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BHA HOUSING/BUSINESS SOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES

HOUSING/BUSINESS SOLUTIONS HYBRID COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE BREMERTON HOUSING AUTHORITY (BHA) HELD 4:00 PM AT 600 PARK AVENUE AND/OR REMOTELY ON JANUARY 19, 2023.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present:

Chair Jeff Flood
Vice Chair Jaime Forsyth
Commissioner Joan Hanten

Excused:

Subchair Commissioner Andre Henderson

BHA Staff Present:

Jill Stanton	Executive Director	Also Present:	Randy Rhodes
Andi Reed	Housing Director		Olena Bay
Carlita Mendez	CMS Director		Joie, Olly, Polly
Tim Schanne	Business Solutions Director		
Sherman Enstrom	Finance Director		
Katie Sharp	Communications Manager		
Paula Kennedy	Human Resources Manager		
Lorna Camacho	Office Manager/Executive Assistant/Minute Taker		

3. SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR COMMENTS: None

4. RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND SECURITY DEPOSIT ASSISTANCE UPDATE: Comments by Ms. Reed.

The rental assistance for BHA residents and participants is dwindling as eviction prevention programs related to the Pandemic ended. The Kitsap Eviction Prevention Assistance (KEPA) program ended on December 31, 2022. The other source of funding was the BHA matching funds to the City of Bremerton Rental Assistance Program. These programs had limited funds and were the only programs available to BHA residents and participants from October through December of 2022. These two programs allowed payment of security deposits, rental arrears, and future rent of up to three months. As of December 31, 2022, the KEPA funding is exhausted as are the BHA matching funds to the City of Bremerton Rental Assistance Program.

Our experience is that most new voucher holders require financial assistance with paying the security deposit. We anticipate that without security deposit assistance, our new voucher holders will experience increased barriers to getting leased in units which will negatively impact BHA's

goals to fully utilize our vouchers and more importantly to house our neighbors in need. We are researching what funding may be available through other resources such as Kitsap Community Resources and the City of Bremerton.

In the meantime, we would like to spend up to \$1,500 per household on security deposit assistance for new voucher holders over the next month. We estimate that this will be at an expense of less than \$10,000 which is well under the Executive Director unbudgeted spending authority.

In February, it is our plan to approach the Board with a proposed plan for funding security deposit assistance for the remainder of the year.

A brief discussion was held regarding the Rental Assistance Program. The City of Bremerton funds must be applied based on agreed upon criteria. BHA funds may be used as needed including security deposit assistances.

The average security deposit is \$1,500. The Rental Assistance Program is not meant to be a grant program. And there is no commitment on the part of a landlord or tenant to pay the funds back. Unlike the Emergency Housing Vouchers that come with additional funds to assistance with security deposits. To date we do not have the additional admin fees that we could use for security deposit assistance. We do not know what things will look like down the road, but it will require a long-term solution.

Overall, the committee agreed it is important that BHA follow the same criteria used by others. Currently, BHA is following the KEPA process. As part of our strategy BHA is willing to work with landlords who are willing to work with our participants. And are willing to pay extra in fees and/or security deposits as necessary.

5. PENDLETON PLACE UPDATE: Comments by Ms. Reed.

The Kitsap Sun ran a story on the evictions at Pendleton Place. This was expected and the committee agreed that the story in the Kitsap Sun was both well written and educational. While we continue to work hard to avoid any evictions, this is to be expected especially during the first year of the program. Pendleton Place and BHA have discussed the higher-than-normal increase in maintenance needs at the property. We are asking that Pendleton Place fund a full-time maintenance position in next year's budget.

Overall, we believe that the story did us a great service for this population. It would be unrealistic not to have any evictions based on the population it serves.

6. RESOLUTION B23-02 WRIGHT COURT ELECTRICAL ISSUE: Comments by Ms. Reed.

Wright Court was built in the 1050's. BHA acquired the Wright Court property in 2016. The units were significantly rehabilitated before being placed in service in 2017. Units passed inspection and were subsequently occupied. BHA later learned that the electrical wiring in the units were not property grounded. The electrical work was not included in the rehabilitation of the units. Maintenance did perform some rewiring as workload allowed. Unfortunately, maintenance workload was not showing any signs of slowing down. Ms. Reed determined the work would need to be outsourced to a contractor. We contacted five electricians and received four bids.

Since receiving the bids two are no longer available and one will not return our calls. The contactor who is available can begin in February.

The costs were not budgeted. There are six units that need to be rewired. Of those, five are public housing units and will be paid for using Capital Fund Program dollars. The sixth unit along with miscellaneous cost will be paid from Wright Court operating reserves.

Ms. Reed will ask for Board approval at the January Board meeting to approve Resolution B23-02 to approve electrical work at Wright Court.

7. BUSINESS SOLUTIONS DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE: Comments by Ms. Stanton, Mr. Schanne, and Ms. Sharp.

Ms. Stanton gave an introductory overview of the Business Solutions department structure. This department is part of an organizational restructure plan to bring consistent programmatic and operation support, information technology services, quality control, communications, learning and development, business improvement and customer service to every part of our organization.

Mr. Schanne and Ms. Sharp shared a power point presentation of an in-depth overview of BHA's department structure, strategy execution framework, and strategic plan. This team has spent significant time with each department documenting all the projects that we are working on to achieve the objectives and goals identified to further our mission. In addition, they have set targets and metrics to keep us accountable and to measure our success.

8. STRATEGY EXECUTION FRAMEWORK: Comments by Mr. Schanne and Ms. Sharp.

Building Sustainable Strategy Execution Framework: The components of the framework will help us explain the focus area, strategic objective, metric, targets, project, project status and ownership.

Inspiration HUD Strategic Plan: HUD came up with their strategic plan about the same time we did. We found that we had a lot of similarity with the same terms and focus areas.

We created a one pager and other public facing visuals for the website and for public meetings. This will provide the Board with updates and talking points out in the community.

Guiding Principles: Is a structured way to communicate progress. It aids us to inform Ms. Stanton of information for her Executive Director Report to the Board. The Quarterly Board Strategy Progress Report, and the website. It allows for committees to do deeper dives, allows staff to hold each other accountable for progress on metrics and progress, allows staff to scope budgeted and unbudgeted projects and allows Ms. Stanton's review of Directors, and Boards review of Ms. Stanton.

Focus Area 1 - Residents and Participants: We are committed to ensuring the resources we offer are equitable, inclusive, accessible, and meet the diverse needs of those we serve. We are committed to creating a meaningful experience for each of our customers through effective communication and process improvement. We are committed to taking actions and making decisions based on data and evidence. We are committed to breaking down existing silos within our agency departments and working together with our federal, state, local and other agency partners to accomplish our shared objectives.

Focus Area 2 – Partners and Advocates: Build and maintain relationships with key advocates and partner organizations. Gave several presentations with partner organizations. Build and maintain relationships with property owners, management agents, and landlords. Increase the general public understanding and support for the BHA mission. Encourage the Board to participate in future presentations with partner organizations.

The Board found the strategy framework to be exactly what they want to see. Although the public reading this may understand what our intent is and where our focus is. It may not be built for the public but for the purpose of marketing. When talking to the public it may be too much information. The Board would like to see Focus Area 2 not read in a passive voice and develop more proactively. More of an elevator pitch to someone who does not know the agency. Overall, extremely well laid out. Do not see a need for a media kit.

Objective: Increase public understanding and support for the BHA mission. This is where we are doing a lot of work. Opening of the Project-Based Vouchers waitlist on January 27, 2023. Using the project connect platform to talk to the public and assistance folks with Rent Café. Post the Request for Property for a RAD Consultant as we discuss repositioning.

9. NEW BUSINESS: Comments by Ms. Reed.

The Resident Advisory Board (RAB) would like to request from the BHA Board of Commissioners that the Resident Commissioner attend the RAB meetings. RAB would like to ask the Board to allow RAB additional time under the “Public Comments” section during a regular Board meeting to address their questions and/or concerns.

10. FUTURE HOUSING/BUSINESS SOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING:

The next Housing/Business Solutions Committee Meeting – Thursday, April 20, 2023, at 4:00 PM.

11. ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Jill Stanton

Executive Secretary

Jaime Forsyth (Acting Chair)

Chair of the Board

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