

COUNCIL ON HOUSING
Public Session via Conference Call
November 10, 2021

Motions

- October 13, 2021 Minutes
- Approval of COH Annual Report
- Resolution #625 – Riverside Phase II

Dianne Casey, Chair, called to order the public session of the Council on Housing meeting at 2:07 pm, November 10, 2021. In addition to Ms. Casey, the following Council members were present:

Francis Julian
Amy Walls

Lillian Harrison
Donna Mitchell

Connie Harrington

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

Garrett Grier
Norma Zumsteg (only by phone)

Doug Motley

Vincent White

Lillian Harrison was present in person at Huling Cove, Lewes, 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
Stephanie Griffin, DSHA

Guests:

Ryan Bailey, Pennrose
Kisha Baldwin, Wilmington Housing Authority
Christian Dambly, Pennrose
Ray Fitzgerald, Wilmington Housing Authority

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Julian moved and Ms. Harrison seconded that the Minutes of the October 13, 2021 meeting be approved as submitted. The motion was passed with Ms. Harrington abstaining, as she did not attend the October meeting.

DSHA REPORT – Mr. Young

- Budget public hearing was yesterday. Ms. Casey testified on behalf of COH, along with Patricia Kelleher from NCALL and Sarah Rhine from Housing Alliance Delaware.
- Rental assistance via DEHAP continues to be a primary focus. DSHA has increased capacity and weekly payment processing has gone up sharply the last several weeks, to over \$2 M/week. There are currently have over 50 reviewers working on files. The program continues to receive a large number of new cases (not all new households – also recertifications for past recipients), upwards of 2,000/month.
- DSHA continues to work closely with JP Court on specific cases again as well, to ensure applications with active eviction filings do not fall through any cracks and that, wherever funds can avoid an eviction, we can assist.
- Additional legal services capacity – at the end of 2020 DSHA allocated funding to legal services through CDBG & ESG. Federal ERA funding also allows for “Housing Stability Services” which can include legal services, and CLASI and partners (working together as the Eviction Defense Project) have been putting together an expansive plan to increase legal services capacity. We are in the final stages of working through that proposal with them, and some pieces are already starting, notably outreach and a new courtroom navigators program.
- Additional community navigation/support services – last week, DSHA released a NOFA for \$5 million to support Housing Stability Services to help facilitate access to DEHAP and support households who are unstably housed or experiencing homelessness. This will allow for dramatic expansion of our current community partner application support.
- As was shared last month, it is likely Delaware will be subject to some amount of reallocation of rental assistance funds – this is not a surprise and many small states which received the minimum allocation are similarly facing this issue.
 - DSHA is currently working on a Program Improvement Plan required by Treasury and making some program guidelines adjustments to help facilitate distributing assistance.
 - The process Treasury has laid out is incremental and allows time for programs to continue to ramp up. It will not be a one-fell-swoop large amount reallocation.
 - Any reallocation will not impact DEHAP and our ability to continue offering rental and utility assistance. We have adequate ERA 1 funding and there is a second bucket of funding, ERA2, that DE has not begun spending and goes through Sept. 2025.
- DDD - DSHA launched the Fall 2021 DDD Rebate Round on Monday, Oct 25. There will be approximately \$8.5 million available for Large Project submissions. Applications will be due at the end of January 2022 and we anticipate making the rebate reservation announcements by the end of March. There has been some interest from new investors in the districts, so we’re looking forward to a competitive round.
 - One change this round is the addition of a scoring category for coordination with contractors certified by the Office of Supplier Diversity.
 - Investors may also document workforce development programs for priority scoring.
 - Information provided by the investors on the level of their ongoing work in this area will inform future emphasis in this and other DSHA funding programs.

- Stephanie Griffin will be moving into the position of Director of Housing Finance. She will be greatly missed in Housing Development, and DSHA will be working on a smooth transition.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OPERATIONS: Ms. Harrington

- Reminded everyone to complete annual disclosure form.

COMMUNICATIONS/HOUSING POLICY: Ms. Casey/Mr. White

- Ms. Casey moved and Mr. Julian seconded approval of the COH Annual Report. The motion unanimously.

LOAN REVIEW: Mr. Julian

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

- Riverside, Phase II – **Resolution #625** that the HDF financing be approved. Mr. Julian moved and Ms. Harrington seconded the resolution be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS:

- Ms. Casey provided Council a reminder that everyone is welcomed to bring information on relevant webinars to all members. Also, she attended the Continuum of Care annual meeting at which a new chair, Dana Mitchell, was elected.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

- None

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 2:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Eliason

Susan Eliason

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