

Missoula Housing Authority Board

Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 19, 2022

-MINUTES-

Members Present: Collin Bangs, Jack Richards, Kila Shields, Teigan Avery,
Sheena Comer Winterer

Members Absent: Kaia Peterson, Erma Mack-Wilkes

Staff Present: Lori Davidson, Adam Ragsdale, Debbie Hibbitts

Guests Present: Ryan Sudbury

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:35pm.

II. Attendance: See above
Welcome new Board Member, Sheena Comer Winterer!

III. Approval of Minutes: Regular Board Meeting – December 15, 2021

1st: Richards

2nd: Avery

None opposed, motion passes.

IV. Commissioner Comments/Conflict of Interest Disclosure:

None

V. Public Comments on items not on the Agenda:

None

VI. Action Items:

a. Resolution #1136: Forbearance of loan payment from Maclay Commons to MHA

Davidson: We discussed this last month. This is related to the Garden District roof lawsuit. We had to take out loans to pay for the repair on the roof while we wait for the insurance issues to be settled. Maclay Commons took out a loan from First Interstate Bank because it was the property with enough cash flow to cover the debt service on the loan. Maclay is now paying about \$6900 a month (corrected by LD) in debt service. Maclay also has a permanent loan in which MHA is the lender. The loan started at \$880,000 and is now down to around \$530,000. That loan payment is around \$3900 a month at 3.5% interest. In order to cover the First Interstate Bank loan payment, this resolution states Maclay Commons will pause making payments toward the MHA loan until there is enough cash flow to cover both loan payments or until we are able to pay off the

First Interstate Bank loan. Interest will continue to accrue on the MHA loan at 3.5%, but Maclay would not be making payments on that loan until there's a resolution on the lawsuit.

The last clause of the Resolution needs to be corrected – the interest rate needs to be changed from 3% to 3.5%.

1st: Shields

2nd: Avery

Comer Winterer abstains.

None opposed, motion passes.

VII. Staff Reports:

a. COVID-19 update

Davidson: No change in protocols. We are still not meeting in person with clients as much as possible. We had a little pizza party last week because we hadn't seen each other in person for so long. The staff who felt comfortable doing that came and it was fun to see everyone in person.

b. Villagio update

Davidson: Villagio is coming along well. They are framing the third floor on building A right now. The weather has created some ice on site, which has slowed them down a little bit. The building B framing will be starting this week or next week. Project completion date is in May 2023.

c. Trinity update

Davidson: Trinity is also going well. At the Mullan site, four stores are being framed on the building. At the Cooley site, one building is being roofed. The Cooley site is expected to be completed in December 2022 and the Mullan site is expected to be completed in early 2023.

d. Speedway and 819 Stoddard

Davidson: Speedway is the old duplex in East Missoula that was donated to us by the County. It's on a 1/3 acre lot. We're looking at possibly demolishing the existing duplex and building more units. There are still questions though with the County's new zoning changes. We have asked Andrew Chanania if he'd be interested in helping us write some grants for the Speedway project. He is a consultant that has worked around the state on many affordable housing projects and has experience in HOME grants, Housing Trust Fund grants, tax credits, and more. He's really knowledgeable, so we're hoping to hire him.

Stoddard is the former public housing property that has been used for a variety of things over the years, most recently used as a tenant services office. Collin and Mike went through the property and decided the best thing is to sell it, rather than

spending money to fix it up and rent it. There are questions on whether the house is on its own lot and can be sold separately from the rest of the property. We're still looking into zoning and lot requirements and what it might take to split that off. It is hooked up to city sewer. We will also need HUD's permission to sell it.

e. Strategic Planning

Davidson: I sent out a proposal from Sarah Elkins. I sent the proposal to our leadership team first, and they didn't have a lot of comments. We did add succession planning into that proposal. We are not sure yet on exact cost because some things are still unknown. I'd like to let Sarah know within the next week our decision. She'd like to get started by the end of the month with an expected completion date, including her report, by the end of May. I think that timing works well. Is the Board in favor of moving forward with this?

Comer Winterer: Is the cost for this in the budget?

Davidson: Yes it is. It would be paid out of Business Activities. Even if we get up to \$10,000, this is something that would be easily affordable for us. It's not as cheap as our past strategic planner was, but that was five years ago and Sarah is doing more things.

Bangs: Does she have any experience with nonprofits, specifically housing nonprofits?

Davidson: She doesn't have a lot of experience with housing nonprofits. She's done a lot of work with the University and is currently working on a project with NeighborWorks Montana that is more personnel oriented rather than strategic planning. She's an expert on running meetings and has been a speaker at a lot of conferences. She held something like 200 meetings around the state when the University system was trying to coordinate transferring credits. I don't have any other good candidates for this. The person who did strategic planning for us before is no longer available and it's not easy to find strategic planners right now. While she's not known specifically for strategic planning, I think she does a really good job in a lot of other areas, especially in things like PR and getting our name out there. We've never really been successful in getting someone to help us with PR, so I think she'll be a really great help to us in how we relate to the public and letting people know who we are and what we do.

Avery: I initially had sticker shock, but as I've thought about it more, I think it would be really useful and very informative.

Davidson: Debbie do you have any thoughts or misgivings on the cost?

Hibbitts: I am not having any misgivings on the cost. We have so many professional services come in and help us do the work we need to do. From the financial perspective, there is a lot going on and there are so many facets of the Housing Authority that we need people to guide it. I did not have sticker shock.

For example, we recently paid an accountant to help us do the HUD Financial Data Schedule (FDS) and that was over \$5000. We pay for their professional services.

Davidson: The finance department has been one person short for over a year. I've heard from Adam that we aren't the only organization in town having trouble filling a finance position. Debbie and her current crew of four people have been incredible in stepping up to the plate to keep things in line. But that is one reason we sometimes hire consultants to come in and help us with the end of year accounting.

Bangs: My position is we have someone here (Sarah) who has a lot of skills, we're in a position of a time of transition and we need to get this planning done soon. If Sarah doesn't know the exact business, that is okay because we know it and we can explain it to her if needed. We need to do a little work to lay out where we've been and where we're hoping to go next. I say we get her on board as quick as we can.

Davidson: Sarah will start out by meeting with each of you one on one, so expect to hear from her to schedule that. You'll want to be thinking about where you want to see the Housing Authority in five years. Some items on the list are how do we staff up for these two large projects and how do we get our message out.

Bangs: We'll want to be thinking about what are the needs in the community so we can explore the possibility of meeting those needs some day.

Comer Winterer: It might be a good idea for everyone to read the old strategic plan as a comparison point.

Ragsdale: We update the things we've accomplished every year in our Annual Plan also.

Davidson: I'll tell Sarah that we're ready to engage and let's get started!

VIII. Other Matters:

None

- I. Adjournment: The regular meeting was adjourned at 6:16pm.



Collin Bangs, Board Chair



Lori Davidson, Executive Director