



**Asheville Housing Authority
Commission Meeting Minutes
December 16, 2020**

I. Work Session

Work session was a closed session to discuss personnel matters.

II. Regular Meeting - Call to order

Chair Cassandra Wells called the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at **5:41 pm on Wednesday, December 16, 2020** at the Central Office, 165 S. French Broad Ave., Asheville, NC 28801. The meeting was facilitated via a Zoom Meeting due to COVID-19. Housing Authority staff were on-site to ensure participation by any interested member of the public. Teresa Jenkins conducted the roll call. The following Commissioners were present: Chair Cassandra Wells, Vice Chair Jennifer Pickering, Member Tilman Jackson, Member Amy Kemp, and Member Gene Bell.

III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Amy Kemp made a motion, seconded by **Jennifer Pickering**, to approve the minutes. The Commissioners unanimously approved the minutes of **November 18, 2020**.

BOARD MEMBERS

VOTE

Ms. Cassandra Wells
Ms. Jennifer Pickering
Ms. Amy Kem
Mr. Tilman Jackson
Mr. Gene Bell

Aye
Aye
Aye
Aye
Aye

IV. Bills and Communications

David Nash welcomed Antanette Mosley as the new Asheville City Council liaison to the HACA Board of Commissioners.

David shared a brief update on the Lee Walker Heights. He shared that he had a discussion with the management company in November. The management company agreed to change some of the criminal background screening criteria focusing primarily on violent and drug related crimes. They will not screen for credit for RAD and tenant-based voucher participants. Additionally, actively working FSS participants with a referral from FSS staff will receive an admissions preference.

At the Board Chair's request, David asked the city to install speed humps at Klondyke last summer. The city traffic engineer has agreed and plans to install speed bumps in Klondyke, Hillcrest and Pisgah View next year.

The broad band internet project moving along. Skyrunner Systems is in the installation phase of the project. All of Southside installation is complete except for John and Walton Streets, and those are expected to be completed by Christmas. Reports are good as far as speed and reliability. Hillcrest will be the next development to receive broad band internet. To date, approximately 15% of total units have been installed.

V. Report of the Secretary

a) Asheville Housing Properties

Noele Tackett reported the monthly Asheville Housing Properties occupancy report submitted with the board packet. She reported that they ended the month 96% occupied. There were 15 units that were on rehab/hold status, 51 units being prepared for leasing, 10 ready for leasing, and 28 move-ins. The average turn-around days per unit was 32 days. Bartlett and Klondyke apartments were on the high side for turn around due to several emergency transfers, as well as cabinet and appliance delivery delays due to COVID-19.

b) Asheville Housing Vouchers

Brandy Woodard provided a brief overview of the voucher program. She reported the monthly Asheville Housing Vouchers report as submitted with the board packet. There are a total of 3262 vouchers, 3221 available to lease, 2838 leased, 411 available, and 138 assigned/looking. There were 10 mobility move, 33 move-ins, 14 move-outs, 256 inspections, and 224 re-exams.

c) Family Self-Sufficiency

Shaunda Sandford reported the monthly Family Self-Sufficiency report as submitted with the board packet. She reported that they have 259 participants in the program and 168 escrow accounts. There was 1 new FSS participant enrolled in the month of October and no new escrow accounts. There were 4 FSS graduates this month. The graduates received a combined total of \$45,000. There are a total of 65 homeowners. There are 5 families on hold with USDA; 3 families that closed, and 2 more families that are getting closer to closing. Additionally, 2 families received cars from Working Wheels. Jennifer Pickering inquired about how many families were spending their first Christmas in their new home. Jennifer feels we should acknowledge their accomplishment. Shaunda will gather the numbers and take something to their new homes for Christmas.

The PODs are serving approximately 260 students total in 26 total classrooms. There are 4 new college students working in PODs and about 4 in middle school and/or high school. The experience has been an incentive for students that weren't engaged in academics and allows them to earn pay.

d) Financial Report

Tom Good reported the financials as reported with the board packet. He reported that it has been another good month on the financial side. The properties are still coming up with positive net income each month; nothing jumping out this month as being concerning. HCVP has made positive progress this month. Central management is doing better than budgeted overall. Agency wide looking good overall.

e) Coronavirus Update

David Nash announced that the County is planning to distribute COVID-19 vaccinations. Looking for community leaders to be positive models for the vaccination or resources. He has asked the members of the Board of Commissioners consider if they would be willing to get the vaccination when available. He welcomed them to join a HACA employee vaccination day, when we are able to schedule one.

f) Residents Council Report

Crystal Reid reported that the Residents Council had a successful year during COVID. Instead of a holiday give away, they are planning to do an after-holiday giveaway with health and safety items to be distributed to residents. And information and resources to help with get through the pandemic. Curbside debris collection service has been successful and is doing more work in keeping the properties clean.

g) Edington Center Report

Shuvonda Harper reported that this past Saturday, Titus O'Neal, a wrestler visited the Edington Center and assisted with giving away food boxes. Keenan Lake facilitated the service. They distributed several hundred boxes of food. Tuesday will be last day for the PODs before the holidays. Meals are still being delivered and on the holiday schedule for next week.

VI. New Business

1) Approval of 2021 Board Meeting Schedule.

Teresa Jenkins presented the 2020 Proposed Board Meeting Schedule as reported in the board packet. The main change to the schedule is the meeting locations due to COVID-19. The meetings will continue to be held at Central Office facilitated by Zoom as long as necessary for safety reasons.

Jennifer Pickering made a motion, seconded by **Tilman Jackson** to approve the proposed 2020 Board Meeting Schedule.

The Board voted as follows:

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Cassandra Wells
Ms. Jennifer Pickering
Ms. Amy Kemp

VOTE

Aye
Aye
Aye

Mr. Tilman Jackson
Mr. Gene Bell

Aye
Aye

2) Approval of Resolution No. 2020-3, Authorizing the Submission of Asheville Housing Authority's MTW Plan and Application to HUD.

David Nash gave a brief summary, stating his belief the MTW Plan is a real opportunity to improve things for residents, and almost all resident input on the proposal has been positive. He also believes that HACA can implement a meaningful MTW FSS program with stepped rent, which was included in the plan.

Gene Bell made a motion predicated on feedback and service provided to the resident. With the understanding that HACA will keep a focus on the FSS program and priority will be given to the program. David mentioned we are paying escrow already; we can do more marketing for the program so residents can utilize the program. David mentioned that we can draw down some of the \$4 million in HUD reserve funding for FSS supportive services if we are selected for MTW. We can facilitate both a traditional FSS program for participants who will be exempt from the rent study and an MTW FSS Program for all participants in the rent study.

Tilman Jackson agrees with helping residents, but also challenging them with more opportunities. He doesn't want to take the regular FSS opportunity away from residents. He expressed concern that the new MTW programs does more for keeping things the same for residents, rather than moving forward. He would like us to improve the program we have instead of creating another program.

Jennifer Pickering is in favor of moving forward with the MTW program as long as it is not fully implemented in 2021, so there will be time to recover from the pandemic, develop the process and we still have flexibility to go a different direction if it is not a good fit.

Cassandra Wells expressed interest in polling residents after the program begins to get their perspective and feedback regarding the program. David Nash shared that once the application is submitted, there would be a year long process before the program began and a 6-year study period. This will mean there will be plenty of opportunities for input.

Gene Bell proposed that the board members schedule a work session with Shaunda to brainstorm ideas for identify individuals that want to participate in FSS. Shaunda Sandford expressed that when you look at MTW versus FSS, the FSS mindset is different because participants are used to working and have begun learning self-sufficiency and meeting goals; otherwise we could be setting residents up for failure because they aren't familiar with that level of responsibility. Not sure how with the rent structure what the incentive would be for residents in MTW. Shuvonda Harper suggested we create a testimonial from FSS graduates.

David Nash shared that FSS continues to be important for us to market and encourage participation. If we are not selected for the MTW program, FSS is the primary program we have to encourage self-reliance by our residents. However, if we are able to implement MTW, all the people in the current FSS program will stay there and we can create an incentive program with escrow that would benefit both steps rent and others that want to participate. HUD will have to decide if people can chose to come out of the rent study after it begins and move to FSS during the rent study period, but after that 6 year rent study, we will be an MTW agency for at least the next 14 years, and that will give us broad discretion to design and redesign our broad self-reliance efforts.

Gene Bell made a motion, seconded by **Amy Kemp** to approve Resolution No. 2020-3, approving and authorizing the submission of Asheville Housing Authority's MTW Plan and Application to HUD.

The Board voted as follows:

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Cassandra Wells
Ms. Jennifer Pickering
Ms. Amy Kemp
Mr. Tilman Jackson
Mr. Gene Bell

VOTE

Nay
Aye
Aye
Nay
Aye

3) Approval of 2021 Agency Wide Operating Budget.

Tom Good reported that the proposed 2021 budget is similar to what it was in 2020. We tried to make some changes to improve efficiency and management. In the past there was a focus on RAD properties, and that continues, but we have also set up separate columns (M and L) so other rental properties, such as Eastview and Curve Street can be highlighted. We have budgeted \$500K toward the Woodfin building exterior repair project. We increased budgets for more protective services and the tenant service budgets are projecting to be in the black again this year due to applying money to strategic reserves and still making replacement reserve deposits. This is a lower operating expense budget than last year. Additional funds have been reserved for lawn maintenance, in case we get another wet summer and need to arrange for additional mows.

David Nash explained that this year for COVID-19 response we adjusted everyone's weekly schedule, however this is going back to 40 hours a week at the beginning of the year, also included in the budget is a 3% salary increase across the board and a 2% increase to the retirement fund, a 5% increase for employees next year, \$12K in properties to support families and youth summer program, under central Asheville contract with G4s and other protective services is APD under protective services. Tilman Jackson inquired about protective services contracts. The city has cut the amount of people servicing our communities, however David stated that we need to discuss money with them because they haven't adjusted our contract costs. The board

members requested to review the APD contracts and G4S nighttime security for Central Asheville, Bartlett and Altamont. We may need to re-allocate resources to keep an eye on Altamont to address issues with traffic and trespassing.

Gene Bell made a motion, seconded by **Tilman Jackson** to approve the 2021 Agency Wide Operating Budget.

The Board voted as follows:

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Ms. Cassandra Wells	Aye
Ms. Jennifer Pickering	Aye
Ms. Amy Kemp	Aye
Mr. Tilman Jackson	Aye
Mr. Gene Bell	Aye

4) Approval of FYE2019 Surplus Cash Distributions for the RAD PBV Properties to (or from) the Strategic Investment Reserve.

David Nash reported that under RAD we earned money to pay expenses, and at the end of each fiscal year we have authority to move surplus cash (earned income) to an unrestricted account we call the Strategic Investment Reserve. We dipped into this reserve this year to reactivate the kitchen and pay HACA's share of the broadband installation project. We are proposing to transfer 75% of each properties surplus cash as of 12/31/2019 to the strategic reserve, and to refund some resources from the strategic reserve to the North Asheville properties to cover a deficit there.

Amy Kemp made a motion, seconded by **Tilman Jackson** to approve the FYE2019 Surplus Cash Distribution for the RAD PBV Properties to (or from) the Strategic Investment Reserve.

The Board voted as follows:

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Ms. Cassandra Wells	Aye
Ms. Jennifer Pickering	Aye
Ms. Amy Kemp	Aye
Mr. Tilman Jackson	Aye
Mr. Gene Bell	Aye

5) Approval of Resolution No. 2020-4, Restating the Retirement Plan to increase the HACA contribution to employee retirement accounts from 4% to 6%.

Teresa Jenkins reported that under the current Retirement Plan, employees receive a 4% contribution from HACA. Effective in January, we would like to increase this contribution to 6% as an added benefit HACA employees and staff.

Gene Bell made a motion, seconded by **Tilman Jackson** to approve Resolution No. 2020-4, restating the Retirement Plan to increase the HACA contribution to employee retirement accounts from 4% to 6%.

The Board voted as follows:

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Ms. Cassandra Wells	Aye
Ms. Jennifer Pickering	Aye
Ms. Amy Kemp	Aye
Mr. Tilman Jackson	Aye
Mr. Gene Bell	Aye

6) Authorization for the Board Chair to execute a Certificate of Completion and Termination of Certain Conditions, Restrictions, Limitations, Reservations and Exceptions for property located at 27 Hazzard Street.

The board unanimously agreed to table this agenda item. Djuana Swann will obtain additional information for the board members to review and bring the item back if necessary.

VII. Unfinished Business

1) Approval of and authorization to submit the 2021 Annual PHA Plan to HUD.

David Nash reported that we had a public hearing at the November meeting. This is an annual update to the 5-year plan. The new part is the description of what has been done since the beginning of 2020 to address the goals and objectives established in the 5-Year Plan. David shared that we can amend the goals over time, but we need to get this annual update submitted to HUD by January 16. Cassandra Wells stated that the board would like to schedule a retreat for next year to review the goals and objectives, and to have an initial discussion at the next work session.

Gene Bell made a motion, seconded by **Amy Kemp** to approve of and authorize the submission of the 2021 Annual PHA Plan to HUD.

The Board voted as follows:

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Ms. Cassandra Wells	Aye
Ms. Jennifer Pickering	Aye
Ms. Amy Kemp	Aye
Mr. Tilman Jackson	Aye
Mr. Gene Bell	Aye

2) Authorization to utilize \$275,000 in non-federal Strategic Investment Reserve funds for master planning and predevelopment expenses for a new Purpose-Built Community at and near Deaverview Apartments.

David Nash explained that planning for a West Asheville project was a key goal in the 5-year plan. During a meeting last winter with the Mayor, she was excited about the Purpose-Built Community in Charlotte. We had planned to visit that community in April, but had to cancel those plans due to the coronavirus pandemic shutdowns. We held a listening session in Deaverview and from those conversations we were able to develop a concept which David shared with the board members.

Cassandra inquired if this was implemented in the Strategic Plan. David shared that this was added to the plan back in the Fall of 2019. David reviewed the Purpose-Built Community model. The architects plan to come back with ideas and meet with residents to get input, and develop a master plan in consultation with the residents over the next 12 months. Cassandra asked if the priority will be given for residents from other housing communities? As with Lee Walker Heights, current residents will have priority for any new units eventually constructed and tenant-based voucher residents can apply and we will be sure that an FSS preference will be given. Gene asked if units could be focused toward housing residents, and David shared that we have asked for 320 rental total units; 100 units for homeownership including 50 of those units for HCV Homeownership participants. Jennifer approved of the project as long as we are utilizing contractors that match our mission.

Amy Kemp made a motion, seconded by **Gene Bell** to authorize the utilization of \$275,000 in non-federal Strategic Reserve funds for master planning and predevelopment expenses for a new Purpose-Built Community at and near Deaverview Apartments.

The Board voted as follows:

<u>BOARD MEMBERS</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
Ms. Cassandra Wells	Aye
Ms. Jennifer Pickering	Aye
Ms. Amy Kemp	Aye
Mr. Tilman Jackson	Aye
Mr. Gene Bell	Aye

VIII. Public Comment

Roy Harris did not have any specific comments, but asked that it be noted that he was present at the meeting.

David was asked if residents would have hiring preference on this project? He said yes, we will work to make hiring residents a priority to work on the West Asheville project. He

explained that we have had a collaboration with AB Tech to train residents for the Lee Walker project, but AB Tech's limited classes during COVID-19 has slowed down that training, We do have one crew trained by Green Opportunities that assisted with the Edington Auditorium project, has worked a Lee Walker, and is now working for Skyrunner on the internet installation. Gene plans to coordinate with David on the activities and planning.

Tilman inquired if there was a projected percentage for the number of applicants which should be residents, and if they can't accommodate our request, do we back away. We are working collaboratively on a master plan and timelines, and funding that work will help ensure that they accommodate our requests.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm. The next meeting will be held at 6:00 pm on January 27, 2021 at Asheville Housing Authority Central Office, 165 S. French Broad Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801.



Cassandra Wells, Chair

ATTEST:



David Nash, Secretary

