

Housing Opportunity Fund Advisory Board Meeting October 5, 2023

A. Roll Call

Tammy Thompson, Karen Garrett Jerome Jackson PhD, Mark Masterson, Paul Spradley PhD, Deb Gross, Alan Sisco, Derrick Tillman, Adrienne Walnoha, Kellie Ware, Esq, Deidra Washington

Not Present: Lena Andrews, Jamil Bey PhD, Marcus Reed,

URA Staff Present: Susheela Nemani- Stanger, Evan Miller, Derek Kendall-Morris, Jahd Burns, Natalie Lopez, Kristen Leuschen, Kyle Novak, Victoria Jackson, Rae Ann Driscoll, David DiBernardo, Niklas Persson, Donna Freeman, Melinda Ward, Breanna Benjamin, Alicia Majors

B. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from February 2, 2023 Meeting: Approved.

Mark Masterson motioned to approve. Kellie Ware seconded the motion. All in favor, no opposed, no abstentions.

C. Public Comment:

Ivonne Smith-Tapia, JFCS Pittsburgh: Challenges immigrants face accessing housing.
Swain Uber, Community Justice Project: Legal Assistance Program funding.

D. URA Administrative Updates: Presented by Derek Kendall-Morris

Authorization for additional funds to the Homeowner Stabilization Program

- URA is in the process of executing a new co-op agreement with the Department of Human Services for the HSP Program which will encompass the HOF allocations for the program from 2022 and 2023.
- Due to the high level of need we are currently seeing for eviction prevention funds we are also requesting that \$175,000 of 2023 Demonstration Program funds be allocated to HSP as part of this co-op agreement. This would bring the total amount of funding being distributed to DHS for HSP up to \$1,250,000.
- We are looking for approval from the HOF Advisory Board to make this change.

Questions/Comments:

Kellie Ware: What does it leave in the demonstration dollars account?

- \$270,000 currently so \$95,000 remains.

Paul Spradley: When would those funds be accessible if moved?

- It would take a few weeks to execute then funds would be transferred.

Tammy Thompson: What are the specific needs?

- The highest need is eviction prevention.

Motion to approve by Tammy Thompson and seconded by Mark Masterson. All in favor, no abstentions.

E. Advisory Board Administrative Items: Presented by Evan Miller

Draft Annual Allocation Plan- 3 Brackets: 30% AMI and below bracket requires 50% of HOF funding, the 50% AMI and below bracket requires 25% of HOF funding, and 80% AMI or below bracket also requires 25% of HOF funding. Within each income bracket we have the advisory

boards average from everyone filling out their own allocation plans. We also have what the URA staff recommendations are. We took advisory board averages to make sure that all numbers balance.

- The Rental Gap Program that assists with the actual development is reduced by around \$1 million to \$2.75 due to demand of consumer facing programs.
- The For-Sale Development Program is also being reduced from \$900,000 to \$650,000 due to other sources that the URA has to support non-profit for sale developers.
- The resulting increases that come from some of the shifts are for the Homeowners Assistance Program from \$1 Million to just over \$3 Million overall for the program.
- The Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program also increased to \$700,000 with the OwnPGH.
- The Housing Stabilization Program would increase 80% from 550,000 to \$850,000.
- The Legal Assistance Program would increase to \$1 Million.
- The Small Landlord fund would be reduced to 0, because we have \$500,000 remaining that can still be committed to projects.
- The demonstration program also reduced to 0 because it would fit the demands of the programs that have specific uses already.

Questions/Comments:

Deb Gross: If there is 30 million for new construction from the housing bond, what is the rationale for increasing an extra \$500,000 out of this \$10 million? Also, we are overdue for an equity analysis outcome of our investments and incentive programs.

- The rental gap program is reduced to reflect that there are other sources available as we move into 2024. The bond has not been issued and the need is still there for this program. 2023 allocation 3,815,000 which was a 25% decrease.

Mark Masterson: On the administrative line if it is at \$1 million is that the way services are falling? There is nothing in the legislative plan that says 50% of admin falls to 30% AMI or below, so is that where the services are being provided? Is there some flexibility? And what is the bond being allocated to, is it the Rental Gap Program and For-Sale Development?

- It is split up this way over the life of the fund to mimic the percentage that helps balance the entire equation. The assumption that it follows the portion of the money overall to the programs. We can put admin in a specific bucket for 30% AMI or below if that is suggested. The new bond has not been completely determined yet, but the idea is for housing development.

Alan Sisco: Is there a capacity and contract space for the Homeowners Assistance Program? Also, advocate that the Legal Assistance Program be increased and doubled, but we do not have to advocate in an annual vacuum we can be creative and nimble with this fund.

- We are actively considering increasing the per household funding due to the high rate of construction cost. We would serve the same number of homeowners but would have more funding to complete projects.

Derrick Tillman: Would like to advocate for the Small Landlord Fund to receive more funding but be restructured, the program should be structured as a grant or forgivable loan so that the terms are more favorable.

Kellie Ware: HAP does have a great need and with having the funds available, we do not want to rely on other revenue streams. We can restructure and have the flexibility to meet our goals, so we don't need to pull money out of certain areas because others are doing something similar.

Deidra Washington: Are there funds allocated to those behind on property taxes and back taxes?

-HSP can be used for that purpose.

Adriene Walnoha suggestion to remove \$1 million from the \$2,750,000 draft from Rental Gap and add to the Legal Assistance Program but would need to address each income category.

- Alan Sisco and Mark Masterson in favor. Kellie Ware supports a shift but would suggest a smaller- not quite a third amount be shifted. Derrick Tillman in agreement with Kellie Ware.

Adriene Walnoha suggestion for \$400,000 or \$600,000 in LAP to bring on either two more courts in two more areas of the city or three more courts in three more areas of the city.

- Kellie Ware in agreement. Mark Masterson suggest extending to \$1 million from Rental Gap with \$600,000 and move Demo Dollars of \$400,000 that leaves flexibility if there are more evictions, so we could shift it around. Derrick Tillman counter request to keep the Rental Gap at \$2 Million and keep flexibility in case something else needs funded, so move \$400,000 to LAP and \$350,000 to demo dollars leaving the \$2 million for Rental Gap.

Derrick Tillman suggestion instead of increasing LAP move \$500,000 from Rental Gap to Demo Dollars and \$250,000 from Rental Gap to Small Landlord Fund

- Mark Masterson not in agreeance.

Alan Sisco suggestion to use as much of the \$750,000 from Rental Gap into LAP and negotiate the Demo Dollars, then get a commitment to rethink the existing half a million in the Small Landlord Fund.

- Derrick Tillman agrees with restructuring SLF but if there is a move, it should come from the Demo Dollars and funds can be moved later to LAP if there is a need since we have the flexibility.

Mark Masterson motion to move \$750,000 from Rental Gap Program to put into Legal Assistance Program. Deb Gross seconded. Derrick Tillman and Kellie Ware opposed.

- Deb Gross calls for a Roll Call Vote
- Tammy Thompson- left the meeting.
- Karen Garrett- No
- Deb Gross- Yes
- Mark Masterson- Yes
- Deidra Washington- Yes
- Paul Spradley- left the meeting.
- Alan Sisco- Yes
- Derrick Tillman- No
- Adriene Walnoha- No
- Kellie Ware- No

Motion does not pass to move \$750,000 from Rental Gap Program to put into Legal Assistance Program.

Kellie Ware motion to reallocate \$750,000 from the Rental Gap Program with \$400,000 to the LAP and \$350,000 to the Demonstration Dollars Program. Seconded by Deidra Washington. All in favor, no abstentions.

Mark Masterson motion to take from \$500,000 from 30% AMI and below and \$250,000 from the 50% AMI or below and allocate accordingly. Seconded by Kellie Ware. All in favor, no abstentions.

Motion to adjourn by Alan Sisco.