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HYBRID BHA BOARD RETREAT MINUTES

NOTES OF THE HYBRID BHA BOARD RETREAT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF BREMERTON HOUSING AUTHORITY (BHA) HELD AT 9:00 AM AT 345 6TH STREET AND/OR REMOTELY ON JUNE 17, 2022.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

Present:

Chair Joan Hanten	Commissioner Jaime Forsyth
Vice Chair Jeff Flood	Commissioner Ryan Burton
Commissioner Andre Henderson	

Excused:

Commissioner Bo Palmer

BHA Staff Present:

Jill Stanton	Executive Director/Minute Taker
Carlita Mendez	CMS Director/Minute Taker
Tim Schanne	CMS Assistant Director
Paula Kennedy	Human Resources Manager/Minute Taker

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** This work retreat was open for the general public to attend; however, no opportunities were provided for input or participation.

4. **AGENCY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

Introduction – Comments by Ms. Stanton

Ms. Stanton began the meeting by sharing her appreciation to the board for the time dedicated by board members for today's Board Retreat. She finds it to be unbelievably valuable. Ms. Stanton provided an overview of BHA's three major programs including, the Public Housing and Property portfolio, the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and Contract Management Services. Ms. Stanton discussed the needs BHA was addressing through each one of the agency goals. The Commissioners asked questions and provided feedback for each of the agency goals. Commissioners discussed BHA operations at length.

4.1 Agency Goal 1: Continue to build a strong network of support and services to meet the needs of our Residents and Program Participants

4.2 Agency Goal 2: Leverage cloud-based technology and electric document workflow to drive customer satisfaction

4.3 Agency Goal 3: Fully utilize our programs and our resources through community partnerships

- 4.4 Agency Goal 4: Develop a long-term repositioning, preservation, and acquisition strategy and financial sustainability plan
- 4.5 Agency Goal 5: Continue efforts to build a positive, equitable, and healthy workplace culture
- 4.6 Goals included in 2022 Budget adopted by Board of Commissioners – Financial Impact

5. AGENCY 2021/2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Comments by Mr. Schanne, Mrs. Mendez, and Ms. Kennedy

The Executive Team members provided an overview of the agency accomplishments and their present and future challenges. The following is a detailed free flowing conversation.

- 5.1 Agency Goal 1: Continue to build a strong network of support and services to meet the needs of our Residents and Program Participants

Cultural and Structural:

- Hire new Director
- Security
- Waste Management
- Shadow Creek playground
- Working on determining metrics

Residents & Voucher Participants:

- Financial Stability- Four sources of rental assistance
- Support Network- Community Connections whole again

Board asked are these positions a part of BHA staff.

- Bezos Academy
- Preschools in different communities reached out to see if we want to put a preschool on a property, under discussion with the community
- \$846,000 in capital improvements
- Mental Health- de-escalation training for staff

- 5.2 Agency Goal 2: Leverage cloud-based technology and electric document workflow to drive customer satisfaction

Anticipate Staff Needs:

- Needs were highlighted during COVID
- IT in dept. meetings listening to employee needs
- Consultant Work- highlighted the need for faster performance- this has been addressed, SherpaDesk- improving help desk
- Process Streamlining:
- Rent Café- new technology for public to interfacing with BHA, major cultural adoption moment, internal training, meetings
- DEI-Translating our flyers, community outreach

- Landlord portal- interface with landlords and BHA
- Mobile Maintenance- apps on phone, residents schedule workorders through app
- Electronic signatures (CMS 600 documents processed this way), time and quality savings, housing also implemented
- Screen Scraping- HUD's system can be slow, this technology will grab all information overnight and put the information in a database, time saving
- VTDocs- allows a comparison of documents to make sure changes have not happened

Response to OnBase Administrator:

- Contracted with vendor Hyland to move to Cloud
- Filled vacant position

Data Security:

- Of 26 major initiatives by IT consultant 15 are already complete, 11 that are scheduled to be done by September

5.3 Agency Goal 3: Fully utilize our programs and our resources through community partnerships

Need to bring in more vouchers:

- Secure 20 more Vash Vouchers- 67 occupied, 12 currently shopping
- Issued all Emergency Voucher- 22 complete, 9 shopping
- Created strategy to get more vouchers in circulation- brought in consultant to help with how we will utilize vouchers
- Secured Foster Youth to Independence- supports foster young adults, 3 leased, 9 shopping

Board inquired how do our regular vouchers and FYI intercept?

Need for more vouchers:

- 150 shoppers currently looking, 56 PB and 7 VASH at Pendleton
- Translated Waitlist Outreach
- Opened Section 8 Waitlists- total applicants over 4,700 (both BHA and KHA)
- Opened House and Shared Article with HUD

Need voucher holder to have more success:

- Increased fair market rents- 20% increase
- Received HUD approval for 120% of FMR's
- Ready to Rent course launched- yesterday at resource fair and at Juneteenth
- Article in Kitsap Sun about FMR increase
- Improved Voucher Orientation Video
- Hired Landlord Liaison- improve relationship with landlords, recruiting, Ready to Rent Program

Need more affordable housing stock:

- Awarded \$1.5 M grant for 5 new homes
- \$35,000 Grant to furnish new homes and FYI voucher holders

- Procured architecture services for 8 units at Shadow Creek- may be able to increase this to 21 based on a code variance with the city, still working on design, cost estimate, procurement, and construction, waiting to hear on this

Board asked how many units at Shadow Creek? Mrs. Mendez replied 32. And we would be able to build more at that location.

- Wrote winning grant for Bay Vista homes and furniture grant

5.4 Agency Goal 4: Develop a long-term repositioning, preservation, and acquisition strategy and financial sustainability plan

- Procured Repositioning assessment from Brawner
- Proposal for Dept of Commerce for DOC Stipend- chose not to submit currently
- Proposal for Tennessee PBCA work- did not win award
- In talks with Grace Hill to have a partnership with BHA for training opportunities- we will help provide content if award
- Helped Develop prototype training content

5.5 Agency Goal 5: Continue efforts to build a positive, equitable, and healthy workplace culture

- We put together a program for recognizing employees for their work.
- CMS did team lunches for their team for clean annual compliance reviews, adopted formal recognition for staff appreciation through Cornerstone.
- Housing adopted a bell in their work area. Staff rings the bell when someone is housed.
- Created a BHA engagement committee, they are more than just a potluck committee. They want to focus on connecting staff with mission by coordinating things like Armed Forces Day Parade, Employee Appreciation Event, National bring your pet to work day to virtually feature staff pets.
- Hired a new HR manager and a new Housing Director, and they both bring a servant leadership style. They believe in making people feel valued and appreciated.
- HR is still conducting Tuesday Talks and we are including staff suggestions such as refresh EAP, retirement, FMLA & paid family medical leave. Asked staff to select the best day of the month to have Tuesday Staff.
- We welcome new staff by having all staff sign a virtual welcome card.
- DE&I trainings have been conducted for staff.
- We prepared for a market salary survey and updated all job descriptions. We also looked for language to be more equitable, such as experience & minimum requirements language. We received two proposals for salary market consultant.
- DE&I was put into action by completing a monthly DE&I newsletter. We shared local events that things that are happening, we highlight our employees, brought in a trainer to speak with staff, and we held a training on micro-aggression. We continue to support the Juneteenth event, and we brought in Northwest Justice to help us look at our procedures to ensure we are safe from discrimination.
- The DE&I brought us more community involvement with things such as Armed-Forces Day Parade where we partnered with Veteran's Village, Juneteenth, and Georgia House. Staff collected donations for Georgia's House. We Collected items from staff for Georgia's house.

- We updated hiring practices due to DEI findings. Including adding DE&I questions to our interviews. We send a virtual welcome card to new staff.
- Housing Dept now is restructuring their housing team.
- We are providing training and cross training with CMS and housing. We are asking them for their input and trying to get them more involved.
- Our communication goal was both internal & external. The Communication Manager takes care of social media, published content, and updates to our website tied to communication. We now post available housing units on our website that lists all affordable units on our site.
- The Communications Manager trained and coordinated the launch of rent café. The Communications Manager also helped our agency get ready for the wait list opening.
- In the about section of our site, we added a part for 'working with BHA.'
- We added a landlord frequently asked questions page. And we are also working on adding an extensive FAQ for our programs that will help customers and staff to their questions.
- We had an increased media presence with our FMR increase, rent café, wait list, Pendleton Place's ribbon cutting ceremony, and the FYI program.
- During the server outage, the Communications Manager sent daily IT updates internally. This kept staff informed of what was happening, and what areas of the network that was not available.
- We began using our ADP homepage more than in the past for communications and interactions within the agency. ADP is now a tool for communication.
- Ms. Stanton and our Communication Manager serves on the Kitsap Homeless coalition, joins the podcast weekly.
- Ms. Stanton does a weekly email to staff and updates everyone on what happens during the week. Badges are posted in her emails so that everyone can celebrate each other.
- We began recording Tuesday Talks when possible. Staff who cannot attend Tuesday Talks can still watch the recordings.
- The Communications Manager helped with digital adoption, attended meetings, training, info on our website.

Chair Hanten asked, what is rent café? Mr. Schanne stated that it is a wide portal that is consists of 11 systems in one. It starts with the wait list. Rent café is our main interface for applicants, participants, and landlord. Chair Hanten asked if we can hold a presentation to the board. Show the Board what it is and how the different audiences can use it in the future. The Communication Manager or the Landlord Liaison can do this since the Landlord Liaison is out doing those demos. It would be nice to see how people use it. This could be done in August or September. Rent Café really is the future face of BHA, and the Board should be ahead of that.

6. BOARD MEMBERS DISCUSSION:

6.1 Strategy Discussion (Historical and Going Forward)

The Commissioners provided feedback that they would like to see a broader communication plan that focuses on community involvement and heightened awareness of who BHA is and what we do. They also want to be sure that all our goals, resolutions, and discussions at Board meetings have a direct tie to our mission and that we state what that is.

6.2 Development of Goals and Outcomes

The Commissioners are fine with our five goals, although they liked them expressed as the needs that we are trying to address. They also agreed with staff that we need to have measurement tools in place.

Goals and Objectives for FY 2023 – Time will be reserved at the June 27, 2022, board meeting for the board to provide Executive Team with additional input after Board has had time to digest the materials presented today.

7. **ADJOURNMENT:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Jill Stanton

Executive Secretary

Joan Hanten

Chairperson of the Board

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