
**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF FREEPORT
DECEMBER 8, 2017**

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Freeport was held on Friday, December 8, 2017, at the Housing Authority of the City of Freeport Administrative Office in the Empowerment Center located at 1052 W. Galena Avenue, Freeport, Illinois at 12:00 p.m. Chair Jennifer Smith-Norman called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present and responded to roll call: Chair Jennifer Smith-Norman, Commissioner Greta Harrell, Commissioner Robert Rhymer, Commissioner Rhonda Becker, and Commissioner Gwen Shirley.

Members absent: Vice Chair Newton and Commissioner Kim Boldt

Also present: Interim Director Babette Jamison-Varner and HACF Counsel Michael Phillips

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Rhymer moved, second by Commissioner Shirley to approve the agenda for the December 8, 2017, regular meeting, as presented. On voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES – November 9, 2017, Regular and Closed

Commissioner Shirley moved, second by Commissioner Becker to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 9, 2017, as amended. On voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The closed session minutes will be considered at an upcoming meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF CLAIMS AND DEMANDS

AT 12:05 P.M. VICE CHAIR NEWTON ENTERED THE MEETING.

Commissioner Shirley requested an explanation for payments. Interim Director Jamison Varner will provide an explanation

Commissioner Rhymer moved, second by Commissioner Becker to approve the Claims and Demands for September, October, and November, as presented. Roll call was as follows:

Newton:	Aye	Rhymer:	Aye	Shirley:	Nay
Harrell:	Aye	Becker:	Aye	Smith-Norman:	Aye

Chair Smith Norman declared the motion passed.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Chair Smith Norman discussed the Executive Director notice of vacancy. The job description will be posted on Indeed, NAHRO, GovHR, and the Journal Standard. The job will be posted by December 15, 2017. At this point, the posting will be for 30 days between each site. Attorney Phillips will check to see if there are any special posting requirements.

Commissioner Shirley suggested language to be added that would state that the candidate should possess a thorough knowledge of federal programs with emphasis on budgeting and accounting and procurement requirements. She also suggested language outlining the ability to successfully interact with various local officials and individuals from diverse backgrounds...

It was clarified that the item presented is not an actual job description, but a notice of vacancy to be posted.

Member Shirley suggested also listing with PHADA (public housing agency and director association). Chair Norman shared that the cost for posting will be approximately \$1,000.

Commissioner Shirley moved, second by Commissioner Newton to accept the job listing for the Executive Director position listed with associations noted. On voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT

Procurement Actions

Ms. Jamison Varner discussed the procurement process. She stated that in regard to the audit, financial protocols as well as policies will be examined. She is recommending Clifton Larson and Allen because they are experienced with public housing. They are located in Florida, but they do have a location in Wisconsin and Illinois. In order to make certain that we can provide accurate financial reports and are tracking finances accurately, we need to think of a CPA firm. She will provide more information on several firms. Discussion as held on cost. Ms. Jamison Varner is waiting on a quote from the firm she has been in contact with.

Human Resources – ROSS Services Coordinator

HACF will be putting together a marketing program for a Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency Services (ROSS) Coordinator. Currently, HACF has hired a Family Self Sufficiency Coordinator that will focus on resident needs and self-sufficiency. That program is for a limit of five years. Residents are able to establish a savings account, are monitored, and

receive training on purchasing a home. Ms. Jamison Varner discussed some of the goals of the residents who are participating. Five people have graduated from the FSS program.

The ROSS Program will focus on skill building and economic independence. The job description has just been completed. This is a grant position.

Commissioner Harrell asked about the purpose of two positions. She stated that she believes in the past that the position was combined and asked for the need for two positions. Ms. Jamison Varner stated that she received communication from HUD that a temporary employee was hired for the ROSS Program however, the program wasn't fully implemented. Some of the services may have been combined. It is a requirement from HUD that the FSS and ROSS are separate programs.

The job will be posted no later than December 11, 2017, with the hope to bring someone in in January.

Website, marketing and social media for public Housing

Ms. Jamison Varner provided an update on website and social media. Minor changes were made to the website. Former employees were removed. A web plan is being developed. The website should be launched in January or February. The Facebook page has been deactivated until a social media policy is established. Her future recommendation is to create a brand identity particularly because of the redevelopment project. We need to take a better look at the public housing piece and promoting public housing.

Rental Assistance Demonstration Project Update

Ms. Jamison Varner highlighted the new logo for Brewster/Hosmer. A website has been created and will be launched.

A meeting was held with Brinshore. Ms. Jamison Varner stated that Hosmer has to be leased up by the end of December. As of November, there were a total of 55 vacant units. Many applications have been processed. If all applications are approved by Maestro and Winnebago County, there will be seven vacancies remaining. Events are planned in the next couple of weeks in order to do electronic applications. Ms. Jamison Varner stated that the marketing program has been very aggressive and has been moving along.

Ms. Jamison Varner encouraged board members to stop by Hosmer and tour one of its projects. She stated that residents are happy with the atmosphere and are encouraging others to apply. She stated that HACF's job is not to manage lives, but to manage the property. She stated that it is important to let tenants know that HACF is there for them and that it is important for them to be happy and a part of a community.

Discussion continued on the application process. Ms. Jamison Varner explained that it will be essential for both RAD and Public Housing to use the modules in our SACC system to be more efficient in the application process.

Board of Commissioners Meetings and Communication

Ms. Jamison Varner provided the board a roster listing Commissioners. An HACF email address has been provided for each board member. Board members should not use personal email addresses from this point forward.

Discussion was held on the 2018 board meetings. Chair Smith Norman stated that next year's schedule has not been set. It was decided that the meetings will continue at noon. The next meeting will be January 12, 2017, at noon. A new schedule will be considered at that time. Attorney Phillips requested that the meeting be posted.

Commissioner Training

Ms. Jamison Varner provided information for board member training. She clarified that this training is supplemental training. She is working on personalized training for Commissioners from HUD.

Board Operating Comparison Statement

Ms. Jamison Varner is working on identifying line items. For the months of October and November, there have been no draws from HUD. Currently we are not receiving our HUD subsidies, but Ms. Jamison Varner is trying to get clearance in order to start receiving.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Executive Search Committee

Commissioner Harrell suggested that Chair Smith Norman serve on the committee

The purpose of the Executive Search Committee is to narrow the search and present recommendations to the board.

Vice Chair Newton suggested that outside community people assist in reviewing applications.

Chair Smith Norman and Commissioner Shirley will be on the Executive Search Committee.

Chair Smith Norman will provide the board with a timeline.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be conducted at this ~~special~~ regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Freeport, Commissioner Shirley moved, second by Commissioner Becker to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and at 12:58 p.m., Chair Smith Norman declared the meeting adjourned.

Jennifer Smith-Norman
Chair of the Board of Commissioners
Housing Authority of the City of Freeport

ATTEST:

Greta Harrell
Secretary Pro-Tem/Commissioner
Housing Authority of the City of Freeport

Corr.
1/12/18
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