



HOUSING CONNECT

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 2021 MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

June 16, 2021

PRESENT:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Janice Kimball – Chief Executive Officer
Andre Bartlome – Chief Finance Officer
Mike Kienast – Chief Operating Officer
Zach Bale – Chief Programs Officer
Jarin Blackham – Information Technology Director
Dan Pincock – Executive Administrator

GUEST:

Eric Novak – Praxis Consulting Group

COMMENCE

The June 2021 Housing Connect Board of Commissioners meeting took place at The Hub of Opportunity and started at 11:59 a.m. Chair Jennifer Johnston welcomed all in attendance to the meeting. Eric Novak (Praxis Consulting Group) attended and participated in the meeting.

1. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one from the general public in attendance.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board approved the Emergency Vouchers waivers. Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the waivers, and Vice Chair Moffat seconded the motion, with all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, and Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen and White) voting in favor. The other items on the Consent Agenda included the Hunter Hollow activity report and a staff update.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 12:01 p.m., the Board chose to move into Executive Session to discuss some real estate and HR-related and budget matters, as shown on the agenda. Vice-Chair Moffat motioned to go into Executive Session, and Commissioner Litvack 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 the Board entered Executive Session.

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

4. ACTION ITEMS

Resolution #1035: Pay off loan to the State (Dover House purchase) – Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball gave a brief history of the Dover House in Magna, which Housing Connect has been managing for several years. Originally, Housing Connect took the house to help

the State for a family who had a severely disabled child. There are no members of that family currently living in the house. Housing Connect is proposing to purchase the house from the State to use it to provide housing to a family at 50% area median income (AMI) or below. Rents at that level will provide enough money to cover expenses and save for capital needs.

Commissioner Nguyen said that the action taken by Housing Connect made a huge difference in the lives of 6 people and was a gift “beyond compare.” Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the pay off to the State to purchase the Dover House, 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) supported the action, and the purchase of the Dover House (Resolution #1035) was approved.

Resolution #1036: FY2022 Housing Connect budget – Housing Connect CFO Andre Bartlome presented the finalized FY2022 Housing Connect budget to the Board. He said, from the discussion at last month’s Board meeting, that Housing Connect increased wages 3.6% for all employees and brought up staff who were at 40% or below the median for their grade to the mid-point. Additionally, he factored in \$50,000 for professional services (for technical support, research partners, etc.) for the Moving To Work (MTW) initiative, \$28,000 for the remodel of the Housing Choice Voucher department area at the main office, \$18,000 to add wi-fi to Housing Connect’s 6 remaining Public Housing properties (not including the High Rise), and 6 months’ worth of salary for a staff member who is delaying retirement for a few months. He also included staff turnover data (per earlier request from the Board).

Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the FY2022 Housing Connect budget, including the salary changes discussed in the Executive Session. Commissioner Mark Johnston seconded the motion, and all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, and Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen and White) voted in favor of the motion, and Resolution #1036 (FY2022 Housing Connect budget) was approved.

Calendar-year audit for Frontier – Commissioner Nguyen motioned to approve the audit for Frontier (one of two properties owned by Housing Connect), and Commissioner White 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 the Frontier calendar-year audit was approved. The Villa Charmant calendar-year audit will be provided for the Board’s approval at the next meeting.

Resolution #1037: New City Plaza bond issuance – Guest Eric Novak remarked that some financial issues related to the New City Plaza bond issuance would be addressed by Housing Connect (the lessor of the property) and others by HOI. He noted that this is a blanket resolution that gives the Housing Connect CEO the authority to sign on behalf of both entities. Vice Chair Moffat motioned to approve the New City Plaza bond issuance, 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 in support of the motion, and Resolution #1037, for the New City Plaza bond issuance, was approved.

Resolution #1038: Property purchase (Parkhill mobile home park) – CEO Janice Kimball briefly reviewed the history of the agency’s involvement with the Parkhill mobile home park. In 2005, Housing Connect purchased Parkhill on behalf of Salt Lake County and worked to help the tenants to form a co-op which was not successful. Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation (RMCRC) is not able to re-finance with them. The law firm Holland and Hart is working with the tenants to meet its obligations to reincorporate so that they can work with Housing Connect to assume ownership. The resolution gives the Housing Connect CEO the authority to take over a deed-in-lieu for the property.

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball said that the issue going forward is whether or not Housing Connect should keep the property as a mobile home park or develop it at a higher density level. She added that the intent would be to preserve the property as affordable housing and make sure that the tenants’ interests are cared for, but with no guarantees that it would be kept as a mobile home park. She also said that she hoped within two years that the agency would have options for the property in the future.

Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the resolution, and Vice Chair Moffat seconded the motion with all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, and Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen and White) voted in favor of the motion. Resolution #1038, for the property purchase of the Parkhill mobile home park, was approved.

5. SUNSET GARDENS UPDATE

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball gave an update to the Board on the Sunset Gardens property (a 24-unit development in Midvale, which has been approved by HUD for conversion to 89 units – with 24 vouchers still pending approval). Housing Connect was not successful in its request to extend the tax credits. The agency will return the tax credits. Housing Connect asked Chelsea Investment Group (a development partner) to run a proforma as a 4% bond deal. The preliminary outlook indicated that it is doable. Housing Connect would need to have an initial cash investment of \$1.25 million (to close the financial deficit of the 4% bond), which could come from the sale of the agency’s scattered sites proceeds. CEO Janice Kimball indicated to the Board that Housing Connect would like to pursue the 4% option, and the Board indicated its support for that.

6. COMMISSIONERS' INPUT

Commissioner White did not have anything to report from the Resident Advisory Board (RAB), as no RAB meeting was held in June. She thanked the agency for opening up the building. CEO Janice Kimball added that Housing Connect has opened the community spaces at the properties, as of June 1.

There was a brief discussion on vaccination rates at the properties and among the staff. Commissioner Litvack informed the Board that the County is still offering to do on-site clinics and asked that anyone who is interested to contact her. She remarked that things from her side are starting to transition back to "normalcy."

Commissioner Mark Johnston asked about the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) decision and how the vouchers will be used. CEO Janice Kimball said that the initial thoughts are that this is really an important opportunity to target individuals who the agency doesn't have good resources for, and who Housing Connect knows really need the housing, such as homeless families who need rent assistance but who don't qualify for chronic homeless assistance (as most of the Continuum of Care resources are dedicated to chronically homeless) and other individuals who are not going to meet the definition of chronic homelessness but who have a good, sizable history of being homeless.

Housing Connect had emergency preference vouchers for homeless individuals to help during the pandemic, and there were 78 households in the pipeline, but they did not receive vouchers because the agency was overleased. Housing Connect felt an obligation to work with the community to prioritize those households and get them housed.

Housing Connect Chief Programs Officer Zach Bale added that another program that is being discussed (as to whether it qualifies for EHV) is Move On. He said he would have a summary after meeting with the City Housing Authority.

Commissioner Bernal noted that NAHRO's CEO was sworn in as the HUD Deputy Secretary.

Vice Chair Moffat remarked that development issues are about the same as they have been in in the past, although some things in the supply chain are starting to come into balance.

7. OTHER

Chair Jennifer Johnston asked the Board for feedback on future meetings, and it was decided to continue meeting in person with the option to for commissioners to join virtually if they are not able to attend in person.

Housing Connect Chief Programs Officer Zach Bale informed the Board that the agency is working to host another Paint Night (the earlier one was cancelled because of a conflict which the artist had), and those organizing it are narrowing down the date.

ADJOURN

Chair Jennifer Johnston adjourned the meeting at 1:22p.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Pincock
Executive Administrator