

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE
JANUARY 19, 2021

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Seattle (“Seattle Housing Authority” or “SHA”) met in Regular Session on January 19, 2021, via teleconference. Board Chair Paul Purcell called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. Kimberly Garrett performed a roll call for Board Commissioners in attendance. Commissioners present and absent were as follows:

Present: Paul Purcell, Chair
Dr. Paula Houston, Vice-chair
Robert Crutchfield
Twyla Minor
Gerald Smiley
Debbie Thiele

Absent: Michael Diaz

Public Comment

Chris Ethington, Greenlake Plaza

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Purcell presented the Consent Agenda, which included approval of minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of December 14, 2020; and, approval of the Expenditure Certification Report (Authorization to Pay Outstanding Obligations of Salaries and Claims for the Period of December 1 to December 31, 2020.)

Commissioner Houston moved to approve the Consent Agenda and the motion was then seconded by Commissioner Crutchfield. Hearing no questions or comments, Commissioner Purcell called for a vote. The Consent Agenda was approved unanimously among the members of the Board present at that time (6 yes; 0 no).

Regular Agenda

SHA Executive Director Job/Agency Description

Commissioner Purcell introduced Simone and Ernst Barefield of Gans & Gans Associates and Deputy Director Anne Fiske Zuniga to give the status of the Executive Director job description and executive recruitment process with the Board. This does not require resolution or vote, but to simply develop a consensus that this job description and agency description accurately reflects who we are looking for based upon the materials that we developed in working with retreat facilitator Beroz Ferrell, the staff and board discussion that was had in September and October. Commissioners Purcell, Thiele and Minor are working in the capacity of a Search Subcommittee with the facilitators.

Ms. Fiske Zuniga presented a document to the Board, which indicates that anybody who is interested in learning more about this position or applying should reach out directly to Gans & Gans, as SHA is not accepting applications directly.

The description starts with talking about the Housing Authority. It speaks about SHA's moving to work status, when we became a moving to work agency, and talks about SHA's Hope VI projects that have been completed and Choice Neighborhoods work we are doing now. It talks about number of people that we serve, the units that we own and manage, and the vouchers that we administer. The description also calls out that SHA prioritizes serving households below 30% of area median income, or those that are homeless. We wanted to make sure that people knew that was our focus upon lease up for households. We identify how many staff we have in the agency and wanted to let people know that we are rated double AA with a stable outlook by Standard & Poors credit rating agency, which is an impressive and significant thing for the Housing Authority. Also, that the Board all will potentially vote on the budget next month, which for 2021 is about over \$405 million, to give people a sense of the size of the agency. She then suggested to the Board to include in the agency description the context in which Seattle Housing Authority operates, as well as the economy of Seattle. It speaks on the homelessness challenges that exist in the in the city, as well as the cost of housing in the city to give people just a sense of the environment we operate in, and to also call out how we are a key player and partner with others in the community to address the homelessness challenges.

The ED position description addressed the overall responsibilities of an executive director, woven in the in the duties, knowledge, and abilities sections. These are the results of the conversations were had with the Board as a group with the retreat facilitator to

identify the characteristics of an executive director that were more important to the group and then reflected in the document. At the very end, we identify education, experience, and other requirements, which includes a bachelor's degree in social science, business, architecture, engineering, or a related field that may be substituted for equivalent work experience for the required degree. A Master's degree is preferred and 10 years of work experience in the management of complex large organizations, including eight years in a leadership role, not specifically centered at a housing authority organization. The rest of the description is focused on the City of Seattle.

Ms. Barefield concurred with the presentation. Commissioner Crutchfield noted that included in the City of Seattle focus, there may be information re: cultural events, that it would make sense to add a line saying there's lots of venues and opportunities to take in the local popular culture.

Ms. Barefield then shared with the Board some of the timeline that the subcommittee has put together in December. She and Mr. Barefield conducted stakeholder interviews with funders, people from philanthropic organizations, permanent supportive housing organizations, social service providers, legal services, local government, national public housing authorities, industry leaders, labor leaders, as well as a whole host of stakeholders and the highlights of those meetings. Just that morning, the subcommittee met and talked about the stakeholder feedback and some of the staff feedback. January 19 through February 18th they are actively recruiting, interviewing, and vetting candidates to prepare to present to the subcommittee; that information will be sent on February 16. On February 19, they will be meeting with the subcommittee to review all the candidates and narrow them down to a list of candidates for thorough interviewing. On March 4 and 5, the subcommittee will be interviewing with the candidates. On March 15, the subcommittee will report to the full board, that is narrow the candidates down to somewhere around three candidates. Between March 15th and 19th, the full board will interview the top ranked candidates, perhaps 3 maybe 4, and on April 19, the full Board is to select the preferred candidate. She noted that they had met with a lot of stakeholders and the feedback was positively very consistent, absolutely wonderful feedback regarding Executive Director Lofton's skills, professionalism, that he's a collaborator and skilled partner, as well as his ability in making SHA a housing authority to duplicate nationally. She also mentioned that that him being a national level advocate has brought a lot to the

agency. Mr. Lofton was described as empathetic, courageous and listens. Also noted was his strong relations with the Unions, which was very much appreciated, and that the agency is a racial and social justice promoter.

Legislative Priorities: 2021 Funding & Stimulus Bills

Executive Director Andrew Lofton introduced Intergovernmental Relations Director Lisa Wolters to present an update on the stimulus bills and the 2021 budget bill that was approved and ultimately went into law at the end of the year; what was in it, how it relates to SHA locally, and what other things which might expected here as we are at the eve of the Presidential Inauguration.

Ms. Wolters presented HR 133 Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, which outlines a \$2.3 trillion omnibus (meaning all the bills are rolled into one) appropriations and coronavirus relief funding bill, the second largest economic rescue package in U.S. history, as part of a massive year-end spending bill that contains appropriations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. Passed Congress on December 22, 2020, it was signed by President Trump on December 27, 2020. It addresses FY21 HUD appropriations located in Division L, Title II and emergency rental assistance located in Division N, Title V. Under the Covid-19 portion of the bill, more than \$900 billion would be provided for unemployment aid, direct payments to individuals, and business loans. The measure would provide funding for vaccines and testing and \$25 billion for rental assistance. It would also extend the moratorium on evictions through Jan. 31, expand nutrition assistance programs, and provide additional funds for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The measure does not include limits on COVID-related liability or additional direct funding for state and local governments. The FY 21 Appropriations Omnibus includes \$1.4 trillion to fund the federal government. It provides increased funding for most agencies and programs, including the Health and Human Services, Environmental Protection Agency, and Housing and Urban Development, and Transportation.

FY21 Funding Levels are included in the graph below:

	FY2020 Final	FY21 CLPHA Request	FY21 Final	% Year to Year Change
Capital fund	\$2.869 b	\$5.0 b	\$2.765 b	-3.6%
Operating fund	\$4.549 b	\$4.659 b	\$4.839 b	+6.4%
HCV renewals	\$21.502 b	\$22.779 b	\$23.08 b	+7.3%
HCV admin fees	\$1.977 b	\$2.55 b	\$2.159 b	+9.2%
VASH	\$40 m	\$40 m	\$40 m	Flat funding
FUP	\$25 m	\$25 m	\$25 m	Flat funding
Mainstream Program	\$229 m		\$314 m	+37.1%
TPVs	\$75 m	\$130 m	\$116 m	+54.7%
FSS	\$80 m	\$110 m	\$105 m	+31.2%
Choice Neighborhoods	\$175 m	\$300 m	\$200 m	+14.3%
PBRA	\$12.570 b	\$13.4 b	\$13.465 b	+7.1%
CDBG	\$3.425 b	\$3.8 b	\$3.476 b	+1.5%
HOME	\$1.35 b	\$1.5 b	\$1.35 b	Flat funding

Special Purpose Vouchers included \$43 million for a new special purpose voucher program that serves people at risk of homeless and survivors of domestic violence, which we are still waiting to see how that level of detail gets defined. We have done some reach out on this already with King County Housing Authority and we will need to be working or going to sign off for the homeless Continuum of Care.

The Fostering Stable Opportunities Act allows former foster youth participating in FUP to stay an additional two years under certain conditions (if they are participating in self-sufficiency activities.) Currently, if they are not doing that, then it is a time limited voucher. Also, something we have been talking about for years and really excited to see that this has happened. That expanded the eligibility of VASH to those receiving less than honorable discharge. This will let us serve chronically homeless vets in a way that we have not been able to in the past. This has been quite a barrier. There's no shortage of homeless veterans in Seattle, but there have been many veterans who are interested in the program but weren't eligible to participate.

We predict that with the new administration, homelessness and prevention will be key topic, but they will be looking at that and looking at best practices. We are hoping that will come with perhaps some flexibility around funding the eviction moratorium, which nationally has been extended until January 31. Our state traditionally has had a more

lenient eviction moratorium. \$70 million has been funded for a broadband benefit program for broadband access for low income people.

The Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) bill was a bit of a sleeper, but a huge win. Finally, in this bill, they establish a permanent floor of 4%, but it is effective for acquisitions allocated after December 31st and for bond financed properties placed in service in receiving those allocations after December 31st. What this will do is it will allow multi-family developers across the country and in the Northwest to nationally finance thousands of additional, more rental units. Development Director Terry Galiney went on to state how important, as well as overdue this bill is.

COVID-19 Update

Deputy Director Anne Fiske Zuniga gave the Board an overview on how things are going and with staff and with residents, and shared some history over the past year; what has happened? What have we put in place to support residents and staff? And, what are we working on now as we move towards moving to this new year in relating to the pandemic?.

SHA created a recovery work team, which the purpose was to focus on specific issues relevant to operating under COVID-19 and then giving direction, bringing those recommendations to Cabinet, and having Cabinet approve and then implementing protocols and guidelines. So, we created the Workplace Preparedness protocol and guidelines that really laid out for staff what's expected in terms of doing your job safely, and how the workplace was going to be managed to keep everybody to keep everybody safe before the federal government put into place the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, We knew right away that there needs to be some emergency leave provisions put in place, and so for that period of time, the end of February to the end of March of 2020, SHA created leave information and got that out to employees immediately to give them sort of peace of mind. Then, the Federal Leave program did kick in and the Coronavirus CARES Act was very important. It provided funding for a lot of things. A couple of examples of things we have utilized used Cares Act funding for is reimbursement for PPE we acquired, and plexiglass dividers. Changes to the workplace that we implemented to keep staff safe. We also, in June of this past year, implemented COVID-19 paid emergency leave when it was clear that there was nothing coming from the Federal government to extend the

Corona First Families first coronavirus leave programs the Federal government had put into place. COVID-19 paid emergency leave is SHA's construct to fill the gap between whatever the federal government comes up with next. And, we do expect there to be more leave direction, coming from the feds, but we've got something in place now that's been communicated to employees so they know what leave is available to them if they need to take it. She also recalled that in the mid-year last year we let everybody know when it was clear that we were in kind of a long haul on dealing with COVID-19 that we provided all staff with an additional 5 days of respite leave to take as they saw fit to give them a break. Frankly from the grind of the pandemic, which was appreciated by staff overall. Other supports for staff included high-risk worker protections, expanded alternative work schedules (including prioritizing remote work through July 5), Agency-wide Meeting Free Time from 11am-1pm, temporary suspension of employee monthly commute program premiums, as well as a COVID-19 one-time lump sum salary adjustment for 2021.

SHA COVID-19 cases since February 2020 included 26 confirmed cases: 2 onsite suspected exposures, and 164 potential cases and contact tracing. Confidential, over the phone guidance and assistance, plus follow up resources, were given. Other supports afforded to staff were Wellspring Employee Assistance Program resources, webinars, and Zoom Calls; additional support for parents, including monthly parental support Zoom calls, and leave management Zoom and Microsoft Teams meetings.

Many COVID-19 supports were given to SHA residents, while care for SHA properties were also made a priority:

COVID SUPPORTS TO SHA RESIDENTS

- COVID testing and flu vaccinations
- Wellness calls (approximately 20,000 made to date by SHA alone)
- Food delivery partnership w/ Amazon & Fare Start
- Community Pantry Services: fresh food, hygiene and cleaning supplies, and diapers (40,000 diapers/month)
- Support for those with COVID through partnerships
- Response to acute behavioral health crisis with Sound Mental Health
- Outreach and direct connection to rent relief programs from property management
- JobLink response including UI navigation
- Continued partnership with SPS to meet families' educational needs including books from SPL, teacher conference support, and FAFSA completion assistance. SHA also partners with SPS meal coordination so school children can receive meals delivered to their door
- Other social-emotional youth supports include virtual social group (teen time, cooking classes), art therapy kits

State Employment Mutual City Council meeting on 4/13/2020. [View the meeting recording.](#)

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COVID PROPERTY AND UNIT MAINTENANCE AND CARE

- Regular sanitizing of common areas
- Smoke/CO detector and health and safety inspections of units
- Urgent and emergency work orders
- Asset Management property walks

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Executive Director Report

Mr. Lofton reported to the Board the good news that Wi-Fi access had been established in all of the SHA buildings. Congrats all around from Commissioner Thiele, and the rest of the Board.

Commissioner Purcell asked for any questions, or comments from the Board. Hearing none, it was moved by Commissioner Crutchfield and seconded by Commissioner Thiele that the December 14, 2020 Regular Session of the Board be adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Secretary-Treasurer