



HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

— of SW Washington —

Connecting people to homes, hope and opportunity. Jennifer Westerman, CEO

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING **Monday, May 23, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.** **In Person and Zoom**

PRESENT:

Chair Marchelle Knapp
Vice Chair Traci Wood
Commissioner David Vasquez
Commissioner Allan Rudberg
Commissioner Dixie Kolditz
Secretary Jennifer Westerman

ABSENT:

Commissioner Sue Lantz

STAFF:

Cecilia Larson, Rent Application Program Manager
Becky Phillips, Finance Manager
Rachelle Sanders, VIP Manager
Katie Bonus, Director of Operations
Linda Hanna, HR/Executive Assistant
Cynthia Mitchell, Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC:

MaryAlice Wallis, Mayor for City of Longview
David Glasson, Chair for JPCHA Board

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a) Chair Knapp called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m.

2. CHANGES AND ADDITIONS TO AGENDA, IF ANY:

- a) There was a change under New Business to add item “b) Board Action: Add Juneteenth to HOSWWA Holiday Schedule.”

Vice Chair Wood moved to approve the addition to the agenda. Commissioner Vasquez seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.



3. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

- a) Mayor Wallis reported that Longview City Council approved of the appointment of a new Board Member, Dixie Kolditz.
- b) Dixie Kolditz introduced herself and shared her background.

4. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- a) Ms. Phillips provided financial reports for April 2022 for HOSWWA and Lilac Place, as provided in the Board Packet. She noted that for the HOSWWA report, she accidentally swapped the restricted and unrestricted funds. Values should be \$1.3 million for restricted and \$933 thousand for unrestricted. Next month, we will receive about \$200 thousand in restricted funds from HUD for HAP.

Income is largely doing well except we have not yet drawn down developer fees. We anticipate pulling those near the end of the year. There were budgeting errors in the general expenses that have since been fixed. Our net profit is \$302 thousand. There are three write offs, two of which are from evicted tenants who defaulted on their payments.

Lilac Place is doing well overall. Revenue is underbudget due to vacancies, but expenses are also low.

Commissioner Knapp commented that it is too bad that we do not have as much unrestricted cash as the error shows. Ms. Phillips responded that once we get the developer fee funds and the waterfall payments from Driftwood and Lilac Place, our unrestricted cash will be much higher.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) *Vice Chair Wood made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Rudberg seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*

6. STAFF REPORTS

- a) **Voucher Status:** Ms. Larson gave her report as included in the Board packet. She reported that she is hoping to have someone hired for one of the open positions by the end of the week. She also reported that the Section 8 team has processed 754 transactions over the last month. Chair Knapp congratulated Ms. Larson and the Section 8 team on their amazing work.

Commissioner Rudberg asked if the number of people HOSWWA serves grows with every month. Ms. Larson responded that through the TBRA program we were able to serve more families but that we were limited in only 42 more people



through EHV. Commissioner Rudberg expressed concerns about the worsening economy and asked if we had any contingency plans to help our communities if things become worse and if we can get more funds to help. Ms. Larson responded that we do not know if we will be able to obtain more funds, but that Secretary Westerman is always looking for more financial support. Chair Knapp added that with the Section 8 team working as hard as they have been, they have been helping families not run into extra financial troubles in the first place. She expressed her gratitude to Ms. Larson and the entire the Section 8 team.

Commissioner Vasquez asked if HOSWWA has any assistance for Spanish speaking families. Ms. Larson responded that yes, we have a staff member who speaks fluent Spanish and has been helping as an interpreter in several situations.

- b) **Property Summaries:** Ms. Bonus gave an update on the Property Reports as provided in the Board Packet. Starting with the large write off, she reported that the resident had stopped paying during Covid restrictions, and we were unable to do anything at the time. Once Covid restrictions were lifted, the resident still would not work with us, so we went through with the eviction.

Phoenix House has negative NOI in part due to vacancies. We need to wait for Cowlitz Family Health Center to have members of their program graduate to fill Phoenix House vacancies. This means that often such vacancies take some time to fill.

Two units that were damaged during the Tulip Valley fire need to be abated. The abatement is supposed to happen in June and will last 6-8 months if not longer. One tenant was placed in another unit within the building. Chair Knapp extended congratulations on getting that tenant placed again.

- c) **VIP Summaries:** Ms. Sanders gave an update on the Veteran Integration Program (VIP) as provided in the Board packet.

Commissioner Rudberg asked if the VA or federal government have indicated that they have any plans to help if the economy takes a turn for the worse. Ms. Sanders reported that various programs have been discussing concerns about support in such an event and that the national office has indicated that they are not concerned about their ability to provide funds. We will be reapplying for grants this fall. Commissioner Kolditz asked who determines wages for VIP employees. Ms. Sanders responded that we as an agency determine wages and Secretary Westerman added that the budget also contributes.

7. CHAIR AND SECRETARY REPORTS

- a) **Chair Report:** N/A



- b) **Secretary Report:** Secretary Westerman gave her report as included in the Board packet. She reported that the employment situation is very difficult all over the country. We need more funds to compete with traditionally lower paying jobs and are working on improving recruitment and retention processes. She added that VIP has an advantage in receiving funds as they are funded through VA grants and the VA has encouraged us to apply for more funds so that we can increase salaries. We also have had potential employees turn down the job because our benefits do not cover dependents. Secretary Westerman added that Ms. Mitchell is now a regular employee as Executive/HR Assistant instead of a temp, and Ms. Hanna has transitioned to the Business Analyst role under Ms. Bonus.

The Sunrise Village redesign has changed the number of proposed units to 40. This is down from the previously proposed 45, but higher than the 35 that an earlier redraw proposed. At Pacific Place only three decks need to be completely rebuilt due to rotten joists. The rest can be repaired.

Commissioner Rudberg inquired as to how things are going with Ms. Phillips's replacement. Secretary Westerman responded that Sarah from Theresa D. Johnson, CPA will be our Interim Controller in the Finance Director role. Sarah has a good experience base and should do well in the position. Vice Chair Wood inquired if we will be using an Interim Controller only on a temporary basis. Secretary Wood responded that we intend for this to be a temporary situation, but it may take time to fill the Finance Director role. Vice Chair Wood asked what the cost burden is. Secretary Wood responded that most Finance Directors want \$100 thousand minimum plus benefits and that we have \$70 thousand budgeted for Interim Controller services. Vice Chair Wood inquired as to whether we would be at a disadvantage to use an outside contractor long term. Secretary Westerman responded, yes, that having a financial strategist participating in decisions is important. To get the same amount of work from a contractor as from a hired director would cost a lot more money. Furthermore, we do not want the CEO supervising the Finance Department long term. Chair Knapp inquired if anyone on the current team could be trained into the role of Finance Director. Secretary Westerman responded that no one on our current staff has sufficient education to fill the role, and that potential hires who could have grown into the role needed more benefits than we provide at this time. Chair Knapp commented on how difficult hiring is at this time in many fields.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) Board Action Resolution 22-00: Regarding Development Work at Sunrise Village in Longview.

Commissioner Rudberg moved to accept Board Resolution 22-09. Vice Chair Wood seconded. Passed unanimously.



- b) Board Action: Add Juneteenth to HOSWWA Holiday Schedule.

Commissioner Rudberg moved to accept adding Juneteenth to the HOSWWA Holiday Schedule. Commissioner Vasquez seconded. Passed unanimously.

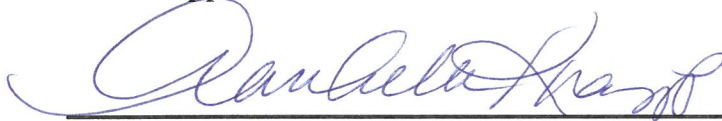
9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION, IF ANY: None

11. ADJOURNMENT:

- a) Chair Knapp extended a welcome to Commissioner Dixie Kolditz and thanked Mayor Wallis and the City Council for bringing us a new board member.
- b) Chair Knapp stated that the next regular meeting will be Monday, June 27, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
- c) Chair Knapp adjourned the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Board Approval of Minutes:



Marchelle Knapp, Chairperson

Date

6/27/22



Attest: Jennifer Westerman, Secretary

Date

6/28/22

