Minutes**

**Joe Berney:** Regarding Pg. 1 of the minutes, a quote from Jacob:

“Let me give it some thought, and I can email you and get some ideas of a plan. I will engage with Jeff Bridgens our Finance Director and come up with some plans, and I’ll kind of bounce that off Char and Joe as the Chair and Vice Chair.”

I just wanted to let people know that that has not yet occurred.

Motion: **Michelle Thurston**

Second: **Pat Farr**

**This motion has passed unanimously 7/0.**

## **7. ADMINISTRATION**

- A. Executive Director Report (Estimated 10 minutes)

**Jacob Fox:** Talks about the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) that Wakan drafted, and that HUD has asked for Housing Authorities to create more robust plans. Homes for Good is working with a consultancy company to build out the COOP for various situations including pandemics and earthquakes.

Jacob then talks about the staff who have been working out of the new administrative building, including himself. He talks about the staff who have come in and unpacked into their new spaces, then he talks

about the tasks that the in-office staff have been performing. Jacob talks about the need for training for staff regarding interactions with people experiencing homelessness who are around the building. Jacob recounts an experience he had the building a few days prior concerning some youth experiencing homelessness hanging around the building, and his interactions with them, and the need to properly train staff for those interactions.

- B. **Order 20-20-05-01H**— In the Matter of Approving Contract 20-P-0042 (Architectural Services) for 13th and Tyler PSH Community in Eugene, Oregon (Nora Cronin, Project Development Manager) (10 Minutes)

**Nora Cronin:** Gives an update of the 13<sup>th</sup> and Tyler project and the progress so far. She talks about the process by which Homes for Good got the land, and the funding for services for the project. She also talks about the neighborhood outreach that has been able to be held virtually with the neighbors for the project thus far.

**Joe Berney:** Inquires about additional materials for the board order (specifically the RFP documents/application from the architect), and the criteria in which the contract was scores/selected.

**Nora Cronin:** Expresses in her time at Homes for Good that it has not been the practice to include these materials with board orders/memos, but doesn't see why that would be a problem to include going forwards.

**Steve Ochs:** Historically we have provided all the names of the firms who have applied, but we haven't ever provided the full proposals. I don't think we would be averse to sharing the full documents, or the scoring criteria.

Steve talks a little bit more about the scoring criteria for this RFP, he talks about the strengths of MWA Architects who is being awarded the contract, and the experiences they have had in the past with Permanent Supportive Housing. He expresses that they can include more details in future board items.

**Nora Cronin:** Lists some of the scoring criteria:

- The team proposed
- Affordable Housing Experience, PSH Experience
- DEI Strategies
- Local Knowledge
- Staffing and capacity for projects

**Joe Berney:** I am starting to feel like a wet blanket, which is not my intent. I have never been on a board that has been asked to make big spending decisions without the methodology or context for how that recommendation was made. You have explained that it is not past practice to do that, and I don't want to beat a dead horse, but apparently that is not how this organization does it.

**Jacob Fox:** I think that if the board consensus is more information and background in the board orders, that's easy to deliver. So, putting the scoring methodology in the body of the memo would be an add.

And what I guess I am asking, is if you would like to see just the proposal we are recommending, or the top five or seven proposals that were submitted? I think one of the lines we walk is a balance between how many pages is too many pages, and how do we summarize that information.

**Pat Farr:** Talks about his experience on other boards approving construction contracts. Suggests a brief overview of who applied to the RFPs.

**Michelle Thurston:** I am going to go with Commissioner Farr. Commissioner Berney, I am wondering if you want to be part of the decision-making process, or just for information surrounding the decision.

**Joe Berney:** To me it is very basic to have a list of what the selection criteria were, and who the applicants were when making a recommendation. That's not a ton of information. I believe there is a real lack of accountability when the Board doesn't at least have that minimal amount of information when making a motion.

**Pete Sorenson:** The Agency has done quite a bit of due diligence in making this selection, and the board and the public doesn't see that, so for me the simple request would be that the information that the agency uses to make their decision is in the packet. I think it is the Board's due-diligence to get the information that Commissioner Berney is pointing out.

**Char Reavis:** Thank you Commissioner Sorenson, you and I have been on the board for a long time, and I think in the past we got the top three bids that came in the packet. Do you remember if that was the case Commissioner Sorenson?

**Pete Sorenson:** Yes, I think that was practice before, and I think that if this is already material that the staff are putting together to make their decision it wouldn't be any additional work to include it for the board.

**Nora Cronin:** Yes, we do have all that information: who applied, what their scores were in each category. I have summarized that, what seems to be too simplified in the memo, but we can provide more detail. In future memos I can layout who we got applications from and how they ranked, that is very simple for us to do.

**Michell Thurston:** I agree, I don't find anything wrong with the additional information if it is available. I am for having that information.

**Pat Farr:** After hearing the conversation, and Commissioner Berney's explanation. If it is no added burden listing the top three would be interesting information.

**Jacob Fox:** We can add information and then see what the board thinks of the added information. It is no problem to to actually attach proposals, but it can get up to 50+ pages fairly quickly. So, let's start by punching up the memo like Nora and Steve said that would be really easy, and then we can always give you more information.

Motion: **Michelle Thurston**

Second: **Heather Buch**

**Jay Bozievich:** I would just like to say that I am going to vote against this motion for reasons I have stated prior in Lane County Board Meetings and Homes for Good Board Meetings that I think the sight selection was done incorrectly. I think it is actually going to impact the economic viability of the fairgrounds in the future. We are seeing what economic impacts are doing to peoples' housing stability right now under the COVID-19 pandemic.

**This motion passes 6/1 with Jay Bozievich opposed.**

- C. **Order 20-20-05-02H—** In the Matter of Approving Contract 20-C-0047 (Construction Management/General Contractor Services) for 13th and Tyler PSH Community in Eugene, Oregon (Nora Cronin, Project Development Manager) (10 Minutes)

**Nora Cronin:** Goes over the RFP selection process. Homes for Good received three proposals from Chambers Construction, Meili Construction and Essex Construction, in which Essex construction scored the highest.

**Steve Ochs:** The one advantage that we have with the CMGC solicitation versus the architect solicitation is that we are able to ask for the price of the fee upfront and we do weigh that in the scoring up front and that provides us with some really competitive proposals.

**Joe Berney:** Again, with a 3 Million Dollar project, we don't have that basic information, and the bigger the numbers, the bigger that level of accountability is.

Does Homes for Good always use prevailing wages on construction projects?

**Nora Cronin:** Not always, it is dependent on the funding sources of that particular project that determine the wage rate that we use. For this project we anticipate that we will actually have to pay BOLI wages on this.

**Joe Berney:** That's what prevailing wages are.

**Nora Cronin:** We would be required to either use the state BOLI wages, or the federal Davis Bacon wage rates. So sometimes the project is required to use on, or the other, or both.

**Joe Berney:** Does Homes for Good do what the Lane County Commissioners have done have a statement saying they will use living wages, that they will give higher priority to procurement of contractors who do pay living or prevailing wages, or do in fact pay healthcare to their workers?

**Nora Cronin:** We currently don't have that as part of our scoring criteria in the RFP, we usually state, when we know what the wage rate determination for the project, we would put that in the RFP and then

we would ask them what their experience is in using those wage rates, and providing the documentation for that. So sometimes we would score them on their experience and being able to do that.

**Joe Berney:** I am going to forward, with no action required from the board, to Homes for Good staff the section of the Lane County Strategic plan, the section that deals with this, because I am one person who believes it should be adhered to by this agency also.

**Michelle Thurston:** I would just like to know the prevailing wage information, because that is something, I am not familiar with.

Motion: **Pete Sorenson**

Second: **Joe Berney**

**Pete Sorenson:** This is a very important project in this community, and this is in my Commissioner District, and I just wanted to say that the Neighborhood Association has been very supportive of this and Homes for Good in my view has done an excellent job in working with state and county officials to get the money together for the project.

I just want to make a couple comments on the prevailing wages. There is a Federal Prevailing Wage Law, commonly called the Davis Bacon Act, and there is a State Prevailing Wage Law, called the Little Davis Bacon Act, and both of these laws apply to Homes for Good when it uses State or Federal Funds to construct housing. It does not apply to projects where another construction company is hired by another company to do the work, such as when we work with another non-profit in the community. Non-profits are not subject to the prevailing wage law. I agree with Commissioner Berney, that our work should be guided by these, and that could be a topic in the future, whether we are or are not fully embracing that. I have heard from non-profit builders saying that if they were governed by prevailing wage laws, they would not be able to do some of the things they do, so there is a trade off there.

**This Motion Passes 6/1 with Jay Bozievich being opposed.**

- D. **Order 20-20-05-03H—** In the Matter of Updating the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan (HCV Admin Plan) Local Preferences Language. (Beth Ochs, Rent Assistance Division Director) (5 Minutes)

**Heather Buch declares a conflict of interest and recuses herself of the discussion and vote.**

**Beth Ochs:** Explains the background of the Mainstream Voucher program, the new allocation of vouchers, and the expanded definition from HUD to me modified in the admin plan.

Motion: **Pete Sorenson**

Second: **Joe Berney**

**This motion passes 6/0 with Commissioner Buch being recused.**

E. **Order 20-20-05-04H**— In the Matter of Updating the Homes for Good Housing Agency bylaws (Jacob Fox, Executive Director) (15 Minutes)

**Jacob Fox:** A couple meetings ago, a neighbor of the River Road property came for public comment and asked why our by-laws were not on our website. The bigger picture is that we as a board need to do a bigger comprehensive review of the by-laws, which is part of the larger governance discussion. But essentially when that neighbor asked why our by-laws weren't on the website, it made perfect sense for us to put them on the website. With our move to the new building, and some other clean up, the fact that Lane County administration had done some of our board administration in the past and now that we have taken on that on our own, Ela and Jordyn in consultation with our Attorney did a comprehensive review just to clean them up so that we can put them on the website. Sooner or later we will get into the by-laws in more depth and make any changes to them, but right now with the uncertainty of when the governance discussion should come back to this board, I am not exactly sure when that will come. Just so folks know, the governance discussion would be most appropriate in a face to face meeting, and I have no idea when that will happen next. Also, for the governance discussions to happen, before the COVID-19 pandemic happened, I was poised to engage with Steve Mokrohisky, Greg Rickoff, and Steve Dingle because there will always be a legal relationship between the Lane County Board and the Homes for Good Board. Steve Dingle and our attorney needed to do some due-diligence so that I felt I could present all the nuisances about our governance. So, since the pandemic started, that engagement with Lane County administration has not occurred since we have all been busy triaging our organization. So, with that, these are all edits so that we can put the by-laws on the website, and Ela is going to go through them so that you know what we are asking the Board to approve as modified by-laws.

**Ela Kubok:** Goes through the attachments to the board memo.

Motion: **Michelle Thurston**

Second: **Heather Buch**

**Char Reavis:** This doesn't apply for now, but I would like to suggest in the next few months that we could make a committee to look at the by-laws. There are a couple of things, that have nothing to do with what was changed today, that I feel is an equity issue, and it has to do with the appointed commissioners. When you read the by-laws it is fine, but when you go to the ORS it is referencing, it talks about removing appointed commissioners that are residents, but not anybody else. So, I would just like to say for the future, that I would like to discuss that, and it may not be that we can do much because it is ORS.

**Michelle Thurston:** I second that with Commissioner Reavis, this is something that we have talked about on the side. It is something we are both interested in getting looked at.

**This motion passes unanimously 7/0.**

**Commissioner Pat Farr** is excused after the vote.

F. **PRESENTATION**— COVID-19 Regulatory Relief and Financial Impacts (Jacob Fox, Executive Director) (30 Minutes)

**Jacob Fox:** Goes over the presentation slides starting with the Timeline of Key Responses. Then Jacob moves on to the negative financial impacts.

**Joe Berney:** What is the date range on these numbers?

**Jacob Fox:** That is from middle of March through to when the Board Packet was published.

**Joe Berney:** I am going to suggest that you present this on a monthly basis, or some consistent basis so that we can compare. It sounds like this is about six weeks, more or less.

**Beth Ochs:** Talks about the HVC Admin Fees and what the funds can be used for.

**Jacob Fox:** Talks about how guidance from the HUD Field Office has indicated that the money needs to be spent on existing clients and residents, and staff, not for additional Rent Assistance.

**Beth Ochs:** Talks about set-aside funding from HUD.

**Wakan Alferes:** Gives an overview of the Public Housing Operating Subsidy from HUD.

**Jacob Fox:** Talks about Weatherization money and corrects the number on the slide to \$135,000. Jacob then goes over the Early Scenario Planning and situations that could occur 18, 24, or 36 months in the future and what would happen if funding levels drop to 75%. He talks about what implications of 75% funding may look like.

**Michelle Thurston:** I really appreciate how Jacob has broken down the information and made it understandable.

**Jay Bozievich:** I have been doing some napkin math, it looks like the additional cost to date are about \$365,500 but the additional funding looks like it is about \$984,00 so at least for the moment on additional COVID-19 costs we are buffered.

Jay talks about state money that is coming into the County for Rent Assistance.

I think your conversations with our Human Services division would be good about the distribution of the Rental Assistance. Commissioner Bozievich talks about the County's history in distributing rental assistance.

I would really appreciate whatever partnership you can establish with our staff to make that happen effectively and efficiently.

**Jacob Fox:** Talks about his presentation to the Lane County Board the past week, and the Lane County Board of Commissioners discussions about rent assistance funding coming in. Jacob questions why Lane County would be the administrator in dispersing that rent assistance when Homes for Good is the largest rent assistance platform in the county, it might make sense to utilize Homes for Good's systems, and Homes for Good is willing to get that money out in the community if that makes sense to support Lane



County and the City of Eugene. Homes for Good has robust systems and is here to help.

**Jay Bozievich:** Talks about Homes for Good and Lane County being a natural partnership for that.

**Joe Berney:** I agree that we need to use existing infrastructures when getting out scarce resources to people who need them the most.

Regarding the various scenarios: These are scenarios for doing things the way we have done them with the funding we might get, and I am looking forward to seeing how we can do things differently in expanded capacity for the dollar and building that notion in a prudent way into the planning.

**Char Reavis:** With the financial loss, is there a way we can utilize our non-profit to fundraise?

**Jacob Fox:** I think it is a good thought Char. So, Homes for Good is not a non-profit, but we have a very discrete fundraising platform that we do for scholarships for youth in our housing, and we lean on the businesses that we do work with on a regular basis, and have employees contribute to that fund. But I am a little hesitant to get into the non-profit fundraising space, although we could do that. I think right now ShelterCare, St. Vincent DePaul, Cornerstone, Looking Glass, and others really need the community to support them during this crisis. So for us to jump in and start fundraising in the broader community space doesn't seem like the right role for us.

Jacob talks about a grant from Meyer Memorial Trust, and the redistribution of that grant to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit properties to create a rent assistance fund targeted at the residents in those properties who have faced income losses or health related expenses related to COVID-19.

## **7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Adjourn