



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
of the Board of Commissioners of the  
Housing Authority of the City of Everett**

**August 28, 2017**

**Meeting Called to Order**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Everett was called to order by Chair Lyle Ryan following lunch, at 12:09 p.m. on Monday, August 28, 2017 at the Authority's main office, 3107 Colby Avenue, Everett, Washington.

**Commissioners Present at Roll Call:**

Chair Lyle Ryan  
Vice-Chair Maddy Metzger-Utt  
Commissioner John Mierke

Commissioner George Perez, Jr.  
Commissioner Michele Rastovich

**Commissioners Absent:**

Commissioner Todd Taylor

**Also in attendance were:**

**Staff:**

Ashley Lommers-Johnson, Executive Director  
Jill Stanton, Deputy Executive and Finance Director  
Rick Dorris, Dir. of Development and Acquisitions  
John Forsyth, Director of Housing Operations  
Wendy Westby, HCV Program Director  
Erica Dias, Relocation and Planning Manager  
Brenda McLeod, Ass't. Dir. of Procurement & Contracts  
Chris Neblett, Hearing Officer/Administrative Coordinator

**Guests:**

Lorna Corrigan, Attorney

## **Motion to Revise Agenda**

Chair Ryan called for a motion to replace Resolution No. 1441 with a memorandum requesting approval of contracts for moving services associated with the Baker Heights relocation project. Vice-Chair Metzger-Utt moved to revise the agenda as stated, Commissioner Rastovich seconded, and the motion was approved.

Chair Ryan asked Executive Director Lommers-Johnson to introduce a new staff member in attendance, Director of Housing Operations John Forsyth. Mr. Forsyth will oversee the resident services and housing management departments, with a focus on establishing sustained partnerships for the Housing Authority's longer-term projects. He comes with more than two decades of experience with Seattle Housing Authority, where he served on the senior management team and coordinated grants and partnerships for larger projects.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Ryan called for approval of the minutes for the Regular Meeting of June 26, 2017 and the Special Meeting of July 13, 2017. Commissioner Perez moved to approve the minutes of these meetings, and Commissioner Mierke seconded. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed and the minutes of both meetings were approved.

## **Communications**

None.

## **Executive Director's Report**

The Executive Director began with an overview of 2018 House and Senate Appropriations Bills for federally funded housing, the Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Choice Neighborhoods Initiative programs specifically. He noted that the Trump Administration's proposed budget underfunded two of these programs, and defunded the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative altogether. In the case of Public Housing, this amounted to a \$500 million reduction to the operating fund and 70 percent cut to the capital fund. Apart from the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, the House and Senate Appropriations Bills mitigated these cuts by maintaining program funding at current levels, or at a slight increase. The Executive Director noted, however, that the long-term funding prognosis for the Public Housing program was untenable, and this confirmed that the Housing Authority was wise to be in the process of winding down its own program.

The Executive Director expected the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative would receive a fraction of its current allocation, which would undercut a potential funding source for the redevelopment of the Baker Heights neighborhood. He was also concerned about projected reductions in administrative fee funding for the Housing Choice Voucher program. In closing this segment, Mr. Lommers-Johnson anticipated that the final Budget Resolution was likely not to prove catastrophic to most federally funded housing programs, as the Housing and Senate Appropriations Bills would balance out the administration's more draconian funding cuts.

Mr. Lommers-Johnson next addressed the topic of plans for Baker Heights replacement housing, noting that this would cover material originally slated for the policy discussion

segment at the end of the meeting. Although it is not a HUD requirement, he reiterated the Housing Authority's commitment to replacing each of the 244 units that will be lost as a result of the Baker Heights disposition, through both development and acquisition. In part, this would involve acquiring tax-credit eligible properties of 80-120 units over the next five years – at a minimum cost of around \$28 million – and designating 25 to 30 percent of the units in each mixed-income development as Project-Based Vouchers. While management preferred an ownership interest in these Project-Based units, it was open to locating them in housing owned by a partnering non-profit, such as Housing Hope, or a private developer such as HNN.

The replacement of Baker Heights units through new development centered on plans to construct between 60 and 80 new units on 3.6 acres of the 15-acre site, as provided for by the disposition agreement with HUD. The Executive Director said it would be necessary to compete with other non-profit developers across the state, and possibly within the county, for a limited allocation of nine percent tax credits to finance this project. In order to submit a competitive application that aligned with the Housing Finance Commission's priority on housing homeless populations, the Housing Authority was committed to designating 75 percent of the units for homeless families, and it had established a partnership with the Everett School District to facilitate this. Mr. Lommers-Johnson believed there was a better chance of securing financing for this project if the tax credit application was submitted in January 2018 rather than the following year. Related issues that merited consideration included a decrease to the nine percent tax credit allocation available to stakeholders within the local Metro Pool, concerns that locating housing for the homeless within the Delta Neighborhood ran counter to the agency's goal of deconcentrating poverty, and challenges to incentivize the development of unit sizes greater than one-bedroom within the existing tax credit funding model.

The Executive Director concluded this portion of his report by observing that although the Housing Authority supported the city's Safe Streets Initiative and other local efforts targeted at homeless individuals, it was prioritizing its commitment to homeless and low-income families with children, in order to make a dent in generational poverty within the greater Everett area. He was in the process of communicating this policy priority with the Housing Consortium and other partnering agencies. As a final point, Mr. Lommers-Johnson said he did not support the City's proposed expansion of the Business Improvement Area as it was presented, which was intended to improve safety and cleanliness within the downtown core. Mr. Lommers-Johnson said this would translate to an annual tax of \$10,000 for the Housing Authority, money that could be better applied to directly assist its clients through the administration of existing programs.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Consent Agenda**

Commissioner Metzger-Utt made a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda, and Commissioner Rastovich seconded the motion. The Consent Agenda contained the following items:

1. Section 8 Payments for the Months of June and July, 2017

## 2. Summary of Vouchers for the Months of June and July, 2017

### **Items for Individual Consideration**

#### ***Resolution No. 1438 Approving Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Certification for the Program Year Ending June 30, 2017***

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program Director Wendy Westby began by noting that the exhibit to this resolution, a SEMAP certification form that was not included with the meeting agenda packet, had been distributed at the start of the meeting. This SEMAP form was a self-assessment tool, containing questions that rated the Housing Authority's performance across 14 indicators related to the administration of the HCV Program over the fiscal year that ended June 30. Ms. Westby said the Housing Authority received an 81 percent score on the SEMAP, designating the agency as a "standard" performer for the third straight year. Nevertheless, Ms. Westby saw improvement in low-scoring areas and further noted that circumstances outside of the Housing Authority's control with respect to the HQS Inspections indicator played a part in lowering the agency's overall score. She planned to implement some new strategies designed to restore the Housing Authority to its former "high performer" status, but reminded the Board that the lower rating did not mean a reduction to program funding.

Executive Director Lommers-Johnson praised the efforts of Director Westby and her staff over the past year, noting they had worked hard to improve the quality of reporting and work processes. He said that although these efforts did not translate into a high performer rating on the SEMAP evaluation, they were instrumental in reaching the greater goal of 100% utilization of Vouchers over the past fiscal year.

Commissioner Perez moved that the resolution be adopted. Commissioner Rastovich seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### ***Resolution No. 1439 Authorizing Amendment #22 to the Interagency Agreement with Housing Hope Relating to the Commerce Building SRO Units***

HCV Program Director Westby said the purpose of the resolution was to renew the contract with Housing Hope for management services at the Commerce Building, a 29-unit Mod Rehab building under Housing Authority ownership. If approved, this would represent the twenty-second year the contract had been in effect.

Commissioner Rastovich moved that the resolution be adopted. Commissioner Metzger-utt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

#### ***Resolution No. 1440 Revising the Non-Fixed Asset Management Policy and Procedures***

Assistant Director of Procurement and Contracts Brenda McLeod said this resolution sought to revise the agency's Non-Fixed Asset Management Policy and Procedures, an action that was required after the previous asset tracking system stopped working properly. The replacement system was a function within Yardi, the Housing Authority's web-based housing management and accounting software system. Ms. McLeod said this new policy

eliminated the former policy of tracking furniture, but added electronic tablets and cell phones as items that required tracking.

Commissioner Perez moved that the resolution be adopted. Commissioner Mierke seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

***Motion Requesting Approval of Contracts for Moving Services Associated with the Baker Heights Relocation Project***

Assistant Director of Procurement and Contracts Brenda McLeod referred the Board to a memo that was distributed at the beginning of the meeting as the supporting material for the recommended action, which replaced Resolution No. 1441 as an individual consideration item. Ms. McLeod said it was necessary to employ moving services for tenants who would be displaced as a result of the Baker Heights disposition and the renovation of Wiggums Park Place. After evaluating bids in response to the RFP for these projects, the Housing Authority had determined that Bekins Northwest offered the most favorable proposal for moving tenants from Wiggums Park Place, and Evergreen Moving Services for the Baker Heights relocation effort.

Commissioner Mierke motioned to authorize the Executive Director to execute contracts for moving services as stated. Commissioner Perez seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Motion to ratify Collective Bargaining Agreement with Washington State Council of County and City Employees for July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020**

Deputy Executive Director Stanton said after several months of negotiations management reached an agreement with AFSCME, the union that represents non-exempt, non-maintenance employees, prior to the expiration of the previous contract that ran through June 30. However, timing issues prevented management from bringing the new contract to the Board for approval until now. Ms. Stanton summarized the new provisions within this new agreement, including a reduction in the amount of time required to qualify for out of class pay, a lessening of the trial service period required following a promotion or transfer, and a 2.5 percent wage increase effective July 1, 2017. Ms. Stanton said this wage increase fell within current budget authority.

Commissioner Metzger-Utt moved to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Washington State Council of County and City Employees for a three-year period that began July 1, 2017. Commissioner Mierke seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**Policy Discussion**

The Executive Director said he had covered the listed subject matter under this section, EHA Project-Basing Policies and Proposed Projects, during his Executive Director's Report and had nothing further to add.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Ryan adjourned the meeting at 1:16 p.m.

Maddy Metzger  
Chair, Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:  
[Signature]  
Secretary