



HOUSING CONNECT

MINUTES OF THE ELECTRONIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

April 15, 2020

PRESENT (audio):

Jennifer Johnston – Chair
Mark Johnston – Vice Chair
Phil Bernal – Commissioner
Erin Litvack – Commissioner
Spencer Moffat – Commissioner
Christine Nguyen - Commissioner
Gwen White – Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT (audio):

Janice Kimball – Chief Executive Officer
Andre Bartlome – Chief Financial Officer
Jarin Blackham – IT Director
Mike Kienast – Chief Operations Officer
Paul Rooker – Human Resources Director
Jeremy Runia – Real Estate Development Director
Dan Pincock – Executive Administrator

COMMENCE

Chair Jennifer Johnston commenced the Housing Connect Board Meeting at 11:35 a.m.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

No one from the public was in attendance at the Board meeting.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board approved the consent agenda which consisted of the March Board Meeting minutes, the HOME compliance results and the UHC audit findings report of Kelly Benson, Resolution #1001 (revision to Housing Connect's by-laws, authorizing certain Housing Connect officers to sign documents on behalf of the CEO), the Hub activity report, the Covewood remodel update, the 426 South project, and Housing Connect Fund (HCF) Board nominations. Commissioner Moffat motioned for approval and Commissioner Nguyen seconded, with all commissioners (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Mark Johnston, Commissioners Bernal, Litvack, Moffat, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 11:36 a.m., Vice Chair Mark Johnston motioned for the Board to go into Executive Session to discuss real estate and Human Resources issues, with Commissioner White seconding the motion. All commissioners (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Mark Johnston, Commissioners Bernal, Litvack, Moffat, Nguyen, and White) voted in favor, and the Board entered Executive Session.

At 12:03 p.m., Vice Chair Mark Johnston motioned for the Board to return to regular (open) session. Commissioner Bernal seconded the motion, and all commissioners Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Mark Johnston, Commissioners Bernal, Litvack, Moffat, Nguyen, and White) voted in favor. The motion passed, and the Board returned to regular session.

4. COVID-19 UPDATE

CEO Janice Kimball gave the Board an update on where things stand with COVID-19 and the agency. She discussed HUD waivers, rent projections, staff and residents who are quarantined due to possible exposure to the virus, and existing and additional HUD funding and

cash reserves. CFO Andre Bartlome mentioned that he is in the process of submitting an application for Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding.

5. ACTION ITEMS

Resolution #992 (Villa Charmant re-financing)

Chair Jennifer Johnston abstained from voting and participating in this action item, given her affiliation with Zions Bank. Chief Operating Officer Mike Kienast informed the Board that Zions Bank offered the most competitive bid and was selected for the Villa Charmant re-financing. He also said that negotiations for reducing or eliminating the debt-service reserve requirement would continue, as a Zions Bank representative said there might be some flexibility in this requirement. CEO Janice Kimball added that there are some capital needs at the property, and Housing Connect would use some of the funds to fix them. Currently, Villa Charmant has substantial capital reserves, so the main purpose for the use of the additional funds would be for the acquisition of a new asset to continue to increase our unit count and provide more opportunities to connect people to quality affordable housing opportunities while promoting self-sufficiency and neighborhood revitalization. Commissioner Bernal motioned to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Nguyen seconded. Vice Chair Mark Johnston, Commissioners Bernal, Litvack, Moffat, Nguyen, and White voted in favor, with Chair Jennifer Johnston abstaining, and Resolution #992 for Villa Charmant re-financing was approved.

Resolutions #1000 and #1002

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball explained that the proposed changes in the wording of the Section 8 Administrative Plan (Resolution #1000) would allow for the establishment of an emergency preference for families who are displaced or at imminent risk of being displaced due to a declared disaster (such as a pandemic), whereas the current wording indicates for natural disasters.

Resolution #1002 allows Housing Connect to use the Section 8 program to implement a short-term preference for 120 days to house those families who are in Rapid Re-housing and to households who are impacted by COVID-19 who have some barriers to housing and risk losing their housing whose income was at 80% Area Median Income (AMI) or below prior to the emergency. Through this resolution, Housing Connect would also be allowed to work with landlords to qualify families who are at 80% of AMI or below before being impacted by COVID-19 and accept referrals from them. CEO Janice Kimball indicated that the agency is in a unique position to be able to support the community, as it has approximately 600 vouchers that it can utilize between now and the end of the year due to being under-leased as a result of being put on short-fall last summer by HUD. This gives Housing Connect an extra tool to deploy vouchers. She also noted that the agency's big challenge will be to accelerate leasing and that there are those with a voucher who are hesitant and don't feel comfortable in using it right now and honoring their request to pause. She said the agency may want to look at the new HUD funding to see if there are incentives that can be utilized for landlords and to help individuals get into units. Vice Chair Mark Johnston mentioned that the homeless funding through the emergency shelter grants program which was a \$300 million to program and has now become a \$4 billion program gives a massive amount of EST funding, and HUD is waiving several rules in order to use that funding very quickly.

Vice Chair Mark Johnston motioned to approve resolutions #1000 and #1002, and Commissioner Litvack seconded the motion with all commissioners (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Mark Johnston, Commissioners Bernal, Litvack, Moffat, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor. Resolutions #1000 and #1002 were approved.

Resolution #1003 (authorization for the CEO to waive certain internal policies and procedures during a declared emergency)

CEO Janice Kimball explained that this resolution authorizes the CEO (or others on her behalf) to waive certain internal policies and procedures which do not allow for the swift action required during a declared emergency. She used as an example the way how Housing Connect handles oral briefings to issue vouchers (the agency will offer a Powerpoint presentation and a YouTube video for clients to watch) and how it performs physical inspections (some may be done virtually, and the inspections are targeted on health and safety, or anything that will get someone into a unit – new or move). Vice Chair Mark Johnston said that in a recent call which he and other technical assistance providers had with HUD that HUD would look favorably on what agencies are doing as long as they are putting things in their policies. Janice Kimball added that COO Mike Kienast is putting together a spreadsheet with a list of policies and what Housing Connect is doing differently, which will help to be able to track the changes nicely and will give a record of what was done and when it was done. Chair Jennifer Johnston asked Executive Administrator Dan Pincock to put a note on future agendas to track and revisit this issue, given the language in the resolution that this resolution remains in effect until rescinded by the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the resolution and Commissioner Nguyen seconded the motion, which all commissioners (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Mark Johnston, Commissioners Bernal, Litvack, Moffat, Nguyen, and White) voted in favor. Resolution #1003 passed.

Compensation for Front-line staff

The Board approved management's plan (discussed during Executive Session) to compensate front-line staff for their diligent work in serving Housing Connect's clients and their needs, while risking possible direct exposure to COVID-19. Commissioner Nguyen motioned

to approve the compensation for front-line staff, and Commissioner Litvack seconded the motion, which passed with all commissioners (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Mark Johnston, Commissioners Bernal, Litvack, Moffat, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor.

6. CEO's REPORT

CEO Janice Kimball provided an oral report to the Board. She informed them of various developments while the crisis is ongoing. She told them that supportive housing is doing well, receiving an increase in funds to house those with AIDS, and that Housing Connect is being recommended for \$500,000 in short-term HOME funds for rent assistance for households who have been impacted by COVID-19. She informed them of central maintenance's work in remodeling the space behind the lobby/front desk for new offices to house the Central Maintenance and the Eligibility teams and for a temporary front desk while that area is being remodeled. She also updated them on the progress being made on the disposition. The West Valley properties will close at the end of the month and the duplexes are also scheduled to close near the end of the month. The final details of the deed restriction for the single family home have been worked out, and the agency is hoping to transfer the first 16 homes to CDCU soon. For client relocation, Housing Connect has only two clients left who need to be relocated. She noted there have been a few break-ins to empty units and squatters which staff have identified and secured.

7. RAB REPORT

Commissioner Gwen White summarized the highlights from the March RAB meeting, which included Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball's discussion on the Section 8 Administrative Plan changes, which the RAB agreed with, and the Powerful Moms Who Care organization also gave a presentation.

8. COMMISSIONERS INPUT

Chair Jennifer Johnston asked commissioners for any input or thoughts from their respective viewpoints.

- Commissioner Bernal informed the Board that NAHRO and PHADA are working very closely with HUD on additional funding needed for housing authorities across the country;
- Commissioner Nguyen praised and complimented Jeanette Hernandez, Whitney Brickey, Ryan Parker, and the entire Hub team. She said they're doing such an exceptional job and wanted management and the rest of the Board to know that they are going "above and beyond." She said they have really excelled at this moment in time.
- Commissioner Moffat briefly talked about the warehousing of products (for future buildings) and the downward re-pricing and adjustments going on in the real estate sector. He added that labor has started to adjust but materials have not adjusted yet. Housing Connect Real Estate Development Director Jeremy Runia interjected that with the Hunter Hollow and the High Rise rehab bids, he should be able to give a little more feedback as far as pricing is concerned over the next 30 – 60 days.
- Commissioner Litvack emphasized the importance of the work and that we are on the front lines of the homeless situation and that we need to do everything we can to get people in housing as quickly as possible. She thanked Housing Connect for all of its work, partnering, compassion, and dedication at this time.
- Vice Chair Mark Johnston compared the funding which the federal government is putting out now (\$4 billion) to the funding which came out about 10 years ago for the recovery act (the Homelessness Prevention Rapid Rehousing) which was \$1.5 billion and felt that the funds should be used in strategic ways to accomplish the vision which Housing Connect already has and not squandered on quick remedies which don't really solve an issue.

9. OTHER

There were no items in the Other section to discuss.

ADJOURN

At 12:47 p.m., Chair Jennifer Johnston adjourned the Housing Connect Board Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Pincock
Executive Administrator