

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

Thursday, October 4, 2018

The meeting of the Portland Housing Authority was held at the Portland Housing Authority, 14 Baxter Blvd, Portland, ME. Upon roll call, quorum is declared. Meeting called to order by Mariar Balow, Chairperson, at 5:35 PM.

PRESENT	ABSENT
Mariar Balow, Chairperson Kristin Blum, Commissioner Christian MilNeil, Commissioner Shirley Peterson, Commissioner Robyn Tucker, Vice-Chairperson Thomas Valleau, Commissioner Mark Adelson, Executive Director Cheryl Sessions, Deputy Executive Director Jay Waterman, Development Director Trevor Nugent, Public Housing Director Jan Bosse, Housing Services Director Linda Ballew, Special Program Manager Lourdes Alvarez, Administrative Support Specialist	Faith McLean, Commissioner

1. Public Comment

Louis Salvato, a resident at Franklin Towers, came to the meeting as a follow-up to last month’s public comment. Executive Director Mark Adelson clarified that the agency is still discussing the pending issue on the homeless preference. He added that policies are reviewed during the month of January for an April submission of changes that become effective the following July. It was understood from the presented commentary that Mr. Salvato wanted changes sooner than regular cycle. Discussion has started among the staff. He adds that the staff understands the element of fear affects quality of life. Mr. Salvato asked for copy of the ACOP sent to him to see what the current policy is and be able to distinguish the changes may occur in the future. He thanked the Board and PHA staff for their attention in this matter.

2. Resolution to approve the minutes of the Meeting of August 2, 2018.

Amendment to minutes briefly discussed in regards to change on page 3, Section C, the RAD update: the application filed was for Riverton Park, not Sagamore Village.

Resolution #2919

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the minutes of the meeting of September 6, 2018, as amended, be and hereby are approved.

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

AYES

NAYS

Mariar Balow, Chair
Kristin Blum, Commissioner
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner
Shirley Peterson, Commissioner
Tom Valleau, Commissioner

None

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted. Commissioner Robyn Tucker was no present at the time of the vote.

3. Housing Services Update

Housing Services Director Jan Bosse presented the summary report on Section 8 vouchers. She summarized the Mainstream vouchers award presented in the agenda packet. Six housing authorities in the State of Maine applied for the vouchers and all six received vouchers and the funding for them. PHA was awarded 28, the most in the state, with the most monies based on PUCs (per unit costs) to fund the vouchers. The focus of these vouchers is to provide assistance to nonelderly disabled clients in risk of becoming homeless. Qualified candidates need to come from the current waitlist. A list was pulled from the waitlist, focusing on the head of household with handicaps and the staff is in the process of sending letters to the households asking if they have a nonelderly handicapped person currently residing in the household. The agency is also working with community partners to get referrals for clients who may be qualified and are on the waitlist. The program is scheduled to start issuing vouchers in Jan 2019. HUD has pre-calculated funding based on average figures listed in the award. If any client were to be transferred to regular voucher, it would be a simple administrative move. She also explained the new Payment Standard to the Board as illustrated by bedroom size of unit in the newly released HUD chart, published in September for implementation in January. Lease ups are happening but just as many clients have been leaving the program. Voucher lease-ups are happening at the Mother House. These have allowed flexibility in the relocation of clients into smaller units. She compared the current per unit cost with projected per unit cost. Utilization is reflected in the number of units currently under lease. The cost is about 1.4 million per month to the landlords. The agency's payment standard is currently at 110% of the FMR to assist clients in finding units to lease. She clarified that there is still plenty of funding available for growth. Question asked in regards to size of the current waitlist. Ms. Bosse estimated about 2800 for Portland's preference in the Central Wait List.

Special Programs Manager Linda Ballow followed with a summary of the special vouchers programs, including corrections to some of the numbers presented, reflecting the usage level of the voucher stock, which include EOPs, lease ups, and movers. VASH take longer to lease up and BRAP vouchers are being converting into regular vouchers and leasing up as well. She reminds the Board that BRAP is a state funded program, not funded by HUD. Ms. Bosse proceeded to present the VNED program update. She explained that during the shortfall period, these were not used (40 vouchers). The VNED program

is currently housing 20 veterans. Letters were sent to 15 qualified homeless veterans who varied between 900 and 300 (shelter) bed nights. Five clients at Florence House received vouchers.

4. Public Housing Update

Public Housing Director Trevor Nugent reviewed the report presented in the meeting agenda packet. He also reminded the Board that REAC was recently completed at the three largest developments. He started his report with the current occupancy/vacancy number, clarifying that unit currently in rehabilitation do not count towards the number of vacancies. Vacant units are currently 42. The numbers are expected to drop with new lease ups scheduled this coming week. From the last group called up from the waitlist, 41% were eligible. Lease ups currently at 80. The Homeless preference households are at 75 units. Front Street still being leased up; these will stop once SAC application is approved for the new redevelopment. He shared that family units take more time to turnover than the smaller efficiency and single bedroom units. Pest infestations have also been an issue as HUD does not see it as a reason to take a unit off line. Executive Deputy Director Cheryl Sessions added that the work order system is continuously being tighten up and should increase the unit quality and be caught up with unit turn overs. Utility allowance charts are being updated due to EPC energy savings.

Question asked concerning the 75 homeless households – are they concentrated or spread out? Would that make a difference in bad behaviors exhibited at some of the sites? Mr. Nugent would need to look into this detail.

5. Executive Director's Report

A. Development Update

Development Director Jay Waterman presented his report. He started with the 58 Boyd Street Project. Value engineering is being work on using 75% drawings seeking to reduce costs. There is discussion on increasing tax credits, making changes in materials, and considering charging for parking on the market rate units as ways to reduce project costs. The soil contamination, ground fill, and demolition are separate from the project and different funding stream is being procured to pay for this initial part of the project. This will probably delay loan closing by one to two months, expecting it in February 2019. This means that demolition is expected to being sometime in January.

Mr. Waterman continued his report, updating the Board on the Front Street Redevelopment Project. He visited with Portland Builders to have them look at the old conceptual drawings and their cost estimate came in at much lower costs than Ryan using the current drawings. He was looking for a cost second opinion but is doing due diligence to make sure they are comparing apples to apples. The design team at Utile needs to look at the estimate for feasibility since their estimate was almost 15% lower. A decision would need to be made by October 15. He decided to look at a 2nd opinion because of the constant increase in costs throughout the project planning process. Jay will seek references for Portland Builders.

He reported that the staff is planning a meeting on November 14 with the City of Portland Housing Committee to get them up to speed on the plans for the RAD program. RAD application approval from HUD is expected in the next 4 to 6 weeks. He reported that the 841 Congress Street five-unit building is

now under contract. Inspection and appraisal are in process to move forward on the loan. Closing is expected in late November. Purchase of this building may assist in moving the 47-49 Boyd Street project forward, giving space to relocate tenants. The Mercy Hospital Portland Campus is for sale and the agency is working with a development group on a proposal. PHA may bring some PBVs to the project and maybe some ownership stake split with Community Housing of Maine and some developer fee a possibility. He ended with an update on the developer officer interviews as they are in the final phase for selection and offer.

B. Operations Update

The 75th anniversary event went well and Mr. Adelson was pleasantly surprised with the congressional recognition presented by Senator Ed King. He reminded Board members of the upcoming Board (November 1) and Finance Committee (October 16) meetings. He is planning on presenting a new draft PILOT policy for tax exempt properties for the City of Portland to be discussed at Finance Committee. Currently, the Real Estate taxes are paid based on HUD guidelines. PHA is number 2 on the tax exempt properties in Portland; in first position is Maine Medical. The Tax Credit properties rebate about 75% of real estate taxes. Board members agree to the suggestion to have the next Board meeting at Harbor Terrace.

6. Finance Committee Report

Commissioner Christian MilNeil indicated that the items discussed at the last Finance Committee meeting were basically summarized by the Development Director Waterman in regards to the project updates and real estate transactions. The expenditure report will be available at the next meeting.

7. Acceptance of Retirement of PHA Executive Director

Letter presented to the Board announcing the retirement of Executive Director Mark Adelson at the end of 2019, with an effective date of January 4, 2020. His last day in the office is October 26 as he will be on vacation the last 2 months of the year.

Commissioner Tom Valteau expressed the Board's appreciation for his work and best wishes in the future. He lead the discussion on a succession plan – is there a committee planned for the search? Board members suggest the HR committee may take the lead at the beginning of the year, but the Board members are expected to be fully engaged in the search. They agree the search should start on January 1, 2019. Commissioners Peterson, Valteau, and have been through the process before, when Mr. Adelson was hired. Outside help may be required to provide for administrative support for the search committee.

Resolution #2920

Be it resolved by the Commissioners of the Portland Housing Authority that the acceptance of the retirement of Executive Director Mark Adelson, be and hereby are approved.

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

AYES

Mariar Balow, Chair
Kristin Blum, Commissioner
Christian MilNeil, Commissioner
Tom Valleau, Commissioner

NAYS

None

Chairperson declared said motion carried and said resolution adopted. Commissioner Shirley Peterson and Vice-Chair Robyn Tucker abstained from the vote.

8. Additional agenda items

With no more business on the agenda, meeting moved to be adjourned by Vice-Chairperson Robyn Tucker, and second by Commissioner Christian MilNeil. Meeting ended at 7:00 PM