

MINUTES

Longmont Housing Authority Advisory Board

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

Virtual Meeting

1. Call to order and roll call

The regular meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Cameron Grant

Members Present: Cameron Grant
Jean Christopher
Tom DeBie
Arlene Zortman

Members Absent: Lauren Cely

Others Present: Harold Dominguez – Interim Executive Director, LHA
Karen Roney – Director of Community Services, City of Longmont
Kathy Fedler – HCI Division Manager, City of Longmont
Polly Christensen – Longmont City Council liaison
Kyndra Daniels – Accounting Supervisor, LHA
Lisa Gallinar – Regional Property Manager, LHA
Olivia DeVere – Administrative Coordinator, LHA

2. Review and approval of February 16, 2021 Minutes

Arlene recommended a minor amendment. A motion was made by Jean to approve the minutes with the suggested amendment.

Motion: Jean Christopher **Second:** Arlene Zortman **Approved**
Carried 4-0

3. Public invited to be heard: None

4. New and Old Business

a. Update on Inclusionary Housing Program

Kathy Fedler reviewed the draft of an “Inclusionary Housing Snapshot” that includes information about affordable housing. She reported that Longmont is about 45% of the way toward the regional affordable housing goal of 12% permanently affordable units

by 2035. In 2018, there were 2,300 affordable housing units, which accounted for 6.2% and the goal is 12%. Only 6 units were added in 2019 because Fall River didn't get its certificate of occupancy until 2020. 90 units were added in 2020 from Fall River and the Micah project; the Inn Between acquired a market rate project that will be converted to affordable, so those units are included as well. 14 for-sale homes were also brought on bringing the total to 6.07%. Going forward in 2021, projection includes about 73 new units, in 2022 about 175 new units, and in 2023 about 240 units. 5400 is the total goal. Of the 2,432 units that are affordable, 94% are rental homes and 6% are for-sale homes. In 2020, \$746,000 of federal funds as well as \$233,000 from local affordable housing funds were invested in affordable housing units, which leveraged \$15 million in other funding (primarily comes from the Fall River project, and the acquisition of the Inn Between units).

She went on to address the Fee-In-Lieu Pipeline graph that showed \$14,622 received in Fee-In-Lieu that was paid into the affordable housing fund. She also reviewed the projected amounts for the coming 3 years. About \$808,124 is projected to be received in 2021.

Kathy Fedler reviewed another graph that demonstrated the median sales prices in Longmont for both Single Family detached homes and Single Family attached homes as well as a graph that displayed new versus existing home sales in Longmont. She then went over the income needed to purchase or rent in Longmont; a family needs to make around \$115,000 income to afford a median-priced home which is about \$40,000 higher than the area's median income.

A board member asked, "if an existing facility does not currently have affordable housing, can it have units included in the future?" Kathy advised that, if they wanted to deed restrict their units, they could contact HCI. She added that there are currently not enough available subsidies to get to that point but that it can be looked at in the future. The question was also asked about the average rental price in Longmont and Kathy reported that \$1504 is the average price in Longmont. Board members asked to see a chart of the average rent prices over the years and Kathy advised that she can add it to the sheet.

Inclusionary housing and the need for affordable housing in Longmont as it relates to the goals of the Housing Authority is discussed. Staff suggested that goals for the future should include aggressive development of affordable housing on the properties owned by the City that are vacant and how more land can be acquired. Staff also discussed the 9 acres that were acquired for affordable housing developments through the Costco deal. Staff emphasized the importance of developing new units on that land as quickly as possible; this is the plan for the new development, Sunset Heights on the land where the Suites is located. Staff mentioned two other properties as well. Developing vacant

land into affordable housing not only provides AH units to the community but will also increase the revenue brought into the organization. Staff discussed the importance of development of communities for families, since LHA's majority of current properties are specifically for older adults. Staff added that LHA owns 11 acres and if properties are developed on that land, the portfolio will double, and this will reduce the LHA's financial dependency on HUD. Staff voiced the importance, also, of expanding the acquisition of Housing Choice Vouchers and briefly discussed some new housing concepts that we may be able to expand on soon.

The role of the LHAAB is discussed as how it relates to these future development opportunities. One board member inquired about the City's restrictions when it comes to how many floors a building can have. Staff stated that there might be some opportunities for higher-rising buildings in certain areas of Longmont that are not adjacent to other residential areas; it would need to be discussed first with City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission. Currently the maximum height allowed is 6 floors.

A board member inquired about new development opportunities and asked if an increase in properties will assist with keeping rent costs low for residents. Staff explained the role that "fee in lieu" has in subsidizing these properties so that the rents can remain lower by relying more on subsidy and less on equity.

b. Presentation of 5-year plan – review and recommendation to LHA Board

Kathy Fedler presented an overview of the plan. She prefaced by stating that there was a waiver to submit in 2020 so although it is being submitted in 2021, it covers 2020-2024 and aligns with the City's Consolidated Plan. The plan was posted publicly for comment even though the requirement was waived by HUD this year.

Board members inquired about the goal listed in the plan of "two new developments a year" and Kathy clarified that "two" refers to new property owners that accept Section 8 vouchers. Another board member asked about the pushback that currently exists from private landlords regarding participation in the Section 8 program. Kathy named some of the work that has been done and continues to be done to encourage more landlords to participate in the program including security deposit incentives, etc. Staff added that work has been done through the City's engagement with local property owners around "positive tenancy". Boulder County also received grant funding for a Landlord Acquisition Specialist position whose job it to build relationships with property owners and encourage their involvement in the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Board member Christopher expressed her excitement about this update. She spoke about complaints she has heard from landlords about the amount of work to house a voucher-holder and asked what can be done to reduce the burden on the landlord. Staff

responded that surveys are periodically conducted with property owners about their participation in the program. That input is used to improve the participation process. The goal is to create successful tenancy for both the landlord and the tenant by encouraging the use of community resources to deal with any issues that may come up. Staff also mentioned a new Colorado state law that requires property owners with 5 or more units in one building cannot consider the source of income when selecting a tenant.

Chairman Grant discussed the LHAAB's role in the recommendation of this plan and prompted the board members to give their input. Board members stated that reducing the budget to a 25% dependence on HUD funds from 45% seems like an aggressive goal and that they are more comfortable with a goal of 35%. Staff indicated that goal was included and carried forward from the 2014-2019 plan. Chairman Grant asked if the board should consider leaving that goal out of the plan and staff suggested it be kept in and amended.

A motion was made to recommend the 2020 5 Year Plan to the LHA Board of Commissioners for approval with the proposed amendment: a goal to reduce dependency on HUD funding by 10% except for the Housing Choice Voucher Program
Motion: Jean Christopher **Second:** Tom DeBie **Approved**
Carried 4-0

c. Review Bad Debt Policy and Recommendation for LHA Board

Staff presented an overview of proposed changes to the existing policy as well as how it related to proposed resolution 2021-03. Staff explained a situation regarding a tenant that was given proper notice of a rental increase but continued to pay the lesser rent amount and LHA staff at that time failed to notice and correct the discrepancy. The tenant moved out in January 2021 with a \$1,000 debt. Because the deadline for security deposit return was approaching, the Executive Director made the decision to write off this debt in order to remove it from the Yardi system and process the security deposit return. The proposed amendment to the policy would allow the Executive Director to write off up to \$5,000 of debt, if needed, in the future. Attempts will be made whenever possible to seek Board approval beforehand; however, this will allow staff to take action in instances that require more immediate responses.

The proposed policy also changes the timeframe to reach a repayment agreement from 30-days to 90-days. Staff added that extending the timeframe also provides more time to attempt to collect rent from the tenant.

One board member inquired about the process by which payments are posted to a tenant's ledger and staff confirmed that Community Managers create their own ledgers and coordinate with LHA's Accounting Supervisor to correct official ledgers. This ensures

a separation of duties between the managers and accountants.

Staff reiterated they are making process improvements in collecting rent payments and that they are collaborating with Senior Services regarding resources and resident engagement.

A motion was made to recommend the Bad Debt Policy to the LHA Board for approval

Motion: Jean Christopher **Second:** Arlene Zortman **Approved**

Carried 4-0

5. **City Report**

 a. **Update on Operations**

Snowstorm Update

LHA's vendor for snow removal terminated their contract after the first snowstorm of this season; City Recreation and Golf maintenance staff have been providing snow removal at the LHA properties for the remainder of this winter season. Harold Dominguez indicated that crews worked hard to ensure emergency access during this recent heavy snowstorm. Residents were requesting snow removal behind and between cars, and sometimes from their cars. It is not feasible to meet all of these requests, but options are being evaluated about how to make residents' cars more accessible during significant snow events.

Lisa Gallinar applauded her management and maintenance team for the great work they did to help with snow removal. Harold praised all LHA staff that worked during the storm for their phenomenal work.

Board member Christopher spoke about volunteers that will help clean cars and shovel for older adults in the area. She mentioned that construction is due to begin on the AMSA parking lot there is still too much snow to easily move cars. Staff indicated that the POD removal and parking lot construction will likely be delayed for a short time due to the snowstorm.

Property Updates

Lisa Gallinar updated the advisory board about the upcoming install of a pendant emergency call system at the Hearthstone and Lodge.

Harold Dominguez gave a brief update about new security systems being installed at specific properties, based on available budgets. The goal is to integrate all systems at the properties; same fob system, same camera system, etc.

Other Updates

Lisa Gallinar announced that a Community Manager position is posted for Fall River and Spring Creek. Lisa is also focusing on ways to improve resident engagement in the communities.

Waitlist Update

Karen Roney updated the advisory board on work that Olivia DeVere has done to enter HCV waiting lists into Yardi in order to more efficiently manage the waitlist. The last waiting list update occurred in 2018. Notifications were sent out to the 900 households still on that waiting list and asked for a response within a certain number of days if they wished to remain on the waiting list. Approximately 120 households remained following the purge and Olivia entered them into Yardi.

Vacancy/Aged Receivables Reports

Lisa Gallinar presented the current vacancy report and briefly summarized current vacancies that exist in the LHA properties and plans to fill them.

Harold Dominguez commented that the organization's ability to better utilize Yardi was the result of LHA's work the Yardi consultant and training provided by the consultant and through the Aspire platform.

Acknowledgement to staff

Harold Dominguez spoke briefly about the unit at the Suites that flooded and how it impacted the tenant. He assured the advisory board that everything is being done in a timely manner to return the resident to her unit as quickly as possible.

Harold gave a shout out to the LHA and City staff for their fearless yet caring efforts and for their commitment to moving the organization forward. Harold added that the pace of the work is beginning to move along very quickly. He gave a shout out to Lisa Gallinar for all she has taught him so far and commented that she has been an integral part of the work that has been done to stabilize the organization. He concluded by saying that the future of the organization is bright. Staff added that Harold has embraced the role of interim Executive Director and gave him a shout out for the great job he has done. Chairman Grant expressed excitement for the future.

6. Next Meeting – April 20, 2021

7. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia DeVere

Cameron Grant, Chair

April 20th, 2021
Date Approved

Tom DeBie, Vice Chair

April 20th, 2021
Date Approved

