

**VERMONT STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**July 10, 2019**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- **ROLL CALL**

The Board of Commissioners commenced a Public Hearing at 11:00 a.m. and the following Commissioners were present: Chair Caprice Hover, Vice Chair Mary Miller; Jo Ann Troiano; Cory Richardson and Alex Farrell. Caryn Feinberg and Linda Ryan were absent.

Staff personnel present: Richard Williams, Executive Director/Secretary ; Kathleen Berk, Director of Housing Program Administration; Kelly Pembroke, Director of Finance and Information Systems; Susan Kuegel, Director of Property and Asset Management; Krister Adams, Housing Development Specialist; and Laura Macieira, Office Services Coordinator. The Chair of the Vermont State Housing Authority Staff Federation of the Vermont State Employees Association, Nathan Schmechel was also present.

- **COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION: VSHA'S SECTION 8 ANNUAL PLAN, 5-YEAR PLAN AND ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS**

There was no public participation and the Board kept the Public Hearing open in the event someone would want to join the meeting.

Berk began the discussion on VSHA's section 8 Annual, 5-Year Plan and Administrative Plan amendments.

Both plans have been posted to the VSHA's website, including the proposed changes to the Administrative Plans for the last 45+ days. During that time, we received comments from Pathways Vermont, from the Vermont Department of Corrections (DOC) and from a private consumer.

The comment from a private consumer is asking to develop a policy that allows for voucher participants to be able to rent-to-own their homes. In the past, we had a rent-to-own policy which was eliminated

with the home ownership program where folks can use their Section 8 voucher to pay mortgage costs. Berk cannot recommend the Board to adopt a new policy because we did not had a good experience when we offered situations that were similar to rent-to-own.

## **2. MEETING AGENDA**

There were no changes to the meeting agenda.

## **4. MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING – MAY 22, 2019**

Troiano moved to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 22, 2019 and Miller seconded. Hover inquired as to further discussion, there being none a vote was taken. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

## **5. SECRETARY’S REPORT – JUNE 2018 / JULY 2019**

Williams presented updates to his Secretary’s Report.

The Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADUP) pilot program, which was proposed a few months ago, was accepted and the City of Montpelier will be awarded a community development block grant. VSHA will be a sub-grantee and will be responsible for everything regarding to the functionality of the program. We are currently in the process of working through that grant agreement and Tyler Maas will run the program. Williams hopes that in future years, we will be able to bring this program to other Vermont towns.

Miller moved to approve the Secretary’s Report as presented; Richardson seconded. Hover inquired as to further discussion; there being none a vote was taken. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

## **6. FINANCIAL REPORT THROUGH MAY 31<sup>ST</sup>, 2019**

Pembroke presented the following highlights on the Financial Report:

- The financials are looking great.

- The Administrative Fees have gone over, they are on a proration rate and we've leased up some more units.
- The Salaries line, as we talked at the last Board Meeting, we have a few open positions and that is why we're seeing some savings.
- We've done a lot on the Building line and we still have more projects to accomplish for this fiscal year.
- Overall, we are behind compared to where we were last year at this point; but we are exceeding the budgeted projections we've made.

Troiano moved to approve the Financial Report as presented; Miller seconded. Hover inquired as to further discussion; there being none a vote was taken. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

## 7. FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET

Pembroke presented the FY 2020 budget with the changes that Richardson suggested. We've added a column to the budget format that has what we budgeted for 2019 and also has what we are planning to spend for the remaining of 2019.

Pembroke went over the notes that supported the budget and were included in the Board packets.

Miller moved to approve the FY 2020 Budget as presented; Farrell seconded. Hover inquired as to further discussion; there being none a vote was taken. All voted in favor and the motion passed.

## 8. HOUSING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION UPDATES

- **Resolution Authorizing Vermont State Housing Authority Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2020, 5-Year Plan 2020-2024 and Amendments to Chapter 4 and 11 of the Section 8 Administrative Plan**

The following Resolution was presented to the Board for consideration.

### **RESOLUTION**

#### **2020 Annual Plan, 2020 – 2024 5-Year Plan and proposed amendments**

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Vermont State Housing Authority Board of Commissioners accepts the PHA Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2020 (October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020) and the PHA 5-Year Plan for 10/1/19 – 9/30/2024, including the Amendments to Chapters 4 & 11 of the Section 8 Administrative Plan, the PHA

Certifications of compliance with the PHA Plan and related regulations, as presented, and authorizes the Chairman to sign the certifications and approve the submission of the PHA Annual Plan for 2020 and 5-Year Plan for 2020 – 2024.

Berk mentioned that as it relates to the preferences that we use for admitting families to our voucher program, in Chapter 4, it is our hope that next year we will be able to consolidate all the preferences because the current needs are now different. One of the examples is the preference for homeless families with case management support, which was adopted approximately five years ago, during a time the Vermont rent subsidy program wasn't able to serve additional families; and this was our contribution to allow the state to support more families. The current reality is that we have an adequate supply of family unification vouchers program that has become the avenue that the Vermont Rural Subsidy pursue for permanent rental assistance. The preference for homeless families with case management isn't being used and therefore, it is not necessary anymore.

One of the changes proposed recommends the adoption of a preference for Vermont residents since VSHA was originally created to serve the needs of the Vermont population. The way this preference will work is that anybody who applies to our waiting list and has a Vermont residency status will be provided a preference. We've also made a clarifying change to the disaster preference, making it clear that the preference is available for Vermont residents.

The preference for non-elderly persons with disabilities and/or transitioning out of institutions, like corrections or hospitals; is something we considered last year and we've followed through with it in this year's plan.

Hover asked for a motion to accept the Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2020, 5-Year Plan 2020-2024 and Amendments to Chapter 4 and 11 of the Section 8 Administrative Plan Resolution as presented. The motion was made by Troiano and seconded by Miller. Hover inquired as to further discussion; there being none a vote was taken. All others voted in favor and the motion passed.

- **CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING**

At 12:46 p.m. Richardson moved to close the Public Hearing; Farrell seconded. All voted in favor and Hover closed the public hearing.

- Updates

Berk added that the waiting list for the voucher program will be re-opened on August 1<sup>st</sup> to accept application from folks who meet the eligibility for the 811 mainstream housing choice voucher program only. We will be doing that in a very strategic way, working with the Vermont Agency of Human Services, which will be presenting us with candidates that might meet the eligibility criteria. On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, HUD issued a new notice of funding available for more funding for the 811 program and additional vouchers will be available.

Recently, we received an invitation to apply for more HUD-VASH support housing vouchers, which requires the support of the VA Medical Center in White River Junction.

Berk and the Board held a conversation about the family unification program and the exiting difficulties of leasing up the vouchers we currently have.

The last update relates to the performance based contracts administration (PBCA) and annual contributions contracts (ACC); currently we have an extension of our ACC through the end of the year. We also have a conference call set up for next week with HUD regarding the management occupancy reviews that we are performing and also regarding the transition of contracts to our ACC. There are a number of traditional contracts in the state of Vermont that have not been moved for performance based contracts because of the re-bid of the contract administration work. HUD is wanting to migrate contracts that can be moved to our ACC, which means that we will be taking onto additional work we haven't had before and overall, this will be a positive change.

Williams added that we've been approached by the Bennington Housing Authority because they are converting their public housing to rental administration demonstration program, which is a project-based subsidy versus a traditional public housing subsidy. They won't be able to own and inspect their own units and they've asked us if we would be interested in performing the inspections of their 195 units. The Board held a conversation about this request and how taking on these units would impact our field staff.

At 12:00 p.m. the Board recessed for lunch and returned to session at 12:20 p.m.

## 10. PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT UPDATES

Kuegel presented the updates.

The Fiscal Year 2020 Mobile Home Park (MHP) capital budget has been completed and approved by the HFI Board and we've sent notices of rent increases to MHP's tenants. The RD October 1<sup>st</sup> budgets are either completed or in draft form and have been submitted.

This past June 14<sup>th</sup>, we've had an open house at Hollister Hill Apartments and it went very well. On that evening, there was a tenant barbecue, where the residents came out, all the children were present; and it was a very pleasant gathering.

## 9. DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Adams presented a brief update.

The parapet of the historic Colodny Building, in White River Junction, is falling apart and we have to repair it. We are waiting on a proposal from Alpine Restoration with the costs that will take to make the repairs needed.

Williams added that for the past three years, the VSHA staff has brought up to the HFI Board that the Colodny Building and the Morse Block Apartments need to have renovations done. Hopefully we will be able to join two or three properties together under one limited partnership for the tax credits in order to do the updates that need to be done.

The School Street Apartments in Plainfield need to have improvements on its stone foundation and have other repairs made, which are planned to start in late summer 2019.

Williams added that for the Lauredon Apartments in Greensboro, we will be closing soon the loan for the redevelopment project of this property and currently, we are in the bidding process.

## 10. OTHER BUSINESS

Williams gave a historical background of HFI to the Board, which then engaged in a discussion about the relationship between VSHA and HFI; and the possible implications of the bonds maturing.

The Board asked that for the November 2019 Board meeting, Williams and the VSHA management staff make a presentation about the several options and outcomes that VSHA might have when the bonds of the HFI portfolio come to an end and the properties are transferred to VSHA.

The Board will invite Jonathan Bond for the September 2019 Board Meeting to discuss the Board's concerns and to receive updates about HFI's progress.

There being no other business, Miller made a motion at 12:55 p.m. to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Troiano and all voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard M. Williams  
Executive Director/Secretary