



Housing Authority of Okanogan County

431 5th Ave West • Omak, WA 98841 • (509) 422-3721 • fax (509) 422-1713

“Assisting residents of Okanogan County to acquire and retain affordable housing while strengthening our communities by removing barriers, empowering dignity and building trust”

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES Wednesday, March 22, 2023

Present: Dr. Brendan Smith, Becki Andrist (Chair), Rita Kessell, Jimmy Relaford, Nancy Nash (Executive Director), Tracy Tompkins (Accountant), and Lois Hale (Scribe)

Absent: Anthony Gomez, Laura Hernandez (Vice Chair)

Call to Order: at 5:15 by Becki Andrist

Public, Chair, or Commissioner Comments/Correspondence: None.

Approval of Consent Agenda and Prior Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: to approve the Consent Agenda and prior minutes was made by Rita Kessell, seconded by Jimmy Relaford.

VOTE: Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Review of current contract with CLA for accounting and Pine Meadows Senior Housing for property management:

CLA: Accounts Payable is currently contracted with Tracy Tompkins and is done in-house. Eventually an accountant will need to be hired and removal of most of the contract with CLA. Tracy is currently posting receipts, and Housing Assistance Payments but she and Nancy believe it would be in the HA's best interest to do all receipting, month-end closings, and bank reconciliation in-house, eliminating that portion of the CLA expense. Due to health issues, Tracy cannot commit to fixed hours per week. She and Nancy have been looking at bringing someone in to do part of these duties and how many hours would be required so Tracy could focus on other accounting tasks. Some tasks would remain with CLA. It is important to hire someone to be trained by Tracy to be capable of taking over at some point. Becki asked if Nancy could come up with a brief cost analysis to hire vs CLA. Nancy agreed to do a cost analysis. CLA contract was signed last year but HAOC can reduce services at any time within the contract.

Pine Meadows Senior Housing: This is a HUD property with Section 8 attached to every unit. Housing Authority is currently contracted to be the managing agent for the property. A small amount of money received from HUD (about \$500 per month) for management, reporting, inspections, and everything else. Pine Meadows is an LLC and has its own board members. A staff member spends about 10 hours per month working on Pine Meadows. Under the new arrangement, only \$126 per month will be received for accounting costs and the rest of the cost will be “donated” by HAOC from the general fund. Last year Pine Meadows paid \$6435 in accounting fees and about \$1000 of that was related to year-end reports, which can be charged directly to them. All else will have to be absorbed by the HAOC general fund. HUD management requirements are very different from other properties. Meadow Point and Vista Park management entities have other properties like this and Nancy would like to explore having them also manage Pine Meadows. Becki stated that it no longer fits in with HAOC portfolio and spreads staff thinner dealing with this property. Removing this contract will give staff approximately 10



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more hours per month to work on other HAOC properties. Becki stated that it makes sense for the property management company to take over. Rita asked if it has any impact on the tenants and Nancy responded that it will not. Rita asked if there are any other problems besides cost and Nancy responded that staff time is an issue because it takes away so much staff time for only 10 units. HAOC would still be a board member but not manager of the property. Becki commented that HAOC can do so much better with Rural Development properties and it behooves us to let a company that does HUD properties take over the management. Tracy asked if the board needs any other data to make the decision. Rita asked if it saves money and reduces stress, is there any drawback to letting it go? Nancy will answer all the questions at next month's board meeting. Please address any questions to Nancy so she can prepare for the next meeting.

Approval of Bills, Payroll, and Communications (Nancy Nash): All documents have been reviewed and approved by Becki Andrist.

MOTION to approve Bills, Payroll, and Communications from last month was made by Dr. Smith, seconded by Jimmy Relaford.

VOTE: Motion carried.

Finance Report for income and expenses: presented by Nancy Nash. Financial report was sent prior to the meeting via email to board members for review. Balance Sheet was reviewed. Property comparison shows Cariboo Trails with tenant still not evicted. For the first time in months, Cariboo Trails is not in the red; all units are filled up. All other properties are doing fairly well. Board will see an increase of cost between Section 8 Veterans vouchers and PORT (from other counties) and HAOC is trying to increase use of Okanogan Section 8 vouchers. Emergency voucher – there were 15 new vouchers issued during COVID; the last voucher was finally leased this month. Mainstream vouchers are still available. Nancy is starting to go to Chamber meetings and community gatherings to talk about the homeless and low-income housing programs.

Executive Report combined with training:

Utility allowance (a HUD requirement) which must be completed yearly and must be approved by board resolution. Nancy provided a board training on how the Utility Allowance study is done. HAOC establishes utility allowances for the whole county. HUD has a specific set of rules for determining the allowance. It is based on actual utility rates for every town in the county and degree days. Some towns have two different rates which must be taken into consideration. Allowance varies depending on type of unit; apartment, house, trailer, etc. Allowance will run from June 1st to May 31st. If utility costs change more than 10%, the allowance must change. There are some increases this year due to degree-days and price of gas price fluctuation. People with disabilities can be given higher allowances based on need. Tenant pays the difference between allowance and actual bill.

Rent reasonableness: another requirement by HUD is to keep rent cost data of houses in the region that are not Section 8. HAOC must have comparison data that shows HUD is not paying more than market rate. Rent reasonableness must be verified before any rent increase, HAP contract is signed, etc. It is very labor intensive for staff to compile and maintain this data. Nancy recently was referred to a company that maintains this information in a software system. She is asking the board to sign a



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contract of \$3000 per year to provide the required rent comparison data plus \$500 one time fee to set up the account. This will save thousands of hours in staff time.

Resolution 2023-04 – Update to Finance and Procurement Policy.

MOTION: to approve Resolution 2023-04 was made by Dr. Smith; seconded by Rita Kessell.

VOTE: motion carried.

Nancy explained that there are certain times that there are new requirements or policies with new financiers. This resolution approves the executive director to authorize any changes in the Chart of Accounts to accommodate these changes.

Resolution 2023-05 – Utility Allowance.

MOTION: to approve Resolution 2023-05 as presented to the board was made by Rita Kessell, seconded by Dr. Smith.

VOTE: Motion carried.

Resolution 2023-06 – Section 8 Admin Policy change.

MOTION: to approve Resolution 2023-06 to use a web-based company for rent reasonableness verification was made by Jimmy Relaford, seconded by Rita Kessell.

VOTE: Motion carried.

Dr. Smith asked if the application comes up with expected numbers. Nancy responded that the important part is not the rent amount but availability of data. Contract cost will come from fees paid by HUD.

NEW BUSINESS:

New Construction Reports: Wild Rose development – Nancy went to Methow Housing Trust Board meeting to give an update on the project. Layout looked cramped so Nancy requested a little more land and MHT board members decided to gift more land to the HAOC. Nancy submitted a funding application to Congress. Infrastructure is almost ready. Nancy has 3 different pathways for funding and is working on them.

Pioneer Omak Park: Purchase is moving forward; 2 months out from closing date. Rural Development is now requiring a bid for accessibility alterations. Nancy asked to see the regulation that requires a bid which will probably not be relevant a few months from now.

Human Resources: a transition at Elmwood Apartments requires a redesign of a maintenance technician position. The position will be open this week and the management team hopes to find the right candidate soon since there are so many units that need rehabilitation work plus spring landscape work.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 6.54 pm.

MOTION: to adjourn was made by Jimmy, seconded by Rita.

VOTE: motion carried.

Next Meeting: April 26, 2023 at 5 pm.



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