



MEETING MINUTES
HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
August 26, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

| <u>COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT</u> | <u>STAFF PRESENT</u> |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Katherine Galian (Chair) | Komi Kalevor, Executive Director |
| Melinda Bell (Vice-Chair) | Melisa Dailey, Housing Program Coordinator |
| Eric Schmidt | Will Seals, Asset Manager, Public Housing |
| Sheila Greenlaw-Fink | Shannon Wilson, Housing Development Manager |
| Vince Chiotti | Liz Morris, HCV Manager |
| Renée Brouse | Jes Larson, SHS Program Manager |
| Narendar Sahgal | Yaling Huang-Dressel, Housing Controller |
| Alma Flores | Melissa Sonsalla, Policy & Strategic Initiatives Coordinator |
| Cindi Otis | Jacob Boyett, Administrative Assistant 2 |
| Sid Scott | |
| Balen Younis | |
| Dave Bachman | |
| | |
| <u>ABSENT</u> | <u>STAFF ABSENT</u> |
| Alma Tapia Hernandez | Josh Crites, Assistant Director |
| Ben Sturtz | Annette Evans, Homeless Program Manager |
| | |
| <u>HABOD</u> | |
| | |

I. ROLL CALL – 9:02 a.m. A quorum was present.

II. ACTION - APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM June 24, 2021 @ 9:21 a.m.

Motion: Renée Brouse

Second: Eric Schmidt

Vote: All approved

III. DISCUSSION - ORAL COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER UPDATES

MEMBER UPDATES

Melinda Bell, lead case manager with the Union Gospel Mission's Life Change program, shared they are still operating with periods of isolation due to Covid.

Sheila Greenlaw-Fink asked if Section 18 possibilities could be discussed as an agenda item. Will Seals stated he will include an update in his report.

Alma Flores with REACH Community Development reported negotiations are taking place with Metro on their Elmonica Station project and have considered purchasing the 5.5 acres of land adjacent to it. This would be a 7 acre opportunity to master plan a fairly large project with the possibility of partnering with a market rate developer to include mixed income. They are also talking with Diane Lynn of Proud Ground to contemplate home ownership opportunities. Dartmouth Crossing in Tigard has received LIFT funding for phase one and working on phase two feasibility for a large daycare/community center/international public market hall and affordable office space alongside affordable housing and market rate housing.

Cindi Otis, personal support worker for developmentally disabled adults reported all her clients have been vaccinated.

Sid Scott with Scott Edwards Architecture was happy to announce the decrease of more than 50% in wood prices.

Balen Younis advocates for underrepresented groups including immigrants and refugees as well as a housing specialist for a resettlement non-profit organization. He noted the challenges in finding housing for refugees because applying for housing requires ID, proof of income, or social security which new arrivals don't have upon entering the U.S. He is looking to Washington County to possibly provide temporary housing for Afghan refugees until they are able to secure the proper documents to find permanent housing. Komi offered to discuss this offline.

Katherine Galian with Community Action noted the growth in social services with federal funding increases coming into the community as well as local and regional funding driving a lot of need for additional staff. She noted the challenge to filling and retaining qualified individuals. She added the emergency rent assistance program funding is around \$32 million which is available for those who have rental arrears or need help paying their rent due to Covid or other circumstances. There have been challenges in distributing those funds. She noted almost 4,000 households have been served since March of 2020 with another 4,000 applications waiting for assistance. With the application process comes a 60 day protection under Senate Bill 278. Most non-payment evictions filed have been either dismissed or deferred 60 days to be able to pay out the assistance needed.

ORAL COMMUNICATION

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Komi Kalevor introduced Melissa Sonsalla who is the new Policy and Strategic Initiatives Coordinator. Her background has been working in housing authorities and most recently serving with Camp Rosenbaum.

Melissa Sonsalla stated she will be working on the Moving to Work program. She has had previous experience with Home Forward in Portland working with their Moving to Work program.

Mr. Kalevor also introduced Jacob Boyett who will be filling the roll as administrative assistant. He has a background in theater and set design with a master's degree from Chapman University in production and design for television.

Jacob Boyett stated one of his main responsibilities will be to provide the HAC monthly packet. His hope is to move things forward as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Mr. Kalevor noted Washington County is in the lower risk category because 70 percent of Washington County has been vaccinated. However with the ramp up in activities and rise in Covid cases, the mask mandate has returned along with the restriction of no indoor activities. He shared the success of the waitlist opening via online applications receiving 3,000 applications. Two-thirds of these applicants will be chosen to remain on the waitlist going forward.

The portfolio rehab is moving forward with the four properties with a total cost of 75 million for the total transaction and 25 million for rehab. One additional building has been added to the portfolio which is a 96-unit property called "The Ridge at Bull Mountain" formerly called "The Colonies". With the addition of this property the total transaction cost will now be about 116 million dollars with a total rehab cost of 48 million. He noted they now have a shelter at the Econo Lodge in Hillsboro with a lot of community pushback expressed in the public engagement meetings they've held so far. The Aloha Inn is being used temporarily as a shelter during its rehab but will be permanent supportive housing when the rehab is completed. The Econo Lodge will be owned by the county for public health purposes and use supportive housing services dollars to run the operations. Local business owners have raised concerns regarding homelessness in general and associate that with the shelter that may hinder their businesses.

Alma Flores asked if there are talking points the HAC can discuss with community members to be ambassadors for the shelter at the Econo Lodge. Komi and Jes Larson stated those can be made available upon request.

V. STAFF REPORTS

A. Financial Statements

Yaling Dressel explained the Housing Authority budget is divided between the Housing Authority and the Department of Housing Services. The latter includes continuum of care homeless programs, Metro affordable housing bond, and the Metro supportive housing services. The projected budget for continuum of care was \$4.1 million which included about \$3 million for housing assistance payments and \$600,000 for supportive services that will be allocated to service providers to assist the Housing Authority. The actual funding was \$3.6 million instead of the projected \$4.1 million. The homeless programs were projected to have less than a million dollars but actually received \$1.9 million with \$1 million coming from Community Action to support shelters.

The Metro Kaiser 300 provided \$1.3 million allocated to Washington County to assist 80 homeless households, and the actual was close to what was budgeted. The Metro Affordable Housing bond administrative costs met the budgeted amount. To assist the startup of the Metro Supportive Housing Services, \$1.1 million was borrowed from the county and expensed \$860,000 in 2020 which will be amortized over the duration of the levy, which is 10 years. She added \$2.6 million is allocated toward the winter shelters of which \$1.6 million is from FEMA. They also utilize federal funding for permanent shelters such as the Econo Lodge and Aloha Inn properties.

The Housing Authority of Washington County budget is doing well. Section 8 was projected to have a \$323,000 loss because more people were added. With that there is a potential to receive more funding and vouchers from HUD, but we are not in the red because we received a higher proration rate for admin fees, more port-in vouchers to lower staff cost, and HUD CARES one-time funding because of COVID-19. Cares funding of \$925,000 has been allotted to Washington County to assist in overcoming the impacts due to Covid. Public Housing broke even because of the additional Cares Act funds received, but the concern is the program's stability as many of these units have deferred maintenance issue. This is why the Housing Authority is moving forward with the Section 18 program.

Kaybern Terrace is funded by USDA dollars, but the 12 units are older and there is an ongoing struggle to manage this project. The goal is to operate at a break-even point but this year there is a net loss of \$9,000. Conversations with the USDA are moving forward to figure out how to preserve this property. Aloha Park has a net loss this year because costs were higher than projected and there are several deferred maintenance issues needing to be addressed. However, this property is part of the syndication packet which will include raising funds for renovations. Cornelius Village is operating at a net loss because the rent is kept at a reasonable amount in addition to the \$100,000 yearly mortgage payment. The Affordable Housing portfolio consists of 12 apartments of which four will be part of a syndication project to rehab and get a low-income housing tax credits. There is additional cashflow in the portfolio because of the increased subsidies provided by the Oregon Housing Community Services for the Hollytree and Tarkington properties is over \$800,000 each year.

The local fund allows expenditures or activities for development. This fund, which includes the landlord compensation fund and developer fees, disbursed about \$6 million last fiscal year with more to be disbursed this fiscal year. The admin fees received for the landlord compensation fund is \$140,000 so far, which can be utilized to serve other programs. One contribution is from Quatama Crossing for about \$1.5 million. This money will be utilized to assist the affordable portfolios to make sure we can operate our programs. Overall, there is a \$2.7 million in net income from the portfolio this past fiscal year (2020-2021).

B. Housing Choice Voucher Program

Liz Morris spoke on the HCV program and waitlist. Every person has been pulled off of the 2015 waitlist and those who were eligible are moving through the process. With that waitlist exhausted a new waitlist was opened and applicants at the top of the list will be contacted as early as September. The occupancy rate currently is at 89% as of July 31 with the intent to increase that above 90%. She noted the receipt of 89 emergency housing vouchers from HUD, and entirely through referrals, they were able to distribute half of those vouchers and have the other half set to have briefings before distribution.

She explained the caseloads will be restructured to a team-based model as of October 1st, which will create more efficiency and focus on the needs of clients. The project-based voucher utilization rate is doing well and has two properties coming online with a full waitlist in September and October for The Maryanne and The Viewfinder, respectively.

C. FSS Programs and Special Projects

Liz Morris reported the FSS team is continuing to grow the program. With this growth there will be an FSS career coach who will build on the current services. The last Kaiser Metro 300 vouchers were distributed at the end of June with 60 days to lease up. With it being a short-term program, those who have leased up or are leasing up right now will be transferred to the Regional Long Term Rental Assistance program (RLRA).

In response to a question about whether a larger family size would have preference on a waitlist it was stated that is not currently a consideration but can be considered in the future as a preference.

D. Public Housing

Will Seals reported on the HUD Section 3 policy - a HUD provision that recognizes that federal dollars can be a significant source of economic development and promote individual self-sufficiency in the communities where the funds are expended. In 2020 HUD updated their policy, which requires the Housing Authority to update their policy. One improvement they are working on is to create a better conduit between the contractors the Housing Authority contracts with who have staffing needs and connecting them with some of the residents in our HCV program. The Housing Authority is looking to integrate other programs with this policy as well. HUD responded to the Section 18 application submittal and noted two of the properties in the application were already part of a 2006 application under section 32. These are families who were not able to complete the purchase of the homes, so they remained on the application. They are now in the process of removing them from that old application and adding them to the new Section 18 application for resubmittal. All 60 families have been contacted, that will be affected by the Section 18, giving them first right of refusal. About 19 families responded they would like to purchase their homes and 8 families are working with Bienestar to pursue this option.

E. Affordable Housing/Portfolio Rehab

Mr. Seals reported affordable housing occupancy rates remain at 95.5%. The portfolio rehab has added the Ridge at Bull Mountain, delaying the original timeline. The permit approval process for Bonita Villa required additional review from land use and Clean Water Services due to the proximity of the property to Fanno Creek. A comprehensive relocation plan has been put together for the residents and intake meetings will start taking place soon.

Balen Younis recommended tracking the numbers of complaints within public housing, the major issue the complaint is about, and how many complaints have been resolved.

Narendar Sahgal asked for an overview of the complaint process and recommended a web-based process to be able to log the complaints. Mr. Seals explained the homes are inspected on an annual basis and any complaints are addressed. He noted they currently don't log the complaints but can start tracking them as to how and when they get resolved. He added maintenance orders are tracked and an anonymous survey will be distributed to clients to assess how well the public housing staff is performing.

F. Housing Development

Shannon Wilson reported on the Metro Affordable Housing Bond program. There are four key updates around the implementation of the affordable housing bond. The Viewfinder project is in the midst of preleasing, as it will be completed in October. The Valfre at Avenida 26 closed on July 23rd and construction is underway. The Aloha Inn is being used as an interim shelter and currently out to bid on a contractor, as design work has been completed. Terrace Glen is scheduled to close this year and by the end the year with 144 units. By the end of this calendar year there will be 81 units completed and a total of 234 units under construction. There are two issues around the preservation of existing affordable housing, one is the affordable housing use that has expired in Tigard. There are ongoing negotiations with the owner taking place, to ensure at least partial affordability for that project. The other project, in Aloha, has been for sale and negotiations are taking place with a developer, which would retain the housing as affordable; the Housing Authority is not directly involved in any kind of ownership capacity.

Narendar Sahgal asked if new affordable housing construction will be moving toward net zero to minimize cost in the future, like using solar panels. Shannon Wilson said the Oregon Housing and Community Services provide a lot of the low-income housing tax credits and they require the buildings be solar ready.

G. Report on Homelessness

Komi Kalevor reported in Annette's place. They are working to reprogram about \$285,000 of county funds to new uses, like Metro Supportive Housing Services dollars serving areas within the Metro service district boundary. There is also prevention rent assistance which includes a lot of federal and state funds, of which a portion will serve some of the areas that will not be served by Metro dollars.

H. Supportive Housing

Jes Larson shared information on the supportive housing services program launched July 1, 2021. There are 14 organizations who are beginning or have already executed contracts for expanded services with the housing case management services program. They will be getting two or three case managers each for a total of 38 case managers. Each of these managers will work with 20 households from homelessness, to housing placement, to ongoing housing retention to ensure the outcomes coincide with their goals. The first year goal is to serve 500 households who have experienced prolonged homelessness and have disabling conditions, achieving housing stability. The Bridge Shelter programs include the Aloha Inn, the Econo Lodge, and a partnership with Centro Cultural who has purchased the Forest Grove Inn. These programs will create 102 year-round shelter beds. The winter shelters will again be open from November to March with a capacity of 150 beds.

There have been two important restructures of the system of care that are underway: Community Connect and the Homeless Plan Advisory Committee. Community Connect (coordinated entry system that is required with HUD programs) is the tool connecting people to housing resources, and with these resources expanding significantly a shift needs to take place in how Community Connect works in the community. Right now there are 700 people waiting for resources, and the thought is to change that to a throughput, to quickly connect people to the care they need. Things have been changed and staff has been updated to connect people more efficiently and effectively. The Homeless Plan Advisory Committee needs to expand to include advising on the SHS investments. There is a short-term work

group working on a proposal on how it could repurpose its functions to be inclusive of the SHS work. The hope is to have the revised committee up and running in the new year.

The Bridge Shelter program has listened to community member concerns regarding the Econo Lodge shelter on 10th Avenue in Hillsboro. Two main concerns are how the shelter will impact local business operations and what is happening for all the unsheltered needs in the local and surrounding communities. They are working on a good neighbor agreement with local businesses that are near the shelter and looking into a Clean Start program. The Clean Start program is an employment training opportunity to make sure business districts are clean and safe. Ongoing community engagement countywide will occur with the ongoing decision-making matrixes before property is acquired in the future.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

N/A

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Komi discussed changing the order of agenda items for the next HAC meeting.

VIII. RESOLUTIONS/ACTION ITEMS

Komi Kalevor explained approval from the HAC is needed on the Moving to Work (MTW) Amendment to Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) before it is brought before the Board on September 7, 2021.

Liz Morris reported on the Moving to Work program which allows housing authorities the ability to design and implement new local programs that would traditionally not be possible. This allows the Washington County Housing Authority to implement policies and procedures formed to serve the community and needs in a great way. It will decrease administrative burdens and increase efficiency with the new policies implemented in 2022. She explained the ACC amendment is needed to modify the contract to make the Housing Authority a MTW agency. This is a 20-year agreement requiring full cooperation with HUD and its contractors, who also adhere to the MTW terms and comply with operation notices. They will be able to change the way funding calculations are done, eligibility uses for both public housing operation funds, capital funds, and housing choice vouchers. It gives more funding flexibility, financial reporting, and reporting requirements will be reported differently to HUD. There is program oversight for MTW agencies but there is flexibility. The goal is to expand and grow the service currently provided. There are several different funding streams and MTW will provide a way to consolidate them to become a budget neutral entity. The goal is to be able to spend the funds flexibly across all funding streams. She stated after the ACC agreement is signed the first supplement will be drafted in the PHA plan which will go out in 2022. This supplement notifies HUD of any MTW activities that are planned. The goal is to implement some of the activities as early as mid-2022. In this process, work sessions and public engagement will be important to make sure all stakeholders are engaged to better serve the community.

Melissa Sonsalla stated the motion is authorizing the Board of Directors to give Komi the authority to sign the agreement that makes the Washington County Housing Authority a Moving to Work agency. The ACC is a contract all housing authorities have, and this amendment will denote the housing authority as a Moving to Work agency.

Motion: Sheila Greenlaw-Fink moved to approve the MTW Amendment to Annual Contributions Contract as proposed.

Second: Eric Schmidt seconded the motion.

Vote: The motion unanimously passed.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 a.m.

Komi Kalevor
Secretary/Executive Director