

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE  
MARCH 18, 2024

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Seattle (“Seattle Housing Authority” or “SHA”) met in Regular Session on March 18, 2024, via teleconference and at the SHA Central Office. Board Chair Paul Purcell called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Kimberly Garrett performed a roll call for Board Commissioners currently in attendance. Commissioners present and absent were as follows:

Present: Paul Purcell, Chair  
Sally Clark  
Rita Howard  
Twyla Minor

Absent: Gerald Smiley, Vice-chair  
Robert Crutchfield  
Dr. Paula Houston

Public Comment

Dan Kruzich, Bitterlake Manor

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Purcell presented the Consent Agenda, which included approval of minutes for the Special Board Meeting of February 20, 2024; approval of minutes for the Regular Board Briefing of March 11, 2024; and approval of the Expenditure Certification Reports (Authorization to Pay Outstanding Obligations of Salaries and Claims for the Period of February 1 to February 29, 2024.)

Commissioner Clark moved to approve the Consent Agenda and the motion was then seconded by Commissioner Howard. Hearing no further comments, the Consent Agenda was approved by the majority of the members of the Board present at that time (4 yes; 0 no; 0 abstentions).

## Regular Agenda

### Resolution No. 5280 – Acquisition: Verse

Commissioner Purcell called for consideration of Resolution No. 5280; Commissioner Howard motioned, and Commissioner Clark seconded the motion. Executive Director Rod Brandon introduced Sr. Program Manager James Mayton to present Resolution No. 5280 to the Board and recommended adoption of the resolution.

Verse is a multifamily property with the few commercial suites and is located in the Central District of Seattle. SHA recently refreshed our priority considerations for acquisitions as part of a strategic planning effort in early 2022. The five strategic priorities that were agreed upon was to serve more people, maintain financial strength of the agency, preserve existing affordable housing stock and to prioritize residents (moderate/high risk of displacement) and properties (with efficient/feasible management plans). SHA is in a position to acquire the property for roughly 30% less than the \$40 million valuation that it received from the King County Assessor in 2023, and doing so would allow us to serve small families with extremely large two-bedroom units in this diverse neighborhood. In alignment with those considerations, staff negotiated a Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA) for the acquisition of Verse. The PSA states the terms and conditions of this acquisition, including guidelines for SHA's Due Diligence activities. The Board was previously briefed on this matter at the December board meeting. No action was taken.

Resolution No. 5280 gives approval for the Approval to proceed with the transaction for the acquisition of real property commonly known as Verse Seattle, located at 402 22nd Ave S, Seattle Washington for the total sum of \$28M. It also authorizes Executive Director Rod Brandon, or his designee to proceed with the execution of documents to close the transaction as outlined in the Purchase and Sale Agreement dated December 20, 2023.

Hearing no further comments, Commissioner Purcell called for a vote. Resolution No. 5280 was approved among the members of the Board present at the time (4 yes, 0 no; 0 abstentions.)

### Resolution No. 5281 – Acquisition: 101 Elliott Ave W

Commissioner Purcell called for consideration of Resolution No. 5281; Commissioner Clark motioned, and Commissioner Minor seconded the motion. Executive Director Rod Brandon

introduced Asset Management Deputy Director Xuan Che-Osser, who presented Resolution No. 5281 to the Board and recommended adoption of the resolution.

The 101 Elliott Ave W. building is currently used as SHA's Central Office facility, housing a variety of SHA staff, including staff that provide services to program applicants and participants. The building has undergone an extensive renovation process to bring it into conformance with SHA's needs. This five-story building was built in 1986, and contains 103,610-rentable square feet, (1.06 acres in whole property) and has two levels of garage parking that provides the ability to offer 10 visitor parking spaces available to SHA clients. Revenues from 5th Floor leases and the roof antenna may be used to pay for anticipated management expenses. Due diligence was completed and due to an advantageous commercial market, the sale price is below comparable in this region. By acquiring this property, SHA will reduce operating expenses over 15 years, and the purchase will free up funds earmarked for operating cost available for other program needs.

Resolution No. 5281 approves the acquisition of real property commonly known as 101 Elliott Ave W, Seattle Washington for the total sum of \$39,500,000. It also authorizes the Executive Director, Rod Brandon, or his designee to execute all documents on behalf of SHA requiring execution to complete this acquisition.

After further discussion, Commissioner Purcell called for a vote. Resolution No. 5281 was approved among the members of the Board present at the time (4 yes, 0 no; 0 abstentions.) Commissioner noted for the record that although Commissioner Crutchfield previously stated that he would not be able to be in attendance for this meeting, he conveyed via email his support of this acquisition.

#### Housing Choice Voucher Updates

Mr. Brandon introduced Rental Assistance Program Director Alice Kimbowa to present recent updates with the recently opened HCV program waitlist and the outcomes thus far. Ms. Kimbowa introduced staff assisting with this presentation: HCV Deputy Director Dani Fitts, Issuance Supervisor Ryan Lucas, Strategic Advisor Andy Chan, Compliance & Policy Manager Mark LaBrayere, and Housing Services Manager TySonia McClain to the Board.

Our key priorities for the 2024 budget year were to serve more people, as well as serve existing residents well for in order for them to have a great quality of life. We also wanted to make sure that employee well-being is supported and that we do all things with our race and social

justice lens. We also wanted to ultimately manage our finances and be good financial stewards for public funds. So, knowing those priorities, everything that we've been doing has been a focus in those guiding principles, especially as we await the new strategic plan for the agency.

Some key takeaways for our HCV voucher list are that over 14,000 households have submitted their application to join the voucher List, with the majority of applicants reporting to reside in Seattle/King County (71%). Over 60% are BIPOC (with 10% of those identifying as Hispanic) and over 81% reported a household income below 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), which is important since that is one of our priority groups to serve off the voucher list. 42% reported themselves to being homeless, another one of our preferences off the voucher list, and 40% are families with children vs. the 48% that reside in single adult households. Outreach for households is still ongoing, as well as evaluation of the voucher list.

Community engagement outreach started December 18th, one week after the December 12th press release went out. We've added two digital navigators to the team since then to assist the Central Services team with email inquiries, walk-ins and booking appointments for our voucher list assistance and to aid the team out in the community for site visits. Today, the team has facilitated 63 site visits, both on-site and virtual with over 1000 staff and clients in attendance. Combined, the team partnered with Seattle and King County Public Library Systems and Seattle Public Schools to host information sessions, as well as tabling at resource fairs and other events throughout the community, including working with our job team for some of those events. Of the 63 sites, the team has presented at multiple agencies, organizations and community partners who work with low income, homeless and immigrant and refugee individuals and families. They helped to assist these households apply and to help our partners learn how they can assist their clients with the application process. While out in the community, the team has successfully assisted households to register for a portal account and submit their applications online, as well as assisting applicants with creating email accounts. For those organizations where translation services are needed, and, if not provided by the agency, SHA has provided translators. The number of community outreach visits will decrease by the end of March as the team prepares to assist new admissions households with housing, search and lease up assistance. There will be three monthly resource fairs that the team will continue to table app throughout the end of the year.

As a reminder, there here are many things different about this new voucher list, one being that it will not be closed. There has been an incredible outreach effort, and this is a task that will

remain ongoing. Another thing that's new and different is that we are almost exclusively doing applications online. On February 16<sup>th</sup>, SHA conducted a small test selection from the voucher list to make sure that the technology that was being used was functioning the way that it should. Over the past couple of months, we've transitioned into a new piece of technology through Yardi, which is Site Manager; an electronic vehicle to send out applications and receive those applications back directly into that module. Initially, ten families were selected, and the test went well. In order to perform a more random selection test, 500 families were selected. One of the benefits of this new piece of technology through the Yardi Site Manager is that we receive a quicker response within probably a couple hours of sending out those applications via email. We had a handful of applications already returned directly into Site Manager, which was pretty impressive.

To date, we have a 65% success rate in getting applications returned, so about 331 households have already responded and sent in their applications. 26% have not been started, and 8% were started but not completed. A text message will be sent to both of the groups who started to try to get them to finish and to those who have not started at all. We have already approved some applications, and the next selection is going to be one last Friday of the month and we're going to select another 500 applicants. On average, prior to using this module, it took about 60 days to get from that application being submitted to applications being approved and issued. So, this process is moving a little bit faster, which is why we are doing much larger selections.

Voucher list data comparisons show that in the race make-up of the current overall population of Seattle and King County in comparison to the race make-up of the extremely poor population, White people constitute about half of all extremely poor people in Seattle and King Co. Black people, while constituting only 7% of the local population, are disproportionately extremely poor. In considering the race make-up of the 2024 voucher list applicants compare to the 2017 lottery applicants, it has shown that in the 2024 list there is a larger proportion of multi-race and smaller Black compared to 2017 (but combining Black and Multi-race it is comparable). White/Asian application rates 2024 vs. 2017 are comparable. Black people have been applying to the 2024 Voucher List in disproportionately high numbers, and Asian and White people in disproportionately low numbers (compared to the regional population, or regional population of extremely poor people).

In reminding why we chose to do things differently for this voucher list, one of the key goals was to ensure equitable access to vouchers. So, what this information really shares is that,

with the outreach efforts being put into the communities and making sure that support is available in applying or vouchers in comparable to the results we're seeing. Based on the federal poverty, again, more black people have been disparately impacted and we're seeing more people of color disparately impacted, as well. So, one of the key goals was to make sure that we actually reach them, and it looks like so far, we are. Another concern was would we be able to ultimately select them for voucher issuance from a random draw. This shows that we indeed are meeting those goals at this point, and we will continue looking at the processes and the data to again make sure that this is consistent throughout the year, and we will continue to update the Board. The goal this year is to issue vouchers and hopefully lease up at least 850 households, where our goal is to reach 98% MTW utilization.

One strategy for this is to increase project-based voucher (PBV) utilization up to 95%, in that gets us to 300 households leased up. In the past prior to COVID, PBVs had a really high utilization over the course and use consistent. However, due to COVID, similar to our own properties, they've had some challenges leasing up and keeping a high position goal. In order to make sure that we were receiving the right context from our housing partners, we invited all of our housing partners to a town hall recently to talk with them about what they are seeing and why it is that they are experiencing those lower utilization rates than they have in the past. Some additional context for our project-based voucher program because our housing partners maintain the waitlists and refer applicants to SHA, we have fewer direct levers that we can pull to push that utilization forward. So, it is very much about our partnership with our housing partners to make sure that we're doing everything that we can to facilitate them leasing up units and make the process as easy as possible for them. The town hall was the first start for that, and we've found a couple of strategies already, so there was some additional education that we've been able to do with housing partners about their ability to swap units off of contracts. So, for units that they know are going to be vacant for a long period due to rehabilitation or long unit term due to a previous tenant, we're able to work with them to find the different unit in their project. Also, make them aware of some of our flexibilities and requirements that we do have for assisting applicants and actually being approved and our documentation flexibilities where we have them so that they aren't self-selecting out of applicants that might be referred. The other prong of our project-based approach is we have a new building that will be opening up that will be MTW vouchers. This is the SHA owned and managed building at Sawara. We also have a couple of projects that have vacancies, including one that is fully being fully rehabilitated, due to work that

is being done or in rehabilitation. So, by the end of the year, we are expecting several contracts that are currently either extremely low utilization, or no utilization to be fully leased up once again which will boost the project-based utilization overall.

#### Executive Director Report

Mr. Brandon updated the Board on a variety of activities that have taken place at SHA recently.

He made note to the Board to peruse the budget supplemental document included in the Board materials for perusal. Mr. Brandon also made mention of a unit fire that occurred in the Belltower Apartments, as well as altercation between residents at Hinoki Apartments that escalated into an evacuation of the building; good news was that the Red Alert system was used and was successful in containing the incident.

Mr. Brandon continues to have individual meet and greets with the current Councilmembers and hopes to conclude those meetings this spring. He also noted that current commercial vacancies are at a low, and SHA safety records are looking great.

Hearing no further discussion, it was then moved by Commissioner Clark and seconded by Commissioner Minor that the March 18, 2024, Regular Session of the Board be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous decision at 6:43 p.m.

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Secretary-Treasurer