

Missoula Housing Authority Board

Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday, August 17th, 2022

-MINUTES-

Members Present: Kaia Peterson, Collin Bangs, Teigan Avery, Sheena Comer Winterer Members

Absent: Erma Mack-Wilkes, Jack Richards, Kila Shields

Staff Present: Jim McGrath, Mary Melton, Sam Oliver, Adam Ragsdale, Debbie Hibbitts

Guests Present: Ryan Sudbury

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm.
- II. Attendance: See above
- III. Approval of Minutes: Regular Board Meeting – July 20, 2022
 - 1st: Avery
 - 2nd: BangsNone opposed, motion passes.
- IV. Commissioner Comments/Conflict of Interest Disclosure:

Peterson: I just wanted to note sadness at the mayor's passing and recognize the contributions he's made to the Housing Authority leadership and advocacy for this work over so many years of his career.

- V. Public Comments on items not on the Agenda:

McGrath: We are still operating under a number of waivers. One of the waivers is that we can change our policy on extension of the vouchers without going to the board. So we recently examined how we were doing and added a couple of extensions. One was for larger bedroom sizes and the other one is an extension for clients who are being screened for a unit offer and have a reasonable chance of being offered the unit (also called "having a housing solution in hand"). Those will expire in December 31 of 2022. I doubt, I HOPE that we won't be coming back to the board to extend those. Hoping the market will improve.

- VI. VI. Action Items: Public Hearing for the Annual Plan:

Resolution #1140:

- a. Approval of Corrections to the Revised Personnel Policy

Ragsdale: We had some small changes to the salary administration. In terms of performance-based wage adjustments there was some language that didn't work, so we made it a little more generic so

it works for the future. Too many specifics in the policy we don't have the ability to make changes without bringing it back to the board to make those changes. Related as well, I have engaged Felt-Martin Law in Billings to do the review of this. It will take about 15-20 hours of time and some possible phone calls to review this.

Peterson: Would someone be willing to make a motion to approve Resolution 1140?

1st: Avery

2nd: Comer-Winterer

None opposed: motion passes

VII. Staff Reports:

a. COVID-19 update

Ragsdale: The only update is that we seem to be experiencing a bit of a rush of people getting it again. CDC continues to keep updating how to continue operating so we're working on following those.

b. Public Housing final close-out

Sudbury: Finally heard back from HUD with NO helpful information. The HUD RAD legal opinion template they created for this would NOT work for this and I should endeavor to create my own template. So I'll work with Jim to get it submitted. It doesn't look like they're looking for anything specific.

Peterson: Do we have a deadline for when we HAVE to be done?

McGrath: Not really, no. We just want to be done with it.

c. Villagio Update

Oliver: Lot of folks have been out this week to tour Villagio. Community room and leasing office is the last piece to come together—some redesign there. One of the last unknowns.

Peterson: Teigen and I were out today. Has anyone else had a chance to tour the properties? What are people's reactions?

Winter-Comer: Good to see this coming together. Makes this all more substantial to see what we're talking about.

McGrath: Officials were on the tour and they were really impressed. Good opportunity to chat with them. They had some questions and we had the answers.

Peterson: What kinds of questions have you been getting Sam?

Oliver: A lot of it is a perception issue. A lot of the folks who haven't been on our properties before, they want to hear about the different aspects of the building that are the same or better than market rate units. Most are programmatic. People have this image that we have one style of building that we do---one style of apartment, one style of paint, carpet. We have high rise apartments at Villagio

apartments, we have town homes and workforce apartments serving similar folks in very different ways. There is a great variety of construction and great variety of partnerships that some stakeholders don't realize. Homewood staff are able to demonstrate the different roles Homewood and MHA play in these partnerships and the giant amount of work that goes into it. Once you start explaining the complexity of the operations, the staffing, the need for partnerships—MHA doesn't provide health services--and the need for commitment from others in the community, a lot of lightbulbs go off. Once they lay eyes on it, they are more able to see what's going to happen there.

d. Trinity update

Peterson: Any additional updates on Trinity?

Oliver: Nothing budgetarily or in change orders. This close to getting the painting done on the Mullan site. We're sitting in a good place right now.

e. Speedway and 819 Stoddard
No updates.

f. *Strategic Planning:*

i. Succession Planning:

Peterson: First of all succession: Announcement has gone out to staff to apply. Due to Peterson by next Friday (July 29th). Cover letter resume and contact references. From there, maybe Adam can jump in here.

Ragsdale: Staff will interview any internal candidates around the last week of August, early September. 12th-16th are the board interview, so we'll be done with our process before that happens so we can compile all of our results and send them to the board to make a recommendation.

ii. Measuring success: handout

Peterson: I put these in general categories to start thinking about what we might want to look at long term. Lori shared the staff internal performance measures with me. A couple of pieces I tried to pull out. We don't need to report these externally but have a future conversation about board level reporting on these. High level we talked about demographics, capture affordability and the number of units provided. Housing quality might require some conversations amongst staff about what's realistic or useful? Housing stability and opportunity meaning how do people move through the housing authority—what opportunities are created to move through life goals and housing needs?

Organizational strengths—financial metrics? Community impact. How do we show about how MHA is not just providing housing units but go beyond that. Stories or bigger picture contexts.

Bangs: Metrics on how many people succeed or move out of housing programs. People ask why don't these people get jobs. How many people moving through the system?
What is staff reaction?

McGrath: We have successful stories, we balance it with folks we do not foresee leaving, elderly etc, folks in long term housing. But we can track where they go when they leave. We would not want to use a percentage, feel that would be misleading.

Peterson: May be interesting to see the numbers see which can be used for messaging, and which need more explaining.

Oliver: A lot of things on this list will be good messaging and easy to understand. We are working on the website.

Melton: Other than moving through the system, we have people who improve their situation. They do get jobs or Social Security that they did not have before, update on their current situation.

Ragsdale: The stability they get through us allows them to be successful in other areas of their life.

Winter-Comer: The organizational strength speaks to culture, that employees can weigh in on culture.

Peterson: What would be the right metric for that?

Avery: This is an extensive list, everything is about data now, the numbers tell a story. A good sheet to go off of every year. Sell the story of MHA.

Peterson: This just leads naturally to an annual report, in relation to community impact and staff. The leadership that staff play in the community, the other communities they sit on.

Ragsdale: People on committees ask housing questions all the time. Happens with all of us.

Winter-Comer: Number of project partners, Homeward?

Peterson: Yes, good one too. Any other reactions at this stage?

Bangs: Just that I think it will be very powerful when its done and make it easier to answer questions

Meeting with the city:

Peterson: We have been asking about coming to meeting, September 21st we requested waiting to hear from Heidi West. Lori will be back, what feels like the right things to bring up to this group?

What is the status with the Bonfire?

Ragsdale: Yes, we are focusing on the website, if we need other things from them. They have impressed us so far.

Peterson: They may be a good group to engage in putting together an annual report, or a few year period to look back on Lori's accomplishments, if Lori or staff is interested?

We want to use this transition to focus on the success of the housing authority.

Bangs: Look at what it was then and where it is now

Ragsdale: The staffing number 13 years ago was in the 20s now we are 36 and will grow.

Melton: We've gone from HUD only programs to many others

Ragsdale: We did not have property managers when I started.

Peterson: Great list to start from. How much do we want to share and in which ways. Any other reflections or feedback? Will keep everyone posted on the city regarding presenting to the housing committee?

Winter-Comer: What do you see as the role from the board?

Peterson: As many of us can be in the room is great, I envision a small team doing the presentation. Any other things we want to accomplish when in front of the group?

Winter-Comer: Hoping these tours confirm for them how much good is going on, getting that message out for when more properties come available.

Peterson: Heidi has started basic questions. Will set the stage. Any other business?

Meeting adjourned at 6:37 pm