
SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD BRIEFING

LOCATION Via Teleconference Line
(206) 257-3799 ; ID 598166733#

DATE April 13, 2020 4:30pm - 6:00pm

BOARD ATTENDEES Deborah Canavan Thiele, Board Chair
Dr. Paula Houston , Vice-Chair Twyla Minor
Robert Crutchfield Paul Purcell
Michael Diaz Gerald Smiley

DISTRIBUTION SHA Board of Commissioners; Cabinet

Commissioner Roll Call

AGENDA:

Briefing Items

- Resolution No. 5188 – Pooled Refunding
- Resolution No. 5189 – Omnibus Executive Authorization

Informational Briefings

- COVID-19 Activities Update
- MTW Plan Amendment Briefing

Commissioner roll call was given at 4:34 p.m. The Briefing was held solely via teleconference. Commissioners Crutchfield and Smiley were absent from the Briefing.

Review 4/20/20 Regular Board Meeting Agenda and Updates

Resolution No. 5188 – Pooled Refunding

Finance & Asset Management Director Jared Cummer presented the resolution to the Board. Resolution No. 5188 authorizes the issuance of a private placement taxable bond with KeyBank in an amount not to exceed \$63 million for the purposes of refunding current agency debt and generating funds to address five-year capital needs at select properties. This resolution would replace Resolution No. 5186, which anticipated the issuance of two series of bonds (taxable and tax-exempt) through a public offering in an amount not to exceed \$82 million. Because of rapid changes in market conditions due to the COVID-16 crisis, the refinancing strategy outlined in Resolution No. 5186 to the Board in March is no longer viable. Based on current market conditions, SHA is able to take advantage of low borrowing rates that banks are offering to achieve a similar result as proposed in the March resolution.

Properties included in the Proposed Refunding are:

- New Acquisitions (MLK, Golden Sunset, Weller and Spring Lake Apts)
- High Point North
- Ritz
- Wedbush Portfolio (9 Properties)
- RBC Portfolio (11 Properties)

The total refunding amount and the amount of existing debt refunded may vary based on changes in the market that impact the total cost to pay off the 2013 and 2014 refundings. However, the total issuance will not exceed \$63 million.

Resolution No. 5189 – Omnibus Executive Authorization

Executive Director Andrew Lofton and Legal Counsel James Fearn presented Resolution No. 5189 to the Board, which authorizes the Executive Director to take any lawful action on short notice needed to comply with federal, state and local emergency declarations in a timely manner and take administrative actions needed to protect SHA residents and staff against anything related to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. It also requires the Executive Director to report to the Board monthly on all actions taken within the previous thirty days. This authorization would end within 180 days, or when the Washington State Governor declares an end of the emergency, whichever happens first.

COVID-19 Activities Update

Executive Director Andrew Lofton reported to the Board occurrences over the past month, as well as actions and emergency management related to the Coronavirus pandemic. He and the Cabinet have been in crisis management with daily check-in call meetings, and held an all-day retreat focused on COVID-19 planning on March 10. They have also been in constant contact with HUD, as well as local **coordination with the Washington State Governor's Office, King County Emergency Response, City of Seattle Emergency Management and Public Health**. Directors have been participating in weekly calls with national and regional housing authorities through CLPHA, NAHRO, MTW Collaborative and AWWA. **Cabinet continues to monitor HUD's changing emergency waivers and funding.**

Operationally, SHA closed public-facing to walk-ins on March 16, and set up drop boxes for rent payment and other hard copy needs. We have also set up special call centers with one number for all SHA residents, and another number for all HCV clients and stakeholders. **Due to the Governor's order**, we escalated a response towards heightened hygiene, site sanitizing and social distancing, as well as developed a comprehensive Essential Workplace Protocol for operating during the COVID crisis to help protect the health of our staff and residents. Approximately 200 staff were assigned a telework agreement with narrow on-site work to only essential and emergency work. PPE were provided to maintenance and other staff needing to enter into buildings or units, while some staff were redeployed to work in call centers, or perform in other duties as assigned.

In order to communicate with residents to keep them performed of SHA actions due to the pandemic, a coronavirus alert was on the homepage of the website, as well as a special page where all communications are posted, along with relevant resource information. Letters to SHA residents were emailed and posted in buildings on March 9, 16 and 25 and letters were emailed to HCV clients and stakeholders on March 9, 13, 16, 20 and 25. The Voice newsletter to tenants was also used as a platform to provide SHA communications and updates, as well as a vehicle in order to obtain community resource information. Signs were created in 17 languages for SHA maintenance and other staff to use to inquire if anyone in a household is exhibiting symptoms of COVID, and we developed a protocol for communicating to residents in large buildings if there is a credible report of a resident testing positive for the virus. There has also been numerous emails sent to staff with weekly updates on COVID-19, as well as information regarding temporary changes in leave, operations, health directives, etc.

SHA has been providing additional services to our residents, such as wellness check calls to approximately 3,700 elderly and vulnerable residents, as well as meal deliveries (sponsored by Amazon) to 875 elderly and vulnerable residents, three times a week for four weeks. Service providers, such as Aging and Disability Services, Full Life Care and other service providers continue to work with clients, as well.

The Board expressed much thanks and gratitude for the hard work that is being done in protecting the health and welfare of SHA staff and residents.

2020 MTW Plan Amendment (to Address COVID-19)

Policy & Strategic Initiatives Director Andria Lazaga updated the Board regarding an amendment submitted to HUD to update the MTW plan to reflect how the agency will use existing MTW authorizations during this state of emergency (**SHA's 2020 MTW Plan already included** authorization for each of the activities being updated due to COVID-19.) The technical amendment, submitted to HUD on March 26 and approved expeditiously by HUD on March 27, 2020, are effective through December 31, 2020 (however, the agency intends to resume normal business operations as soon as is feasible to do so.)

SHA was able to defer inspections until the next regularly scheduled inspection and owners, or property managers, may self-certify new move-in inspections in the HCV program. All forms of income verification may be treated equally, including allowing residents to self-certify income over the phone, or by email. Regular certifications (annual reviews) may be deferred until the next regularly scheduled certifications, and residents/participants may still request an interim certification if they experience a change in their circumstance, such as a job loss, change in household, etc. Also, **SHA staff can obtain necessary "signatures" from participants for selected FSS** program forms and contracts by email, or oral confirmation over the phone.

Commissioner Thiele congratulated SHA staff on a swift, cohesive response to the pandemic situation and thanked them for all of their work and efforts. She reminded the Board about officer elections to be held at the April 20 Annual Meeting.

Ms. Thiele then adjourned the meeting at 6:04 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer