



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

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
Scheduled for Monday, September 26, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
Rescheduled to Monday, October 3, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
In Person and Zoom

PRESENT:

Chair Marchelle Knapp
Commissioner Sue Lantz
Commissioner David Vasquez
Commissioner Allan Rudberg
Commissioner Dixie Kolditz
Secretary Jennifer Westerman

ABSENT:

Vice Chair Traci Wood

STAFF:

Katie Bonus, Director of Operations
Cecilia Larson, Rent Assistance Program Manager
Jessica Galovin, Finance Manager
Cynthia Mitchell, Executive Assistant/HR
Jonathan Aguirre, FSS Coordinator

PUBLIC:

MaryAlice Wallis, Mayor for City of Longview

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: None

3. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION:

- a) Mr. Aguirre shared a success story from the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program with the Board. He had been working with this family for some time. They had been given notice that they were being evicted which qualified them for the EHV program. It took time and effort for them to locate a place to rent and the family had all but given up. But they were finally able to rent a unit that suited their individual needs. A couple weeks ago, Mr. Aguirre went to check on them and noted that they had greatly increased quality of life. Secretary Westman added that this family was considering separating at one point in hopes that that would increase their chances of being able to locate a place to live. Mr. Aguirre



added that their relationship had greatly improved as well as the stressors of not having a place to live had lifted. Chair Knapp responded that the work Mr. Aguirre has done with this family changed their lives and that the work HOSWWA does as a whole makes a difference. Mayor Wallis commented that she enjoys hearing the personal stories and appreciates our sharing them.

4. FINANCIAL REPORTS:

- a) Ms. Galovin provided financial reports for June 2022 for HOSWWA and Lilac Place, as provided in the Board Packet.

Secretary Westerman added that one of the reasons that the cash position is different is that we intentionally overspent on HAP as we have a lot of money in our HUD reserves, and we were able to go to HUD to get those reserves. We are continuing to spend down HUD reserves.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

- a) *Commissioner Vasquez made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Lantz seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*

6. STAFF REPORTS

- a) **Voucher Status:** Ms. Larson gave the Voucher Status Report as provided in the Board packet.

Chair Knapp asked if the VASH and Stability Vouchers are available and if we must apply to receive them. Ms. Larson confirmed this. Chair Knapp inquired if we know how many we may receive. Ms. Larson responded that HUD would make that determination. Commissioner Lantz asked if these were new vouchers for new families. Ms. Larson confirmed. Chair Knapp inquired when we will know if we received any vouchers. Ms. Larson responded that we must apply by October 10th and will know how many we've received in the upcoming months. Secretary Westerman inquired as to 9 other vouchers we received. Ms. Larson reported that HUD gave us an additional 9 HCV vouchers with an additional \$650 attached to assist clients in securing housing. Chair Knapp asked what that money can be used for. Ms. Larson responded that it can be used for various assistance, including but not limited to security deposits.

Utilization has sent letters out to a total of about 400 families. Ms. Larson reported that we have many families with vouchers looking for places to rent. Chair Knapp inquired if finding a place to rent was the challenge for people with vouchers. Ms. Larson replied that in part, yes but that families are also having difficulty due to their rental history and due to high rents that are out of budget.



Chair Knapp inquired if we were having a greater response to letters now that we have moved to the online system. Ms. Larson responded that we have exhausted the pre-Yardi wait list and that there were not many responses; however, the list of people from when the waitlist was opened last spring has seen a greater volume of responses. People are able to update their addresses and phone numbers online making it easier to keep in contact. Ms. Larson added that landlords are also using the portal and that, after a learning period, there has been positive feedback.

- b) **Property Summaries:** Ms. Bonus gave an update on the Property Reports as provided in the Board Packet.

Chair Knapp inquired as to how the Maintenance staff felt about the on-call pay changes. Ms. Bonus replied that they do like the changes, and that now that we have more maintenance people, we have been able to spread out the on-call time beyond just one staff member. Commissioner Lantz added that when she was on the property tour last month, she thought the properties looked very nice and are well maintained. She added that it's important to have a good-looking place. Ms. Bonus responded that when we have people coming in to look at the properties that they are often surprised by how nice things look. Commissioner Rudberg added that our new janitorial staff is doing a fantastic job.

- c) **VIP Summaries:** In Ms. Sanders's absence, Secretary Westerman gave an update on the Veteran Integration Program (VIP) as provided in the Board Packet.

Secretary Westerman added that there are about 5 people from VIP who currently work at HOSWWA. She also added that we have a waiting list for VIP for the first time that she can recall. There are 10-15 people on the Cowlitz waitlist and 10 on the Pacific waitlist. Chair Knapp added that it seems as if we are having more veterans referred to us. Secretary Westerman responded that it is in part due to VIP being a "harm reduction" program rather than a "clean and sober" program and in part due to increased outreach, including a new brochure.

7. CHAIR AND SECRETARY REPORTS

- a) **Chair Report:** None.
- b) **Secretary Report:** Secretary Westerman gave her report as included in the Board packet.

Secretary Westerman reported that we are almost fully staffed. As of October 3rd, the Rent Assistance Program was fully staffed due to hiring our last temp.

Secretary Westerman also reported that we are considering using one of the Ocean Beach parcels as part of the Homeownership program.



8. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) Board Action: Resolution 22-17, Loan for purchase of 1525 18th Ave Property.

Secretary Westerman reported on Resolution 22-17 as presented in the Board Packet. She reported that with Commissioner Lantz's assistance, we have located a potential property for the VA Capital Grant. It is in a centrally located position within walking distance of various places including the grocery store and the VIP offices. Following the inspections, we had some changes that we requested from the seller. They were very accommodating to our requests and have agreed to make the changes. Commissioner Lantz added that they wanted to make the sale work which was a contributing factor.

Secretary Westerman added that there are challenges still with this property, the largest of which is that it is expensive at \$554.9 thousand. Part of the solution is that the HOSWWA Maintenance department would rent the garage and use it as a shop. We have been working with the Washington Community Reinvestment Association to refinance the house at lower interest rates. We will need an additional \$30 thousand to receive the lower interest rates. We have put out grant applications to Cowlitz Tribal Foundation, Community Foundation of SW Washington, Firstenberg Foundation, and PeaceHealth. We are hopeful that we will receive these funds. Commissioner Lantz added that this property is a good investment and is in a good location.

*Commissioner Rudberg made a motion to approve Resolution 22-17.
Commissioner Vasquez seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*

- b) Board Action: Resolution 22-18, Approve HOSWWA FY 2023 Budget

Secretary Westerman reported on the proposed budget as presented in the Board Packet. She commented that she expected to bring a budget that would be hard, but that this budget ended up being extremely strong. The budget as presented cashflows.

*Commissioner Rudberg made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.
Commissioner Lantz seconded the motion. Passed unanimously.*

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

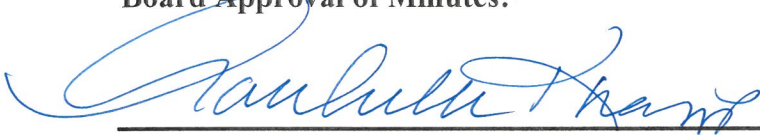
10. EXECUTIVE SESSION, IF ANY: None



11. ADJOURNMENT:

- a) Chair Knapp stated that the next regular meeting will be Monday, October 24, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.
- b) Chair Knapp adjourned the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

Board Approval of Minutes:



Marchelle Knapp, Chairperson

10/24/22

Date



Attest: Jennifer Westerman, Secretary

10/24/22

Date

