

City of Lawrence

Affordable Housing Advisory Board

March 21, 2016 minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT: Stuart Boley, Rebecca Buford, John Harvey, Dana Ortiz, Shannon Oury, Matt Sturtevant, Nancy Thellman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Emmanuel Birdling, Tim Stultz

STAFF PRESENT: Casey Toomay, Assistant City Manager; Scott McCullough, Director of Planning and Development Services; Danelle Dresslar, Community Development Manager; Jeff Crick, Planner II; Brad Karr, Community Development Programs Analyst

Chair Matt Sturtevant called the meeting to order.

1. Approve minutes from February 22, 2016 meeting

John Harvey moved to approve the meeting minutes from February 22, 2016. Dana Ortiz seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0 with one abstention.

2. Public Comment

Steve Ozark gave the Board a handout created by Robert Baker detailing a brief history of local efforts to create an affordable housing fund.

3. Approve Recommendations for Proposed Parameters for Housing Authority Funding for 2016

The Board reviewed a memorandum from Casey Toomay describing the proposed program parameters for the Housing Authority funding for 2016. Shannon Oury asked the memo state the bulleted preferences are all just suggestions, but the LDCHA would rather recommend the final program parameters be similar to the Douglas County program. Stuart Boley asked if Oury had met with all the City Commissioners regarding the parameters for this program. Oury indicated she had reached out to all of the City Commissioners and met with two, the outcome being these suggestions. Toomay indicated she would make the changes to the memo to recommend program parameters similar to the Douglas County program, which are preferences for families and Douglas County residents, with a description of other considered options.

Ortiz moved to approve as amended the Recommended Parameters for the Transitional Housing Voucher Program. Nancy Thellman seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

4. Continue Discussion of Staff Information on Affordable Housing Programs and Funding Sources

Scott McCullough gave the Board a draft list of questions to consider while discussing the long term view of affordable housing.

Boley suggested adding a question about the benefits to the City in having people housed; for example how it would affect emergency room visits, public safety resource requirements and other avoidable costs if there was affordable housing for more people.

Oury suggested the Board invite Ron May from USD 497 to a future meeting.

Oury suggested adding a question of where individuals leaving the proposed Bert Nash crisis center would be housed; the only emergency housing is the Lawrence Community Shelter.

McCullough suggested the Board also add a timeline for determining recommendations for the 2017 budget.

Sturtevant indicated determining which category of the Housing Vision chart to focus on could be a good starting point for long term affordable housing discussions.

Boley asked if a regular accounting of the balance of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund could be included at future meetings. Toomay agreed to provide the information at future meetings.

Boley indicated his first priority is to make sure the number of families at the LCS remains as low as possible. Thellman asked if more funding is provided to subsidize the rent vouchers, are there even enough units in the community to house them all. Oury indicated at previous funding levels of around \$400,000 per year, there were enough units to house that many, but if funding levels are increased to \$500,000 the LDCHA has no experience if there are enough units; outreach to private landlords would have to increase at additional funding levels to potentially increase the number of units available.

Thellman asked how we know what the inventory is of the housing stock in the community. Oury and Buford indicated the numbers of units involving any type of federal subsidy is tracked, but there is no accounting for the number of private landlord market rate units.

Harvey felt his biggest question is what is the number of units needed of permanent affordable housing; if funds are increased to move people along the housing continuum, how many units are available for them when they get to the last permanent housing column.

Oury indicated the ten year old [CHAT](#) report is the best tool the City has at this time to estimate the supply and the need.

Ortiz stated affordable housing from this Board's perspective needs to assess how many units are available for people making an average income in the city; it could be a wage issue contributing to the problem.

Oury agreed, and stated for the voucher programs the issue is money, but for new hard units on the ground the multiple-year lead time is the issue. Boley said the goal then should be to establish money in the 2017 budget for units to be completed 2 years down the road.

Sturtevant suggested the order to work on the issue of affordable housing should be: get money in the budget as soon as possible, look at updating the CHAT report, use the budgeted money to build new units and fund additional vouchers, and come back in five years and do another study to determine if these actions worked.

Boley said the Board providing priorities to the City Commission is most important; not how much is spent, but where the Board thinks the money would be best spent in the midterm and where the City needs to go in the long term.

Toomay reviewed the duties of the Board as described in [Ordinance No. 9129](#).

Thellman asked the Board if they need to have a retreat, inviting others involved including the new City Manager Tom Markus, USD 497, Bert Nash, Douglas County Health Department, etc. rather than have one each month come speak at a Board meeting.

Sturtevant asked if the timeline for meeting with everyone would interfere with the goal of getting money set aside quickly. Boley indicated he felt it was important for the community to get money set aside quickly, but he was not sure it was this Board's need to get money set aside quickly; the Board needs to realize their role in relation to the City Commission and first establish credibility.

Toomay suggested if the City Commissioners are successful in identifying a pool of money to go into the housing trust fund from the 2017 budget, the Board could then discuss recommendations for how best to spend the money. Boley agreed, and suggested they give Tom Markus time to complete his first 100 day plan

before scheduling any retreat. Harvey asked if the Board should extend the time on some of the meetings to facilitate having speakers and gathering their input.

Toomay asked the Board to send any additional questions to add to the draft list for her to compile, and she would work on scheduling a retreat after Markus' first 100 days. She would also ask Markus if he would be available to attend the April 11, 2016 meeting, and set the meeting at two hours from 11am to 1pm.

5. Other New Business / Future Business

Buford invited the Board members to the ceremonial demolition of the house at 908 La Salle St for the demonstration project on Wednesday, March 23 at 1:30pm.

6. Next Meeting – 2017 budget overview; long term revenue streams for trust fund; Health Department

7. Adjourn

Oury moved to adjourn the meeting. Buford seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

Future Meeting Dates / Tentative Agenda items

April 11 - 2017 budget overview; long term revenue streams for trust fund; Health Department

May 9 - Discuss Tax Credit Application Process and Role of AHAB

June 13

July 11

August 8

September 12

October 10

November 14

December 12

These minutes were approved by the Board April 11, 2016.