

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
of the
PORTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Thursday, February 7, 2019

The meeting of the Portland Housing Authority was held at the Portland Housing Authority Conference Room, 14 Baxter Blvd, Portland, ME. Upon roll call, quorum is declared. Meeting called to order by Mariar Balow, Chairperson, at 5:35 PM.

PRESENT	ABSENT
Mariar Balow, Chairperson Kristin Blum, Commissioner Christian MilNeil, Commissioner Faith McLean, Commissioner (call-in) Shirley Peterson, Commissioner Thomas Valleau, Commissioner Mark Adelson, Executive Director Cheryl Sessions, Deputy Executive Director Jay Waterman, Development Director Trevor Nugent, Public Housing Director Linda Ballew, Housing Services Manager Lourdes Alvarez, Administrative Support Specialist	Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson

1. Public Comment

Public Comment presented by George Rowe who lives in Portland’s Bayside neighborhood where he owns a home. Last summer, he was in conversation with the folks at the Barron Center, together with Franklin Tower’s resident Louis, about the homeless housing preference at PHA. In those talks, Mr. Rowe learned that Sagamore Village was not part of the homeless preference program and he wanted to learn more information on the issue. Secondly, Mr. Rowe was interested in the PHA Green Policy report, suggesting it should include resiliency contingency for the sea level water rise and wanted to know if a stress test was being done during the planning process of new developments considering possible flooding due to rising high tides. Lastly, would the agency consider making the meeting agenda packet more readily available via the website.

Executive Director Mark Adelson responded to his comment. Concerning the homeless preference, Sagamore Village is a family property and usually does not come up as an option when an individual who were previously homeless is housed and does not necessarily means exclusion from being housed at this property. There are 20 one-bedroom units at SV so theoretically a previously homeless client could be housed there. Development Director Jay Waterman clarified that there have been discussions on resiliency and water levels rising as part of the Front Street Redevelopment Project. Mr. Waterman agreed that resiliency should be more inclusive in the agency’s green policy and noted it is briefly mentioned in the recently adopted Development Principles document.

2. Resolution to approve the minutes of the meeting of January 3, 2019.

Resolution #2927

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the minutes of the meeting of January 3, 2019, be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Thomas Valleau, Commissioner, and second by Kristin Blum, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>
Mariar Balow, Chairperson	None
Kristin Blum, Commissioner	
Faith McLean, Commissioner	
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner	
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner	
Thomas Valleau, Commissioner	

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

3. Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Adelson started his report with an update on the government shutdown. The news on the funding on the Housing Voucher side is that enough was released through March and April; on the Public Housing side, enough fund was released for March, April, and May. The agency still needs to see where funding stands if a shutdown happens again. PHA staff had letters ready to go out to clients and landlords but the shutdown ended before the mailing went out. He proceeded to review the meeting schedule concerning the annual plan and budget approval processes. The Annual Plan Draft is scheduled to be published on Monday. The draft will be presented to the Resident Advisory Board on Thursday, February 28. The Annual Plan and Budget sets the priorities for the agency and the schedule allows for proper Board feedback and approval. The City Clerk will be announcing vacancies in March and the PHA Board has three positions that need to be considered for renewal.

A. RAD Update

A transition manager has been assigned by HUD and has monthly phone meetings with PHA staff and the PHA hired consultant. On site meetings were held with PHA staff and RAD consultants on January 28 and 29. The hired consultants are EJP from Seattle, Washington, who are very experienced – they know Tax Credits, housing authorities, and RAD conversions. Decisions are being made on Phase 1 of the RAD conversion process. Harbor Terrace and Washington Gardens as part of Phase 1, is being proposed as a combined 4% tax credit project. The 155 Anderson Street property would be a straight conversion deal, using grants not tax credits. Consultants were taken to see the properties after meeting with the PHA staff. Physical need assessments have been completed but have been on the light side of rehabbing needs. There are more issues that the agency is aware off. A meeting with CWS Architects is scheduled for tomorrow morning to review the physical assessment reports and see what items need to

be added to the projects. Starting Phase 1 with a development project at each AMP stretches the schedule for planning and allows the agency to lock in the higher rent income. Riverton Park will be a very large project that would require at least 10 million to complete so for this project, the agency is looking at 9% tax credits for 60 percent of the site and do the remaining 40 percent with 4% tax credits. A meeting is also scheduled with MaineHousing to discuss financing and discuss the complexities of the larger projects

Mr. Waterman presented the project timeline detailing the RAD Critical Path Schedule and he reviewed the major pieces listed, including the finance planning, the removal of units from the PIC database, the relocation of tenants and move-ins, and the stop leasing order dates. It is a starting point for the possible schedule for each phase of the project. The goal is to do as much work as possible at each development. Board members posed the question on the HUD money shift as the LIPH units are converted into the HCV platform and if there will be any reduction in budget monies received from HUD, including Capital Funds. The Harbor Terrace project includes separating the lot on Salem Street for future development.

Mr. Adelson finished up his report with upcoming meeting reminders for the Finance Committee on February 26 and the next Board meeting on March 7.

4. Finance Committee Report

The November 2018 PHA income report was reviewed by Mr. Adelson. Income and operating subsidies have increased. Operating expenses are down but the final numbers is dependent on the winter weather and heating costs due to natural gas use.

Mr. Waterman reviewed development costs on both Front Street and 58 Boyd Street projects. For the Front Street Redevelopment, subsidies for building costs are being researched with the goal of adding funding to the project. A meeting with MaineStateHousing is planned to discuss cost issues and resolve financing for building construction. On 58 Boyd Street, an additional \$125,000 in Brownsfield funds are being requested from the City of Portland; this is in addition to the \$250,000 awarded by the EPA. A presentation is planned as part of the application which has already been submitted. Finally, the Kiley property closing expected in mid-March and the plan is to demolish the structure 60 days after the closing once tenants have moved out.

Chairperson Balow gives the floor to Commissioner Valleau to chair the rest of the Board meeting (Mariar Balow departs at 6:25 PM).

5. Green Policy Report

Deputy Executive Director Cheryl Sessions reviewed the report that was provided with agenda packets. She started with an overview of the utility savings. She noted an increase in the use of the Bus Pass Program so the agency is considering approaching METRO once again for a bulk discount (Currently passes are purchased at cost and sold to the tenants at a discount). Board members suggests revisiting

the costs for parking; Public Housing Director Trevor Nugent reminds members that tenant meetings would be required at every site to discuss fee increase prior to any implementation. He added that parking fee payments, together with the discounted pass payment, currently pays for the Bus Pass program. Ms. Sessions continued her review, pointed out that although the total mileage increased, and the amount of fuel decreased, vehicle fuel costs still show a small increase. It is suggested the agency should consider looking into electric vehicles, as their maintenance costs have seen recent decreases and CMP may offer subsidies towards the purchase of electrical vehicles. The Board is impressed with the energy footprint reduction shown in the report and would like to see a press release issued on the improvements shown by the Green Policy.

6. Operations Report

- A. Housing Services Report – Housing Special Programs Manager Linda Ballew reviewed the details of the HCV reporting chart provided with the agenda packet. She noted that some home owners have left the program because they could no longer afford the mortgage after the 15-year limit. The number of vouchers has increased in general but there were a few drops in specific programs. Housing placement success rate averages about 54%. In the last quarter, the gain was 12 housed but the loss was 41, due to people leaving the program. The goal is to house 99% of the vouchers issued, currently at 932. She reviewed the spread of the current vouchers issued in 2018. She added that the opening of the MotherHouse has helped to successfully house clients. Ms. Ballew noted that no vouchers were issued during the shutdown and they will not restart until there is certainty that another shutdown will not happen. She updated the Board on the award of Mainstream vouchers and where they are in the screening process to find qualified clients. Board members suggested looking into HOME and CDBG funds to create a rotating security deposit fund to help clients with their lease ups. The City of Portland has a similar program through the General Assistance Program.

- B. Public Housing update – Mr. Nugent reviewed the chart provided with the meeting agenda. He reviewed the number of units occupied, the number off-line, and the lease-ups, effective December 31, 2018. As of today, the current vacancies are 14 units. Turnarounds at family sites are taking longer when vacated and are not quickly leased up. Waitlist call ins were 428, out of which 147 were eligible, and 97 leased up. Homeless preference lease ups have slowed down as we are close to the percentage cap. He reviewed the reasonable accommodation requests and approvals; and the maintenance work completed via work orders. Maintenance is moving towards handheld devices and software monitoring of work orders, with the goal of completing requests more efficiently.

7. Additional agenda items

With no more business on the agenda, motion to adjourn meeting moved by Commissioner Christian MilNeil, second by Commissioner Kristin Blum.

Meeting adjourned at 7 PM by Commissioner Thomas Valleau.