



## HOUSING CONNECT

### MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 2021 ELECTRONIC MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

August 18, 2021

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**PRESENT:**

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

**GUEST:**

Eric Novak – Praxis Consulting Group

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Janice Kimball – Chief Executive Officer  
Andre Bartlome – Chief Financial Officer  
Zach Bale – Chief Program Officer  
Ilez Brady – Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Director  
Mike Kienast – Chief Operating Officer  
Jarin Blackham – Information Technology Director  
Meridian Garcia – Regional Property Manager  
Troy Hart – Real Estate Development Consultant  
Dan Pincock – Executive Administrator

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**COMMENCE**

On Wednesday, August 18, at 11:38 a.m., Board Chair Jennifer Johnston commenced the meeting and welcomed all who were participating. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom. Eric Novak (Praxis Consulting Group) was participating in the meeting to provide information about the New City Plaza project. It was also pointed out that Meridian Garcia (Housing Connect Regional Property Manager) was attending.

**1. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the general public in attendance.

**2. CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes from the July 2021 Housing Connect Board meeting, the Hunter Hollow activity report, and the staff changes. Chair Jennifer Johnston asked whether there were any comments or questions to the minutes. Commissioner Nguyen motioned to approve the minutes, and Commissioner White seconded the motion with all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting to approve the motion. The minutes were approved. For the Hunter Hollow update, Housing Connect Chief Operating Officer (COO) Mike Kienast indicated that the delivery deadline is two months away and that Phase 1 (of 2) finished two weeks ago and that Phase 2 has started. There was a question about the progress indicated as 0%, and he indicated that this was overlooked and that the correct percentage should be 40%, and things were progressing well (an updated report was later sent to the Commissioners).

**3. NEW CITY PLAZA STATUS REPORT**

Eric Novak (Praxis Consulting Group) provided an update for the Board. He noted that things are going extraordinarily smoothly, which is unusual for projects, and then he went over the bulleted list from his report. He informed the Board that \$35.1 million in short-term bonds had been issued. There was a kickoff meeting with the investor at the site. They are looking at the construction phasing and its impact on relocation. Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball pointed out that it is a building of historical significance (and that means there are additional loops to go through). Eric Novak added that the project could have applied for historic tax credits and that the State Historic Office feels that the entrance is too modern looking and is proposing a new design. There will be a meeting on Monday, August 23 to come up with a compromise.

Outstanding concerns include maintaining the construction budget, and they have tasked the Owner's Representative (G2) to monitor that very closely and inform the project as changes occur in the budget and let the project know whether the changes are reasonable or not.

For the project plan, Chair Jennifer Johnston asked who is responsible for what (between Housing Connect and the City housing authority) and if the Board can get a more specific plan next time. Eric Novak responded that the City housing authority is procuring the interior designer; otherwise the project team is managing everything else (all decisions related to property management).

One unresolved issue is the level and amount of social services that will be required. It has already been agreed that the City housing authority will manage the Section 8 administration, and the property will be managed by Housing Connect (through Choice Property Solutions). Chair Jennifer Johnston asked for outstanding decisions to be included in the report and that the team makes sure that both Housing Connect and the Housing Authority of Salt Lake City are in sync on knowing what those issues are and what the progress is on them.

CEO Janice Kimball asked whether most major functions and items (outside of the interior designer) are procured, to which Eric Novak responded that they were. He said the City housing authority will need to sign off on the property management operating budget and staffing plan, and the team is giving them the information as soon as it is available but is expecting that the cost to operate the property will be scrutinized and that the team should be monitoring that. Chair Jennifer Johnston felt that it is important to ensure that both housing authorities are aware of issues, should there be a delay or cancellation of services. Eric Novak responded that he will provide the monthly report (and that the City housing authority is receiving the same report) and that he will let everyone know of unresolved issues but that it has been going amazingly smoothly.

Chair Jennifer Johnston and CEO Janice Kimball thanked Troy Hart, Mike Kienast (and his team), and Eric Novak for their work on this.

#### 4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There were no items that were needed to be discussed at an Executive Session. The Board then moved to the Action Items.

#### 5. ACTION ITEMS

**Resolution #1041: Parkhill note purchase** – Housing Connect, pursuant to a note purchases agreement from Rocky Mountain Community Reinvestment Corporation (RMCRC), will use unrestricted funds to purchase the Parkhill mobile home park property at a price of \$670,000 to preserve affordability. Commissioner Nguyen motioned to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Litvack seconded the motion with all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting in favor of approving the motion. Resolution #1041 (Parkhill note purchase) was approved.

**Resolution #1042: Approval of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher administrative plan updates** – CEO Janice Kimball mentioned that most of the changes were administrative changes. Housing Connect Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Director Ilez Brady added that most of the changes were based on Nan McKay's guidance to follow HUD's regulations. There were some discrepancies with what Nan McKay had suggested, allowing agencies to choose (re: overpayment). Other than that, everything else was based on HUD regulations. Responding to a question about whether the income from a hospitalized family member counts against the household income, Director Brady said if the individual is in a nursing home on a permanent basis, the agency would not include them as a part of the household and would not count that person's income, either. Commissioner Bernal motioned to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Litvack seconded the motion with all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting affirmatively. Resolution #1042 (the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher administrative plan updates) was approved.

**Resolution #1043: Approval of Sunset Gardens General Contractor (GC)** – Kier Construction has been selected as the General Contractor (GC) for the Sunset Gardens project. Commissioner Litvack motioned to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Mark Johnston seconded the motion with all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voting to approve Resolution #1043 (the Sunset Garden General Contractor selection).

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball said that the agency is still waiting on HUD approval for the disposition and that she would reach out to HUD to find out the status. Everything else, she added, is going really well.

#### 6. QUARTERLY REPORTS

It was pointed out for the financial quarterly report that the Bodhi maintenance costs were higher than expected, and Housing Connect Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Andre Bartlome said that this could be because security and elevator expenses, but CEO Janice Kimball said that the reason for the primary maintenance cost increase was because several units tested positive for methamphetamines. The occupancy rate is trending in the mid-to-high 90%, but some vacancies take longer due to the meth clean-up.

There were no questions or comments on the Operations or the Supportive Services quarterly reports.

## 7. CEO's REPORT

Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball reported the following information:

**Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs)** – The Foundation for Independence (Cerebral Palsy of Utah) requested 24 PBVs, and Housing Connect received clarification from the Utah Housing Corporation that the project would be counted as Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), but the owner informed Housing Connect that they have received an offer for the property to sell it, which was accepted. Their plan is to find another location, but this has voided their application, as PBVs are tied to the location.

**Real Estate Development Director** – The agency has extended a job offer to Kirk Moorhead (from Minnesota). Kirk has over 20 years of affordable housing experience (which matches with Housing Connect and its mission) and currently works for a faith-based housing provider. The last 2 projects he has worked on were for homeless youth.

**The Hub of Opportunity** – The Hub is progressing nicely and is close to closing on permanent financing. Housing Connect has received a payment to pay down the construction loan of \$6 million.

**Other Side Academy meeting** – Housing Connect CEO Janice Kimball and COO Mike Kienast met with the Board Chair and a staff member from the Other Side Academy regarding the Parkhill property. They had questions on how to run a property and asked about some technical assistance matters. Mike Kienast has shared some lease documents and forwarded to them an operating manual from one of Housing Connect's PSH projects.

**Parents As Teachers (PAT) and Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Programs** – The Housing Connect PAT and FSS programs have been focusing on back to school. They have done a really nice job of coordinating with local school districts and making sure the children and parents are getting connected to the schools.

**Inspections** – Both the Supportive Housing and Section 8 teams are really working towards Housing Quality Inspections (HQS) which were paused due to COVID and are underway with that.

**Sale of properties** – The agency has just finished transitioning the last group of single family homes to the Community Development Corporation of Utah (CDCU) that will be sold to families at 65% to 80% Area Median Income (AMI).

**Parkhill property management** – Cornerstone Residential will manage the Parkhill property on behalf of Housing Connect.

**Main office central maintenance** – At the main office, the agency is looking at an upgrade to the HVAC system. It is just completing the remodel of the lobby. Central Maintenance did a nice job on that.

**Paint Night fundraiser** – The Paint Night Fundraiser was held on Thursday, August 5, and there were approximately 25 guests who participated. It was a lot of fun, and there was great support from staff and the Board, for which CEO Janice Kimball thanked the Board.

**Section 8 overleasing** – The Housing Connect Section 8 department is working on the overleasing issue and being over budget. Housing Connect Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Ilez Brady has been working with West Valley City Housing Authority (WVCHA), who is underleased, and has been able to transfer 48 clients to WVCHA. This has helped out both agencies.

**Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV)** – The EHV are moving along. So far, 27 vouchers have been issued, with 15 in the eligibility process.

**Denver Street and The Hub of Opportunity inspections** – Utah Housing Corporation (UHC) conducted physical inspections at the Denver Street apartments (Housing Connect is the third-party property manager there) and at The Hub of Opportunity. These are the first (physical) inspections since COVID, and they went well for both projects.

**Moving To Work (MTW)** – The agency is beginning to work on this, and Housing Connect MTW Director Marni Timmerman is getting up to speed. Housing Connect is working with HUD to determine when Housing Connect will sign the Annual Contributions Contract (ACC). HUD has indicated it would like the contract signed by the end of the year.

Commissioner Nguyen provided her feedback that the Paint Night was successful, and CEO Janice Kimball said that Chief Program Officer Zach Bale and his team did a great job.

## **8. COMMISSIONERS' INPUT**

In addition to her comments about the Paint Night, Commissioner Nguyen expressed her enjoyment in being a part of the Housing Connect Fund (HCF) Board. She said that the Fund is moving forward with the Social Determinants of Health (SDoH), and the assistance they are giving to the individuals living in the properties is amazing. She is proud to be a part of something so positive. She said that the Fund is going well with the budgeting and working hard on accumulating grants and new funding, and it seems that they are moving forward quickly, and it's exciting to see such progress for a new program and entity.

Commissioner Bernal said that there will be a NAHRO conference (with Commissioners Training) in Phoenix, Arizona, October 6 to 9, and there is still a issue of where COVID will be in October. He believed that individuals could attend in-person or via Zoom (the conference has since moved to virtual-only). Chair Jennifer Johnston tasked Housing Connect Executive Administrator with sending the Board additional conference information.

Commissioner White reported on the Resident Advisory Board (RAB) meeting which was held Wednesday, August 11. Housing Connect Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Director Ilez Brady reviewed the updated to the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher administrative plan, which the RAB approved unanimously. Housing Connect Family Services Development Coordinator Braidee Kolendrianos reviewed the RAB budget for 2021 at the meeting, and Commissioner White said the RAB would like to reserve the funds from last fiscal year for future use. She praised Braidee, Ilez, and Housing Connect Supportive Housing Services Director Russell Opatz for the way they responded to tenants' questions and said that they have been there to answer all of their questions. At the RAB meeting, Supportive Housing Services Direction said that they could share with the RAB the orientation video to help the RAB understand as tenants ways they can help others when the RAB hears that they are having trouble (and who the tenants should contact). She said it was insightful and thanked them. She said that Jamie Ramos will take over as RAB Treasurer. She gave kudos to everyone.

Commissioner Litvack said that because of COVID things at the County have been eventful. The K-6 mask mandate was rescinded by the County Council. They have also been monitoring what has been going on with COVID in the schools and will keep an eye on things. The (COVID positive) numbers continue to increase, which is very disturbing. They will continue to monitor and to push the vaccine as much as possible for those who are eligible to take advantage of the opportunity for booster eligibility. She also said the County is in the throes of the budget process. There is a new Health Director at the County: Dr. Angela Dunn. Commissioner Litvack said that it has been a pleasure to work with her and to get to know her.

Commissioner Mark Johnston did not have anything new to report from his side.

Vice Chair Moffet said that people continue to see (construction) prices going up, and right now, it is mostly labor-driven (there is a shortage of labor).

## **9. OTHER**

Housing Connect Executive Administrator Dan Pincock reminded everyone that the next Board meeting would be held on September 15. Chair Jennifer Johnston said that the plan would be to meet virtually.

## **ADJOURN**

At 12:18 p.m., Commissioner Litvack motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Nguyen seconded the motion, and all Board members present (Chair Jennifer Johnston, Vice Chair Moffat, Commissioners Bernal, Mark Johnston, Litvack, Nguyen, and White) voted affirmatively, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan Pincock  
Executive Administrator