HOUSING AUTHORITY OF KITTITAS COUNTY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, May 17 2023

A regular meeting of the Housing Authority of Kittitas County Board of Commissioner was held Wednesday, May 17, 2023, at 107 W 11th Ave, Ellensburg, WA 98926, held in person and by zoom conference call.

Commissioners Present:
Nicalee Smith, Chairperson
Carole Rhodes, Commissioner via Zoom
John Littel, Commissioner via Zoom
Rob Perkins, Vice Chairperson via Zoom

Absent:

Staff Present:
Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director

Guests:
Rosalia Ramirez

OPEN REGULAR MEETING AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 a.m.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC AND GUESTS

Tenant Rosalia Ramirez was present and wished to address the Board. Ms. Ramirez stated that she believed she had been treated poorly by HAKC staff and that she needed to advocate on her own behalf and on behalf of other families, stating that she felt she was not given the opportunity to explain her current circumstances in relation to the father of her children being at her unit. Ms. Ramirez stated that she had a black mold issue at her unit that she claimed started after construction in 2020 and that when the issue was resolved, she had been charged for work involved and did not believe that was her responsibility. She claimed that she had requested to address the Board in 2020 but was denied that opportunity. Ms. Ramirez stated that she currently had black mold in her unit and that she had been issued a 10 day notice. She stated that she had been working with Yakima Housing Authority and believed that she was being treated poorly in comparison to how she was treated in Yakima in connection to adding her boyfriend to the lease. Chairperson Smith thanked Ms. Ramirez for taking the time to express her concerns to the Board and noted that it would do its due diligence to investigate the issue and respond back to her as soon as it could.

MINUTES

Commissioner Rhodes moved to approve the March 15, 2023 minutes of the regular meeting, seconded by Commissioner Littel. The motion passed unanimously. Vice Chairperson Rob Perkins asked if there was any record of there being no quorum at the April meeting. Executive Director Jennifer Ellis stated that when there is no quorum, there is a record created that simply states, "No Quorum," but that does not require approval.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Commissioners reviewed the March, 2023 Vouchers and March 2023 Project and Activity Status Reports and April 2023 Vouchers and April 2023 Project and Activity Status Reports and found no voucher irregularities or other irregularities. Vice Chair Perkins moved to approve the consent agenda, Commissioner Littel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

DECEMBER 2022, JANUARY 2023 AND FEBRUARY 2023 FINAL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ellis noted that the agenda referenced only December and January final financials, but that February financials had been received after the Board packet went out and then were separately emailed to the Board and were also ready for review. Vice Chair Perkins moved to amend the agenda to include the February final financials. Commissioner Littel seconded and the motion passed. Ellis noted that there

were a few questions on the February financials, but that they would address them with CLA and expected that would be corrected moving forward – for example, the legal and accounting fees for the partnership had been included in the HAKC financials and vice versa since the partnerships had paid for audit services in February.

RESOLUTIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

Resolution 23-995-Resolution Modifying Housing Authority of Kittitas County Cellular Use Policy. Ellis noted that HAKC was going to be expanding the number of HAKC-provided cellphones and that the cellular policy was created in 2016 and needed to be updated. Ellis noted that the current policy had also been provided for reference. Commissioner Rhodes inquired regarding texting prohibition and Ellis noted that it only applied for when driving and that the policy stated that the individual should not be texting or emailing while driving. Vice Chair Perkins asked if the updated policy was also in consideration of existing insurance policies and Ellis noted that the updates were to reflect responsibility with regard to use for HAKC-owned property, noting that there is no right to privacy with regard the HAKC-issued property and employee responsibility if damage is caused due to employee's failure to take reasonable precautions. Commissioner Rhodes moved to adopt the resolution. Commissioner Littel seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, roll call was taken. The resolution passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Executive Director Report –

  Operations and Maintenance Update

  Members of the staff attended the AHMA Conference in Tacoma for additional education and training, including compliance issues for USDA RD, bridge building between departments and other important topics. There was also a maintenance track this year so one of HAKC's maintenance workers attended.

  Currently HAKC is processing a significant number of unit turnovers that maintenance is handling. HAKC had experienced a significant period of time with little to no units open so maintenance and office staff are working hard to have units ready to re-rent and qualified applicants.

  Audits for Partnerships, Pine Terrace

  The partnership audits were completed in a timely manner and finalized. Both audits along with the tax returns were forwarded to CREA with the partnership tax returns filed with the IRS. Pine Terrace's audit was completed and submitted to USDA-RD and only required a small extension for loan interest information HAKC was awaiting from USDA-RD.

  The next audit is the HAKC agency audit, that will be performed by Novogradac, is due later in the year but HAKC will provide additional information needed to complete that audit in a timely fashion.

  Katie Haggin, Operations Supervisor, has also continued to provide quarterly reporting as required to CREA and is also currently providing audit information requested by Chase as part of HAKC's loan agreements with them.

  Pine Terrace

  HAKC is working with Ad-West to schedule parking lot repair. Three bids have been received, however it was determined that only repair work and not full repaving was necessary. To that end, HAKC requested that the additional bids received all reflect the same scope of work for procurement and to accomplish meaningful comparison when comparing bids. HAKC has also forwarded an RFQ for architecture/design services for a wrap around platform from the ADA accessible unit to the office.

  A bid was received for the replacement of windows and sliding glass doors and HAKC is still awaiting additional bids for that project to assure its compliance with procurement.

  Older playground equipment was also removed from the premises.

  Bender Road Property

Ellis and Katie Haggin met with Dan Rothman, Senior Program Manager for WSHFC regarding the Bender Road property and the Board's proposal for an early payoff of the loan. Mr. Rothman asked that additional information be provided regarding the property's feasibility. He confirmed that HAKC would have additional time to provide information and investigate those issues and that WSHFC could even extend the maturity date of the loan, but he wanted to know more details about the specific costs connected to feasibility issues with the property, particularly costs associated with any irrigation mitigation that might be required. He wanted to have a chance to review that information before accepting HAKC's early payoff of the loan. He noted that if the loan was paid off early, it would not inhibit HAKC from entering into agreements with WSFHC in the future. Ellis noted that she was working on an RFQ for engineering services connected to the irrigation issue on the property to be able to illustrate the potential cost for those mitigation efforts.

Attendance at quarterly AWHA meeting

Ellis stated that she had attended the quarterly AWHA meeting that was held virtually. Legislative updates were provided, including new bills for tenant protection that HAKC will review and be in compliance with when the laws become effective. Governor Inslee was also on the call and discussed the importance of immediate housing for the unhoused communities in Washington State.

Board Vacancy

The resume for the Board applicant had been forwarded to the Board members. Ellis noted that the application is on the website and she had not received any additional applications and that if any Board member were aware of anyone with interest to encourage them to apply. Ellis noted that she was still trying to seek out potential applicants in upper county. Commissioner Littel noted that he had also spoken with County Commissioner Laura Osiadacz and that she was very interested and would also encourage applicants. Commissioner Littel stated it would be worth follow up with Commissioner Osiadacz and Ellis confirmed she would do so.

Ending of Emergency Rental Assistance Program.

Ellis noted that the end of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) in the County was going to have some financial impact. HAKC has been referring tenants with inquiries to additional resources. HAKC is still under obligation to send out 14 Day Pay Rent or Vacate Notices that include repayment plans, which are still being utilized.

Chairperson Smith stated that the Board needed to have some additional discussion on the current board vacancy. Chairperson Smith also noted that in the process of vetting an applicant, the Board should also be doing that process in-person with an applicant, noting that she felt it was time to be meeting back again in person with the ending of Covid. Commission Littel stated that he felt Covid was not over but stated that he believed the Board needed a plan to bring everyone back in person, wondering if the Board wanted to maintain the ability for people to participate remotely. With regard to Board vacancy, Commissioner Little expressed concern regarding relevant experience and time in the valley of the applicant. Vice Chair Perkins stated that he felt it was acceptable to keep the position open until filled but felt it was better to wait for the right applicant than to choose without additional options. Commissioner Littel reiterated that relevant experience was necessary and that one could pursue other affordable housing experience or committee appointments to gain more knowledge before seeking appointment to the housing board. He also stated that he didn't want to hold the process back. Chairperson Smith noted that these were all good points for discussion and that the Board would need to discuss the matter further.

Chairperson Smith called for Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(f), to receive and evaluate complaints or charges against a public officer or employee for 15 minutes. The Board went into Executive Session at 8 a.m. and came out of session at 8:07 a.m. Chairperson Smith stated that no action was taken.

Chairperson Smith stated that the next meeting would be on June 21, 2023. Commissioner Rhodes noted that she believed she'd be available for the meeting. Commissioner Littel stated that he would be on the east coast, but would be available to attend remotely.

There being no additional discussion, Commissioner Littel moved to adjourn and meeting, which was seconded by Commissioner Rhodes. Motion passed. Chairperson Smith ADJOURNED the meeting at

8:09 a.m.

Next Meeting: June 21,2023, 7 A.M. Regular Meeting
Minutes respectfully submitted by Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director

SEAL:

ATTEST

Jennifer Ellis, Secretary

Nicalee Smith,Chair