

## **AGENDA**

### **Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF)**

August 5, 2025 @ 3:00 PM

#### **Recording Uploaded to the City of Pittsburgh YouTube Channel**

#### **A. Roll Call**

**Present:** Adrienne Walnoha, Elly Fisher, Robert Helwig, Tanika Harris, Lena Andrews, Karen Garrett, Darius Wallace, Alan Sisco, Deidra Washington, Shantalaya Mathews, Rebecca Yago

**Not Present:** Terrel Thomas, Rochelle Preston, Deborah Gross

#### **B. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from June 3, 2025, Meeting**

First motion- Darius Wallace

Second motion- Tanika Harris

**C. Public Comment** – Anyone from the public who desires to speak may address the Advisory Board for a maximum of three minutes. To provide public comment virtually, you must register prior to 4:00 PM on Monday, September 2, 2025, by e-mailing your phone number and email information to [hof@ura.org](mailto:hof@ura.org) or by calling 412.255.6694, ext. 6721.

#### **D. URA Administrative Updates**

- HOF Advisory Board Membership
  - o Shantalaya Mathews - URA Representative
- Conflict of Interest Forms
  - o 9/15 Received

- Annual Allocation Plan Survey ended July 31

o Over 600 Completed

-We will discuss additional information pertaining to those surveys and the responses we received at the September HOF Meeting.

- **Working Groups/Committees:**

- HOF Bylaws Section 4. Working Groups/Committees: An important tool for advisory boards allowing for in-depth discussions and explorations of topics that they then report back to the main board.

- **Old HOF Working Groups**

- Programming and Innovation
- Marketing
- Inclusion/Fair Housing 4RFP
- Review or Revision

- o In the coming months we are working to understand what future committees we could have. With the help of the advisory board, we will create and organize them.

## **E. Housing Stabilization Program**

- Guideline Changes

- Eligible Uses:

- 1- Move-in assistance which may include: a First month's rent; last month's rent; Security deposit; utility deposits
- 2- Utility in arrears
- 3- Rent in arrears
- 4- Mortgage in arrears

- Subsidy Amount

- o Maximum Assistance currently \$6,000 per household. Proposed to make the change to be \$3,000 per household.

- Time Period between Subsidy for applicants.

- o Currently 3 years; propose to change to 2 years.

- Maximum Assistance Special Circumstance Exceptions

- Allow the applicant to receive \$4,500 for special circumstances listed below:

A discussion was held regarding the proposed changes:

Alan Sisco noted that he likes flexibility in supporting the special circumstances.

Tanika Harris questioned that although there was data collected in the past. Do the requested changes prepare us for what's to come. She proposed to keep the maximum at \$6,000 for assistance.

Quianna Walser- Reminded the board that there is an appeal process built into the guidelines.

Darius Wallace- Agreed that there should be a decrease in the maximum amount in the someone could borrow but suggested that cut be made to \$4,500 per household.

A motion was made- To keep the eligible uses specific to Rent in arrears and Mortgage in arrears. The motion would also include changing the time between subsidy to 2 years. In addition, the Maximum an applicant could receive with exemptions would be \$4,500.

First Motion- Rebecca Yago

Second Motion- Alan Sisco

Motion not accepted

Elly Fisher- Noted that changing the guidelines to \$3,000 per household helps us help more people. In addition, it would be easier for the administrators to administer the program.

Natalie from action housing talked about how many people we could help considering the changes proposed. Because the dollar amount received was less than half the amount spent on rental assistance last year. Their focus was on being able to serve people with what they need and not more than what they need. This would allow all the funding to go further.

Another motion was made- The eligible uses as set forth should remain the same. The only guideline change recommended is to change the time that an applicant can apply for assistance again from 3 years to 2 years.

First Motion- Robert Helwig

Second Motion- Darrius Wallace

Abstention- Lena Andrews

## **F. Legal Assistance Program**

- Guideline Changes
- LAP-H RFP
  - Add Estate Planning as an eligible service.
  - Each client will be eligible to receive a maximum of \$5,000 legal assistance.
  - There will be a change to the Ami calculation that are listed in the proposed guidelines.

A motion was made- Move to add estate planning as an eligible service to the Legal Assistance Program for Homeowners.

First Motion- Elly Fisher

Second Motion- Alan Sisco

Potential Conflict- Lena Andrews- But supports the motion

Quianna Wasler- Clarified that LAP- T is for tenants which assist with mediation, lawyer of the day etc. There is also a Lap- H for homeowners. We have consistently brought both programs jointly for the allocation. As we coordinate with DHS, we have found they do not manage home ownership programs, and they can only support the tenant side. Lap – T will remain the same with potential future talks surrounding AMI. Lap- H we would want to with the changes made, open the program to get a slate of providers that could potentially service this opportunity. The allocation for 2025 was 1 million dollars we are requesting that \$200,000 million of the funding go towards the LAP – H request for proposal. This would leave LAP- T with \$800,000 of HOF funds and LAP – H with \$200,000

A motion was made to authorize the issuing of the RFP with the proposed guidelines in the amount of \$200,000.

First Motion- Robert Helwig

Second Motion- Elly Fisher

- Motion carries

**G. State of HOF/Programmatic Expenditures and Updates**

- Regular Update

HOF May 2025 Expenditures:

- Down Payment and Closing Costs - \$15,000.00
- Legal Assistance- \$11,539.89
- Small Landlord-\$40,000.00

**H. Adjournment**

The next HOF Advisory Board Meeting is September 2, 2025, from 3:00pm-5:00pm, held at the URA Office (412 Boulevard of the Allies Pittsburgh PA 15222) in the Lower-Level Conference Room, virtually, and aired live on the City of Pittsburgh's YouTube Channel. This location may be subject to change due to availability, please stay alert for updates.

Motion to adjourn: Rebecca Yago