

COUNCIL ON HOUSING  
Public Session via Conference Call  
August 10, 2022

**Motions**

- June 8, 2022 Minutes
- Slate of Officers
- Resolution NO. 631- Housing Alliance Delaware

Dianne Casey, Chair, called to order the public session of the Council on Housing meeting at 2:02 pm, Wednesday, August 10, 2022. In addition to Ms. Casey, the following Council members were present:

|                   |               |                  |                |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------|
| Connie Harrington | Amy Walls     | Barbara Cool     | Francis Julian |
| Vincent White     | Norma Zumsteg | Lillian Harrison |                |

Dianne Casey was present in person at the Delaware State Housing Authority, 10<sup>th</sup> floor, Carvel State Building, Wilmington, Delaware which served as the anchor location for the meeting. All other members of Council appeared via video.

The following council members were absent and excused from the meeting:

Doug Motley                      Donna Mitchell

**Also attending:**

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Stephanie Griffin, DSHA | Debra Miller, DSHA   |
| Susan Eliason, DSHA     | Marlena Gibson, DSHA |
| Alice Davis, DSHA       | Eugene Young, DSHA   |
| Javier Horstmann, DSHA  |                      |

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Julian moved and Ms. Walls seconded that a motion be made for the approval of the Minutes of the June 8, 2022 meeting. Ms. Walls noted that the 2<sup>nd</sup> page, 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point should be changed from Javi to Mr. Hortsman.

Ms. Casey moved to take a vote that the Minutes of the June 8th, 2022 meeting be approved and submitted as amended. Motion was passed.

Change was made to the June 8, 2022 meeting minutes prior to posting the official minutes.

**DSHA REPORT – Mr. Young**

- The Governor signed the budget bills on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Of the three major budget bills, there were significant strides made for DSHA including increased funding for SRAP.
- The General Assembly ended the 2<sup>nd</sup> leg of the 151<sup>st</sup> Session in the early morning hours of July 1st. While many housing bills did not pass, including SB101 (right to representation for tenants), SB90 (source of income), and SB167 (creation of the Landlord mitigation fund), this past session

did show that there is a strong interest among the General Assembly to address policy issues pertaining to housing in the coming years. Mr. Hortsmann and team are engaging with stakeholders and legislators to put together a broad legislative agenda for the agency ahead of the upcoming 152<sup>nd</sup> legislative session.

- Since March 2021, DEHAP has paid out rental and/or utility assistance of \$92.5 million on over 15,000 cases. Combined with the original version of the program from early in the pandemic, DSHA has distributed over \$107 million in rental and utility assistance. DSHA is continuing to focus on disbursing as much of our remaining ERA-1 funding as possible before the program deadline of Sept 30, 2022 with additional surge review capacity support being added. As DSHA looks ahead to exhausting ERA-1 and moving into more of a conservation approach with ERA-2 to extend the program as long as possible, DSHA is also working on plans or program changes to be implemented over the next few months that will target the program more tightly on the highest-need and most vulnerable households. This will be a communication shift as well, as income eligibility will be reduced and documentation requirements (currently which are extremely minimal) will be increased.
- Stakeholder feedback sessions on the proposed Catalyst Fund were held on July 26 and 27. Approximately 100 interested developers attended the two sessions. DSHA and its partner, Cinnaire Lending, explained the program, especially the construction financing process to be managed by Cinnaire and the sales gap subsidy that DSHA will be funding with its allocation of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). Most interest was directed towards the proposed eligible areas and the lending requirements. Nearly 80% of the attendees who responded to a poll at the end of the presentation indicated that they were interested in participating in the program. Both DSHA and Cinnaire have established dedicated email addresses for questions. The comment period ended on July 29 and DSHA and Cinnaire are addressing the comments received and preparing an FAQ document to address comments and questions answered at the stakeholder sessions.
- Delaware was allocated \$50 million in federal Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF) resources under the American Rescue Plan Act.
- The Delaware Mortgage Relief program launched statewide on June 27, after the completion of a four-week pilot. The program provides up to \$40,000 in financial assistance to homeowners at risk of displacement due to unpaid housing related obligations. Approximately 300 applications are currently in the pipeline.
- On July 5<sup>th</sup>, DSHA announced the preliminary project award rankings of the 9% applicants.
- The Department of Health and Social Services will be ending their pandemic emergency shelter program on August 31<sup>st</sup>. This closure will displace 436 households, the majority of which are currently in Sussex County. DSHA is working with those affected to coordinate possible DEHAP assistance.
- DSHA is proud to announce several new senior staff appointments. Doris Hall is now the new Director of Housing Management. Doris Hall replaces retiring former Director Chris Whaley. Brian Rossello is returning to DSHA as the new Director of Housing Finance and Anthony Williams has been promoted to the position of Chief Operating Officer of the Agency.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **OPERATIONS:** - Ms. Walls

- Primary focus on the agenda of the Operations Committee is the vote on the slate of officers. The committee is recommending Doug Motley as Chair for a period of 1 year as well as Connie Harrington as Vice Chair for 1 year.
- Ms. Casey made the motion to approve the slate of officers as presented. Mr. Julian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMUNICATIONS: - Ms. Casey

- Committee has been working in conjunction with the Policy Committee to begin drafting the annual report for the Council on Housing.

POLICY: Mr. White

- There has been ongoing discussion of the annual report. A draft was sent out to the committee members for their review and input. Goal is to have another draft to council by September with wrapping up the draft portion and final report completed by November.
- Committee had a presentation by Dan Atkins from CLASI regarding the Right to Council Bill.
- Mr. White recommended to DSHA staff to release dates of presentations to council so when questions are being asked of the Council, they are able to speak more knowledgeably to the subject.

LOAN REVIEW: Mr. Julian

The committee met August 2<sup>nd</sup> and reviewed one HDF grant request for consideration. After due discussion, Loan Review made the following recommendations to Council:

- Based on the information provided in the synopsis and during discussion, the members of Loan Review agreed to present for the full Council's consideration DSHA's request for a \$200,000 HDF pass-through grant to Housing Alliance Delaware. Mr. Julian moved and Mr. White seconded the resolution to be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS:

- None

ADMINISTRATIVE:

- None

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

- The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 2:00 pm. The location will be the Community Building of Huling Cove, 1142 Savannah Rd, Lewes, Delaware.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debra Miller*

Debra Miller

Note: Copies of materials referenced as "attached" in these Minutes are available upon request.