



## HOUSING CONNECT

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

February 17, 2021

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**PRESENT (video):**

Mark Johnston – Commissioner  
Phil Bernal – Commissioner  
Erin Litvack – 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  
Jarin Blackham – Information Technology Director  
Ilez Brady – Housing Choice Voucher Section 8 Director  
Dan Pincock – Executive Administrator

**EXCUSED:**

Jennifer Johnston – Chair  
Spencer Moffat – Vice Chair

**GUEST:**

John Montgomery (Rocky Mountain CRC)

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**COMMENCE**

The Housing Connect February 2021 Board Meeting was held virtually on Wednesday, February 17, 2021, and commenced at 11:33 a.m. with Commissioner Mark Johnston chairing the meeting in the absence of Chair Jennifer Johnston and Vice Chair Spencer Moffat.

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Commissioner Mark Johnston welcomed John Montgomery (Rocky Mountain CRC) who was a guest at the meeting. There were, however, no participants in the meeting from the general public.

**2. CONSENT AGENDA**

There no edits or concerns for the January 2020 Housing Connect Board Meeting minutes which were approved by all Board members present (Commissioners Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White), following a motion by Commissioner Litvack and a seconding by Commissioner Nguyen. CEO Janice Kimball summarized the rest of the Consent Agenda which included information on the Request for Proposals (RFP) selection for the relocation services of tenants at Sunset Gardens, project updates for Hunter Hollow and Medina Place properties, and staff changes/updates. Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, and Commissioner White seconded the motion, with all Board members present (Commissioners Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting affirmatively.

**3. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 11:38 a.m., Commissioner Nguyen motioned for the Board to enter Executive Session to discuss a real estate matter, and Commissioner Litvack seconded the motion, with all Board members (Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor. John Montgomery made some remarks during the Executive Session.

At 12:16 p.m., Commissioner Litvack motioned to return to regular (open) session, and Commissioner White seconded the motion, with all Board members (Commissioners Bernal, Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor.

**4. PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY (PHA) PLAN PRESENTATION**

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball gave an overview presentation to the Board on the annual Public Housing Agency (PHA) Plan. The slides that she showed were as follows:

*[slide] What is a PHA Plan?* She explained the purpose of the PHA Plan.

*[slide] 5-Year Plan vs. Annual Plan* – She noted its two parts: the 5-year plan (which is more complex) and the annual plan (which covers policies and procedures).

*[slide] Housing Connect’s 5-Year Goals* – She reviewed the goals that the agency had agreed upon prior to the most recent submission of the 5-year plan.

*[slide] Annual Plan 3 Parts* – She reviewed the key parts of the plan.

*[slide] Review and Submission* – She went over the timeline for submission.

Commissioner Bernal was pleased to know that the Plan was in parallel to the County’s affordable housing strategy.

## 5. HUNTER HOLLOW CLOSING

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball gave a general overview of Hunter Hollow. It is a 20-unit public housing property which is being converted to RAD project-based Section 8. It recently received a 9% LIHTC tax credit award, and, presently, it is getting ready to close with HUD and the equity partner (Raymond James), which has \$2.5 million with the tax credits, and the property will be put into rehab. There are two loans: the construction loan with Alta Bank (\$2.6 million at 2.76% interest); and a permanent loan with Rocky Mountain CRC (\$1 million at 4% interest). The agency is looking to close next month (possibly before the next Board meeting), and short-term (under a year) relocation of tenants has begun (using units in public housing stock which are available). Housing Connect will turn over approximately half of the units to Kier Construction at closing in order to begin renovations. Presently, there is one ADA unit, and after the renovation, there will be two ADA units.

CEO Janice Kimball also presented and explained the Hunter Hollow organizational chart, which showed a limited liability structure with Raymond James as the majority owner and HOI as the minority owner. Choice Property Solutions will be the property manager.

## 6. ACTION ITEMS

The Board turned its attention to 3 items for voting (and approval).

- Staff bonus for Central City lease-up: CEO Janice Kimball explained that traditionally a lease-up bonus is given for tax credit properties, given it is one of the most important things which Housing Connect does, but this had not been negotiated with First Step House (Housing Connect’s partner for this property). It was proposed that the bonus be given at the rate of \$50 per unit (for a total of \$3,750) to be split among 5 staff. Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the proposal, and Commissioner Nguyen seconded the motion. All Board members present (Commissioners Bernal, Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voted in favor, and the bonus was approved.

- HR policy amendment: CEO Janice Kimball explained that the agency needs a good mechanism in place for certain staff (executive staff) to take compensation time or to receive (regular) pay for work performed above and beyond the call of duty. Commissioner Mark Johnston added that it was his understanding that those considered eligible for this compensation would have needed to work above 45 hours in a week. Commissioner Bernal motioned to approve the amendment, and Commissioner White seconded the motion. All Board members present (Commissioners Bernal, Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voted in favor of this amendment, and the policy change was approved.

- Resolution #1028: Commissioner Mark Johnston summarized this resolution by saying that it addresses the demolishing of Sunset Gardens and to move it out of public housing and to redevelop it for tax credit purposes. Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball further clarified by adding that this resolution gives her approval to submit the application to HUD. Commissioner Litvack moved to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Nguyen seconded. All Board members present (Commissioners Bernal, Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voted favorably, and the motion to approve Resolution #1028 passed.

## 7. RETREAT REVIEW

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball highlighted some of the key outcomes from the January 2020 Board retreat. She thanked the Board for attending the retreat and was pleased with the retreat and the outcomes. She then reviewed the key outcomes.

1. Housing Connect is developing a scorecard to use in conjunction with the development of new properties;
2. How to invest the \$9 million in Section 8. There were two options: 1) development fund; 2) immediate acquisition;

3. To look at using up to 200 vouchers for the development of housing. There were two ideas: 1) Looking for a development or a non-profit services partner, with a preference for an ownership equity; and 2) using 100 vouchers to support low-income housing tax credit properties.

Commissioner Mark Johnston inquired about when the Board could expect to see a draft of the scorecard. Housing Connect Chief Programs Officer Zach Bale responded that there could definitely be a draft at the April Board meeting. He noted that there are other providers which have already integrated Social Determinants of Health into various tools to help determine development, which Housing Connect can follow.

For Outcome #2, CEO Janice Kimball said that she had in her mind an idea of allowing for some flexibility in the division of the funds, but she wanted to have legal counsel review it before taking it to the Board. Commissioner Mark Johnston proposed that CEO Janice Kimball report back to the Board at the April meeting on progress.

CEO Janice Kimball said she would like to report back in April for Outcome #3 and will ask Housing Choice Voucher Director Ilez Brady when she thinks she will be able to get to. Director Brady said that she had signed up for some relevant training which will take place in March.

## **8. CEO's REPORT**

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball reported the following information to the Board:

- Housing Connect has been notified that it will receive Continuum of Care (CoC) funding, which was automatically renewed based on last year's funding.
- Housing Connect is working with ChoicePoints on the diversity, equity, and inclusion training. ChoicePoints staff are doing interviews with agency staff and key partners, and all staff are taking training. Housing Connect leadership is getting some additional training. The agency is starting to see areas where it can do some work. She added that Housing Connect will get back to the Board in a month or two with a synopsis of where it is at. This will also feed into the budget.
- There are 5 long-term staff members who will be retiring over the next few months (three of them have over 30 years of experience here at Housing Connect). She shared that the most impactful to the Board will be the resignation of Public Housing Director Lori Pacheco who will be leaving at the end of June.

## **9. QUARTERLY REPORTS**

- Financials (through the end of December 2020): Housing Connect Chief Financial Officer highlighted some of the more significant figures for the Board. While some areas were showing a loss, there is an understanding that things such as developers fees, how HUD requires RAD information to be accounted for, and wanting to use as much reserves as possible to help families in need as quickly as possible (HUD provides a safety net/shortfall in the case of depletion of the reserve) will offset the losses and that the Board should not be concerned about such losses.

He also pointed out that Bodhi lost \$1,000, in part because of \$25,000 in bad debt as a result of the eviction moratorium. Janice Kimball also let the Board know that Public Housing Director Lori Pacheco and Affordable Housing Director Jeanette Hernandez and their teams are really working hard with tenants who have outstanding rent but that the tenants are not engaging in the resources available to them to help assist with rent payments.

CFO Andre Bartlome also said that the Central Office/Central Maintenance budget is \$162,000 worse than expected. He explained that the overall Central Maintenance staff has shrunk by several people, which resulted in less Fee for Services being generated, and, therefore, revenues are less than what was budgeted. CEO Janice Kimball explained that Fee for Service has been a revenue generator (in the past).

- Operations: CEO Janice Kimball (speaking for COO Mike Kienast who was not in attendance) remarked that Operations' projects are doing well.
- Services: Housing Connect Chief Programs Officer Zach Bale informed the Board that all is well with the programs, and there are no specific areas of concern on his radar for the Services Department.

## **10. COMMISSIONERS' INPUT**

Commissioner Nguyen said she was very impressed with the Housing Connect Fund Board and that it's exciting to see it take off and become defined.

Commissioner Bernal reminded the rest of the Board about the upcoming National NAHRO Washington, D.C. virtual conference, March 2 and 3. He urged the Board to check the website for presenters. Commissioner Mark Johnston remarked that it should be interesting to hear what the new administration is planning for housing.

Commissioner White mentioned that the residents at the Kelly Benson apartments are doing well and that on Tuesday, February 23, those residents who are age 70 and over will receive their COVID vaccinations. Commissioner Mark Johnston asked if Housing Connect had used any of the FEMA emergency response money for COVID. CEO Janice Kimball replied that Housing Connect had not used those resources. Commissioner Litvack added that many municipalities and counties decided against using the funding, as it was not an easy thing to obtain such money.

#### **11. OTHER**

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball briefly informed the Board that the agency has partnered with the Veterans Administration (VA) on VASH vouchers, for which there are 258 units on such vouchers, but that the challenge with the VA is filling the PBV units in a timely manner.

For the Medina Place property (which is jointly owned by First Step House), it was originally agreed for 20 tenant-based VASH vouchers and 20 tenant-based regular vouchers, but Housing Connect has decided to make them all tenant-based vouchers with a preference for veterans for 20 of the units.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting then adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Pincock  
Executive Administrator