



## **Minutes of the Board of Commissioners Meeting November 19, 2019**

### **MEETING CONVENED**

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners for MaineHousing convened on November 19, 2019 at the offices of MaineHousing, 353 Water Street, Augusta, Maine. Notice of the meeting was published on November 8, 2019 in Central Maine newspapers.

Chair Lincoln Merrill called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The meeting convened with Commissioners Donna Talarico, Kevin Joseph, Laurence Gross, Thomas Davis, Bonita Usher, State Treasurer Henry Beck, and Director Dan Brennan present. There was a quorum present.

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE**

Guests and staff present for all or part of the meeting included: Linda Uhl, Chief Counsel; Peter Merrill, Deputy Director; Tom Cary, Treasurer; Denise Lord, Senior Director of Communications and Planning; Laurie Murray, Director of Homeless Initiatives; Daniel Drost, Director of Energy and Housing Services; Kyme Ferenc, Manager of Housing Services; Liz Moberg, Technical Services Specialist; Troy Fullmer, Manager of HEAP & Weatherization Services; Jane Whitley, Director of Human Resources and Facilities; Darren Brown, Director of Finance; Craig Reynolds, Director of Homeownership; Allison Gallagher, Director of Housing Choice Vouchers; Mark Wiesendanger, Director of Development; Clyde Barr, Policy Analyst; Andrew Thomas, Help Desk Analyst 1; Brenda Sylvester, Community Housing of Maine, Inc.; and Gerrylynn Ricker, Paralegal and Note taker.

### **ADOPT AGENDA**

*Commissioner Joseph made a motion seconded by Commissioner Gross to adopt the November 19, 2019 agenda. The vote carried unanimously.*

### **APPROVE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 15, 2019 MEETING**

*Commissioner Joseph made a motion seconded by Commissioner Davis to accept the October 15, 2019 minutes with one correction. The vote carried unanimously.*

### **COMMUNICATIONS AND CONFLICTS**

- Commissioner Joseph told of working with KVCAP to donate two cords of wood.
- Chair Merrill had a conversations with Brian Sites of Volunteers of America about projects MaineHousing owns, funding, what we are putting in to them, and whether we're losing money or making money when we turn them over to a new owner. Director Brennan explained we are holding three projects which we are in the process of transferring and we are able to cover our expenses.
- Chair Merrill also reported that he had spoken with Director Brennan about an invitation he had received to attend an informational potential development meeting at Avesta Housing. Chair Merrill was not sure if it was appropriate for him to go; however, he had a conflict and was unable to attend.
- Chair Merrill also reported he had lunch with his stepfather who is on the Board for the MDI/Ellsworth Housing Authority and they discussed the affordable housing crisis in that area of the state.
- Commissioner Gross reported he has had conversations with local developers regarding

development costs and the amount of time it takes from project approval to receiving a certificate of occupancy.

## **CHAIR OF THE BOARD UPDATES**

None.

## **DIRECTOR UPDATES**

Director Brennan reported issues, his activities and upcoming matters as follows:

- Met with Senator Collins in Biddeford. She announced the lead grants awarded to us, Biddeford, Lewiston/Auburn and Portland.
- Attended the NCSHA annual conference in Boston.
- Met with the HUD Regional Administrator, David Tille, as well as the HUD State Director, Kelsey Brown.
- Chair Merrill and Director Brennan attended an event in North Yarmouth with Governor Mills where AARP announced that Maine has become an age-friendly state.
- Working with Representative Morales of South Portland regarding legislation around homelessness and services.
- Spoke with the Maine Bankers Retail Lending Committee regarding our single family homeownership loans.
- Met with Genesis Community Loan Fund in Brunswick. They are going to be going through a leadership change when Bill Floyd retires at the end of the year. Liza Fleming-Ives will be the new executive director. John Gallagher is now working for Genesis in their development department.
- Director of Homeownership, Craig Reynolds, and Director Brennan met with the Manufactured Housing Association at their annual meeting.
- Downeast Community Partners recognized MaineHousing with their Partner of the Year award. Representative Golden was there.
- Attended the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition annual meeting. Governor Mills was there.
- Met with Dana Totman of Avesta.
- Met with Nathan Szanton and Amy Cullen of the Szanton Company and Deb Keller of Bath Housing Authority.
- Attending the Age Friendly kickoff at DHHS.
- Invited by an immigration and asylum seeker group to attend a discussion in Portland.
- Receiving an award on behalf of the agency from KVCAP for partnership recognition.
- Meeting with former MaineHousing Director, David Lakari in Portland. Mr. Lakari is still very much involved with affordable housing.
- Meeting with Cheryl Sessions, the new Portland Housing Director.
- Meeting with the Maine Affordable Housing Coalition on December 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Cony Flatiron building to discuss construction costs.
- Attending the NCSHA Executive Director Meeting on December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> in Washington, D.C.
- Announced the winners of the 9% tax credit round. After that announcement was made, it was learned that we missed some points in scoring on one project which changed the results of the winners. Unfortunately we had to inform Westbrook Housing Authority that they in fact did not win. Commissioner Usher expressed concerns. A lengthy discussion followed.
- Working diligently with DHHS around recovery homes. Will be meeting with Gordon Smith, the Governor's opioid director.

- Received the HEAP allocation and completed the calculation of benefits. Check run is imminent.
- 2020 resource allocation is underway. Finance Director Darren Brown will be reviewing the proposed 2020 budget.
- The Community Solutions Grant has been completed. The City of Biddeford is our first applicant.
- We have ten participants in the Leadership Development Program.
- MaineHousing will be the administrator for the Youth Homeless Development grant.

### **2020 DOE WEATHERIZATION STATE PLAN INTENT TO PROCEED**

Manager of Housing Services, Kyme Ferenc, gave an overview of the 2020 Department of Energy's (DOE) Weatherization State Plan using the guidance received from DOE. Ms. Ferenc reviewed the changes in the plan and presented a slide show. A public hearing will be held at the December Board meeting.

### **PRELIMINARY 2020 BUDGET**

Director of Finance Darren Brown presented the 2020 preliminary budget. The 2020 budget reflects continuing improvement with the agency's financial position and performance. Total revenues are budgeted to exceed expenses by \$8.5 million. Darren reviewed the major components of the two primary business segments – mortgage lending activities and the program administration activities. The Commissioners had the opportunity to ask questions and provide input prior to the final budget presentation and vote at the December 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **FAIR MARKET RENT RATE CHANGES REVIEW**

Director of Housing Choice Vouchers, Allison Gallagher explained that every year HUD releases the fair market rents. The voucher program is allowed to set their own rent standards which are typically 90 to 110 % of HUD's fair market rents. MaineHousing tends to set their rent standards as high as possible since we have 60% of vouchers going to folks who are experiencing homelessness. Currently we have 250 to 300 people searching for units. We have requested a reevaluation of several fair market rent areas. Policy Analyst Clyde Barr reviewed for the Commissioners the list of fair market rent areas in Maine; the 2019 fair market rents for two bedroom units; the 2019 voucher payment standard for two bedroom vouchers; the proposed 2020 fair market rent; the difference in percentage from 2019 / 2020 fair market rents; and the percentage of vouchers in each fair market rent area currently in MaineHousing's portfolio. Director Brennan will keep the Commissioners updated on our request for reevaluation.

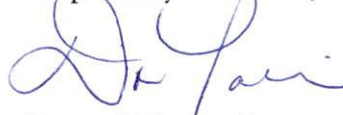
### **2020 QAP RESULTS**

Director of Development, Mark Wiesendanger came prepared to talk about the recent 9% tax credit winners. Because this matter was discussed during Director Brennan's updates, Mr. Wiesendanger's presentation was not needed.

### **ADJOURN**

*Commissioner Joseph made a motion seconded by Commissioner Gross to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m. by unanimous vote of the Board.*

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Talarico, Secretary