

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

June 25, 2018
5:30 p.m.

Clinton Place
Meal Site

1. Call of Roll

Chair Powers called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm. Upon call of roll, the following Commissioners responded present:

Jamie Davison
Maria Duran
Ellen Paulsen
Josh Powers
Bronson Star

Also present were member of the public Anne Fowler, and LDCHA staff members Beverly Hyatt, Ruth Lichtwardt, Gallal Obeid, and Shannon Oury.

2. Approve Minutes of June 4, 2018 Board of Commissioners Meeting

Commissioner Duran moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Commissioner Davison seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Receive Comments from Tenants and Public

There were no comments.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Receive May 2018 Public Housing Financial Report
- B. Receive May 2018 Clinton Place Financial Report
- C. Receive May 2018 Section 8 Financial Report
- D. Resolution 2018-16: Approve Continuation of the LDCHA as Contract Administrator for the Bert Nash Tenant Based Rent Assistance HOME Program Grant

Commissioner Paulsen moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Star seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

5. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Receive Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Oury reported that after the Board packet had gone out, the final Section 8 funding had finally been announced, and that the proration is at an unheard of high level of 99.7%, plus an inflation factor of 1.019. The amount including VASH is far in excess of what the LDCHA's 2018 Section 8 budget had assumed. However, the agency is in a use-

it-or-lose-it situation, and needs to expend the funds in order to keep them in the community. One of the items that staff is looking at is expanding the number of Safe Housing vouchers by an additional ten. All the available vouchers are currently filled and there is a waiting list of another 10 people, so expanding it would reduce the waiting time for housing for eligible families fleeing domestic violence. In answer to a question from Commissioner Paulsen, Ms. Oury explained that it would not reduce the number of vouchers available to other households, it will be additional vouchers known as “overleasing.” Ms. Oury requested the Board’s permission to expand the Safe Housing program by another 10 vouchers.

Commissioner Duran moved to allow expansion of the Safe Housing program by 10 vouchers. Commissioner Paulsen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Oury reported on an issue with the Capital Fund which was presented to the Board at the last meeting. The documents for the Capital Fund agreement contain wording that specifies that acceptance of the grant also constitutes acceptance of changes to the agency’s Annual Contribution Contract (ACC), which is the LDCHA’s contract with HUD for the public housing units. Industry groups have been discussing this, and the MTW Steering Committee will be getting together to send a letter to HUD about it, because they want to ensure it does not undo any of the MTW contract. LDCHA is in the fortunate position of not needing to draw down any of the funds yet, so there is some time to work with the other MTW agencies on clarifying the situation. Ms. Oury will continue to update the Board as the ramifications become known.

The Resident Advisory Council met on June 14th to discuss the 2019 Annual Plan and updates to the Admin/ACOP policies. Two additional items were proposed for the Plan. One came from the Director of Resident Services, to work with a national group which is attempting to make affordable high-speed internet available to all residents in public housing. The goal would be to make high speed fiber available to all units at Edgewood Homes. She outlined the steps necessary for the process, and explained that the reason it could be possible is that RG Fiber has already laid fiber along Haskell Avenue. It would still cost a great deal to have the connections made, and the agency is applying for several grants to cover part of the cost. Permission will be asked in the MTW Plan to use MTW reserves for an additional part of the cost.

Another issue identified by staff is the difficulty some applicants have in obtaining birth certificates. A copy of each household member’s birth certificate is required to be submitted with the initial application before it will be processed. Some area agencies have sporadic funding to assist applicants with the cost, which varies from state to state and can be substantial. This has become a significant barrier to housing for some people, and will also make it difficult to obtain the new driver’s license which meets the TSA criteria as acceptable ID since a birth certificate is required for that. The agency would like to use MTW reserves if approved in the Plan to assist some applicants with the costs of acquiring their birth certificate copies. There were some questions from the Board, and Ms. Oury mentioned one family of eight which included several nieces and nephews, and the hurdles that family had faced in obtaining birth certificates for all members. These proposals will be presented to the Board for approval in the draft of the Plan before it goes to public comment.

Ms. Oury reported that the Senate Appropriations Committee voted unanimously to approve a FY 2019 spending bill that parallels the funding in the FY 2018 omnibus bill, which itself was a significant increase over previous years, including the HOME program that was cut by the House bill. So far, the funding outlook for 2019 is good.

Ms. Oury explained that an issue was identified during talks about the mental health crisis center. The DA's office has been working with area agencies to try to reduce the recidivism rate among non-violent female offenders with substance use disorders. The LDCHA will be partnering with the DA's Office and the other partners to make stable housing options available, using the current special MTW vouchers for Re-Entry or Safe Housing or to get them on the HOME program list. Ms. Oury will keep the Board informed of the progress of this.

In answer to a question which was raised at the previous meeting regarding overlap in rent for Section 8 participants who were taking several days to move from one unit to another, Ms. Oury provided the Board with an overview of the electronic PIC system in which HUD requires all move-ins and move-outs to be recorded. HUD prohibits dual or overlapping payment of subsidy for any tenant and will not allow payment of any subsidy past the recorded move-out day even if a tenant still has belongings in the unit. The HUD policies for this and for deceased tenants was included in more detail in the Board packet.

Ms. Oury introduced Gallal Obeid, LDCHA's MTW Coordinator and Data & Financial Analyst, who has been working with a contractor to develop an all-new website for the agency. Mr. Obeid presented a demonstration of the new website, which will be launched next week. There were several comments from the Board thanking Mr. Obeid and praising the look and accessibility of the new site.

B. Review Amendments to Admin/ACOP and Approve for Distribution for Public Comment

Executive Director Oury explained the changes item by item, pointing them out on the red-lined version included in the Board packet. Many of the updates are to make the language consistent between sections or for better clarity, though two changes are regarding deductions and education hours for MTW participants. More detail was added to the fraud section regarding intentional and unintentional fraud, which Ms. Oury explained. Another change clarified that households which are over housed would not be required to move unless the unit is needed for another household. Commissioner Davison asked if the agency helps the households move. Ms. Oury explained that if a household is required to move because major repairs must be performed on their unit then the agency will normally help them move, but if the move is due to household changes, then the agency generally does not pay for that. There was considerable discussion among the Board about the circumstances when the agency might assist with moving expenses and Ms. Oury answered several questions about situations that have occurred. Chair Powers instructed staff to provide an analysis on how often a household would be required to move due to household size and how much the agency might be able to assist with moving expenses in the form of a lump sum, including where the funds would come from. This item is tabled until the next meeting.

C. Elect Board Vice-Chair

Commissioner Davison nominated Commissioner Duran as Vice Chair. Ms. Duran accepted the nomination. Commissioner Star seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Receive Management Review of Clinton Place and Resolution 2018-17: Approve Draft Revisions to Clinton Place Tenant Selection Plan

Executive Directory Oury explained that on June 21st a management review of Clinton Place had been conducted and that while the score was high, several changes are being required to be made to various documents, primarily the Tenant Selection Plan and EIV documents. Ms. Oury called the Board's attention to the attached summary of findings and the agency's response, and the new draft of the Tenant Selection Plan. She outlined the purpose of the Plan and explained in detail the updates which have been made. The response must be submitted by July 7th.

Vice Chair Duran moved to approve Resolution 2018-17. Commissioner Star seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Discuss One-Time Late Fee Forgiveness

Executive Directory Oury said that although the idea had been presented to the Board at the previous meeting and approved as part of the draft MTW Plan, staff had become aware that it does not need to be part of the Plan to enact. The agency would also like to do this as part of the 50th Anniversary celebration rather than waiting until the Plan is approved and takes effect next year. She said that if everyone who owes late fees takes advantage, it would total about \$9,000. There was a question about tenants who might again accrue late fees after the forgiveness. Ms. Oury said that it was possible that staff would be coming back with a similar request in a few years, and she said that while some tenants just habitually paid late since there was no actual collection enforcement on the late fees, most who accrued the fees genuinely have a difficult time being able to pay their entire rent amount by the fifth working day of the month. Vice Chair asked about the bi-monthly rent payment arrangement that some tenants have and Ms. Oury explained that arrangement. There was considerable discussion among the Board member about moving the deadline that the late fees would be charged. Ms. Oury suggested that perhaps rent could still be due by the 5th working day but the late fee would not be charged until the 15th day. The Board expressed its approval of that idea. Ms. Oury also outlined the ramifications that owing a debt such as late fees has on any tenant who wants to transfer or move, since the fact that they owe a debt must be reported to HUD, which will not allow assistance from another housing authority until the debt is paid.

Commissioner Jamison moved to approve the one-time late fee forgiveness. Vice Chair Duran seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Davison moved to enter into executive session from 6:50 pm to 7:30 pm to discuss personnel matters pertaining to nonelected personnel. Commissioner Duran seconded. The Board entered into executive session at 6:50 pm. At 7:25 pm, Commissioner

Paulsen moved to exit executive session and Vice Chair Duran seconded. The Board exited executive session at 7:25 pm.

7. Calendar and Announcements

Executive Director Oury announced that the LDCHA offices will be closed on Wednesday, July 4th for the Independence Day holiday, on Thursday July 12th from 10:30 – 1:30 pm for the 50th Anniversary celebration, and on Thursday July 19th from 2:30 – 5:00 pm for Summer Employee Bowling.

8. Adjournment

There being no further items of business, Commissioner Star moved to adjourn. Commissioner Davison seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:26 pm.

Chair

Secretary

Attest