

Missoula Housing Authority Board

Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 18th, 2023

MINUTES-

Members Present: Jack Richards, Kaia Peterson, Tiegan Avery, Sam Oliver
Sheena Comer Winterer, Collin Bangs, Jennifer Cerutti

Members Absent: Kila Shields

Staff Present: Mary Melton, Sarah Stout, Adam Ragsdale

Guests Present: NONE

- 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 – September 20, 2023
Richards: Moves
Cerutti: 2nd
Approved
- IV. Commissioner Comments/Conflict of Interest Disclosure:
Bangs: The City is coming up with a way of using funds from MRA to subsidize housing/ construction & remodeling. Now that they are getting ready to use it, I want us all to be taking a good look at it and be very careful that they are passing something that is going to work. The concerns come with who is monitoring to make sure housing stays affordable for 70 years.
Oliver: It is not a rigged black and white policy that they are adopting. They expect there to be hiccups. They are trying to involve the builder and developers as much as they can but there is an agreement that they will work on this together and it will take some innovation.
Peterson: I think people have a lot of questions on how this will work in practice. My experience has been they want to get it out quickly knowing it will not be perfect and they will adjust as need be.
Oliver: They have some staff coming from other areas that have practiced other methodologies. We know that it will not be perfect right out of the box.
Bangs: My biggest concern is all kinds of people are moving into our buildings and not moving out because they cannot afford a house. These people could be working towards buying a home if this was anywhere close to a normal market.
Oliver: As we put 400 new units online it will be interesting to see how it pans out over time. During COVID we saw turnover like we have never seen before. Hopefully we swing

the other way to extreme stability.

Peterson: It is always exciting to see new opportunities being added to the picture and the way that can impact the whole spectrum.

Oliver: It was interesting recently to sit in on MNDC presentation and see both of you featured. We have a pretty rich room right here.

Peterson: Kudos on the article in the daily Montanan that came out a couple of days ago. Mary and Sarah were both in it and it gave a little background into tax credits, and it was a great piece. Really putting the projects in a clear bright light. Great job.

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

VI. Action Items: NONE

VII. Staff Reports:

a. October 18, 2023, Annual Report to City Housing

Oliver: I thought that it went really well. They seemed to appreciate the opportunity and the updates. They had many good questions and I think everyone thought it was a productive exercise. We will keep doing it and doing it better. It is hard for anybody to find anything negative or for there to be push back when we highlight what we are doing. It is great to be in that space and tell them what a huge year we have had.

Peterson: It was great to see all the positive reactions from council members.

Cerutti: I watched it.

Comer Winterer: Afterwards when the houselessness presentation was going on, they really thought some of the reduction in numbers was directly attributed to the work we have been doing.

Peterson: Sam, great job as always. It seemed like a lot of the questions from council members were about the mechanics of the vouchers and how people can access them. It is good for us to know those are the kind of questions that are being asked by the City and the public.

Oliver: The vouchers are all so very different. When this happens, I sit down with Jim and work through the specifics for each program. I am getting better and better at it. Folks moving into blue heron place are frequent users of our emergency services. The permanent supportive housing at BH will hopefully show that taking these folks off the streets and giving them wrap around services and stable and affordable housing can help integrate them back into society and increase the success rate for this vulnerable population.

****Side Note: Not all moving into Blue Heron fit this bill of FUSE. They come through coordinated entry, but we have FUSE which are frequent users of emergency services , BNL aka By Name List(A by-name list allows you to know everyone in your community experiencing homelessness in real time) and transfers from within the PSH program that may be experiencing instability and who could benefit from the wrap around services available to keep them in safe and stable housing.**

d. Museum of Forest Service History Update

Oliver: We are trying to finish 50% DD drawings by the end of the month so they can be submitted to the county for the building permit. I have been working with the owner and the civil engineer to obtain a flood plain permit. This is a process that they have been engaged in for over 20 years now. We are working through that process so mid-November they can put in for the permit and we can break ground in February. A year ago, the architecture team from Boston came to town and we met with the county. All the parties felt good about that meeting. The county waived the permit fees for the museum. Early November they are coming out again to meet with the county to go over the building permit. We will educate them as much as possible on this project. This is the first large project of its kind here in town and I think the county is excited to be a part of it. It is a great opportunity to learn and put a great product on the ground.

Avery: Is there a way to keep track of the issues and successes to share with future developments.

Oliver: Yes, our architect is one of the leading experts in this kind of project.

Peterson: It will be interesting to see what can be shared out.

Oliver: When we actually start putting up the CLT panels we will try and invite everyone out to see that process unfold.

Avery: The UofM has about half the money for CLT building.

e. Villagio Update

Oliver: We have our landscaping done and the playground installed. Our staff is cranking out leases. We should have final CO midweek next week. All aspects of the job are coming to a close and the leasing has taken off and is speeding up. Last week due to staff efforts we provided 75 new applications and each week more and they are all in process now. MHA will continue to do what we do and continue marketing our product to the public. About 50 people living in building A. As Trinity is filled it will free up more leasing staff to move over to Villagio and get that site filled up.

f. Trinity update

Oliver: We reached 75% occupancy yesterday with 5 new leases today. There are about 20 units left to be filled. The landscaping is completed, and all the grounds have been wrapped up. Blue Heron Place is filling up.

Melton: We have at least 20 out of the 30 units filled.

Oliver: Three years in the making for BHP and now we have it opened up and are moving people in. It is just wonderful giving these folks a community and safe and stable housing. Both the POV and PHC have established offices there. The place looks really homey. All the donated furniture is in place. The Nav center is currently being purchased. We have got moving parts and pieces with funding right now and we are still going after more funding. Hopefully in the next couple of months we can have a soft opening there. Adam and I met with a police officer and another gentleman that does the mapping for emergency services to do a safety audit of the nav center. The police officer said he had audited BH last week and he had to struggle to come up with

anything. This is a very complex housing model and population of people served. It feels good to have people recognize it for what it is. The last remaining townhouses have gotten their TCOs. Those are the last for the project.

Peterson: You were asked about the lease up deadline by the council today. Can you talk to the board about this issue.

Oliver: Trinity will start the stabilization period at the end of November it looks like. We had to achieve this by the end of the year. Stabilization be reached reached for 3 months. The lease ups are easily obtainable at Villagio and our date for stabilization was May which means we would have to reach stabilization by February, but we do have a 6-month extension available there. All of our economic indicators look good and there is nothing we are worried about there.

Peterson: Was that extension something you had to apply through the state for?

Oliver: No, it was something that was available to us through Enterprise Financial, I am told.

Peterson: Where are you all at on the leasing challenges on the larger units with the low AMI?

Melton: still an issue. I am going to talk to the city and ask them if we can increase it to 50% AMI which will make it more doable. The 30% AMI applies to such a rare household it is hard to come by. We are working on it.

Ragsdale: I was talking to a mother with a family of 9 who had to put in over 400 hours of overtime last year just to make it by and it puts her over income.

Peterson: Are there any additional need for the PSH?

Melton: That will be ongoing as people are moving in. We will take whatever we can get.

Stout: Donations are handled through PHC.

g. Public Housing Closeout

Oliver: They said they had to wrap up 2 things on their end and we have yet to hear back on the “wrapping.”

VIII. Other Matters:

Peterson: Adam sent out an email about our holiday party this year.

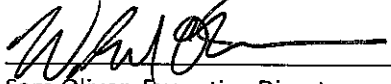
Ragsdale: We are going to do our regular holiday party 12/8/23 at the Son’s of Norway Lodge 4:30 ~ 7:00. We have done a white elephant gift exchange and Santa of the kids in the past and this year should be much the same. Additional details to be shared.

Melton: We are having a party at Highlander Brewing on 10/20/23 at 4:00pm for Karl G and his 30-year anniversary with MHA. This is a huge accomplishment, and he is the history MHA who has been here longer than Lori even. We call him Super G.

Oliver: He is a super worker and is very efficient at what he does and is very looked up to around here.

Peterson: We as the board are responsible for Sam’s yearly review and we hope to get that completed by the end of the year.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm



Sam Oliver, Executive Director

Kaia Peterson, Board Chair