



# TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES REGULAR SESSION WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2020

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma met in Regular Session via Zoom at 4:45 PM on Wednesday, October 28, 2020.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rumbaugh called the meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma (THA) to order at 4:58 PM.

### 2. ROLL CALL

Upon roll call, those present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT	ABSENT
<b>Commissioners</b>	
Chair Stanley Rumbaugh	
	Vice Chair Shennetta Smith
Commissioner Derek Young	
Commissioner Dr. Minh-Anh Hodge (arrived late at 5:21 pm)	
Commissioner Pastor Michael Purter	
<b>Staff</b>	
Michael Mirra, Executive Director	
Sha Peterson, Executive Administrator	
April Black, Deputy Executive Director	
Ken Shalik, Finance Director	
Barbara Tanbara, Interim Human Resources Director	
	Frankie Johnson, Property Management Director
	Kathy McCormick, Real Estate Development Director
Sandy Burgess, Administrative Services Director	
Julie LaRocque, Rental Assistance Director	
Cacey Hanauer, Client Support & Empowerment Director	

Chair Young declared there was a quorum present @ 4:59 and proceeded.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Chair Rumbaugh asked for any corrections to, or discussion of the minutes for the Regular Session of the Board of Commissioners on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. Commissioner Young moved to adopt the minutes; Commissioner Purter seconded.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 4  
NAYS: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: 1

**Motion approved.**

### 4. GUEST COMMENTS

None.

### 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

***Real Estate Development Committee—Chair Rumbaugh, Commissioner Young***

The committee did not meet in the past month but may meet before December to keep track of what is going on.

***Finance Committee—Commissioner Hodge and Commissioner Young***

The committee has not met in the last month.

***Education Committee—Vice Chair Smith, Commissioner Hodge***

The committee was scheduled to meet but canceled the meeting due to no new business.

***Citizen Oversight Committee—Vice Chair Smith, Commissioner Purter***

ED Mirra and Commissioner Purter met and discussed community partnerships and next steps. Commissioner Purter will also meet with Commissioner Smith. He has a few observations regarding how to reach out to community partners to support THA's ongoing projects. He would also like to take them on a tour so they can see Arlington drive. Chair Rumbaugh is looking forward to it.

***Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee—Vice Chair Smith, Commissioner Hodge***

Commissioners Hodge and Smith were not in attendance.

### 6. COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director (ED) Michael Mirra directed the board to his report. His report has the data driven portion that are normally reported on the department reports. A few

directors may refer to some of them. The data shows that the departments are doing good work; they are meeting their metrics despite the challenges arising from the pandemic.

Discussions with legislators regarding Arlington Drive are going well. He recounted the substance of some of those discussions and the questions some legislators are raising. ED Mirra will provide the commissioners with a paper responding to those questions. The paper reviews the statutes and policy that assign to the state the responsibility for addressing the homelessness of young people. Chair Rumbaugh asked follow up questions about that responsibility.

Chair Rumbaugh wanted to know what THA is doing beyond juvenile court, emergency shelters and children coming out of foster care. Director Hanauer responded that THA's response is comprehensive. The Office of Homeless Youth is very close with the child welfare system to make sure there are enough placements for young people who may need it. Legally these young adults are the state's responsibility but whether or not the state upholds that responsibility is a different conversation. Chair Rumbaugh asked about engagements with schools. According to Director Hanauer, Community Youth Services staff are skilled with getting intersection points with young people. But it is not a comprehensive process.

## 7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

### Finance

Finance Department (FD) Director Ken Shalik directed the board to the finance expense and cash reports. Third quarter financials will be provided next month. THA is in good shape for 2020. Expenditures were down a bit due to Covid. There are some ongoing operational expenses that were charged to Covid funds. THA is on good track for a surplus. Chair Rumbaugh asked how much was received from the Cares Act. Director Shalik responded that THA received \$1.7M, \$300k of which went out for hardship Housing Assistance Program (HAP) payments to back fill tenant rent payments who lost income due to the pandemic. Other parts of the funding paid for security, time staff spent working on emergency operations committee and other aspects of Covid operations. Chair Rumbaugh asked if the HAP supplements would end at the end of the year. According to Director Shalik, \$1.7M was received from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and \$1.3M has been spent but THA has until December 2021 to expend it all. There is another pot of money from Pierce County that does expire December 31 of this year. According to Chair Rumbaugh it is now mandated in Pierce County that before an unlawful detainer case is heard, landlords and tenants need to engage with a mediator. Tenants will be represented by the housing justice project to work out a plan to resolve arrearages to keep people out of unlawful detainer court and off the streets. He asked if there is a way of linking THA tenants to that program and whether THA has budgeted any further amounts that might serve that program. Director Shalik responded that there have been no budget discussions, but when he and Director LaRocque discussed the 2021 budget, one that has worked in THA's favor this year is a carry over of HAP funds of \$3M to 2021. One idea is to put \$1.5M as a place holder

regarding eviction protection to assist tenants to maintain tenancy. Chair Rumbaugh asked if there is a way to identify clients who would benefit from the program. According to Director LaRocque this has been taking up much of staff time this past week. It is hard to tell so staff are operationalizing a process to reach out to landlords and voucher clients. Clients are reluctant to provide information because they don't want THA to know they have not paid their rent. Staff are trying to find an accurate number of what people need. THA needs to estimate this need in order to get Pierce County Cares Act money. This is a big job but staff are pushing through. THA's landlord engagement specialist has been encouraging landlords to reach out for dispute resolution. Chair Rumbaugh will provide ED Mirra a copy of the signed order.

THA has ample cash at this time. HUD is holding \$5M of THA's cash and Director Shalik has not done a draw down yet. He will draw down \$2M that HUD would owe THA. Unencumbered cash is at \$8.6M, which does not include \$3.2M still owed for developer fee for Renew Tacoma. Finance is working on the 2021 budget. This is the first year using the budget software and staff completed their budgets and did a great job. Because it is online, it is easy to make budget changes. Budget will be provided to the board in December for approval.

Director Shalik noted that the accountability audit has identified a procurement issue that might end up as a finding. It concerns whether a subcontractor of a THA contractor paid the right prevailing wage to subcontractor employees. It is not a large amount but not in the contracts. ED Mirra asked if it was because THA failed to adequately specify the requirement in its contract with the contractor. According to Director Burgess, when THA first contracted with the contractor it was following the prevailing wage rules but had some staff changes who failed to continue to do so. The new staff are attending L&I trainings. THA is putting a procurement person in the budget for next year. That person will be part of the solution.

Commissioner Young moved to ratify the payment of cash disbursements totaling \$5,022,071 for the month of September 2020. Commissioner Purter seconded.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES:	4
NAYS:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	1

**Motion Approved.**

## **Policy, Innovation and Evaluation**

Policy, Innovation and Evaluation (PIE) Director April Black directed the board to her report. PIE hired Katie Escudero who is coming from King County Housing Authority. Much of what PIE staff do affects THA operations. The challenges with rent arrearages

will be all hands on deck, and PIE staff are being pulled to help with this work and trying to keep new work off the desk of operational departments. The implementation of the Grievance Procedure, rewriting the Administrative Plan and tackling the Department of Corrections (DOC) College Housing Assistance Program continue to take a lot of staff time and attention, not just for PIE but also Rental Assistance and many other departments. THA needs to put a pause on these projects so staff can focus on the Pierce County funds project. There is a hard deadline of December 3. Chair Rumbaugh said that is understandable. He added that THA can modify the terms of the arrangement with DOC. There are alternatives for just using vouchers in conjunction with Tacoma Community College (TCC). He understands that everybody is overwhelmed at this time.

## **Client Support and Empowerment**

Client Support and Empowerment (CSE) Director Cacey Hanauer directed the board to her report. CSE staff continue to see ten times more referrals every month than usual. Staff will rally to address rental arrearages. CSE staff are working on Arlington and feeling as optimistic as possible. Chair Rumbaugh asked if all residential units at Arlington have been filled. Director Hanauer responded that six were filled the first week. Staff are working with compliance and Property Management. Marquis Jenkins, THA's portfolio manager, has been exceptional. Director Hanauer is deeply grateful to her and her team. Chair Rumbaugh inquired how THA gets a potential resident and how a unit is filled. Director Hanauer responded that it is essentially the Y working with community partners to get referrals, doing initial screening, and kicking them to Property Management for the compliance process and paperwork. Marquis added that the Y does the assessment and THA does the backgrounds screening. Commissioner Young asked how long the process takes. Marquis responded that the tax credit process has been fast but it typically takes a couple of weeks, depending on the assessment piece. Director Hanauer stated that this was the piece staff are most worried about—getting young people credit eligible and paperwork ready takes effort. Chair Rumbaugh inquired about the criteria for screening. According to Director Hanauer, the Y is set-up to provide a relatively high level of service and making sure there is a good mix among the residents of levels of need.

## **Rental Assistance**

Rental Assistance (RA) Director Julie LaRocque directed the board to her report. Director LaRocque is working on the budget with finance. Whatever we lease up at Arlington and The Rise on 19th increases THA's utilization. In addition, attrition really has stopped; people are not going off the program. Staff are working really hard to keep landlords up to date with information regarding the moratorium. Alexis Eykel has been doing a phenomenal job. Staff are doing the best they can to take care of the landlords so they can take care of THA clients.

## Property Management

Property Management (PM) Director Frankie Johnson was not in attendance due to tenant issues. Director Black addressed the board on her behalf. PM continues to do really excellent work even during the pandemic. PM also continues to keep occupancy high, with unit turn over below 20 days. Staff are responding to emergency work orders and now are in the thick of two huge lease ups. Staff are working collaboratively across departments. Marquis is doing a really great job. Chair Rumbaugh inquired about The Rise lease up. According to Marquis, move ins will start the middle of November. Right now thirteen files have been pre-approved and there is another handful of files to be reviewed. She is going to meet with tenants to move. Staff are keeping their eyes on all special needs of families, children and Veteran's Affairs. Chair Rumbaugh asked about the consolidated waitlist. Director LaRocque thinks it has around 600 but she will get the exact number to Chair Rumbaugh. THA has not been pulling from the waitlist because THA has been over utilized.

## Real Estate Development

Real Estate Development (RED) Director Kathy McCormick was not in attendance. RED Manager Roberta Schur addressed the board on her behalf. Staff are doing last minute punch list items for Arlington. The Rise is one month behind due to Covid-related delays, but staff expect certificate of occupancy in November. Coordination between departments has been great. THA is going with Banner Bank on the two Trees properties which will allow THA to pay existing loans. On the third property, THA will pay off the mortgage which is about \$1.7M. THA had \$2M in acquisition for this year in the budget so that will pay for it. There will be a resolution in November for Banner Bank. Chair Rumbaugh inquired about the tiny house village on THA property at South 60<sup>th</sup> Street. ED Mirra conveyed reports that installation and operation are going so well it served as an example to encourage the siting of a similar village at 6<sup>th</sup> and Orchard.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS

### 8.1 RESOLUTION 2020-10-28 (1) (Update to Payment Standards)

A **RESOLUTION** of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma authorizing the THA Executive Director to increase THA's payment standards.

**WHEREAS**, HUD sets fair market rents annually; and

**WHEREAS**, The housing authority sets payment standards based on market and participant data; and

**WHEREAS**, New payment standards will go into effect January 01, 2021; now, therefore, be it

***Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Washington as follows:***

The Board authorizes THA's Executive Director to set THA's payment standards for studios at 90% of the 2021 HUD Fair Market Rents and maintain the current payment standards for all other bedroom sizes.

Commissioner Hodge motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Young seconded the motion.

AYES: 4  
NAYS: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: 1

**Motion Approved:** October 28, 2020

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Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

**8.2 RESOLUTION 2020-10-28 (2)  
(Utility Allowance Update)**

**WHEREAS,** Utility allowances must be reviewed annually; and

**WHEREAS,** PHAs must revise utility allowances if they change more than ten percent; and

**WHEREAS,** Changes to the utility allowances must be approved by the Board of Commissioners; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Washington, that:**

Authorizes THA to maintain all bedroom size utility allowances, effective January 01, 2020.

Commissioner Young motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Hodge seconded the motion.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 4  
NAYS: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: 1

**Motion Approved:** October 28, 2020

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Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

**8.3 RESOLUTION 2020-10-28 (3)  
(Agency-wide Special Recognition Award, Additional Holiday and Vacation  
Cash Out Exception)**

**WHEREAS**, The agency has an established and defined Variable Pay policy; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 7.2.3 (c) of the Variable Pay policy authorizes the Executive Director to provide an agency-wide Special Recognition Award; and

**WHEREAS**, The agency has an established and defined holiday policy; and

**WHEREAS**, In recognition of great work done by staff in 2020, one extra paid holiday would be appropriate; and

**WHEREAS**, There are additional personal costs employees are incurring in reporting to work and/or equipping their homes to conduct THA work from home; and

**WHEREAS**, It is more difficult for staff to take accrued leave during this time and some employees have accrued more leave than they are eligible to carry over into 2021; and

**WHEREAS**, In response to these greater expenses and large accrued annual leave balances, an additional flexible vacation cash-out option is necessary; now, therefore, be it

***Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Washington, that:***

THA's Executive Director is authorized to provide a \$1,000 one-time Special Recognition Award to all eligible staff, declare October 30, 2020 as an additional paid holiday, and provide staff with a more flexible vacation cash-out option through June 2021, all as described above.

**Comments:** A couple of things struck Chair Rumbaugh. We enjoy good relationships with unions and collective bargaining is collaborative. An organization that can go beyond that, providing some relief for people experiencing financial issues due to unavailability of childcare and a day off to collect oneself, particularly in troubling times and without mandate -- says a lot about an organization. He is pleased that THA can offer this kind of relief. He

thinks this is appropriate, not just because of the work that has been done, but in conditions that are not good. He is resolutely in favor of the resolution. Commissioner Hodge agrees but wanted to know if the extra Friday is just for this year due to Covid. Human Resources Interim Director Tanbara confirmed that the additional day off is just this one time. Commissioner Purter stated that it is a blessing that all the hard working men and women will receive some assistance during this time.

Commissioner Hodge motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Young seconded the motion.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 4  
NAYS: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: 1

**Motion Approved:** October 28, 2020

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Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

**8.4 RESOLUTION 2020-10-28 (4)  
(Updating THA's Administrative Plan: Informal Review and Informal hearings)**

**WHEREAS**, The Administrative Plan relates to the administration of informal review and informal hearing policies and is required by HUD; and

**WHEREAS**, The purpose of the Administrative Plan is to establish policies for carrying out programs in a manner consistent with HUD requirements and local goals and objectives contained in THA's Moving to Work plan; and

**WHEREAS**, Changes to the Administrative Plan must be approved by THA Board of Commissioners; now, therefore, be it

***Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City Of Tacoma, Washington, that:***

THA's Executive Director is authorized to revise THA's Administrative Plan Chapter 16, related to the administration of the informal review and informal hearing policies in the ways described in this resolution.

Commissioner Young motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Purter seconded the motion.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 4  
NAYS: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: 1

**Motion Approved:** October 28, 2020

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Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

**8.5 RESOLUTION 2020-10-28 (5)  
(Continued Moratorium on Time Limit End of Participation Program Exits)**

**WHEREAS,** THA has four time-limited rental assistance programs: Housing Opportunity Program (HOP), Child Housing Opportunity Program (CHOP), tenant-based College Housing Assistance Program (CHAP) and Family Unification Program Youth (FUPY); and

**WHEREAS,** Each time-limited program has participants scheduled to reach the end of their program participation before December 31, 2021; and

**WHEREAS,** Program participants have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and need to receive rental assistance through 2021; now, therefore, be it

***Resolved by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City Of Tacoma, Washington, that:***

THA's Executive Director is authorized to revise and implement the COVID-19 Executive Action 12.1 allowing for a continued moratorium on time limit-driven program exits through December 31, 2021.

Commissioner Hodge motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Young seconded the motion.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 4  
NAYS: None  
Abstain: None  
Absent: 1

**Motion Approved:** October 28, 2020

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Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

## 9. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Purter stated that after listening to the reports and resolutions, he is proud to come on to this board. He had no idea of all the hard work that takes place to make things happen. "It is a privilege and an honor to be part of an organization that is helping people. Like Michael said, some benefit and some don't."

Chair Rumbaugh stated that when he came on the board twenty-three years ago, he didn't know what THA was. "We all have our awakening when you see the scope of what is going on."

Commissioner Hodge thanked ED Mirra for his spectacular leadership that produced spectacular results. "It is a wonderful opportunity to work and learn from you."

ED Mirra stated that he sent the commissioners an invitation to participate in the CLPHA meeting in November by Zoom. According to Chair Rumbaugh, he will be out of state and unable to attend the November meeting.

## 10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

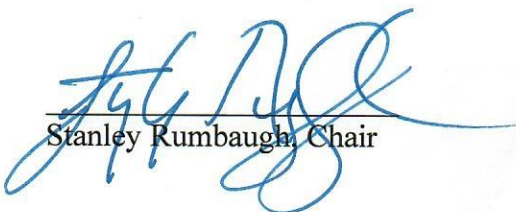
None.

## 11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, the meeting ended at 6:17 PM.

**APPROVED AS CORRECT**

**Adopted:** November 18, 2020

  
Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair