

COUNCIL ON HOUSING
Public Session via Conference Call
March 8, 2023

Connie Harrington, Vice-Chair, called to order the public session of the Council on Housing meeting at 2:10 pm, Wednesday, March 8, 2023. In addition to Ms. Harrington, the following Council members were present:

Dianne Casey	Amy Walls	Donna Mitchell	Francis Julian
Barbara Cool			

The following council members were absent from the meeting:

Doug Motley	Lillian Harrison	Vincent White	Norma Zumsteg (Resigned)
-------------	------------------	---------------	--------------------------

Also attending:

Eugene Young, DSHA	Stephanie Griffin, DSHA	Debra Miller, DSHA
Javier Horstmann, DSHA	Candace Collins, DSHA	Seth Collett, LNWA
Michael Acciani, LNWA		

NOTE: Due to a lack of quorum for this meeting, this is an informational meeting only. All voting activities were tabled until the next meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Review tabled until the April 12th meeting. Not enough council members in attendance to constitute a quorum. Ms. Casey made note of minor punctuation errors to the February Minutes. The minutes will be updated for review at the April 12th meeting.

DSHA REPORT – Mr. Young

DSHA will have its second budget hearing on Friday, March 24th at 10 A.M. before the Bond Bill Committee. The request before the committee will include program allocations for the Affordable Rental Housing Program (ARHP), the Downtown Development District Program (DDD), and the Strong Neighborhood Housing Fund (SNHF).

- DSHA continues to engage with our policy stakeholders in discussing innovative solutions to our State’s housing crisis.
- Delaware Housing Assistance Program (DEHAP)
 - Relating to the upcoming DEHAP program closure, DSHA will continue to engage legislative partners on the program’s status as it winds down.
 - The DEHAP application portal closed to new applications and recertifications of prior applications on January 2, 2023. The DEHAP review team will continue processing the cases pending until funding is depleted. To date, DEHAP has provided over \$130.4 million in rental and utilities assistance to over 24,400 Delaware families. Currently, there are around 300 remaining cases in the process of being reviewed. DSHA is paying

- rent and utilities through March only.
- A portion of DEHAP funds will be kept in reserve to assist high needs households facing an immediate threat of eviction. DSHA will also continue using Emergency Rental Assistance - Housing Stability Services (ERA-HSS) funds to support the Community Navigation Program through December 31, 2023, and the Eviction Defense Project through September 30, 2025. In the absence of DEHAP, these two critical programs will provide alternate forms of assistance to households facing eviction.
 - Delaware Mortgage Relief Program (DEMARP)
 - To date, we have provided \$16,480,506 in assistance to 1,615 households for an average of \$10,205.
 - In addition to the assistance paid, we have \$197,652 allocated for applicants receiving future monthly assistance payments.
 - Both the Multifamily Bond Accelerator Fund and the Preservation Fund were launched last Friday, Feb 24. Each Fund is making up to \$15 million available to support LIHTC development applications in the 2023 funding round.
 - The Multifamily Bond Accelerator Fund will provide up to \$35,000 per unit available to encourage the use of the 4% LIHTC credit for projects which qualify for the Housing Creation set-aside in the QAP.
 - The Preservation Fund will also provide up to \$35,000 per unit for projects that qualify for the Preservation set-aside in the QAP. The Preservation Fund may be used by both 4% and 9% applicants.
 - This SLFRF funding is in addition to other DSHA financing traditionally available.
 - To the extent that funds remain available after the April 28, 2023 LIHTC application deadline, these funds will continue to be made available to 4% applications submitted in accordance with the rolling application process specified in the QAP.
 - DSHA's HOME-ARP Allocation Plan has been approved by HUD. Staff is currently working on the program and application timeline and NOFA targeting a mid- to late-spring release.
 - As of Feb. 28, we have received 1,003 responses to the housing survey. The geographic distribution of responses is as follows:
 - New Castle County - 47%
 - Kent County - 26%
 - Eastern Sussex County - 19%
 - Western Sussex County - 7%
 - The survey, which is part of a comprehensive statewide housing needs assessment, seeks input on residents' current and past housing experiences, housing development preferences, and opinions on Delaware's housing market needs.
 - The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and will close on March 31. It can be accessed in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole at: <https://delawarecommunitysurvey.com/>. Promotion materials were shared with your communications staff.
 - Since our last Council meeting, DSHA announced that the maximum rebate for the DDD Large Project has been increased to \$2.5 million in recognition of the extraordinary cost increases in the construction industry. This increased rebate will be available to Large Projects receiving rebate reservations between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2024. The Large Project application period is currently open, with applications due on March 6, 2024.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **OPERATIONS:** Ms. Walls
 - None
- **COMMUNICATIONS:** Ms. Casey
 - Communications Committee and Mr. Horstmann penned a letter to Governor John Carney thanking him for his \$30 million proposed housing funding for 2024 budget.
- **POLICY:** Ms. Casey
 - None
- **LOAN REVIEW:**
 - The committee met February 28, 2023 and reviewed one HDF funding request for council consideration. Review tabled until the April 12th meeting. Not enough council members in attendance to constitute a quorum.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS:

- Ms. Griffin and Mr. Horstmann are working on filling the vacancies that exist within the Council on Housing.

ADMINISTRATIVE:

- None

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

- The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, 2:00 p.m. via conference call with the anchor location at the Offices of the Delaware State Housing Authority, 18 The Green, Dover, DE.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Miller

Debra Miller

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