Minutes of the Special Meeting
of the Board of Commissioners of the
Housing Authority of the City of Everett

February 3, 2025

Meeting Called to Order

The Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Everett was called to order by Chair Koren Smith at 12:01 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2025. This meeting was held as a hybrid meeting, with participants attending in person at the Colby Administrative Office at 3107 Colby Avenue in Everett and via Zoom video conference.

Commissioners Present at Roll Call:

Chair Koren Smith (*in person*)
Vice-Chair Cynthia Andrews (*virtual*)
Commissioner Chip Burgess (*in person*)
Commissioner Paul Manselle (*in person*)
Commissioner George Perez, Jr. (*in person*)

Absent:

Commissioner John Traynor

Also in attendance were:

Staff:

Mary Swenson	Executive Director
Jeni Arndt	Resident Services Coordinator
Shannon Atkins	Aging & Disability Services Program Manager
Janinna Attick	Director of Policy & Innovation
Mika Blish	Rental Assistance Manager, THRIVE
Kristen Cane	Director of Asset Management
Cal Cuellar	Deputy Director of Asset Management
Donelle Kienholz	Family Services Program Manager
Kelly King	Interim Director of Human Resources
Melanie Pilkenton	Director of Rental Assistance
Heather Stults	Communications & Engagement Manager
Anna Todd	Deputy Director of Rental Assistance
Kimberly Wilson	Interim Chief Financial Officer
Jaysen Witt	Executive Assistant & Communications Coordinator

Steve Yago	Interim Director of Development
Kyndra Zellner	Resident Services Coordinator
Sandy Langdon	Consultant

Non-Staff:

Jimmy Castro	EHA Program Participant
Julie Foss	Division Director, Seattle HUD Office
Janice King-Dunbar	Director, Office of Public Housing, Seattle HUD Office
Crystal Simpson	Portfolio Specialist, Seattle HUD Office

Program Participant Comment

Chair Smith and the Commissioners received a request from a program participant to speak at the beginning of the meeting. The voucher participant, Jimmy Castro, read a prepared speech to the group.

Administer Oath of Office Reappointing Chip Burgess

The City has appointed Mr. Burgess an extension of their appointment by one year, expiring October 6, 2025. Chair Smith administered the oath of office to formalize Commissioner Burgess' appointment. Commissioner Burgess recited the oath.

Items for Individual Consideration

Resolution No. 1607

Executive Director Mary Swenson presented this resolution, which authorized her to execute the negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreement with AFSCME, the bargaining unit for EHA administrative staff.

Chair Smith asked for a motion, Commissioner Burgess moved for approval and Commissioner Manselle seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

Site Visit - HUD

Three staff from the HUD Seattle Field Office attended the meeting: Janice King-Dunbar, Director of the Office of Public Housing; Julie Foss, Division Director, and Crystal Simpson, the Portfolio Management Specialist assigned to support EHA.

Director King-Dunbar shared that the HUD Seattle office oversees 43 public housing authorities (PHAs) in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska. Their role includes assuring that PHAs are carrying out the fiduciary and regulatory duties of the federal government.

Executive Director Swenson started by providing background on the organizational changes that EHA has had over the past few years, starting with the departure of former Executive Director Ashley Lommers-Johnson in April 2023. Since then, EHA was led by Interim Executive Director John Forsyth, Executive Director Major Galloway, a short period of time when the EHA Board of Commissioners assumed operational control, and then Executive Director Swenson's

appointment, which was initially in an interim capacity until she and the Board agreed that additional time was needed before the agency would be in a position to undertake a search for a permanent Executive Director. Executive Director Swenson also provided an overview of several department leadership transitions over the past year, some consultants that Executive Director Swenson had hired to bolster the agency's capacity, and some additional leadership positions that will soon be filled. She also mentioned that because of the changes, including within Finance, the agency has engaged BDO USA to conduct a third-party audit, which should be complete within the next month.

Upon HUD's request for project updates, Director of Asset Management Kristen Cane provided status updates on the Park District, Ben Young, and Mariner Square developments and confirmed that EHA was aware of and following applicable HUD environmental and other requirements for federally-funded projects. Director Cane also provided information about how EHA has used its flexibility under the MTW demonstration to fund PBV development activities and supportive services for some of these projects as well as other initiatives.

Director King-Dunbar then requested that the agency provide updated organizational charts and contact information for key contacts at the agency. She then asked what EHA may need from HUD and how HUD can support EHA through this transitional time period.

Executive Director Swenson then shared about her collaboration the Board of Commissioners. She reported that the Policy and Innovation Department has created a Board Handbook for Commissioners and that BDO USA, who is conducting an audit for the agency, will be doing a training for Commissioners on their fiduciary responsibilities and role. She also shared how she regularly communicates with Commissioners to keep them informed.

Director King-Dunbar noted that Commissioners have fiduciary and regulatory responsibility for the agency and the responsibility to keep HUD updated about who is leading EHA operations. She also provided guidance that the Board cannot act as Executive Director due to the need for separation between duties. She concluded by sharing how the local office takes a proactive approach to address any challenges locally with housing authorities and how they are a partner to EHA and are here to collaborate and support the agency. She thanked Commissioners and staff for their service to execute the mission of the agency.

Adjournment

Chair Smith announced the next regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners is scheduled for February 24 at noon. There being no further business to discuss, Chair Smith called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Burgess motioned as requested, Commissioner Manselle seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 1:01 p.m.

ATTEST:

_____ Chair, Board of Commissioners

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Secretary