
**SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD BRIEFING**

LOCATION Seattle Housing Authority, 190 Queen Anne Ave N, Seattle, WA
Jesse Epstein Conference Room, First Floor

DATE May 8, 2017 4:30pm-6:00pm

Deborah Canavan Thiele, Board Chair

BOARD ATTENDEES Emily Abbey, Vice-Chair **Dr. Paula Houston**
Ahmed Abdi **David Moseley**
Zachary DeWolf **Jermaine Smiley**

DISTRIBUTION SHA Board of Commissioners; Cabinet

4:30pm - Commissioner Roll Call

AGENDA:

Topics for Discussion

4:35pm – New SHA Website

4:45pm – Policy Introduction (Voter Registration)

Informational Briefings

4:55pm – Housing Choice Voucher Payment Standards (VPS) Analysis

5:20pm – KPI 2017 1st Qtr. Report

Board Chair Debbie Thiele opened the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

Commissioners Abdi, Houston & Smiley were absent from the Briefing.

MEETING NOTES

Review 5/15/17 Regular Board Meeting Agenda and Updates

During Commissioner Roll Call, Executive Director Lofton announced that Commissioner Smiley submitted his written resignation to the Board.

New SHA Website

Mr. Lofton introduced Communications Director Kerry Coughlin to present the launch of the newly-designed SHA external website. This project has been in the works for more than a year, as the previous website was technologically out of date. Digital Content Manager Holly Henke gave a visual presentation of the website, which was designed for smartphone mobility as 60%-70% of those accessing the site do so by utilizing smartphone technology. The website now displays a cleaner and more streamlined homepage with an easier navigation structure, highlighting resident stories, events, news headlines and agency snapshot of pertinent facts.

Policy Introduction – Voter Registration

Commissioner DeWolf inquired whether the agency provided opportunity for applicants to register and/or provided information regarding voter registration to residents and applicants applying for Housing Choice vouchers. Commissioner DeWolf described the benefits of making voter registration more accessible to our residents. Commissioner Moseley commented that it was a great idea, but that research would be needed to make sure that this policy would not be prohibitive to the agency for providing this service. He also was interested as to whether this is provided at other housing authorities and, if so, what approach was used to make this service available. Commissioner Thiele concurred, and added that research would also be needed regarding perception that some applicants may have immigration/citizenship issues, and may think that this policy would be contingent on their housing accessibility. Mr. Lofton commented that this hasn't been done in the past because the agency's main focus has been on eligibility and requirements based on housing itself, so we have to be careful of not politicizing the application process at all, or of being perceived to influence any particular political party. Staff agreed to research this report back to the Board with a recommendation at a future date.

Housing Choice Voucher Payment Standards (VPS) Analysis

Since the Board increased the Voucher Payment Standard in the summer of 2016, we have been tracking the impact of the increase on voucher applicants. Mr. Lofton provided an interim report which provided some preliminary analysis on the impacts of the VPS increase HCV Program Manager Kelly Zelenka briefed the Board on the interim report.

Effective July 1, 2016, the Board approved a VPS increase to 100% of the 2016 FMR for private sector units in order to make private sector market for tenant-based voucher holders more accessible (affordable) to voucher holders.

This preliminary analysis, based on six months of data, suggests some improvements since the July 2016 VPS adjustments. Our leasing success rate is trending upward, there has been an increase in new voucher holders leasing from private landlords, and affordability has improved for leasing from a private landlord. We hope to have more information regarding the impacts of the increase within the next 6 months. One of the complicating factors is that while we increased our VPS the rental market rates continue to rise, complicating the analysis.

Staff indicated that the financial affect of the VPS increase and the increasing rise in the rental market would be a subject at the upcoming retreat. It was requested that a report be given regarding KCHA VPS rates and shopper lease up success rate at the next Quarterly Voucher Utilization Report held in September.

KPI 2017 1st Qtr. Report

Mr. Lofton introduced Policy & Strategic Director Andria Lazaga who presented a Key Performance Indicators dashboard for 1st quarter 2017 to the Board. This report is a snapshot of how SHA is doing as an organization and to apprise the Board of information that was expressed by them as being key information for staff to report back on.

Commissioner Thiele adjourned the meeting at 5:36 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer