

Minutes of the Affordable Housing Council (AHC) Meeting

Tuesday, July 13, 2021

2:30-4:00 pm

Virtual via WebEX and

Facebook Live on Frederick County Boards and Commissions Facebook page

Minutes of Meeting

Call to Order: Chairperson Mark Long called the meeting to order at 2:31 pm and reviewed virtual meeting practices and protocol. He stated: Public comments will be accepted on the AHC live portal located at <http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/Commissions>, or by calling toll-free 855- 925-2801, entering meeting code 9813, and leaving a voicemail comment to be played back to the board or entering into a queue to give live public comment. Written comments and transcribed voice messages will be included in the AHC record and minutes. Please note that personnel matters are confidential and cannot be received through this kind of forum. Afterwards, he spoke to the mood of recent events and invited all to share some joy as roll was taken.

Attendance:

Members Present: Malcolm Furgol, Assan Sosseh, Kandy Alexander, Hugh Gordon, Angie Liddiard, Tiffany Fossett, Jason Wiley, Mark Long, Patricia Galloway

Members Absent: Bruce Zavos, Mary Ellen Mitchell, Kimberly Ashkenazi

Public Officials/Staff Liaisons: Derek Shackelford, Liaison, City of Frederick Board of Alderman; Jessica Fitzwater, Liaison, County Council; Susan Brown, Director DHCD

Guests/Visitors: Christine Cambareri Kay, Division Director, Citizens Services of Frederick County; Beth Ovando, Director of Operations and Compliance, Housing Authority of the City of Frederick; Roger Sobkowiak, Human Relations Commission; Alan Feinberg; Ashli Morris, Family Services Coordinator, Habitat for Humanity; James Baker, Community Resource Impact Coordinator, Housing Choice Voucher Program; Maggie Galloway, intern to Malcolm Furgol; Robin Inskeep, Accounting Supervisor, Frederick County Finance Division

Agenda: Mark made a change of the order of items to the agenda by switching Business items number 1 and 2 with each other. Kandy made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Malcolm seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Minutes of June 8, 2021 Meeting: Kandy made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Malcolm seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Announcement of Appointment and Reappointments to AHC: Mark welcomed and introduced Assan Sosseh, Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Manager, Frederick County Habitat for Humanity.

Mark announced the reappointments of Kandy Alexander, Patricia Galloway, Angie Liddiard, Mary Ellen Mitchell, Jason Wiley, and Bruce Zavos. Christine Cambareri Kay, Division Director, Citizens Services of Frederick County, announces and congratulates Susan Brown for being hired as the new Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development of Frederick County. Susan Brown made brief comment, and Mark Long congratulated her on behalf of the Council.

Presentation by Beth Ovando, Director of Operations and Compliance, Housing Authority of the City of Frederick (HACF): Beth introduced the presentation as being 12 slides going over what the Housing Authority does and what they look forward to doing in the future. Beth introduces herself and explains part of her new work is taking over part of what the retiring Deputy Director, Theresa Justice, did at HACF. HACF centralizes their mission on thriving. They are mostly known for their public housing. Public housing are properties owned by HACF and they currently provide 284 units. Public housing communities are mostly centralized in downtown Frederick as the Lincoln Apartments, Carver Apartments, Lucas Village, Scattered Sites Townhouses, and in FR1 and Hillcrest. HACF Family services division helps with education. They support employment objectives and healthy living, provide leadership to youth residents, offer youth programs (including an early learning center), support advanced degrees and certificate goals and achievements, and offer on-the-job training. HACF partners with businesses and agencies who are willing to help and support residents and objectives. Beth acknowledges partnership with The United Way. Family Self Sufficiency is a program HUD sponsors for families to set educational goals and HACF to match a portion of their rent and put that money into an escrow account they can earn back if/when they meet their goals while still in the program contract. HACF partners with agencies to offer financial counseling. They offer home ownership through their voucher program by, if approved, they can apply their voucher to help pay a mortgage. Community partnerships, like The Curious Iguana, help fundraise. The other main program of HACF is the rental subsidy program Choice Voucher side. Authorized by HUD to provide 805 households with vouchers. Vouchers cover the gap between what the family can afford and what the market rate in the area is. Mainstream Voucher program offers vouchers to households with at least one disabled member between the ages of 18-61. Received vouchers right before COVID and opened the waitlist August 2020. HACF got all 39 issuances issued. They offer project-based vouchers that are unit specific. Eight of the units are at 520 N. Market. Waiting list for public housing is 1-2 years (can be 4+ for one bedrooms), for vouchers is usually closed so it won't get too big to manage, and for the Carriage House is 14 units of subsidized housing based on vacancies. Catocin View Homes, 800 Motter Ave, is a newly renovated HACF project of 76 one-bedroom units with project-based vouchers requiring a member of the unit to be 62+. Occupancy begins this fall, and the waiting list is open. HACF upcoming projects include 150 units of elderly/disabled and family housing at South Street Centre and 65 units at Madison on Market.

Presentation by Beth Ovando, Director of Operations and Compliance, Housing Authority of the City of Frederick (HACF) (continued): Roger asks what equity and inclusion mean to HACF. Beth responds equity is addressed by having a mission to offer diversified communities with mixed-income and housing is an equal opportunity agency and they target needs while serving many. Assan asks what the subsidy guidelines are. Beth responds by explaining some of the guidelines for programs. Alan asks if there will be single room occupancy units. Beth responds yes, South Street units will have them. Angie confirms. Mark asks for clarification from Alan if that answered his question. Alan then asks something he had seen elsewhere like in a converted hotel in MC. Malcolm asks if there is anything the AHC can do to help

HACF. Beth responds funding is always a need, and public outreach educating people that affordable housing can take years to get relief to people in need so people can form a plan before the need arises. Kandy says needing housing is not just for low-income but also to help people get into and through difficult times.

Discussion of August meeting: With no objections, Mark cancels the August meeting.

Susan announces councils will be able to begin meeting in person in September. Mark opens the topic of meeting in person or virtually for discussion. The council has a general discussion about meeting options. Mark says the Executive Committee will discuss options in September and add it to the September agenda.

Committee updates:

Susan Brown- Employees returned to the office. Close to hiring two positions. Emergency Rental Assistance is still available and Ryan has posters about it.

Messaging committee- Hugh says FB following is up to 188 – 400 followers/participants, solicits council for articles to post, says Ryan needs help distributing posters. Susan clarifies she thinks Ryan might need help distributing to remote areas.

Derek Shackelford- Gave an update on ADU legislation. Passed PC phase. It is coming back to workshop August 4 at 3:00 and public hearing August 19. He says letters of support and calling in for public comment in support would be helpful.

Public Comment: There was no public comment at this time.

Council member comment:

Malcolm says the first-time homebuyer amount a person can save has been increased to \$3000 with a match of \$12,000 for a total of \$15,000 starting July 1. Says he is now fulltime with Frederick Health, Executive Director for the Frederick County Healthcare Coalition, will be sharing the community health needs assessment survey soon, and the COVID-19 impact on ALICE households survey assessment is complete and will be sharing it with the council soon.

Assan shares Habitat for Humanity provides a home repairs program.

Susan shares American Rescue Act included assistance for homeowners – funds will remain at state level.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:59.

The next meeting will be September 14, 2021.