HOUSING AUTHORITY OF KITTITAS COUNTY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, October 18, 2023

A regular meeting of the Housing Authority of Kittitas County Board of Commissioners was held Wednesday, October 18, 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
Rob Perkins, Vice Chairperson

Absent:
Carole Rhodes, Commissioner

Staff Present:
Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director

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 September 20, 2023 minutes of the regular meeting, seconded by Commissioner Littel. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

JULY 2023 FINAL FINANCIAL REPORTS

Ellis noted that July financials had been received just prior to the September meeting, so were being presented now for review and approval. August 2023 financials had not yet been received. There remain some outstanding questions HAKC needs CLA to clarify and HAKC will be confirming whether or not CLA will remain on the schedule they provided regarding timeliness on providing financials. Incidentally, HAKC requests billing detail and did not receive the same for the last bill so will be following up on that as well. HAKC did prepare an RFP to send out for services if necessary.

Vice Chair Perkins moved to approve the July 2023 final financials. Commissioner Littel seconded. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

Ellis introduced Resolution 23-997, Resolution Authorizing Increase in Monthly Contribution to Housing Authority of Kittitas County Employee Insurance Pool. Ellis explained that the request stemmed from another significant rate increase – 21.17%, with a 4% discount for the employee's participation in the wellness program. The rate increase last year was also around 21%, which is what prompted last year's resolution for the increase, the amount of which had not changed since 2008. The Board discussed when it would be appropriate to look at other plans or if there was any long term plan to do so. The Board also discussed how HAKC had come to utilize WCIF. Ellis noted that many agencies were likely experiencing significant rate increases, but that she could inquire with other governmental agencies to see if these types of increases were being experienced in other plans as well and that HAKC did have some information related to the benefits other organizations were providing through the salary study that had

been conducted. Ellis noted that the plan was still desirable for HAKC employees and provided solid coverage, but that it would be worthwhile to have context as to other potential plans and how their rates are affected as well. Vice Chair Perkins moved to approve the resolution, Commissioner Littel seconded the motion. Roll call was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Executive Director Report –

  Operations and Maintenance Update

  HAKC has continued to experience a significant period of unit turns and receiving Notices to Vacate. HAKC continues to provide documentation for the 2022 HAKC audit and at this time, auditors are only awaiting tenant file information from Pine Terrace. Once the agency audit is completed, an exit interview will be scheduled. SAO will also be notified and they will perform their audit of the agency audit as well as be advised of any exit interview.
  HAKC has also received letters of engagement from Novogradac for the partnership audits for 2023 and the agency and Pine Terrace audits for 2023. Those will be signed, returned and then work will begin on those audits and providing information and documentation for the same. Katie Haggin, Operations Supervisor, has also begun work on the budgets for 2024 – with the goal for those to be on the agenda for the November Board meeting.

  Commissioner Littel inquired about when the last time was that rents were increased and Ellis outlined how rent increases for Section 8 were dictated through the HUD rental increases that were then administered through Yakima Housing Authority who handles the Section 8 project-based vouchers as well as restrictions and caps through the tax credit program. Vice Chair Perkins asked if HAKC had to rely on the amounts set by Yakima Housing Authority. Ellis noted that YHA sets the rent and increases per HUD limits. Commissioner Littel asked for more information regarding the ability for HAKC to independently increase rent. Ellis noted that she did not believe that there was any unilateral ability to address the same, and that HAKC was restricted to the HUD parameters based on its conversion into those programs, but she would confirm. Ellis noted that Haggin had obtained the new HUD rent amounts along with utility allowances and had projected the rent increases so that notices could be issued to tenants by October 1, 2023 so that the rent increases could take place by January 1, 2024, as she did not yet have confirmation from YHA as to the increases.

  The Board also discussed the possibility of requesting an increase of the management fees through the partnership agreements considering the increased costs. Ellis stated that she would look into the same as those rates had remained the same since the signing of the partnership agreements.

  Pine Terrace
  Replacement of windows and sliding glass doors have been completed and final inspection occurred on site with Haggin and Steve Holt, the maintenance lead as well. Haggin and Holt also walked the property with on-site management and advised that if there were maintenance needs that they could not meet, to reach out to see if HAKC maintenance staff could assist. There are additional wish list projects for the property, but HAKC also wants to assure that any larger, structure related work is addressed and that there are consistent inspections on-site.
  Commissioner Littel referenced concerns that had existed at the time of the sale and the need to continue examining maintenance concerns. Ellis also noted that they would like to include the on-site management in the monthly calls moving forward to have more communication about expectations in management moving forward.

  HAKC received the proposed management documents from Ad-West for Pine Terrace and will review and respond appropriately. The Board discussed management moving forward and HAKC's ultimate goal and timeline for the same. Ellis also discussed the management fee and salaries for Pine Terrace as well.

  Developments

Ellis noted that she had received an email from Matthew Stalder regarding the apartment building on 7th and Water Avenue that will be completed in June 2024 and will ultimately be looking for a purchaser. Ellis also noted that HAKC was still looking at information related to Crestview and the continuation of its tax credit program, understanding that it was possibly moving forward with new ownership or transfer and renewal of the tax credit program.

Volunteer opportunity
HAKC's volunteer work with Habitat for Humanity is postponed due to open units and Ellis will advise of the later date selected. Commissioner Littel reiterated his ability to participate and asked to be advised about the type of work they would be doing and when. Ellis noted that the duration of time can be whatever the group is able to do, starting at 9 a.m. HAKC would likely choose a Thursday, but it does start at 9 a.m. in the morning, but she would confirm if a volunteer could join at 9:30 as Vice Chair Perkins also wanted to participate but has an early morning class on Thursdays.

Discussion Regarding In Person Meeting Requirements. Ellis will submit proposed bylaws language for the Board to review at the November meeting. Proposed language will include both reference to flexibility in remote attendance as well as a proposed attendance policy so there is guidance as to those expectations and what constitutes an excused absence.

There being no additional comments or questions from the Board, Chairperson Smith stated that the next meeting would be on November 15, 2023. Commissioner Littel moved to adjourn the meeting, Vice Chair Person Perkins seconded. Motion passed. Chairperson Smith ADJOURNED the meeting at 8:03 a.m.

Next Meeting: November 15, 2023, 7 A.M. Regular Meeting
Minutes respectfully submitted by Jennifer Ellis, Executive Director

SEAL:

ATTEST

Jennifer Ellis, Secretary

Nicalee Smith,Chair