

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
of the  
PORTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY**

Thursday, March 5, 2020

The meeting of the Portland Housing Authority was held at the Portland Housing Authority, 14 Baxter Boulevard, Portland, Maine. Upon roll call, no quorum is declared. Meeting called to order by Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson. Meeting opened at 5:35 PM

<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson Monique Mutumwinka, Commissioner Kristin Blum, Commissioner (call-in) Christian MilNeil, Commissioner (call-in) Shirley Peterson, Commissioner Tom Valleau, Commissioner Cheryl A. Sessions, Executive Director Jay Waterman, Director, Real Estate Development Trevor Nugent, Director, Property Management Leah Bruns, Director, Voucher Programs Lourdes Alvarez, Administrative Support Specialist	Mariar Balow, Chairperson

**1. ACOP presentation**

Director of Property Management Trevor Nugent presented the summary of changes to the Admission and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP). The ACOP was converted to match the Nan McKay model which will make future updates easier to achieve. The waitlist has been updated to be site-based in preparation for the RAD project conversions. Applicants can choose to be considered for any or all properties. Currently, the agency has 13 waitlists. Once the client’s eligibility is determined, a letter is sent within 10 business days estimating when housing would occur. A pet deposit is being added to the lease ups; to be \$100 or the determined rent amount if lower. It would be refundable minus any pet caused damages, the same way the security deposit works except that the max amount charged against security deposit is \$250. Deconcentration policy has been updated to use new admissions to increase area median income instead of focusing on transfers. Lease violations will now cover an area compromised of a three-block radius from the development and language added to lease termination policy reflects this change. Household need to be notified of lease termination due to new criminal activity and given opportunity to explain the circumstances prior to start of eviction proceedings. Hearing details added to right for a hearing language when reconsideration is requested for a denial of housing. Language updated in the program abuse policy to include agency staff. Repayment plan minimums updated to require a 10% down payment to start repayment plus a minimum monthly payment of \$25 minimum or 10% of the total amount owed, whichever is higher but can be adjusted if deemed necessary. Retention document policy is updated to save only the last three years of rent calculations. Notification of VAWA rights will be distributed in three instances: at eligibility notification, at lease up, and annuals. It would also be included with any late rent notification. This procedure has been added for resident’s protection. Other lease changes proposed include: the safety of kiddie pools, added regulation in regard to water spigots, changes and additions to trash removal fees. Lockout fees increased if request

triggers the creation of a work order (during regular work hours or after hours). Charge for open windows during the winter months will also be increased. It is suggested to make arrangement with banks regarding bounced check fees as these cause budget difficulties in low income households. Currently when a resident bounces a check, a fee is charged and then only debit or money order accepted from that point forward. He noted that at the RAB meeting, there was pushback regarding the one parking pass per household policy.

**At this time, Board quorum is achieved, and meeting agenda goes back to approval of consent agenda**

**2. Resolution to approve the consent agenda for the minutes of the regular board meeting of February 6, 2020, the Finance Committee Report of February 25, 2020, the Income and Expense Report of January 31, 2020, and the Executive Director’s Report**

**Resolution #2987**

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the above consent agenda, be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Shirley Peterson, Commissioner and second by Monique Mutumwinka, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

<u><b>AYES</b></u>	<u><b>NAYS</b></u>
Mariar Balow, Chairperson	None
Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson	
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner	
Monique Mutumwinka, Commissioner	
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner	
Tom Valleau, Commissioner	

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

**3. Administrative Plan presentation**

Director of Voucher Programs, Leah Bruns, presented the summary for the Administrative Plan governing the management of all agency’s Voucher Programs. It has been updated to the Nan McKay model. Changes are highlighted in the document shared with the Board members. Concise language has been streamlined and updated to include changes to application state and federal laws. Reasonable accommodation requests will include an in-person interview. Definition of family has been redefined. If a family is broken up triggering a two head of household situation due to VAWA or divorce, an extra voucher would be issued to the other spouse. In addition, a child cannot be claimed by two households. The allow absence time from a unit would increase to 180 days max if approved in advance. If household change is due to a foster care removal, return is assumed unless otherwise stated in writing by DHS. Definition of currently engaged in criminal activity will be defined as 6 months from lease up or violation of the lease. Medical marijuana use, as mandated by federal law, is not allowed by an HCV recipient; no use in unit or in possession by resident. Language updated to provide clarity on how

criminal record information is requested and reviewed for housing determination, including the use of fingerprinting to access criminal background if applicable.

She proceeded to review some of the other Voucher program changes to increase usage. MOD Rehab would assign 25 for homelessness if vouchers are underutilized. Another 25/year are being assigned to Foster Youth Program for three years which allows clients to be leased in place. Vouchers assigned to First Place, VASH, BRAP, and VNED, can also lease clients in place. Ms. Bruns reviewed the HCV waitlist preferences. Issued vouchers extensions for search are automatically set to 365 days. Annual reexaminations include changes in income; declarations will be allowed when assets are valued at less than \$5000. Landlords can lose HAP Contract/HCV participation if tenant abuse is proved or a crime is committed against a HCV tenant. Retroactive payments to landlords will be allowed in cases of lost of income due to a life change and can be completed after verification documents are submitted.

Homeownership Program will limit participation to 50 clients; it is currently at 45. It will also extend property search to 365 days. Project-based Vouchers (PBV) policy has been revised to align with approved RAD/repositioning agency plans. HQS Inspections will be a random sampling of no less than 20% of PBV units. Since the agency cannot inspect own PBV units, inspections would be contracted out. VASH vouchers are currently underutilized and the proposal is to offer them to the Augusta Housing Authority to service homeless veterans currently on their waitlist. PHA would still administer the vouchers and collect administrative fees on them. Also, the agency is planning on working closely with service providers to increase usage of VNED vouchers, allowing candidates to apply through service provider to vet their eligibility.

#### **4. Resolution to approve acceptance of JT Gorman Foundation Grant for the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program**

Proposal was presented by Resident Services Manager Emily Mancini-Fitch, in conjunction with Ms. Bruns. The grant application would be for funds to hire support staff to manage the FYI program vouchers. The grant award would fund one full time housing coordinator and a part time housing navigator. Ms. Bruns clarifies that the referrals for the FYI program would come from the service providers partnered with PHA and the program's goal is to set up the youth for success. Participation in FSS program and leasing clients in place would meet the program requirements. JT Gorman would track data in both rural and urban areas for residents in the program. The budget would be: \$127,112 for the 1<sup>st</sup> year; \$121,923 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year; \$134,553 for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. The youth who is successfully housed for 5 years could then be converted to a regular voucher and be leased in place.

#### **Resolution #2988**

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the grant funding from JT Gorman Foundation, estimated at \$127,112 for Year 1; \$121,923 for Year 2; \$134,553 Year 3, to fund the positions of FYI Project Coordinator and FYI Housing Navigator, be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Tom Valleau, Commissioner and second by Kirsten Blum, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

**AYES**

**NAYS**

Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson  
Kristin Blum, Commissioner  
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner  
Monique Mutumwinka, Commissioner  
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner  
Tom Valleau, Commissioner

None

Vice-Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

**5. Capital Fund Program**

Executive Director, Cheryl Sessions, reviewed the CFP summary presented to the Board as part of the agency’s Five-Year Plan. She reminds the Board that no CFP funding can be used on a development once the RAD conversion commences on the property.

The next Finance Committee meeting is on February 25, and next Board meeting will be March 5. Strategic Staff Retreat is planned for February 8 at SMCC, with a start time of 8:30the Commissioner Training and questions regarding the on-boarding of commissioners will be discussed on Saturday.

**6. Development update**

Director of Real Estate Development Jay Waterman updated the Board on current projects. The SAC-Section 18 application has been submitted for Front Street Re-Development and response from HUD is expected in the next 60 days. Project design is moving forward as site plans are completed and approved by the City of Portland Planning Board. Brownfields funding would be used for soil remediation and removal of old building foundations. The application would close the funding gap on the project.

These remediation funds would be in addition to the Maine Housing Tax Credits and monies being awarded from CDBG, TD Grant, and City of Portland.

**Resolution #2989**

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that authorization to submit application to the City of Portland and Greater Portland Council of Governments for up to \$200,000 in each application for Brownfields funding regarding Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Front Street Redevelopment Project, be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Christian MilNeil, Commissioner and second by Tom Valleau, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

**AYES**

**NAYS**

Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson  
Kristin Blum, Commissioner  
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner  
Monique Mutumwinka, Commissioner  
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner  
Tom Valleau, Commissioner

None

Vice-Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

**7. Riverton Park Redevelopment Project**

Mr. Waterman presented the renderings for the Riverton Park Redevelopment Project. Options are being reviewed for cost reductions on the per unit price. There are no tax credits in place and the per unit costs are currently over \$150,000. Section 18 cash flow can make the project affordable and the project is also seeking to bring more service providers into the neighborhood. The project is also looking on improving the connectivity with Forest Avenue and bring more connections to the neighborhood. Residents who attended the neighborhood meeting appreciated the vision. He displayed a close up rendering of the Community Center/Maintenance Building which will cost about \$3 million. Vacant units will allow for easier relocation of residents once the project starts. Roofs need work as well as the parking lots.

Jay explained the details of the presented resolution paragraph by paragraph. The resident relocation plan for Riverton Park is similar to the previously approved plans for Washington Gardens.

**Resolution #2990**

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority authorizes all activities related to the conversion of Riverton Park, including lease options, ground lease, Section 18 application, relocation plan, and empowers Executive Director to act, be and hereby are approved.

The above resolution was moved by Kristin Blum, Commissioner and second by Monique Mutumwinka, Commissioner, and upon roll call, the ayes and nays were as follows:

**AYES**

**NAYS**

Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson  
Kristin Blum, Commissioner  
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner  
Monique Mutumwinka, Commissioner  
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner  
Tom Valleau, Commissioner

None

Vice-Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted.

## **8. Executive Director Report**

Cheryl Sessions shared document listing the goals and objectives of the agency, including the internal plans on how to achieve these, as listed in the Agency's Five-Year Plan. Board suggested that specific benchmarks be defined to provide better feedback on the goals.

She reviewed upcoming meeting dates for the Finance Committee on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 and the next Board meeting, which will be held right after the public hearing for the five-year plan on Thursday, April 2, 2020. The Human Resources Committee meeting is being planned for March 25.

## **9. Meeting adjournment**

With no other business to discuss, motion to adjourn meeting moved by Commissioner Tom Valleau, and second by Commissioner Christian MilNeil.

After a unanimous vote, the meeting ended at 7:39 PM