



TACOMA HOUSING AUTHORITY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES REGULAR SESSION WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2021

The Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma met in Regular Session via Zoom at 4:45 PM on Wednesday, July 28, 2021.

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 4:45 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

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

PRESENT	ABSENT
Commissioners	
Chair Stanley Rumbaugh	
Vice Chair Shennetta Smith	
Commissioner Derek Young	
Commissioner Dr. Minh-Anh Hodge	
Commissioner Pastor Michael Purter	
Staff	
April Black, Interim Executive Director	
Sha Peterson, Executive Administrator	
Julie LaRocque, Interim Deputy Executive Director	
Rich Deitz, Interim Finance Director	
Lorraine Viers, Human Resources Director	
Frankie Johnson, Property Management Director	
Roberta Schur, Interim Real Estate Development Director	
Sandy Burgess, Administrative Services Director	
Aley Thompson, Interim Rental Assistance Director	
Cacey Hanauer, Client Support & Empowerment Director	
Katie Escudero, Interim Policy, Innovation and Evaluation Director	

Chair Rumbaugh declared there was a quorum present @ 4:46 pm and proceeded.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Chair Rumbaugh asked for any corrections to or discussion of minutes for the Special Session of the Board of Commissioners for Friday, June 11, 2021. Commissioner Hodge moved to adopt the minutes. Commissioner Young seconded.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 5
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

Motion approved.

Chair Rumbaugh asked for any corrections to or discussion of minutes for the Regular Session of the Board of Commissioners for Wednesday, June 23, 2021. Commissioner Young moved to adopt the minutes. Commissioner Hodge seconded.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 5
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

Motion approved.

4. GUEST COMMENTS

None.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Real Estate Development Committee—Chair Rumbaugh, Commissioner Young

The committee meets monthly. The committee went over the updates for Hilltop Lofts, which Chair Rumbaugh is pleased with. It has been signed and sealed. The committee also talked about James Center North and what to sell, what will be retail and what will be housing. Tacoma Community College is taking a different path. The committee did not talk about Gault but will discuss it at the next meeting.

Finance Committee—Commissioner Hodge and Commissioner Young

Nothing to report.

Education Committee—Vice Chair Smith, Commissioner Hodge

The committee met to propose changes to the committee's name. The committee felt that the Education Committee is important, but it intersects with other aspects. The group wants to expand the scope and change the name to Housing Services and Partnerships Committee. There will still be two committees—Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Housing Services and Partnerships. The committees will have monthly meetings to address each committee's agenda. Commissioner Hodge recommended Education, Housing, Services and Partnerships Committee. Vice Chair Smith agreed, and Interim ED Black thinks it is reflective.

Staff are drafting recommendations on Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) and College Housing Assistance Program (CHAP). They are thinking about a study session in August or September. When the committee met in June, they did not have the full scope of recommendation. The committee wants to be attentive to the language used when reporting. Many felt some language used in the past needed to be modified to be more inclusive and respectful, showing the value of DEI to staff. It is mainly the framing of the HOP program and assumptions that were used. Chair Young recommended a cheat sheet of inclusive language to capture and reference it if needed. He can provide summaries. Chair Rumbaugh looks forward to seeing the cheat sheet.

Citizen Oversight Committee—Vice Chair Smith, Commissioner Purter

Commissioner Purter met with Interim ED Black and Nick Tolley this month. There is nothing to report, but the committee hopes to report something next month. Interim ED Black proposed to change this committee's name to Community Partnerships and Advocacy Committee.

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

The committee is looking at getting a consultant to be able to walk through the process of making sure everyone is being heard.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Interim Executive Director (ED) April Black started by thanking staff for Michael Mirra's retirement celebration and the support from Sha Peterson, Property Management and maintenance. She thanked the commissioners for their time and effort and coming to the event which was a great success. Chair Rumbaugh stated that the event was well planned and showed kindness. Commissioner Hodge commented on what a great job Chair Rumbaugh did at the event.

Interim ED Black directed the board to her report. THA is in the middle of a software analysis. THA created its own because others would not meet THA's needs; however, the product is not working as planned. Associate Director and CIO, William Morse is leading this work to compare OpenDoor product with Yardi which is used by majority of the housing authorities in the nation. THA will budget to either make improvements to OpenDoor or purchase Yardi in 2022. Commissioner Young asked for the timeline for Yardi. According to Interim ED Black it would take about a year. William added that

staff will not know the exact timeline until THA does product plan, but it will be at least a year. Commissioner Young appreciates the staff looking into this.

Staff started the budget process and will use the strategic objectives to propose priorities. There is also promising news from the federal budget. The Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA) also shared news related to the legislative news. There is a good emphasis on federal housing and staff are tracking it closely. Karen Bunce is leading the effort in tracking all funding. THA secured \$250k in Gates grant for Arlington Drive. THA's \$3M capital request through congress made it to Derek Kilmer's budget for housing Hilltop. Staff is making a good process for tracking, following and securing funds.

Interim ED Black provided an updated regarding the Pierce County Housing Authority (PCHA) resolution. Pierce County passed a resolution in March asking PCHA and THA to collaborate and consider consolidation. These discussions are happening at the county level. She noted how THA is governed by the City of Tacoma. THA is attempting to collaborate with PCHA for the best interest of clients and staff. Commissioner Young asked if discussions are happening in the media. Chair Rumbaugh responded that not in the media because there have not been actions taken. He added that these discussions started twenty years ago. THA has requested data acquisition before THA would consider consolidation. There have been no agreements. Interim ED Black added that Moving to Work (MTW) is really the key, but also THA's clients are important. Nobody inside THA was aware of the resolution.

The Emergency Operations Committee (EOC) met this week and is proposing an addendum to Executive Action 12 (THA has the ability to sign off on Executive Action and let the board know). Today, the potential change would allow THA to return to some regular form or rental assistance operations. Pending notification, Interim ED Black will send information to staff and post addendum 12.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) Director Lorraine Viers directed the board to his report. There have been a lot of changes in HR. Barbara Tanbara retired and Amanda Parent left to go on the road in an RV with her family. HR had a temporary manager who came to the end of her assignment and has taken another job with an international firm. She is planning to move to Italy in a couple of years. HR is at the final process of getting new staff.

THA changed its performance review system to ADP. This is a stable platform for managers to use. In the future, HR will look at changing the actual system. HR is working on a Return-to-Work team to look at a telecommuting policy and forms. This will be an option for staff to continue to telework. Vice Chair Smith asked how long staff will be teleworking. She has clients asking her regarding yearly paperwork. She feels there are a lot of issues and clients are not getting the support they need. According to

Director Viers, staff are currently still fully teleworking. THA is cautious about concerns with staff getting the virus. Director Viers thinks that staff will be teleworking until October. Staff should still be able to get their work done. There is a drop box at 902 and paperwork may be mailed. Chair Rumbaugh is hearing that forms are being submitted but not processed. Commissioner Hodge stated that staff are working with vulnerable clientele and is disappointed to hear that paperwork are not being processed the way they should be. She suggested a policy that forms are responded to within 24-48 hours. Director Johnson stated that there is a hybrid program that staff are currently working on. She added that there are drop boxes at all THA locations. She would like to explore the information provided to Vice Chair Smith. Chair Rumbaugh is concerned that there is a disconnect and staff need to identify the complaints. Vice Chair Smith will sit down with Director Johnson to identify the issues. Interim ED Black asked they the discussions include Interim Rental Assistance Director, Aley Thompson.

Director Viers directed the board to the staff changes noted on her report. It will take a while for open positions to be filled while THA fills the Executive Director (ED) position. Fourteen staff have left THA, and HR is doing a lot of hiring. There have been a lot of turn over which causes a lot of work for HR. For the ED recruitment, the committee had interviews with top candidates last week. HR is in the process of selecting top candidates to come to Tacoma to interview with the full board, staff and community partners. Information will be sent to staff for the hiring process and involvement. Commissioner Hodge would like a status report for the ED hiring, key dates and general information. Director Viers will provide information to the board.

Finance

Finance Department (FD) Interim Director Rich Deitz directed the board to the finance report. Finance started the budget process. The auditors will be coming the end of August, which is a late start for them, but they are confident that they can get it done. Financials continue to look good. Chair Rumbaugh would like to know how many properties are performing and exceeding. According to Director Deitz, there is a way to do that, and the budget software has that capacity.

Commissioner Hodge moved to ratify the payment of cash disbursements totaling \$5,875,352 for the month of June 2021. Commissioner Young seconded.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES:	5
NAYS:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

Motion Approved.

Client Support and Empowerment

Client Support and Empowerment (CSE) Director Cacey Hanauer directed the board to her report. CSE staff are working on strategic planning and the team was able to meet in person last week. There are a lot of new staff, so it was a good opportunity to get facetime. Staff are working with the Salishan Association to come up with neighborhood development grant to give to residents at Salishan who want to put on activities in the neighborhood. CSE staff are also trying to find a community builder at Salishan and are working with residents to understand what they need. The 2Gen program is off the ground, trying to come up with family plan/goals in the west portfolio. The Y and CYS spent down their service contract and THA reassured the state that they do in fact need the funds they allocated. Director Hanauer is grateful for those partnerships, and the finance and administrative services teams.

Rental Assistance

Rental Assistance (RA) Interim Director Aley Thompson directed the board to her report. RA staff continue to be busy resuming operations. The rent increase won't be effective until after September. Staff will do an analysis to see if THA should increase standards in the early fall. Staff are also busy preparing for new programs and opportunities to serve clients better. The Housing Connector contract is being finalized. THA's Landlord Engagement Specialist is doing a great job keeping in contact with landlords and answering their questions. THA is absorbing nineteen mainstream vouchers from Spokane Housing Authority.

Property Management

Property Management (PM) Director Frankie Johnson directed the board to her report. In June is when staff will assess when to make adjustments and how staff acclimate to the new norm. She thanked her staff for their hard work. It is hard to stay operational at this time and she acknowledged all staff for their work on Michael Mirra's retirement celebration. Staff has maintained an occupancy level of 99% for sixteen months. The portfolio completed 850 certifications remotely. Staff are preparing to do new things like rent collection remotely; online is the first option and by mail is the second. Staff are starting to look at the budget process. Director Johnson's report includes a chart on rent calculation with 2019 compared to other years. Unit turn process numbers have increased significantly primarily attributed to leasing process this month. In-unit inspections will start next month. She recognized her staff how have been working above and beyond. Cindy Bergee, David toy, Tiffany Price and Steve Couch were recognized for giving their work 100%.

Real Estate Development

Real Estate Development (RED) Interim Director Roberta Schur directed the board to her report. THA closed on Hilltop Lofts this month. The Mr Mac building has been demolished. Staff are working with Reach Meadows on Hillsdale Heights. THA selected

Walsh and SMR to develop the master plan. THA applied to the Amazon Foundation for Housing Hilltop. Staff are hoping to close on this project and start in spring. RED staff has been doing branding for work with Ankrom Moisan and Nick Tolley for James Center North. The name picked for the site is Aviva Crossing. Her report includes a couple of logo ideas and color palette. Aviva was picked for a couple of reasons—it has different meanings in different languages, staff wanted something that indicated something fresh and new happening at James Center North. Crossing was picked because it is a crossing where Tacoma meets University Place. It is also not overused.

9. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 RESOLUTION 2021-07-28 (1) (Emergency Housing Voucher Services Contract)

A RESOLUTION of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma

Whereas, The Emergency Housing Voucher Program was established by the American Rescue Plan of 2021; and

Whereas, A collaboration between THA, Pierce County Human Services and the Tacoma/Lakewood/Pierce County Continuum of Care was established to administer the program; and

Whereas, Emergency Housing Vouchers will serve homeless households and those at risk of homelessness; and

Whereas, HUD requires THA to offer participants assistance in securing housing; and

Whereas, Voucher holders struggle to find and secure rental units in Tacoma's current housing market; and

Whereas, The Covid-19 pandemic and impending end of the State's Eviction Moratorium may exacerbate the difficulty faced by those searching for housing; now, therefore, be it

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

The Executive Director is authorized and directed to execute a contract with Pierce County Human Services to provide housing search assistance to Emergency Housing Voucher program participants.

Vice Chair Smith motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Hodge seconded the motion.

AYES: 5
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

Motion Approved: July 28, 2021

Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

**8.2 RESOLUTION 2021-07-28 (2)
(Purchase of IT Equipment)**

A **RESOLUTION** of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma

WHEREAS, Tacoma Housing Authority "THA" requires most staff to work from home due to social distancing due to Covid 19, and

WHEREAS, THA plans to continue a remote working environment due to limited space, as well as proven efficiencies and productivity staff are demonstrating, and

WHEREAS, regular use of laptops requires a more reliable model, or a business class model, and

WHEREAS, additional monitors, docking stations and other peripherals are also required to create shared office spaces for those reserving in-office time slots, and

WHEREAS, the current budget for IT equipment is \$84,000, and

WHEREAS, IT staff estimate the need to spend an additional \$60,000 this year on laptops and peripherals, and

WHEREAS, IT staff estimate the need to spend an additional \$100,000 this year on server room improvements, and

WHEREAS, exceeding budget by more than \$50,000 requires a Board resolution; now, therefore, be it

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

The Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma, Washington that the agency is authorized to spend up to an additional

\$160,000 for IT equipment for 2021 in order to deliver improved customer service, reliability, efficiency and productivity for staff.

Vice Chair Smith motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Young seconded the motion.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES: 5
NAYS: None
Abstain: None
Absent: None

Motion Approved: July 28, 2021

Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

**8.3 HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TACOMA
RESOLUTION NO. 2021-07-28 (3)**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TACOMA,
APPOINTING THE ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE
AUTHORITY.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF TACOMA as follows:

Section 1. Recitals and Findings. The Board of Commissioners (the
“Board”) of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma (the “Authority”) finds
and determines that:

(a) Consistent with RCW 35.82.045(8), the By-Laws of the
Authority provide that the Board shall employ a Secretary, who is also the
Executive Director.

(b) Michael Mirra, the former Executive Director of the
Authority, resigned effective July 5, 2021.

(c) Pending the selection and appointment of a new Executive
Director of the Authority, there is a need for an individual to serve as Acting
Executive Director of the Authority.

Section 2. Appointment of Acting Executive Director. Pending the
selection and appointment of a new Executive Director of the Authority, April
Black is appointed to serve as Acting Executive Director of the Authority, with
full authority to perform all actions that are authorized to be performed by the
Executive Director of the Authority.

Section 3. Ratification and Confirmation. All actions of the Authority and its officers prior to the date hereof and consistent with the terms of this resolution are ratified and confirmed.

Section 4. Effective Date. This resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and approval.

ADOPTED by the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Tacoma at an open public meeting held on July 28, 2021.

Commissioner Hodge motioned to approve the resolution. Vice Chair Smith seconded the motion.

Upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

AYES:	5
NAYS:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

Motion Approved: July 28, 2021

Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair

9. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Hodge noted how weird it felt to not have Michael Mirra at the meeting and noted what a great job Interim ED Black did for her first meeting. Chair Rumbaugh stated that it is clear that staff are working on their maximum performance level. "It is a big time for change and opportunities both good and bad," he added. Vice Chair Smith appreciates the staff and their work. She added that her voice is for tenants and what she mentions are for resources.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct the meeting ended at 6:35 pm.

APPROVED AS CORRECT

Adopted: August 25, 2021



Stanley Rumbaugh, Chair