

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF) Advisory Board for the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA). City of Pittsburgh YouTube channel.

February 2, 2023

Advisory Board Members Present: Lena Andrews, Morgan Overton, Jamil Bey, Karen Garrett, Mark Masterson, Dr. Paul Spradley, Alan Sisco, Derrick Tillman, Aster Teclay, Adrienne Walnoha, Kellie Ware (Chair), Deborah Gross

URA Staff Present: Jahd Burns, Breanna Benjamin, Rae Ann Driscoll, Donna Freeman, Victoria Jackson, Derek Kendall-Morris, Bailey Knapp, Evan Miller, Niklas Persson, Melinda Ward, David Geiger, David DiBernardo and Natalie Lopez

- A. Roll Call
- B. HOF Advisory Board Member Changes
 - Megan Winters (*Neighborhood Based Nonprofit/Community Resident – West*) has resigned from the HOF Advisory Board
 - Awaiting a new nomination for her seat.
- C. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from January 5, 2023, Meeting - *Approved*. Mark Masterson motioned to approved. Karen Garrett seconded the motion. Approved by all board members present.
- D. Public Comment – Aim from Northside

Stated that there needs to be more access for individuals with disabilities in programs/projects and there is a greater emphasis on individuals that are elderly than those with disabilities. Also discussed tenant rights/selection in terms of individuals being accepted for properties. Discussed poor conditions and poor locations of properties that are available to residents.

Questions/Comments: Adrienne Walnoha – Stated that tenant selection for properties as well as accessibility across groups should be considered into projects and the way we look at things in the future.
- E. Fair Housing RGP Discussion – Megan Confer-Hammond

Discussed equity data in the City of Pittsburgh in relation to the Rental Gap Program and gave specific examples of inequity in projects. Cited senior citizen high-rise in Brookline as an example. Made recommendation to select projects that promote greater equality across neighborhoods.

Questions/Comments: Adrienne Walnoha – Thanked Megan for the information and said that she hopes we can use this information to help look at our applications and priorities for the year.
- F. Authorization to enter a Rental Gap Program loan agreement, in an amount of up to \$500,000 with Bethlehem Haven of Pittsburgh for the renovation of Bethlehem Haven Women’s Shelter at 1410 Fifth Avenue. – David DiBernardo – *Approved*.

Presented by David DiBernardo at the URA. Annette Fetchko from Bethlehem Haven and Jodi Lincoln from ACTION Housing also provided additional context about the project. Motion was

put forward to approve the project by Deb Gross, and Jamil Bey seconded the motion. It was approved by all, with Derrick Tillman and Lena Andrews abstaining.

Questions/Comment: Derrick Tillman – Stated that rents appear to be high and he would like to get a better understanding of the funding going into the project. Annette Fetchko and Jodi Lincoln explained that the individuals are not specifically charged in the women’s shelter and the amount listed in the information packets were the total cost per room rather than what is charged to individuals. The HUD contract is funding 16 women and 10 women funded through Allegheny Office of Behavior Health. For Phase 1 of the project, rents are not charged; if individual has an income it is limited to less than 30% of income for rental subsidy. For Phase 2 of the project, 34 low-income housing units will be created; HUD contracts bundle the services, costs of rap around services, operations of the building, on site staff, etc. They were placed in as unit rents. Deb Gross – Advocated for additional transitional housing and was interested to hear if funding is coming straight from HUD or HUD from county contracts. Annette Fetchko and Jodi Lincoln stated that funding received is a recipient from the county- the county negotiates with HUD and the county manages the contracts, making us a service provider contracted through the county. HUD Definition of transitional housing is up to 12 months, however individuals at the women’s shelter often stay longer.

G. URA Administrative Updates

New URA Executive Director - Susheela Nemani-Stanger

- Thanked the Advisory Board for all that they do each day. She discussed several stats in regard to the HOF and its accomplishments. She stated she is looking forward to working with the HOF Advisory Board more closely in the future.

Small Contractor Line of Credit Program – Derek Kendall-Morris

- Line of credit available for Small Contractors interested in bidding on projects within the URA, or the city that may not be able to upfront the cost to take on the project. Up to \$100,000 can be used to upfront cost.
- Webinar Feb. 8th at 5:30 PM for anyone interested in applying or learning more.

OwnPGH Homeownership Program – Derek Kendall Morris

- First-time homebuyer program available to residents looking to purchase a home within the city of Pittsburgh. Up to \$90,000 of financial assistance; \$50,000 provided through grant money and \$40,000 matching loan from the Housing Authority that is a 0% interest forgivable loan. Buyers must be prequalified for a home through one of the three participating lenders.

Downtown Conversion Program – Evan Miller

- American Rescue Plan Funded Program that is used to convert vacant or underutilized officed buildings in the Central Business District. It provides funding for owners/developers interested in converting space into residential uses with a component of affordability. Consists of a rolling RFP

Housing Preservation Program – Evan Miller

- American Rescue Plan Funded Program to provide quick access to capital for projects that are currently affordable but at risk of going to market rate. It is not

operational yet. Last month staff took graph guideline to URA board and posted for public comment. Intentions of going February URA Meeting for final guidelines and looking to open in the early Spring.

H. Advisory Board Administrative Updates
Committee Reports – HOF AB Members

- Fair Housing Committee – Adrienne Walnoha stated that Megan Confer-Hammond brought up what most of what was discussed at their meeting. They are looking forward to working on some of those initiatives. She invited all interested board members to reach out to join the committee.

HOF Advisory Board Retreat Updates – Kellie Ware, Esq.

- Looking to get scheduled and underway. Doodle poll was sent out earlier today to get everyone's availability. Will allow time to create vision and then find new leaders within the HOF and creating committees.

Nominations for Chair Positions – Kellie Ware, Esq.

- Established chair/co-chair for community outreach committee.
- Established chair/co-chair for fair housing committee.
- Targeting election for April 6, 2023 for all positions
 - Member of the Advisory Board that is not running for Office can be on the Nomination Committee.

I. Programmatic Expenditures and Updates

- Regular Update – Jahd Burns

Presented data on the Small Landlord Fund Program, the Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program, the Housing Stabilization Program, the Legal Assistance Program, the Homeowner Assistance Program, the Rental Gap Program, and the For-Sale Development Program.

J. Announcements

- The next HOF Advisory Board Meeting is Thursday, March 2, 2023, at 2:00 PM, held in City Council Chambers with remote options.

K. Adjournment

Dr. Paul Spradley motioned to adjourn.