

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).

Wednesday, March 17th, 2021 at 1:30pm

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 Homes for Good conducted the March 17th, 2021 meeting via a public video call with dial-in capacity. The public was able to join the call, give public comment, and listen to the call.

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.)

Todd Boyle: [Typed in the chat box and read into record by Michelle Thurston]

"I guess I'll just request that HFG try to develop some units at around \$50,000 per unit, such as SMALL manufactured housing on public land. Especially if they're around a central kitchen/bath building(s).

Basically, I think we need housing for 1000s more people at the low incomes and their pace of construction, and costs over \$250,000 per unit, will simply never get there.

Is there a single document or chart, showing how many units HFG is operating, let's say, annually at the end of each of the past 10 years, and the total cost of the units added for that year? This would be four columns. YEAR, TOTAL UNITS AT YEAR END, NUMBER OF UNITS ADDED, and TOTAL COST."

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

Joe Berney: I just want to say that I absolutely agree with the content and sentiment of Mr. Boyles statement. We need to do absolutely everything that we can, and as it relates to that, later when the Executive Director feels it is appropriate, perhaps he can give us a brief status update. I know he has had some discussions with some developers who have applied to the Springfield Economic Development Agency, and I know that two of them have low income and affordable housing in their concepts. And I know very well that one of them is talking about a total of 250 units, and has arranged for private dollars to subsidize low-income or working family housing to enter into lease-purchase options and subsidize their ability to actually own those units.

Jacob Fox: Do you mind if we move, and then in my Executive Director Report I can give the board an update of these discussions?

Joe Berney: That is my exact request.

Jacob Fox: Chair Thurston, I would just like to acknowledge Todd's vision for some sort of cheaper Affordable Housing proto-type, or style, and I share in that vision. I do think that the work that we are doing in Blue River could be an opportunity for us to test out a different model that could be less expensive.

Joe Berney: I just want to flag something for this body, I just got a call from a woman working at CASA, so I don't have a lot of information to present at this time to the board, but it is about residents at The Patrician in Springfield, who are trying to purchase that development so that they will no longer have the anxiety of thinking they are going to be unhoused and not have a place to live. From my understanding there is a financial gap between what the residents are able to offer, and what the owner is willing to accept (and he has two other offers). So, I wanted to flag that for the Homes for Good Board, and ask that for the next Board meeting we can bring this to the board to see if there is anything we can do to help.

3. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

4. COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS

Char Reavis had to leave the meeting at 2:25 for another meeting.

Joe Berney had to leave the meeting at 2:37.

5. EMERGENCY BUSINESS

None

6. ADMINISTRATION

A. Executive Director Report (Estimated 10 minutes)

Jacob Fox: One of the biggest positive disruptions has been taking over the operations of the hotel formerly known as The Red Lion. It has been a tremendous experience of human engagement and supporting people who have been displaced. Since it was such a fast acquisition, as expected there have been many unexpected challenges with the building that have come up including key card systems failing, so we have been working with Lane County to get all of those things figured out, and they have been amazing to work with. With a new building there are always quirks and surprises.

Laurie in response to IGAs, I included a list. There were actually two that I had forgotten to previously mention, because they are instances where we pay another jurisdiction to help us. These are to LCOG and Lane County for IT.

Jacob then talks about Steve Jole, the Energy Service Director's retirement, and introduces Esteban as the new Energy Services Director. Jacob reflects on Steve Joles work at Homes for Good and informs the Board of the transition plan that is in place to ensure a continuity of service.

Steve Jole: I have been in the Community Action Program industry for 20 years, and it has always been a pleasure, and a rewarding career. I did just follow Jacob on board at Homes for Good, and what he didn't tell me was there would be a title wave of growth. I really enjoyed it, I enjoyed the challenge, it has been exhilarating. The seven years has really gone by fast. I would also just like to say that with COVID we started these daily check ins, and it has been really great to get to know and work with this really passionate, productive, and professional group of directors we have here. To see the great change. But what I will say, is that I have been working with Esteban this last month in this role, was we knew he had a lot of talent, we have basically hired him twice.

Commissioners **Pat Farr, Joe Berney, Heather Buch, Michelle Thurston, and Char Reavis** express thanks for Steve Jole's service sharing some personal stories of their work with Steve, and welcome Esteban to the team.

Jacob Fox: I just want to give Esteban our respect and support. It was an extremely competitive recruitment. It had a lot of steps because finding the right person for the job was extremely important, to see how they fit and interacted with the members of the Leadership Team. We want to warmly welcome Esteban, he has been incredible to work with, positive and extremely intelligent. Esteban I just wanted to give you an opportunity to introduce yourself and say a few words about your background.

Esteban Montero Chacon: Hello! I am very passionate that is for sure. I know that I have a lot to learn, and some big shoes to fill, but so far it has been a blast working with him for the last few months. Seeing the way he is so creative, it is great to learn from. A little bit about myself, I love to work with people, I worked as a medical interpreter for about 12 and a half years or so. In that time I learned a lot about people and their difficulties, as well as through my wife who works in Humanitarian assistance with the USAID. We were stationed in Costa Rica, where I worked as a Community Liaison Officer, so for a while I was that link between the diplomats and the people with what we could do there, so we would do things like going and cleaning up parks, painting work, etc, to help the locals. That's when I decided I wanted to put all of my passions together: helping people, and helping from an energy conservation standpoint, so I went back to School at Lane Community College in the Energy Services Program, since we had already decided that we wanted to live in Lane County back in 2015 after visiting and falling in love with the people.

Joe Berney: I look forward to meeting you, and as a starting point for when we get to get together, I worked in El Salvador all around energy efficiency, and we interfaced with USAID and the US Embassy there.

Pat Farr: Esteban welcome, it is great that you have gotten a chance to work with Steve Jole, I hold him in very high regards.

Jacob Fox: Talks about the Glenwood development, and working with the Glenwood Development Group and the SEDA board, and potential projects that are going to be vetted by those boards.

Joe Berney: I just wanted this board to know, but I am totally stoked that we are moving forward. I know that atleast two of the entities are committed to low-income and affordable housing. The second thing I wanted to point out is the timeframe: the SEDA board is going to hear from all three proposers on April 12th, and it is attempted to be fast tracked. The board may indicate with proposal they are going with in another public meeting on April 26th. The bottom line is that one of the questions I want asked

from each of the proposers is how many housing units they are planning on building, and how many of those housing units are going to be designated for low-income or workforce family housing. I just wanted the board to know because housing is a big deal, and it isn't just our concern, but for the whole community. But if one of the two housing proposals are chosen, the executive director, and this board will participate significantly to expand the number of low-income units available.

Jacob Fox: Talks about the working connecting with the Lane County to talk about Community Benefits Agreements.

B. Approval of 2/10/21 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Pat Farr**

Second: **Char Reavis**

The minutes are approved unanimously 7/0.

C. Approval of 2/24/21 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Pat Farr**

Second: **Char Reavis**

The minutes are approved unanimously 7/0.

D. **ORDER 21-17-03-01H** — In the Matter of Updating the Rent Assistance Administrative Plan, Tenant Based Vouchers, Local Preferences (Beth Ochs, Rent Assistance Division Director) (Estimated Time 10 Minutes)

Beth Ochs: Effective the 1st of April this year we will receive an additional allocation of 75 mainstream vouchers, which will add to our current allocation of 76 to create a total allocation of 151 vouchers. From HUD, mainstream vouchers must serve non-elderly or disabled persons, and previous to this allocation, we had applied competitively for these mainstream vouchers, and in doing so we were given more points in our application in establishing local preferences with local partners to distribute those vouchers. So, we had a relationship with Laurel Hill and Sponsors to utilize those vouchers in the community. Our utilization for calendar year 2020 was 67% so for this new allocation of vouchers we went back to our partners to talk about full utilization. Once you have full utilization of your vouchers, whenever HUD runs another competitive process for allocations, you are more likely to get more vouchers and receive additional funding, and then you are not at risk of losing the funding. These additional vouchers were not done in a competitive manner, they were simply allocated to us by HUD. In doing so, HUD added that they could really be sued to serve anyone on our waitlist who meets the non-elderly or non-disabled status. So, in discussing it with Laurel Hill and Sponsors, we decided to keep their preference within the wait list, but open it up to either Mainstream or the regular Housing Choice Voucher, whatever is available when the referral is made, but then to open the Mainstream voucher to anyone who is on our waitlist.

Beth talks about the process for people to get on the General Section 8 wait list.

So, what we are proposing after April 1st, is that when we pull people from the General Waitlist, we vet whether they meet the non-elderly or non-disabled status, and if they do, they would be issued a

Mainstream Voucher, and if they don't they would be offered a regular Section 8 Voucher. On the public side, the vouchers are the same: they have the same rent standards, etc. So we are hoping by making these changes, we are able to have better utilization of these Mainstream vouchers, and better service to our General Waitlist, because attrition (turn back rate of vouchers), before COVID it was 13% and now it is down to 6%.

Motion: **Heather Buch**

Second: **Laurie Trieger**

This motion is passed unanimously 7/0.

- E. **ORDER 21-17-03-02H** — In the Matter of Updating the Administrative Plan, Subsidy Standards (Beth Ochs, Rent Assistance Division Director) (Estimated Time 10 Minutes)

Beth Ochs: What we are proposing is the grandfathering of the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Plan (ACOP) subsidy standards into our Administrative Plan. When we started the RAD process, which is the conversion of Public Housing units, and the building of replacement housing—which in this case is Hayden Bridge Landing and Sarang. The subsidy standards in the ACOP- which governs Public Housing- was not the same as the Administrative Plan. When Wakan and I both became the Division Directors, we talked about aligning the subsidy standards which is how many people can be in each bedroom in a unit, and that alignment was made and the ACOP and the Admin plan were aligned. In that time, however, the Real Estate Development team moved forward with RAD and the replacement housing and used the old occupancy standards. So, if you had a 2-bedroom unit in Public Housing they built a 2-bedroom unit of replacement housing. In that, the resident who is relocating has a right to return to 2-bedroom unit. So, when we can across this juncture of all of these things intersecting, we hit a pause. So, to address this, we met with our HUD field office in Portland, who then connected with the HUD headquarters office in Washington D.C., and we received guidance to grandfather in the occupancy standards that were in place in the ACOP when the replacement housing was planned. So this provides a pathway for a family that was a 2-bedroom in Public housing, to retain their right to a 2-bedroom unit at either Sarang or Hayden Bridge Landing. This order will clarify in the Administrative Plan that those subsidy standards only apply to people who are moving from Public Housing into Sarang or Hayden Bridge Landing, and then upon turn-over of that unit when the family moves out, the occupancy standards of the Administrative Plan would take effect, and that is how the unit would be refilled.

Char Reavis: So, what I am looking at is the occupancy standards right now, but there is one in there about the different generations having a different room, and that was taken out, and I didn't realize that, and with Public housing I thought we were going to go with the Section 8 standards, which was that, and what I am seeing is that is being taken out in the new portion, and I wanted to understand what is happening there.

Beth Ochs: Are you looking at the part that says, "Persons of different generations will not be required to share a bedroom. Different generation is defined as a difference of 8 years or more." ?

Char Reavis: Yeah, and when you go down to the new one, it doesn't have that. I don't want to go back to everyone in a cracker box again, I just don't want to go backwards, I know that we don't have enough housing, but I don't want us to go backwards. So, I want to make sure that I understand the difference. Because it says, "As a result of this allowance, Homes for Good is requesting to update its

Administrative Plan Subsidy Standards policy to:" and in the new one it says, "All other household members will be based on two (2) persons per bedroom, without regard to gender or age."

Beth Ochs: Yes, so that would be correct, the subsidy standards in the Administrative Plan do not assign bedroom sizes based on a generational difference. So, the allocation of bedrooms under the administrative plan is Head of Household and Spouse, or significant other, would be one bedroom. Head of Household and Other Adult, that would be two-bedrooms, so if we had me and my mom on a Section 8 voucher together, then we would get two bedrooms, but if it was me and my husband on Section 8 we would get one-bedroom. Beyond the head of household and co-head, then essentially every two persons beyond that would get a bedroom regardless of age and gender.

Char Reavis: Ok, that makes more sense, I wasn't reading it that way.

Char Reavis: The one with gender and age removed, is that the old one or the new one?

Beth Ochs: That would be the new one. So, under HUD you have a "Head of Household" and then you have a "Co-head" and those two are always seen as the same thing. They have the same rights to the voucher. Most often a co-head is a spouse or a significant other. The other common composition you have will be a "Head of Household" and an "Other Adult." The "Other Adult" does not have the same rights to the voucher that the "Co-head" does. But the Other Adult is usually someone in the household who is not essentially viewed as an equal, and often that is the add-on of another adult either an adult child, or an adult parent. So, in those instances, those folks would get two-bedrooms, but it is because of the way a relationship is defined. However, let's say a head of household wanted to add her mother as a co-head and was like "no I want my mother to have equal rights to this voucher, and if we have a disagreement, we both should have an equal say in who gets the voucher", if you choose to add your mother as a co-head, then you would only get one bedroom because that is the way the allocation is broken out. But, when you are making that composition and having those conversations with your Housing Specialist, they are going to guide you into the differences, and say "Ok, if you're going to add your mom, here are the pros and cons of going this route, and here's the pros and cons of going that route, which route do you want to go?" But once you've added your mom, and now you're going to add your two adult cousins, those two adult cousins are only going to go into one bedroom, because after to co-head, and the one other adult are established, it is two per bedroom regardless of gender or age.

Char Reavis: Ok, I am good with this now, I just didn't understand it. I am good with it now.

Pat Farr: Thank you Char for asking that question, I think a number of us were informed by that answer, thank you Beth.

Laurie Trieger: I will just chime in like Commissioner Farr, it was helpful and informative, and it also just brings up, as someone who has worked in legislature and it is problematic to have the government dictating family composition and relationships within families and households, so we are under that constraint, but hopefully someday people will just be able to tell us for themselves who they are in relationship to who else they live with, and it won't be defined by a governmental agency.

Motion: **Heather Buch**

Second: **Joe Berney**

This motion is approved unanimously 7/0

- F. **WORK SESSION** — Employee Performance Evaluation Reboot (Bailey McEuen, Human Resources Director) (Estimated 30 Minutes)

Bailey McEuen: Goes through Presentation talking about the updates in the performance management and the employee review process that has taken place over the past year in the Agency. She talks about the new focus on team and agency goals worked into individual reviews and individual goal setting. She also talks about employee work rewards like working out of class opportunities and special projects, and what rewards look like within a union environment. Bailey talks about the process of designing the performance management system from data through a survey by supervisory staff, and the four main questions that came out of this to create the performance review.

Jacob Fox: Mentions the great improvement to the employee review process that has taken place with Bailey's leadership. He also talks about the connection of the overall performance management system and the process that the Board will approve in the next board order regarding the executive director performance review.

Pat Farr: Talks about his experience of performance reviews and performance management in his past career in private industry and expresses interest in the type of rewards that Homes for Good is offering to incentivize employees working at a higher level. The most intriguing one being special projects.

Bailey McEuen: Talks about the drive to do good work in the community that employees at Homes for Good have, and their reason for getting into the work. Rewarding with things like special projects allow employees to do more good work, and tap into their reason for wanting to work at the Agency.

Laurie Trieger: This is really a great process, and people usually leave jobs because of people— usually a communication breakdown somewhere or feeling like they aren't able to communicate their needs, but this process has really built in a process of reciprocal and iterative communication. Time will really tell because turnover is one of the most expensive things in an agency so it will be really interesting to see what turn over and advancement from within rates look like.

And forecasting to the executive director performance evaluation which we will review next, the five star rating idea is always tricky for me. The goal is a lot of three, because three means meeting expectations, and we should really just be meeting expectations on a daily basis, and there should be these pops, and it's nice to have these fours and fives of "exceeds" and even "exceptional"s. But if everyone always thinks the goal is to always have all five stars, it doesn't really give us a good picture of what is really going on. So that's what I like about what you just presented, and it is a little more nuanced and it isn't just a rating system. And that really gets into some cultural things that we have going on, that you have to be the best, and five stars is always the best, which really isn't realistic or sustainable or true.

- G. **ORDER 21-17-03-03H** — In the Matter of Adoption of Process, Format & Timeline for the Executive Director Performance Evaluation (Bailey McEuen, Human Resources Director) (Estimated 10 Minutes)

Bailey McEuen: So, in pairing with this, we also wanted to adopt a process for the executive director review process. Part of the reason is we have been looking a lot at continuity of operations, and when we are looking at processes like this we want to make sure we have a documented process so that if something happened to me or Ela, we would have a documented process of how to proceed.

Just as a discussion, Jacob's contract does mention that the merit increases are at the Board's discretion and references a performance review process that may be conducted.

Bailey talks about the 360 feedback survey that has been conducted in the past for the executive director review, and it being best practice for executive staff but not necessarily for all staff members across the agency. She talks about the goal setting tie in to the mission and how that is evaluated in the executive directors performance review as it is the other staff of the agency as they have just talked about.

Bailey talks about outreach to various Counties and Cities their process' for evaluating executive employees to get a sense for what other public agencies are doing.

Bailey then goes through the proposed timeline of the evaluation process, and doing a community outreach survey every other year, alternating with a smaller internal survey on off years.

Motion: **Heather Buch**

Second: **Laurie Trieger**

This motion passes 5/0 with commissioners **Joe Berney** and **Char Reavis** excused.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Adjourn.