HOUSING AUTHORITY OF KITTITAS COUNTY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, September 20, 2023

A regular meeting of the Housing Authority of Kittitas County Board of Commissioners was held Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 107 W 11th Ave, Ellensburg, WA 98926, held in person and by zoom conference call.

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

Absent:
Carole Rhodes, Commissioner

Staff Present:
Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director via Zoom
Katie Haggin, Operations Supervisor

Guests:

OPEN REGULAR MEETING AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson Smith called the meeting to order at 7:01 a.m.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC AND GUESTS

There were no comments from the public nor any guests in attendance.

MINUTES

Vice Chair Perkins moved to approve the July 19, 2023 minutes of the regular meeting, seconded by Commissioner Littel. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Commissioners reviewed the July and August 2023 Vouchers and June and August 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.

MARCH, APRIL, MAY and JUNE 2023 FINAL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ellis noted that June financials had been received just prior to the last meeting date, but with there being no quorum, the final financials were all included for Board review and approval. Haggin noted that there were a few outstanding questions HAKC needs CLA to clarify, but that we were receiving the financials in a more timely fashion. July 2023 financials had been received the day prior to the board meeting and will be presented for review and approval at the October meeting.

Vice Chair Perkins moved to approve the March, April, May and June 2023 final financials. Commissioner Littel seconded. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Executive Director Report –

  Operations and Maintenance Update
  Two new maintenance employees have been hired – Thomas DeWolfe and Kathy Rodewald. Existing maintenance personnel Steve Holt has been promoted to the lead role. Holt has been with the agency for three years and brings a wealth of institutional knowledge to the position as well as a solid record of collaboration and dedication to the agency. Ellis noted an upcoming staff retreat soon which will help outline personal and agency goals as well as bonding for the team. Staff are currently prioritizing unit turns and getting new tenants approved and moved in – which has continued to be a significant portion of the current work load.

Ellis noted the existing lawn contract for the properties will go through the month of October which has allowed for training time and letting maintenance focus on unit turns. Weeds have been sprayed and bids have been received for additional weed control and removal as well as future arbor care, particularly at Alder Terrace. Ellis noted her appreciation for staff doing what was necessary and needed while short staffed and the dedication and determination all staff showed during that time.

Haggin noted that there would be a CREA site inspection on October 5, 2023.

HAKC is currently providing documentation for its 2022 agency audit and that is moving along.

Ellis spoke regarding the confirmation of the RAD Completion Certification being fully submitted and accepted by HUD and explained the process that had been undertaken to provide all information regarding funds that had been requested. The certification is now complete and HAKC has received proof of the same from HUD. Ellis will follow up with regional HUD to determine if this also moves forward the closeout HAKC had passed resolution for several months ago.

Pine Terrace
Replacement of windows and sliding glass doors will be starting next week at Pine Terrace. Monthly calls with Ad-West regional management have continued and new on-site management was hired and began at the beginning of August. Further, the management contract with Ad-West is set to come up for renewal on October 1, 2023. Ellis will be in further communication with Ad-West about that contract and what will be acceptable timeframes for the same. Ellis noted that there is still the ultimate goal of being able to manage and maintain that property through HAKC however it has to be with consideration of operating with the USDA-RD program and assuring that all regulations and requirements are met. HAKC staff have continued with training in those programs. Vice Chair Perkins asked if there was a financial benefit to HAKC managing the property versus a third party. Ellis noted that a management fee is paid to Ad-West along with salaries for on-site managers and maintenance. The management fee would be eliminated, but there would also be the consideration of managing a property not in close geographic proximity to the office and some cost associated with travel when necessary. Ellis advised she would look into the cost element more.

Volunteer opportunity
HAKC staff will be doing a volunteer project and working on site with Habitat for Humanity, which is tentatively set for October 19, 2023. Ellis invited any interested board members to complete a volunteer profile if they wanted to join the group. Vice Chair Perkins inquired about the duration of the volunteer opportunity and Ellis noted she would confirm the times.

- Discussion Regarding In Person Meeting Requirements. Ellis gave a brief overview of the language from various agencies regarding remote attendance and attendance policies for the Board's consideration. The Board discussed formalizing attendance requirements and clarifying use of remote access for meeting attendance. Commissioner Smith noted that zoom meetings have value and flexibility for the entire board but that there should also be face to face meetings for contact and planning at least twice a year. Chairperson Smith also expressed the necessity to assure that the Board was able to have a quorum. Commissioner Littel referenced the attendance policy examples noting that some were more punitive than others. He felt that when there are board member absences and its been previously communicated to the ED or Chair, it should be reflected in the minutes. Commissioner Littel felt the attendance language and remote attendance options from the Tacoma Housing Authority bylaws was mor proactive and not punitive, noting that HAKC has traditionally allowed for Board members to phone in. Vice Chair Perkins asked if it could be discussed at next meeting to allow for more review and discussion.
- Board Vacancy. Ellis discussed the current board vacancy and requested for guidance from the Board about how to proceed. She outlined additional efforts that had been made to solicit more applications, however no additional applications have been received. The Commissioners provided various comments about moving forward. Vice Chairperson Perkins noted that the process shouldn't be open indefinitely but that we want to make sure any applicant is qualified and he had concerns about the qualifications of the pending board applicant. Chairperson Smith noted that housing experience was not a requirement for the position and that if someone has a

heart to serve they should at least be considered and perhaps could be mentored by the Board. Commissioner Littel felt that the Board was wasting time on an unqualified candidate, was not as visible or active in the community and that the applicant should be advised to start out at the Affordable Housing Committee with the County or City and stated it was up to Ellis as ED and Smith as Chairperson to decide how the process should move forward and go to the Board of County Commissioners with a recommendation. Commissioner Littel felt the BOCC should be more active in pursuant of an applicant and that it is up to the County Commissioners to make the appointment. Vice Chairperson Perkins reiterated the desire to have a representative from Upper County but the need to balance that desire against the willingness to wait and draw out the process. The Board discussed requiring an applicant to attend additional meetings to garner more experience in the area over time and allow the Board time to make a decision. Ellis and Chairperson Smith were tasked with determining the path forward.

There being no additional comments or questions from the Board, Chairperson Smith stated that the next meeting would be on October 18, 2023. Vice Chair Perkins moved to adjourn the meeting, Commissioner Littel seconded. Motion passed. Chairperson Smith ADJOURNED the meeting at 8:22 a.m.

Next Meeting: October 18, 2023, 7 A.M. Regular Meeting
Minutes respectfully submitted by Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director

SEAL:

ATTEST

Jennifer Ellis, Secretary

Nicalee Smith,Chair