

## **Missoula Housing Authority Board**

Regular Board Meeting  
Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### - MINUTES-

Members Present: Sam Oliver, Jack Richards, Kaia Peterson, Kila Shields, Colin Bangs

Members Absent: Tiegan Avery, Sheena Comer Winterer

Staff Present: Debbie Hibbitts, Jim McGrath, Mary Melton, Ryan Sudbury, Sarah Stout,  
Evan Hauser

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

II. Attendance: See above

III. Approval of Minutes: Regular Board Meeting – April 19, 2023

Richards: Moves

Bangs: 2<sup>nd</sup>

Approved

IV. Commissioner Comments/Conflict of Interest Disclosure: None

V. Public Comments on items not on the Agenda: None

VI. Action Items: None

VII. Staff Reports:

a. Introduction of new staff members

Oliver: Happy to introduce 2 new leadership team level employees here at the housing authority. Evan Hauser is our Construction Project Manager and Sarah Stout is our Outreach Coordinator & grant writer.

Stout: I'm working on our website, outreach & social media. It has been a pleasure to learn about the different programs and properties of MHA. I have enjoyed the last 6 weeks. My background is nonprofit development and fund raising and communications. I am excited to be here and continue that work.

Oliver: We were lucky to find the specific background that Sara has. We have a really improved social media presence.

Peterson: Welcome Sara. We have been dreaming of you and your position for quite some time. So thrilled to have you on board.

Hauser: Formally trained in Fine Arts. Worked various production/project management positions and co-owner in a home supply store here in town. Happy to join here at MHA. I have been very busy with Trinity and Villagio and I am looking forward to more projects in the future.

Oliver: I can't say enough how much Evan has helped us. He is taking over a lot of my former responsibility and knowing that I can hand that over to someone trusted and capable is just huge. We are extremely lucky and very thankful.

Peterson: It is really awesome seeing this team get built out and we have a lot to look forward to. Welcome and thanks for being here.

b. Discussion of Draft Resolution Defining Procurement Limits for Executive Director

Oliver: We have a draft resolution Ryan has provided designating the signatory and procurement powers for ED. It is open for discussion amongst board members.

Peterson: This is part of the ED transition and some clean up. Ryan, can you walk us through this document and give us some highlights? We will not go through it tonight, but we wanted to give everyone a draft and see if there is any discussion items that need to be addressed.

Sudbury: This is based off city council's delegation of authority to the mayor. Sam has made changes to make it fit for MHA's purposes, allowing Sam to sign or make purchases under a certain dollar threshold. It gives Sam day to day signatory powers on small contracts that don't necessarily need to come to the board for review and approval provided it is within the budget. It frees up the board from dealing with the smaller day-to-day management operations. It is relatively straight forward.

Bangs: We have never had anything like this before, have we?

Sudbury: Not that I am aware of. We have never had a sort of blanket authority.

Bangs: It will be interesting to see how it plays out.

Peterson: MHA has a pretty extensive procurement policy and procedure behind this document. How did you come up with \$80,000 is there some sort of magic to this number?

Oliver: No, it may be the cities number because it does not cross reference with our procurement policy, but it is up for discussion.

Peterson: As long as this document and the procurement policy don't have any conflicts that would be wonderful. Be thinking about what you want that dollar threshold to be so you can operate effectively without the board slowing you down. I think this is pretty straightforward. The only issue that jumped out at me was this lowest responsible bidder. Responsible is an important word to keep.

c. Valor House Update

Oliver: Continuing to plan outreach with VA staff and pollical staff and keeping them up to speed as things move along.

McGrath: Meeting with Tester's staff on Monday and reached out to Daines' staff and we will be meeting with stakeholders from the Retired Military Officers Association.

They have been very plugged into Valor House and Veterans court stuff. We will get to sit down with them.

Richards: How many Veterans do you estimate we get into Valor House?

McGrath: ~ 225 over the course of the project. It is currently transitional, so tenants are generally there for a year or a year and a half before they move on. Very successful.

d. National Museum of Forest Service History

Oliver: They are moving along. They chose a contractor. The design phase is over May 5<sup>th</sup> at which point we will engage back with the contractor and look at bids. Their biggest bummer is that their construction fund was stock based, and they lost 1.5 million dollars. They are trying to hammer out the last bit of donations from the CLT companies. Hoping to get going on infrastructure and groundwork through this coming fall/winter.

e. Closeout of Public Housing

Oliver: No updates yet. Just waiting to hear.

f. Villagio

Hauser: They had a walk through today for TCO. They may have their TCO finalized and the certificate of occupancy as soon as tomorrow. Realistically we would probably take ownership by May 1. People could start moving in about the second week in May. There are some final punch list items and some cleaning that needs to be done. They believe it will take 18 days to clean building A so they are trying to work out if we can get the 5<sup>th</sup> floor punch done and get the team in there to knock it out. That is what I am trying to negotiate. The 5<sup>th</sup> floor will probably be the most desirable with the views. It is up to the punch situation right now.

Melton: 650 people on the Waitlist last we checked. Thanks to Sarah Stout.

Peterson: How do you work through that waitlist?

Melton: First come first served. Jim has started on the PBV units, and we have some eligible applicants.

Peterson: As you start the lease process it would be great to hear some client stories at the board level.

Oliver: There are plenty of those. When we started moving people into Cooley there were tears and jumps for joy. It was rather moving to see it.

g. Trinity

Hauser: It is moving along. A little behind the deadline. TCO has not been issued for the Mullan site. Cooley and Stoddard are wrapping up.

Oliver: Punch is finalized, and we have started leasing.

Hauser: A lot of the trades are focusing on Mullan right now. We are having some staffing issues but once other projects wrap up, we will get more staff over there.

Oliver: As of today we are hoping they can achieve the TCO and move people into Workforce by the end of this month.

Melton: Cooley has one unit left.

Oliver: There is constant meeting behind the scenes with the care providers trying to get ready so we can start moving people in.

h. Speedway & Stoddard

Oliver: These are a couple of projects we will be familiarizing Sarah with.

i. Strategic Planning

Oliver: Last month we visited a lengthy list of goals and talked about what great progress that we have made. There were a few topics that the board wanted to revisit as discussion items and possible goals for the coming year. Agency wide succession planning over time, rebranding, annual formal presentation to the city of Missoula were the 3 topics to revisit.

Peterson: What would you like from us? Are there ways the board can support you?

Oliver: There was talk that there might be board discussion on the presentations to the city to provide direction.

Peterson: We want to wait until the end of the budget season in June, but we want to get on the radar and ask when we could get in there. Last year I believe it was September. We could reach out now and ask for that place holder. We also talked about County Commissioners and wanting to get on their agenda.

Bangs: It would be great to be partnering with them too.

McGrath: We can go outside our jurisdiction if we are invited by the county. I also wanted to remind everybody that the county donated land which is how Trinity got off the ground.

Oliver: Not sure where we want to go with the rebranding.

Peterson: There is definite interest in encouraging the organization in considering a rebranding and this is one item for our outreach coordinator, Sarah, now that we have her. The board would like engagement in that process.

Stout: My initial thought is no; it is incredible costly to the organization. It would be a lot of money that could be better used elsewhere. I have been pushed for use to claim MHA and that could be a shift that could help, and it is free. That is where I stand right now.

Peterson: Something to keep on your radar.

Oliver: I think there is an opportunity to rebrand within our own parameters. With succession planning at a department head level. That probably starts at leadership team level. We are currently considering different positions to fortify MHA in the coming year.

Peterson: The tension between stabilizing current operations and looking for future opportunities. Wherever we can support as opportunities come up and being careful with what our agency's capacity is to carry forward with all of that.

Oliver: I spoke with the mayor the other night about the vacancy on the board for a resident board member. There are more applicants than we have ever seen before. He will have to look it over and get back to us.

VIII. Other Matters: None

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm

*W Samuel Oliver*

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Sam Oliver, Executive Director

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Kaia Peterson, Board Chair