

COUNCIL ON HOUSING
Public Session via Conference Call
August 11, 2021

Motions

- July 14, 2021 Minutes
- Resolution #622 – Annual Funding, Housing Alliance Delaware

Dianne Casey, Chair, called to order the public session of the Council on Housing meeting at 2:05 pm, August 9, 2021. In addition to Ms. Casey, the following Council members were present:

Connie Harrington	Francis Julian	Donna Mitchell
Doug Motley	Amy Walls	Vincent White

The following council members were absent and excused from the meeting:

Garrett Grier	Lillian Harrison	Norma Zumsteg
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Connie Harrington was present in person at 18 The Green, Dover, which served as the anchor location for the meeting. All other members of Council appeared via video.

Also attending:

Eugene Young, DSHA
Susan Eliason, DSHA
Marlena Gibson, DSHA
Cindy Deakyne, DSHA

Guests:

Rachel Stucker, Housing Alliance Delaware
Samantha Hooker

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Julian moved and Ms. Walls seconded that the Minutes of the July 14, 2021 meeting be approved as submitted. The motion was passed.

DSHA REPORT – Mr. Young

- **Budget** – No budget updates.
- **Legislative** – African American Task Force – The AATF met on July 19. Recommendations from the Infrastructure and Environment Subcommittee were on the agenda for the Task Force to review and discuss. The AATF and its subcommittees still

seem to be getting their bearings on how they will operate and process.

- **LIHTC:** The preliminary awards were announced on July 8. Three 9% deals were offered a preliminary award, pending further underwriting of their applications – Nonprofit and Preservation – Maxwell Estates/MHDC; New Creation – Betts Common/Ingerman; Preservation – Diamond Court II/Green Street Housing. Both Villa Maria and Christiana Village came in for debriefing sessions and appear to be ready to submit stronger applications in the future.
- **CRF uses for LIHTC gaps:** In order to address the impacts COVID has had on affordable rental development projects, we have worked with the Governor’s Office, OMB and DOJ to use other stimulus funds (CRF) to assist the 2020 LIHTC projects. All of the 2020 projects have been impacted by increased costs created by COVID. OMB has made \$7 million available for this purpose and Foster Commons, recommended for funding at last month’s meeting, was the first to be awarded preliminary funding. As the remaining 2020 projects come to COH for review, please expect to see use of these funds.
- **Home4Good:** The Home4Good funding program for homelessness related services is open and accepting funding requests. The Technical Assistance day was held on August 5. Seven nonprofits signed up with new ideas.
- The system upgrade for DEHAP is progressing well and is still on schedule to reopen on August 11 (today!). In terms of preventing evictions, the most effective impact DSHA can have is with a well-functioning rental assistance program, and this remains our focus. Mr. Young gave special recognition to Ms. Gibson, Jack Stucker, and Brian Rossello of DSHA for their efforts managing through this transition. The system upgrade will allow us to start providing utility assistance to eligible renter households, as well as helping households who are moving into a new unit with security deposits.
- Mr. Young also provided some context about the rate at which DSHA is providing rental assistance to tenants. DSHA received the minimum appropriation for this program, which has totaled about \$350 million – an excessive amount given the size of Delaware’s total population and renter population. Approximately \$31 million of that has been disbursed for eligible rental assistance. While this represents less than 10% of the funds available, it represents a significant amount for Delaware’s renter population and has prevented evictions for these renters.
- DEMAP remains on hold as DSHA plans for use of the Homeowner Assistance Fund established by the ARP. DSHA continues to evaluate capacity needs, application process/point of entry and engaging some with stakeholders this week and next for some feedback. DSHA understands demand is high here; as of last week only four states had HAF-funded programs already opened.
- DSHA On-Site Management Reviews - DSHA has returned to in-person, on-site management reviews of the PBCA portfolio. Two sites were visited last week and both management companies had maintained high standards of compliance with the federal regulations regarding tenant information, file maintenance, and physical condition of the site. Due to the inspection schedule and the public health restrictions in place since March 2020, it had been at least three years since DSHA had been on-site at either location. Each had developed remote alternatives during the public health emergency for obtaining tenant information and ensuring the health and safety of the residents. These sites will be receiving favorable review results and are a great indication of the

management companies' flexibility and creativity under highly unusual circumstances. HUD is also resuming its in-person inspection and assessment of the physical condition of subsidized rental units nationwide, while being mindful of local virus levels.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OPERATIONS: Ms. Harrington

- Ms. Harrington and Ms. Walls presented the draft revised bylaws. Discussion points:
 - Geographic requirements for meeting locations: This is a requirement of the **Delaware Code.** Intent is to use the anchor locations to meet these requirements.
 - New public meeting law does not allow a member to attend a public meeting only by telephone
 - Article IV – typo to change “thing” to “things”
 - Article II, Section 4 – does quorum calculation include vacant positions? Yes.
- Bylaws will be voted on at next Council meeting.

LOAN REVIEW: Mr. Julian

The committee met August 2 and reviewed one HDF request. After due discussion, Loan Review made the following recommendation to the Council.

- Housing Alliance Delaware – **Resolution #622** that the HDF financing be approved. Mr. Julian moved and Mr. Motley seconded the resolution be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Casey

- Ms. Casey reported that the committee will present the Annual Report at the October meeting.

HOUSING POLICY: Mr. White

- The committee met August 4 and talked about the annual report and the policy recommendations to make to the Governor. Particular attention was given to how DSHA assesses racial equity across its program. Among the characteristics to include in such an assessment are:
 - What are the potential effects on the neighborhood where the project will be sited/
 - Will the project increase density in a particular ZIP code?
 - Will current residents have access to the project?
 - What are the environmental impacts of the project?
 - Will the project create jobs for current residents?
- The committee will invite Housing Development staff to a future meeting to talk about incorporating these questions into the QAP.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS:

- Ms. Hooker asked some questions about DEHAP and also commended the Council on its consideration of the racial equity assessment questions. Mr. Young asked Ms. Hooker to follow up with him directly on DEHAP.

- Ms. Casey invited COH members to attend an Urban Institute webinar on August 24 on homeownership/wealth building

ADMINISTRATIVE:

- None

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

- The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 2:00 pm. Information on the anchor location and the video connection will be provided.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 3:08pm

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Eliason

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Note: Copies of materials referenced as “attached” in these Minutes are available upon request.