

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
LAWRENCE-DOUGLAS COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

June 24, 2019  
5:30 p.m.

Edgewood Homes  
Conference Room

1. Call of Roll

Chair Powers called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Upon call of roll, the following Commissioners responded present:

Jamie Davison  
Maria Duran  
Walter Meyer, Jr.  
Ellen Paulsen  
Joshua Powers

Also present were members of the public Pat Benabe and James Dunn, and LDCHA staff members Beverly Hyatt, Ruth Lichtwardt, and Shannon Oury.

2. Approve Minutes of June 3, 2019 Board of Commissioners Meeting

Vice Chair Duran moved to accept the Minutes as presented. Commissioner Paulsen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Receive Comments from Tenants and Public

Mr. Dunn commented on the proposed rise in water and sewage rates by the City of Lawrence, and how difficult that is going to be on some of his low income tenants who are already struggling to pay utilities. He said he had a tenant earlier in the day who had her water shut off because she already could not afford the current bill.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Receive May 2019 Public Housing Financial Report
- B. Receive May 2019 Clinton Place Financial Report
- C. Receive May 2019 Section 8 Financial Report
- D. Resolution 2019-17: Approve Continuation of the LDCHA as Contract Administrator for the Bert Nash Tenant Based Rent Assistance HOME Program Grant

Mr. Dunn asked for more detail on Agenda Item 4C. Executive Director Oury reported that the Section 8 budget year was going to be very good because the proration is so good, and that the regular Section 8 vouchers are fully issued, at 102% utilization. There are some other types of special vouchers which are not fully subscribed yet. Last year had the shortest wait time for a voucher and this year the wait time will likely be longer since all vouchers are being used. There are some reserve funds being held locally and more being held at HUD. All the MTW activities which are paid for from Section 8 reserves will be fully funded.

Mr. Dunn inquired about the MTW car repair program, and Ms. Oury explained how it works.

Commissioner Paulsen asked how the new Clinton Place bus service is going. Ms. Oury said it was going well and that she would bring ridership numbers to the next meeting.

Commissioner Meyer moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner Davison seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## 5. REGULAR AGENDA

### A. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Oury explained that the entire community has been losing case managers for transitional housing, several area agencies and the Shelter have no case management staff any longer. She reviewed the status of the families who have been served by this program. LDCHA has been partnering with Family Promise to provide the case management for this program through a grant from the City. The City Commission will be considering additional funding for this program.

Staff is also applying for a renewal of the New Horizon grant. In answer to questions from the Board, she explained the New Horizon program timeline and process for households receiving case management, and the requirement that participants be Douglas County residents.

The Environmental Review has been completed for the Cottages at Green's Lake. It will be published for public comment on July 1. Staff will file this information with HUD in Washington and prepare the Request for Release of Funds. There are only two other items that need to be filed with HUD before the funds can be released to the LDCHA, the Site and Neighborhood Standards approval and a Development Proposal. Staff has contacted HUD to schedule this, and based on previous reviews both are expected to pass with no issues. The current schedule according to the County is to draft all construction documents by September and break ground in October.

The Board had previously approved a lease with automatic extensions to 80 years, but the Housing Trust Fund grant requires a 99-year lease to establish a security interest in the built-ins, solar panels and other items the grant is paying for. Staff will bring a new lease for the Board's review and approval at the August meeting.

Van Go will be starting a project to repaint the rusted backboards for the 6 basketball courts at Edgewood Homes. This project will create an art opportunity for youth and will improve the appearance of the property.

Ms. Oury gave a synopsis of a new partnership with the Landen Lucas Foundation and their successful fundraiser for the Full Circle Youth Program, then a short video was shown highlighting the work of the Foundation.

B. Review Draft MTW Plan and Amendments to Admin/ACOP and Approve for Distribution for Public Comment

Executive Director Oury gave information on the two new proposed activities in the 2020 Plan, and explained in detail the elimination of other items in the Plan. She gave the reason and background issues on each of the proposed changes in the Admin / ACOP Plan. She answered questions from the Board regarding the definition of homelessness which is used. Both Plans will be distributed for public comment on July 22 and the public hearing will be August 21 during the Back-to School BBQ. Any comments will be presented to the Board at the August meeting, and both Plans will be brought back to the Board for final approval at the September meeting.

C. Discuss Capital Fund Evaluation Long-Range Plan

Executive Director Oury outlined the uses of the Capital Fund grant and pointed out the upcoming major projects on the list given to the Board. She went down the list of projects arranged by property, and detailed the causes of the needed repairs or projects and the work which will be performed. There was discussion about the new gazebo for smokers which has been installed at Babcock Place, and possibly installing a park-style cookout grill in the courtyard area. Vice Chair Duran relayed several questions from Babcock Place residents. Ms. Oury answered the questions and said that staff members will be holding meetings with the residents at each property on the planned Capital Fund improvements and gathering comments and ideas.

D. Discuss Late Fee Forgiveness

Executive Director Oury presented the proposal to re-offer the program which had been tried for the first time last year as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Board engaged in considerable discussion on reasons that some tenants habitually do not pay rent on time and several possible solutions. They debated rewarding the vast majority of tenants who do pay on time vs penalizing those who do not. Ms. Oury provided answers to several questions on rent policy and HUD rules. She explained there are agreements with some tenants for bi-monthly payments due to ongoing circumstances, and they are not charged late fees as long as their payments are on time. The Board directed that staff do more research into options for inducing habitual late payers to pay on time, and to bring those back to the Board at a later date.

6. Calendar and Announcements

Executive Director Oury turned the floor over to Finance Director Hyatt, who explained that the agency is opening a new account for the Full Circle Tenant Services funds, and the agency's bank is requiring a new process to add the Board member's signatures to the account for co-signing checks. The new form asks for more personal information than previously. Commissioner Davison explained that some of the questions meet new federal rules which have come into force. Several of the Board members expressed discomfort with giving the bank some of this information. Ms. Davison volunteered to visit the bank in person and speak with the contact there about signing options. There was also discussion about internal agency policy vs bank practice on requiring two signatures.

Ms. Oury announced that the agency has received an award for its 2018 Annual Report and showed the Board the plaque received. The Board offered its congratulations.

LDCHA offices will be closed Thursday, July 4th for the Independence Day holiday

7. Adjournment

There being no further items for discussion, Commissioner Meyer moved to adjourn. Commissioner Davison seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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Chair

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Secretary

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Attest