

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

Thursday, March 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.

<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Mariar Balow, Chairperson Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson Kristin Blum, Commissioner Christian MilNeil, Commissioner Shirley Peterson, Commissioner Thomas Valleau, Commissioner Mark Adelson, Executive Director Cheryl Sessions, Deputy Executive Director Jay Waterman, Development Director Tyler Plante, Development Officer Trevor Nugent, Public Housing Director Emily Mancini-Fitch, Resident Services Manager Joni Boissonneault, FSS Program Manager Jan Bosse, Housing Services Director Linda Ballew, Special Programs Manager Richard Biggs, Director of Maintenance Lourdes Alvarez, Administrative Support Specialist	Faith McLean, Commissioner

**1. Resolution to approve the minutes of the meeting of February 7, 2019.**

**Resolution #2928**

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the minutes of the meeting of February 7, 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:

**AYES**

Mariar Balow, Chairperson  
 Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chair  
 Kristin Blum, Commissioner  
 Christian MilNeil, Commissioner  
 Shirley Peterson, Commissioner  
 Thomas Valleau, Commissioner

**NAYS**

None

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

## **2. Executive Director's Report**

As mentioned at the last meeting, the Board has three commissioner openings up for renewal (Christian, Faith, and Robyn). The City Clerk will be announcing vacancies on March 25 and will have the three (3) PHA Board positions will be listed. Board members wishing to renew need to re-apply for the post. REAC rules have been recently changed, reducing the amount of notice given for inspections to 14 days. A minipark on Cumberland Avenue is being proposed by Portland Trails in Bayside East, with a trail going through (a study is currently in process for the trail). They would like to organize a community event in the neighborhood to build the park, in cooperation with PHA. The plans for the park are being drawn up, with materials provided by PHA and Portland Trails volunteers would supply the labor. Once plans are set, they will be presented to the Board for approval.

### **A. Development Update**

Mr. Waterman opened his update with the 58 Boyd Street Project. The demolish permit has been issued so Phase 1 is ready to start. Financing closing is expected the week of April 22 for construction to start soon after as Phase 2. The Front Street Redevelopment is moving forward as work is being done to reduce costs and exploring options for cost reductions. Utile is presenting the hybrid site plan with original work planned on East side for families and senior housing on the west side. The 841 Congress Street Project has issued the notice to proceed with CWS architects and Hardy Pond Construction. Finally, 47-49 Boyd Street is moving forward towards pricing for preliminary costs on rehabilitation work. The plan includes applying to various funding grants from the City of Portland.

### **B. RAD Update**

The recent phone call with HUD and the readiness manager went well and the agency is on track as planning continues. The agency has requested revision of rents for the program. The needs assessments are being updated to include all needed work. CWS will be visiting the sites tomorrow to begin the architectural assessment of the properties. 155 Anderson will be the first straight conversion property under RAD. Research is being performed for funding sources to bring Washington Gardens next and how to finance the next phase of the projects. Riverton Park has several special use units for which special releases may be required from HUD. The subsidy amounts for those special use units will be spread across the rest of the units to be converted as part of the RAD budget process.

Mr. Adelson completed his report with upcoming meeting reminders. The Search Committee will be meeting on March 12 to discuss selection of search consultants. The Finance Committee will meet on March 19. The next Board meeting is on April 4. The Human Resources Committee needs to schedule a meeting to discuss policy changes and staff updates to be determined.

## **3. Search Committee Update**

Solicitation for proposals for a consultant to work on the selection process has been issued. The proposals are due tomorrow. Decisions will be made promptly to hire a consultant. The goal is to be able to have some overlap between the Executive Directors once the final candidate is selected. Sites being considered for posting the hiring advertisement include PHADA, NAHRO, MAPHD, and others.

#### **4. Finance Committee Report**

Christian MilNeil reviewed the incoming expense report through January 2019. Operating income is on track for year to date. Heating expenses are still running on target as we approach the end of the season. More monies are being spent on staff training due to readiness in the future transition to RAD program. The Mercy Hospital project proposal decision is expected in the next month; an answer may be known by April meeting.

#### **5. Annual Agency Plan Draft – presentation and discussion**

Mr. Adelson reviewed the table of contents and the highlights included in the agenda packet. He noted that a copy of the complete plan was also available for review. Highlights focused on the ACOP and S8 Admin Plan. Progress on missions and goals from the 5-year plan were updated. Capital Fund Plans proposed are also included. The RAD section of the plan is rather large due to the narrative pieces that need to be included and the relocation plan. He also explained the HUD documents and certifications included in the plan.

Mr. Nugent reviewed the changes to the ACOP. The language on the purge list policy was clarified to give clients 30 days to respond, including acceptance of letters postmarked by the deadline. He reviewed the over income policy for families housed in Public Housing. In summary, the Notice is sent if over income is maintained for one year (above area median income); if tenant is still over income after two years, then a higher rent rate would apply based on fair market rent (flat rent). The transfer policy has been updated to be included new admissions. Priority will be given to emergency transfers as listed in the policy. Regular transfers will be processed at the rate of one to every four new admissions. In the case of overcrowding in a household, the rate would be one transfer for every eight new admissions. The Board members question if the mission of the agency is still being addressed by this change on the over income policy and suggest limiting the grace period to two years. The Board expressed the importance of providing incentives to achieve the bench mark that folks will move on their own so others can have the opportunity to succeed. Trevor noted that the change is based on regulation changes made by HUD. He reviewed the lease verbiage for language changes and obligations of tenant documentation. Parking policy update suggests adding a second space when available but only in a 5-6 bedroom where 3 adults each have a vehicle registration to their name. The board members suggested increasing parking fees and the amount should be at the same level as the bus pass subsidy. They would like to see fee to be equitable as parking is \$5 but the bus pass is \$20. The suggestion is to charge the higher rate to new leases and grandfather the current tenants paying \$5 parking. He ended his summary with changes to resident fees that can be collected, including the new smoking offense fees (a 3 tier structure). These fees would be in addition to lease violation notices.

Jan Bosse presented Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan draft changes. She introduces Linda who proceeded to present a summary of the changes in the Homeownership program. Among the

program changes are increases in required income to \$22,000/year, minimum savings of \$5000, and requiring one-on-one advising with a counseling such as AVESTA Housing to better prepare them financially for the responsibility of owning a property. Qualified clients need to be in a stable job and the S8 program for a minimum of one year. Joni Boissonneault added that the program has a time limit of 15 years, so they want the clients to be successful throughout the process. Ms. Ballew estimates about 5 clients on average enter the program annually. Jan continued the presentation with the addition of the Mainstream Voucher program. Housing Services is currently in the process of calling in 26 families from the waitlist for interviews to verify qualification and hope to be able to house all 26 with MSVs. It has been a process as the pulls need to come from the current waitlist, as a separate waitlist cannot be created for these vouchers. She provided the definition of those who qualify for MSVs to end her presentation.

Mr. Adelson proceeded to update the Board on the progress achieve on the 2015 agency plan goals, including information on the Green Policy and Resident Services. He continued with the Capital Fund Program summary, mentioning that some of the amounts listed are place holders for the various projects and he explains the changes RAD is bringing to the Capital Fund Plan. Every development has potential capital fund projects which will be determined as the RAD project continues to evolve. He noted some of the special projects at the various sites. Line items need to be included so that the monies are made available and the Agency is prepared to move forward on any and all projects as needed.

Public Hearing on the Annual Plan is scheduled at the end of the month.

## **6. Resident Services Update**

John T. Gorman Foundation and Brandeis University funded the resident needs assessment presented. They were looking to duplicate their success with the Bangor Housing Authority. Brandeis provided the technical assistance. The goal of the survey is to provide more direct programming to the residents in those areas. The top 3 in each category were looked at: language, time and money, job search assistance (barriers) – top 3 goals: pay their bills, get hired in the right job, education credentials; 3 top interests: home ownership, financial coaching, family resources available to them. This information will allow staff to focus on needed services and seek partnerships locally. Community conversations in the neighborhood has brought to light the need for child care and better transportation. Partnerships and residents attended the meeting that happened last night (and was very well attended). Portland Adult Education did their own survey to determine timing of classes to be offered (specifically ELL). There is interest in Citizenship classes at Front Street as well as Riverton Park. The plan is to offer a Jobs class in near future, which provides resume and job search assistance. The Board would like to see more funding in these areas. Joni mentioned the availability of some flex funding to help families in those areas. Opportunity Alliance can also offer training to help in the area of child care.

## **7. Resolution: Approval to apply for grant funds from United Way of Greater Portland.**

Approval to apply for a United Way Grant for a possible \$46,380 (a renewal grant) in funding. Joni explained the grant application and where they are planning on spending the funds as part of EmPowerMe. In addition, they are hoping to hire a part-time coordinator to work the program.

**Resolution #2929**

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the approval to apply for the United Way Grant, be and hereby are approved.

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

**AYES**

**NAYS**

Mariar Balow, Chairperson  
Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chair  
Kristin Blum, Commissioner  
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner  
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner  
Thomas Valleau, Commissioner

None

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

**8. Resolution: Approval to receive monies for 58 Boyd Street Project – Phase 1**

Jay Waterman explained the budget for demolition and the soil remediation of the site. Resolution needed to accept the funds and enter into the grant agreement. PHA and PHDC are co-recipients of the award.

The resolution reads as follows:

*The Portland Housing Authority hereby accepts the award of \$200,000 of EPA Brownfield Clean-Up grant funds as a subrecipient of the Greater Portland Council of Governments as well as \$125,000 of EPA Brownfield Clean-Up grant funds as subrecipient of the City of Portland; Mark Adelson, as Executive Director, is hereby authorized to execute any and all grant agreement related to the award.*

**Resolution #2930**

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the above resolution, be and hereby are approved.

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

**AYES**

**NAYS**

Mariar Balow, Chairperson  
Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chair

None

Kristin Blum, Commissioner  
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner  
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner  
Thomas Valleau, Commissioner

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

**9. Additional agenda items**

With no more business on the agenda, motion to adjourn meeting moved by Commissioner Christian MilNeil, second by Chair Mariar Balow.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.