



## HOUSING CONNECT

### MINUTES OF THE ELECTRONIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 20, 2021

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**PRESENT (video):**

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

**STAFF PRESENT (video):**

Janice Kimball – Chief Executive Officer  
Andre Bartlome – Chief Finance Officer  
Zach Bale – Chief Programs Officer  
Mike Kienast – Chief Operations Officer  
Jarin Blackham – Information Technology Director  
Ilez Brady – Housing Choice Voucher Section 8 Director  
Braidee Kolendrianos – Family Services Development Coordinator  
Dan Pincock – Executive Administrator

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**COMMENCE**

The Housing Connect January 2021 Board Meeting was held virtually on Wednesday, January 20, 2021, and commenced at 12:22 p.m. Chair Jennifer Johnston welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

**2. CONSENT AGENDA**

There were two items in the Consent Agenda which needed Board approval: The December 2020 Housing Connect Board Meeting minutes, and Resolution #1027 (Public Housing and Section 8 write-offs for the period July 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020). Vice Chair Moffat motioned to approve the minutes and the resolution, and Commissioner White seconded the motion, with all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, and Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting affirmatively. The other items listed in the Consent Agenda included: the Medina Place project update, the Hunter Hollow activity report, the staff training summary, the staff turnover report, and staff changes.

**3. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 12:24 p.m., Commissioner Bernal motioned for the Board to enter Executive Session to discuss real estate and human resources matters, and Vice Chair Moffat seconded the motion, with all Board members (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, and Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor.

At 12:41 p.m., Commissioner Litvack motioned to return to regular (open) session, and Commissioner White seconded the motion, with all Board members (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, Commissioners Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor.

**4. ACTION ITEM**

Resolution #1026: Approval of Housing Connect's CEO to negotiate and execute documents to fund a cash deposit not to exceed \$1.1 million for the temporary collateral for the rehab phase of Hunter Hollow – Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball explained to the Board that this resolution allows her to negotiate and execute various rehab phase financial documents for Hunter Hollow. Housing Connect CFO Andre Bartlome explained that the timing for the temporary collateral is through the end of construction, which is scheduled for the end of September (2021), and CEO Janice Kimball added that Housing Connect anticipates a construction phase to be about 200 days and

that the agency is planning on submitting a tax credit application in September. Commissioner Mark Johnston motioned to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Nguyen seconded the motion. All Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, and Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voted affirmatively, and Resolution #1026 was approved.

## 5. CEO's REPORT

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball provided the following real estate updates:

- Hunter Hollow: This property is close to being able to close with HUD. The agency anticipates the closing to take place in the next 60 to 90 days.
- Sunset Gardens: The property was awarded 9% tax credits, but they were for the year 2020, which means the window for using them is 1/3 less (2 years instead of 3 years). Housing Connect is vetting whether it will be possible to use them, given the complexity of HUD requirements and tax credits. In the meantime, the agency is sending out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an owner's representative to oversee the construction. Housing Connect needs to come up with a timeline to make sure that everything that needs to be done on the HUD side will allow the agency to meet the demands of the construction and the tenant relocation.
- 45th South: This property is coming along nicely. Housing Connect has a purchase addendum through June 2021. The key issues will be around how the negotiations with Murray City and UTA go. This is still being worked out.
- Real Estate Development Director position: The agency has determined that it does need to fill that position. A job description has been drafted, and Housing Connect will start right recruiting right away. In the interim, however, the organization is considering increasing the use of consultants and bringing on a development partner for the 45th South property.

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball also provided other updates:

- Moving To Work (MTW): HUD released its application notification for MTW Cohorts 3 and 4. Housing Connect is interested in Cohort 4, which is a research model that would look at ways to work with landlords in the Section 8 program and how to increase housing through better partnerships with landlords. The organization will vet this cohort internally, but it will probably submit a placeholder application.
- VASH voucher audit: HUD's Office of Inspector General (OIG) has informed the agency that it is planning to review all housing authorities that received VASH vouchers during the period October 1, 2014, to December 31, 2020, which includes Housing Connect.
- Programs funding: There is an overall increase across the board for public housing and Section 8 funding from the federal government. In addition, homeless funding through the Continuum of Care (CoC) program will be renewed for 2021 (there is no need to apply).
- Gregson Apartments ownership (unwinding of tax credits): Housing Connect COO Mike Kienast was able to work with the agency's equity partner and the lawyer to unwind the tax credits, and Housing Connect is now the sole owner of the Gregson Apartments. Since December 2019, COO Mike Kienast has worked with the organization's legal counsel and the Accounting Department, and Housing Connect has managed to close out the Frontier, Villa Charmant, and Gregson properties. Housing Connect has no non-active tax credit properties which are lingering.
- Coat donation: There was a donation of 200 children's coats through Operation WARM.
- Complaint received: Housing Connect recently received a complaint from a contractor it had been working with. The contractor indicated its dissatisfaction with Housing Connect's pay schedule. Housing Connect is looking into the matter to determine what was the cause of those delays in payment. CEO Janice Kimball indicated that the project was quite complex with three different condos, two different partners, changes in key staff, and COVID. CEO Kimball indicated that she would like to have a letter from the Board and herself acknowledging the concerns and outlining what the agency found and how it plans to do better going forward. The Board urged her to reach out to the contractor with a phone call ("executive to executive") to acknowledge the complaint and to let the contractor know of Housing Connect's concern and that the agency is looking into the circumstances behind the situation.

## 6. COMMISSIONERS INPUT

Commissioner Mark Johnston mentioned that there was a lot of money (\$25 billion) to be used for emergency rental assistance. CEO Janice Kimball added that the State of Utah originally made a decision not to assist Section 8 voucher holders because they thought that the vouchers would take care of those households. She explained that there had been subsequent conversations with the State that there are some Section 8 households where there may be fees attached to the unit or where the voucher holders may be paying more than 30% of their income towards rent. As a result, going forward, the State will change that. Commissioner Mark Johnston also informed the Board that unused ESG funds (Corona-virus money) could be redirected to homelessness prevention, which could help with some of the eviction issues.

Commissioner Litvack said that the County's rental assistance funding was submitted on January 11 and that she heard that some of the communities had started receiving checks as of January 19. She said it is anticipated that the County will receive \$26 - \$28 million in rental assistance funding.

Commissioner White gave a brief Resident Advisory Board (RAB) report. She said that Supportive Services Director Russell Opatz went over Housing Connect's Public Housing Agency (PHA) Annual Plan and that the RAB voted to approve it.

**7. OTHER**

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball thanked the Board members for their time and input at the Board retreat. There was praise from several of the Board members for the retreat's facilitator, Fraser Nelson, for the way she led the retreat.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Pincock  
Executive Administrator