

# MINUTES

Homes for Good Housing Agency

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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**Wednesday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 1:30pm**

Homes for Good conducted the August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting in person at the Homes for Good administrative building and 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.

## CALL TO ORDER

Board Members present: **Char Reavis, Michelle Thurston, Larissa Ennis, Justin Sandoval, Chloe Tirabasso, Kirk Strohman Jr. Pat Farr, Heather Buch, Joel Iboa**

Board Members absent: None

Quorum Met

## 1. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

## 2. COMMISSIONERS' RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS AND/OR OTHER ISSUES AND REMONSTRANCE

None.

## 3. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

## 4. COMMISSIONERS' BUSINESS

*Jacob Fox presented a summary of the requirements to vote for the Board Chair and Vice chair. He recommended that **Char Reavis** serve as Chair for continuity purposes. He also suggested that one of the Lane County Commissioners serve as the Vice Chair as they have more background information as to the budget process and other Homes for Good policies.*

*Kirk Strohman Jr. verbally supported the recommendation.*

*Larissa Ennis commented how leadership continuity is important and also supported the recommendation.*

*Michelle Thurston motioned for Char Reavis to continue to serve as the Homes for Good Board of Commissioners Board Chair effective 2022-2023.*

Motion: **Michelle Thurston**

Second: **Chloe Tirabasso**

Discussion: None

**VOTE**

Ayes: **Char Reavis, Michelle Thurston, Larissa Ennis, Justin Sandoval, Chloe Tirabasso, Kirk Strohman Jr. Pat Farr, Heather Buch**

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: **Joel Iboa**

**The motion for Char Reavis to serve as the Board Chair was passed 8/0/1 with Joel Iboa absent.**

*Kirk Strohman Jr. motioned for Heather Buch to serve as Vice Chair of the Homes for Good Board of Commissioners effective 2022-2023.*

Motion: **Kirk Strohman Jr.**

Second: **Michelle Thurston**

Discussion: None

**VOTE**

Ayes: **Char Reavis, Michelle Thurston, Larissa Ennis, Justin Sandoval, Chloe Tirabasso, Kirk Strohman Jr. Pat Farr, Heather Buch, Joel Iboa**

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

**The motion for Heath Buch to serve as Vice Chair was passed 9/0/0.**

## **5. EMERGENCY BUSINESS**

None.

## **6. ADMINISTRATION**

### **A. Executive Director Report**

*Jacob Fox discussed waitlist connect and the process of opening the waitlists and serving at various pop-up locations.*

*Jacob Fox discussed the community night out event put on by the Resident Services division. Invited over 20 community partners and honored the people that Homes for Good services by providing access to services and food. He noted that **Justin Sandoval** was in attendance providing services.*

*Jacob Fox gave appreciation to new board for being at The Nel's grand opening ceremony.*

*Jacob Fox noted the various awards that Homes for Good has been receiving. Informed the board that **Char Reavis** was voted for Commissioner of the Year for NAHRO and gave appreciation for her.*

*Michelle Thurston commented on the compassion and coordination of the Waitlist Connect event.*

*Michelle Thurston commented on Community Night Out event and how well coordinated it was.*

*Michelle Thurston congratulated Char Reavis on her nomination for commissioner of the year award.*

#### **B. Approval of 6/22/2022 Board Meeting Minutes**

Motion: **Michelle Thurston**

Second: **Larissa Ennis**

Discussion: The board agreed that the new commissioners who were not present for the June board meeting would not vote on the meeting minutes.

#### **VOTE**

Ayes: **Heather Buch, Pat Farr, Char Reavis, Michelle Thurston**

Abstain: **Joel Iboa, Chloe Tirabasso, Kirk Strohman Jr., Larissa Ennis, Justin Sandoval**

Absent: None

**The 6/22/2022 meeting minutes were passed 4/0/5.**

#### **C. Approval of 7/27/2022 Board Meeting Minutes.**

Motion: **Michelle Thurston**

Second: **Kirk Strohman Jr.**

Discussion: Chloe Tirabasso commented that she appreciated how the minutes were laid out.

#### **VOTE**

Ayes: **Heather Buch, Pat Farr, Char Reavis, Michelle Thurston, Joel Iboa, Chloe Tirabasso, Kirk Strohman Jr., Larissa Ennis, Justin Sandoval**

Abstain: None.

Absent: None

**The 7/27/2022 meeting minutes were passed 9/0/0.**

## **7. PRESENTATION: FYE September 30, 2021 Audit Results**

*Kevin Mullerleile and Amanda McCleary-Moore from Moss Adams presented the audit results. They informed the board that there were no findings in regard to internal controls over financial reporting and that there were no compliance findings. They stated that all reports were clean.*

*Kevin Mullerleile provided information on how the audits were conducted and what areas were focused on and emphasized for the audit. He stated that there were no significant risks, exposures, or uncertainties in the financial statements.*

*Chloe Tirabasso inquired about ARPA funding being considered high risk. Kevin Mullerleile responded because they are new programs and having them allocated to people in need in a quick manner that is still in compliance, which creates higher risk environment.*

*Heather Buch gave appreciation to Jeff Bridgens and the finance team for being able to submit the audit on a timely manner. She inquired if the issue with timing and HUD had been fully resolved.*

*Jeff Bridgens responded and stated that he spoke with the reviewer from 2020. Jacob Fox stated that the primary challenge with HUD was with FY 19 audit, and due to the Covid-19 pandemic there were a lot of different waivers at play. Stated that FY 2019 our audit was not approved by HUD due to a fundamental disagreement that could not be resolved, and HUD did not complete final approval. FY 20 with support from Moss Adams was completed, and FY 21 HUD may still come back with questions, but we have met all the deadlines and we are in good shape.*

**No action needed.**

## **8. ORDER: 22-24-08-01H In the Matter of Updating Homes for Good's Administrative Plan to Use Income Limits to Determine Eligibility**

*Rent Assistance Division Director Beth Ochs presented. She explained that in September 2021, HUD gave clarification on the income levels that VASH can serve to increase the eligibility level from 50% to 80% area median income. Stated that it is not required and is at the PHA's discretion to change the income level requirement. Stated that she met with the VA in June and they had 5-10 people who fell in this income category who could be assisted with VASH through this change. Explained that we are not at 100% utilization of VASH vouchers so this would not negatively impact the agency. Explained that the VASH voucher serves homeless veterans and are administered in partnership with the VA; the PHA provides the voucher, and the VA provides wraparound services.*

*Pat Farr inquired as to why VASH vouchers have not been 100% utilized with 50% AMI. Beth stated that the capacity at the case management level the VA may be the issue. Would potentially be a lighter touch for higher income levels and less need for case management.*

*Pat Farr inquired about whether if availability of landlords is an issue. Beth Ochs stated that is an issue across the board for all of our programs.*

*Pat Farr* inquired about if we increase to 80% if we can change it back to 50% if needed. *Beth* stated that it is at our discretion should we want to change back in the future.

*Joel Iboa* inquired how often AMI is updated. *Beth Ochs* stated that it is yearly and is updated late in the fall.

*Joel Iboa* inquired what the current AMIs are. *Beth* stated that 50% AMI 1 bedroom is 27,900, 80% AMI at 1 bedroom is \$44,600- pulled the information from Lane County website.

*Heather Buch* said that she is in support of increasing the AMI as it increases access for vouchers for veterans and the more that we can fill a gap the better.

*Chloe Tirabasso* said that she is in support of this and suggested that we revisit this annually to ensure that people who are very low income continue to have access to the vouchers.

*Kirk Strohman Jr.* inquired about reverse pipeline for referrals; if Homes for Good can refer veterans to the VA. *Beth* stated that Homes for Good is able to make referrals to the VA, and the VA has a variety of different housing programs so they may not necessarily be routed back for a VASH voucher, but it would be a natural course of action for our staff to do this.

*Kirk Strohman Jr.* inquired about federal funding of voucher; *Beth* confirmed that funding for VASH vouchers is fully federal.

Motion: **Joel Iboa**

Second: **Michelle Thurston**

Discussion: The board agreed to revisit this policy change at later date in regard to restrictions. **Jacob Fox** discussed the Annual Plan that is brought to the board annually provides the opportunity to revisit.

**VOTE**

Ayes: **Char Reavis, Michelle Thurston, Larissa Ennis, Justin Sandoval, Chloe Tirabasso, Kirk Strohman Jr. Pat Farr, Heather Buch, Joel Iboa**

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

**Board Order 22-24-08-01H was passed 9/0/0.**

**9. ORDER: 22-24-08-02H In the Matter of Proposed Revisions to the Public Housing Lease Agreement and Community Rules**

*Supportive Housing Compliance and Data Analyst Melanie Church* presented. She explained that Homes for Good has public housing in Eugene, Springfield, Florence, Cottage Grove. There are 595 public housing units. Stated that periodically updates need to be made to the lease agreements and community rules. Some are required by HUD and some are discretionary. We need to give residents 30 days advance notice to provide comment; received one comment and subsequently changed language for further clarification. Once changes are made, residents will be notified. As a result of pandemic, change in rent collection. HUD is requiring that termination

*of lease is being changed from 14 days to 30 days to give individuals more time to pay rent. Rent is based on resident income and is calculated with Housing Specialists, so if residents have experienced a loss of income that is taken into account and have their rent adjusted. Also suggesting we remove the section about termination of tenancy based on numerous late payments, as this is not something HFG has enforced since 2020. Most of the changes are clarifications on certain rules, so additional language has been added for clarity. For example, the quiet hours have been further defined. Homes for Good attorneys suggested to add interference with management to include verbal, physical harassment of management contractors, and staff from effectively managing apartment communities. Language included for fire safety in regard to BBQ grills, video surveillance, and guests that have been trespassed have been updated. Informed the board that best practices in property management for Oregon were considered and reviewed when making any changes. Big component of change is in regard to weapons policy to keep residents within their rights but to keep anyone from feeling intimidated or unsafe in common areas.*

**Kirk Strohman Jr.** *inquired about the history of fires occurring at properties. Melanie explained that small fires have happened, and we want residents to be aware of the safety precautions.*

**Larissa Ennis** *inquired if attorneys reviewed the issue with political and religious signage. Melanie stated that yes, it is part of Oregon's best practices in property management.*

**Pat Farr** *inquired about the rule changes in regard to interference with management. Melanie clarified that specific examples include physical harassment, assault, cyberbullying, using profanities, and other things that rise to level of being unsafe for the staff.*

**Michelle Thurston** *inquired about late fees for late rent starting October 2022 in regard to automatic payment system. Melanie stated that any issues in regard to late payment will be assessed, and late fees will be waived if it is due to technological or administrative errors.*

**Heather Buch** *inquired about flags on properties and flags that may be considered hate speech. Melanie referred to Supportive Housing Division Director Wakan Alferes. Wakan is working on the procedure process; most flags will be addressed at the minimum violation. American flags do not fall into the political or religious flag prohibitions.*

**Kirk Strohman Jr.** *inquired about change from 14 days to 30 days and the process for lease termination in this regard. Melanie stated that we must abide by state and federal rules in regard to nonpayment of rent. Stated that individuals are first notified after the 8<sup>th</sup> of the month outlining when they need to pay by. Stated that grievance rights are incorporated into termination notices and participants can request an informal meeting to discuss the termination notice. Stability and eviction prevention is the goal of Homes for Good and there are multiple opportunities to work with residents to keep them in housing. Wakan followed up that all termination notices are forwarded to Resident Services team so that staff can work with that team in connecting them with resources and support to avoid potential evictions.*

**Char Reavis** *commented on youth not being able to run through the sprinklers on properties due to insurance issues.*

Motion: **Michelle Thurston**

Second: **Larissa Ennis**

Discussion: **Pat Farr** said that we strive to make it so Homes for Good participants are treated no differently than private market residents and that he felt that these rules as he heard them are similar. **Chloe Tirabasso** inquired about the Resident Advisory Board and if these changes are something that most residents would support.

**VOTE**

Ayes: **Heather Buch, Pat Farr, Char Reavis, Michelle Thurston, Joel Iboa, Chloe Tirabasso, Kirk Strohman Jr., Larissa Ennis, Justin Sandoval**

Abstain: None.

Absent: None

**Board Order 22-24-08-02H was passed 9/0/0.**

## **10. Other Business**

*Finance Director **Jeff Bridgens** provided framework for finance overview to provide context for the annual budget that will be brought to the September Board of Commissioners meeting.*

***Jacob Fox** provided overview of the remainder of the year and what to expect.*

**Meeting adjourned at 3:34pm.**