



# Asheville Housing Authority Commission Meeting Minutes November 18, 2020

## I. Work Session

The work session was held in the Asheville Housing Authority Board Room, as well as via Zoom virtual meeting starting at 5:02 pm. The following Commissioners were present: Chair Cassandra Wells, Tilman Jackson, Gene Bell, Amy Kemp, and Jennifer Pickering. Chair Cassandra Wells called the work session to order.

Chair Cassandra Wells requested an overview of agenda item #1; AHA's 2021 Annual Plan. David Nash explained that the Housing Authority conducts a public hearing and submits a PHA Plan to HUD annually. The 5-Year Plan, which we prepared and submitted last year includes a list of specific goals and objectives. We are generally required to demonstrate that our PHA Plan is consistent with the City of Asheville's goals set forth in its Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan. Last year when we submitted our 5-Year Plan, the City had not updated its Consolidated Plan, and that overall plan is still being finalized. The goals are largely consistent with the prior Consolidated Plan, so we are still in compliance.

The Annual PHA Plan on the agenda today is an update on our progress in meeting the 5-Year Plan Goals and Objectives, and we have followed the HUD guidelines for advertising the public hearing and meeting with the Resident Advisory Board (Residents Council Board members Cassandra Wells and Tilman Jackson asked questions regarding the initial goals and objectives presented in the plan. Mr. Jackson asked if working families could have priority for units in the new Lee Walker Heights development, after returning residents are housed. David explained that, in addition to applicants on our waiting list moving into the 96 project-based voucher units at Maple Crest, Asheville Housing residents with tenant mobility vouchers will be able to apply for the other 116 units, so long as they meet income and other screening requirements of the NC Housing Finance Agency.

After further discussion regarding the goals and objectives, David suggested moving forward with the scheduled public hearing. Cassandra requested additional time for the board members to review the plan in depth to ensure understood the goals and objectives. David suggested a spring retreat to review the 5-Year Plan Goals and Objectives, after the City's Consolidated Plan is finalized and adopted by Council. David explained that this document is just an update and is due by the end of this year, but that we can take whatever time we need early next year to amend and update the 5-Year Plan Goals and Objectives.

Cassandra Wells and Tillman Jackson requested additional time to review and discuss the document before submitting it to HUD. Gene Bell suggested that the board members submit their questions to David prior to the meeting, which would give him adequate time to respond to their questions, and hopefully they could vote on the plan during the December meeting. After further discussion, the board members decided to wait on voting on the Annual Plan, but to move forward with the public hearing previously advertised. The Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> work session will begin at 4:30 pm per Cassandra's request.

The Work Session ended at: 6:25 pm. Chair Cassandra Wells had to leave for another meeting before the Regular Board meeting.

**II. Regular Meeting - Call to order**

Vice Chair Jennifer Pickering called the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at **6:26 pm on Wednesday, November 18, 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: Vice Chair Jennifer Pickering, Member Tilman Jackson, Member Amy Kemp, Member Gene Bell. The following Commissioners were absent: Chair Cassandra Wells.

**III. Approval of minutes from last meeting**

**Gene Bell** made a motion, seconded by **Amy Kemp**, to approve the minutes. The Commissioners unanimously approved the minutes of **October 28, 2020**.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

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

**VOTE**

Aye  
Aye  
Aye  
Aye

**IV. Bills and Communications**

No report. David Nash explained that regular board reports for October will be presented at the December meeting, due to the early meeting date this month. Tilman Jackson thanked Robert Hooper for taking a proactive approach and responding to concerns regarding discarded needles on the grounds in Pisgah View.

**V. Report of the Secretary**

**a) Asheville Housing Properties**

No Report.

**b) Asheville Housing Vouchers**

No Report.

- c) **Family Self-Sufficiency**  
No Report.
- d) **Financial Report**  
No Report.
- e) **Coronavirus Update**  
No Report.
- f) **Residents Council Report**  
No Report.
- g) **Edington Center Report**  
No Report.
- h) **Property Management Report**  
No Report.

## **VI. New Business**

### **1) Public hearing on Asheville Housing Authority's 2021 Annual Plan, and authorization to submit to HUD.**

Jennifer Pickering opened the Public Hearing at 6:30 pm. The resident advisory board comments were made available in the board packet. Nikita Lindsey, a resident and Housing Authority employee, commented on the MTW stepped rent program currently being developed consistent with a long-term goal in the PHA Plan. She feels that the plan is a great idea moving forward, and had it been in place prior to now she would've likely been able to move out of public housing a long time ago. Jennifer Pickering expressed her appreciation for Nikita's comments. There being no other comments, the public hearing closed at 6:32 pm.

The Board decided by consensus to table the vote to authorize the submission of the 2021 Annual Plan to HUD until the December board meeting following further review and discussion.

### **2) Approval of Interlocal Agreement regarding funding support and implementation for Asheville Housing's installation of broadband Internet access in RAD PBV family developments.**

David Nash explained that sources committed in this agreement along with Asheville Housing funding approved by the Board last month will allow the Housing Authority to provide free internet services to the residents in our developments during the COVID-19 shutdowns and after. The first priority of funds identified in this agreement is to support Asheville City and Buncombe County school student and

families, but the new system will allow residents to attend remote medical appointments and generally access important information in the digital age.

**Gene Bell** made a motion, seconded by **Tilman Jackson** to approve the Interlocal Agreement regarding funding support and implementation for Asheville Housing's installation of broadband internet access in RAD PBV units.

The Board voted as follows:

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

**3) Approval of updated utility allowances for the Housing Choice Voucher Program effective December 1, 2020.**

Brandy Woodard explained this is an annual update to the utility allowances for HUD. There was a 10% combined difference so we are required to adjust the numbers. This does not impact PBV residents, because Asheville Housing pays all utilities, but covers private market rentals where residents are required to pay all or part of the utilities directly.

**Tilman Jackson** made a motion, seconded by **Gene Bell** to approve the updated utility allowances for the Housing Choice Voucher Program effective December 1, 2020.

The Board voted as follows:

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

**4) Authorization to utilize \$250,000 in non-federal strategic investment reserve funds on master planning and predevelopment expenses for a new Purpose-Built Community at and near Deaverview Apartments.**

Tilman Jackson asked to table this item until December meeting because it is linked to the long-term goals and objectives discussion. The board members agreed to table this item to the December board meeting.

**5) Authorization to allow employees to carry over up to 640 hours of regular PTO effective at the end of December 2020.**

David Nash explained that currently employees can carry over 480 hours of PTO each year. However, due to COVID employees have been unable to use their PTO and will lose it at the end of the year, unless they are able to increase the roll-over limit. The original request was to allow this for future years also, but it was amended at the Vice Chair's suggestion to be limited to this year only.

**Amy Kemp** made a motion, seconded by **Tilman Jackson** to authorize to allow employees, on a one-time basis, to carry over up to 640 hours of regular PTO at the end of December 2020 into 2021.

The Board voted as follows:

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

**6) Authorization for employees to voluntarily elect to carry over all or part of their supplemental COVID-related PTO approved by the Board of Commissioners in April 2020, rather than receiving a pay out in December 2020.**

David Nash shared that the supplemental COVID PTO was an incentive approved by the board back in the Spring; which provided special COVID PTO leave for 2 weeks for most employees and 4 weeks for employees with medical conditions that put them at high-risk. This request will allow employees to voluntarily carry over the COVID PTO to 2021. Otherwise it will be paid out in December as originally authorized by the Board.

**Amy Kemp** made a motion, seconded by **Gene Bell** to authorize employees to voluntarily elect to carry over all or part of their supplemental COVID-related PTO approved by the Board of Commissioners in April 2020, rather than receiving a pay out in December 2020.

The Board voted as follows:

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

**7) Authorization to continue paying double time for emergency after-hours calls after December 31, 2020, including paying a minimum of 5 hours at double time per week for the week that maintenance staff are on call**

David Nash shared that in spring that they approved double time for maintenance staff. The staff have requested that this incentive continue into 2021. They also requested a minimum payment because being on-call is burdensome to their work-life balance, and sometimes they do not get any calls. The Vice Chair suggested that the board approve this pay to continue through March 31, 2021 and review it again during the March board meeting and all agreed.

**Gene Bell** made a motion, seconded by **Tilman Jackson** to authorize the continuation of paying double time for emergency after-hours calls after December 31, 2020, including paying a minimum of 5 hours at double time per week for the week that maintenance staff are on call, through March 31, 2021.

The Board voted as follows:

**BOARD MEMBERS**

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

**VOTE**

Aye  
Aye  
Aye  
Aye

**VII. Unfinished Business**

None.

**VIII. Public Comment**


Jennifer Pickering shared an encounter with a former Deaverview resident who moved with a tenant mobility voucher to an isolated location in Swannanoa because that was the only place she could find to rent with her voucher. The resident is facing significant challenges with transportation because she does not have a car. Jennifer will discuss this resident's needs with staff in the future.

Shuvonda Harper announced next Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> Thanksgiving-themed simple meals will be sent out between 2 pm and 4 pm; also, the Southside Garden and kitchen will provide soup to the community next Tuesday at 2 pm.


David Nash announced that the PEAK Academy is interested in exploring the use of trailers and modular units at the PVA garden site. David has requested support from the board members to explore this option. The board members agreed to support this option. Shuvonda Harper cautioned that preparation for use of this area should be handled carefully due to safety concerns from discarded needles.

**IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 6:59 pm. The next meeting will be held at 6:00 pm on December 16, 2020 at Asheville Housing Authority Central Office, 165 S. French Broad Avenue, Asheville, NC 28801.

  
Cassandra Wells, Chair

ATTEST:

  
David Nash, Secretary

