



**Kalamazoo County Public Housing Commission  
Special Meeting Minutes  
February 11, 2021**

**Commission Members Present:** David Anderson, David Artley, LaToya Haywood, Evelyn Lewis, and Monteze Morales

**Commission Members Absent:** None

**Kalamazoo County Commissioners Present:** Zachary Bauer and Tracy Hall

**LHAF Millage Monitor and Recording Secretary Present:** Melanie Gildea and Lisa Willcutt

**Call to Order and Approval of Meeting Agenda**

The meeting was called to order on Zoom

(<https://zoom.us/j/98231204968?pwd=REdPL2dvUjBaM1lhWmZHbEtORmE4dz09>) by Artley at 6:02 pm.

*Motion to approve meeting agenda by Morales*

*Support by Lewis*

*Motion Approved*

**Public Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items**

Mary Balkema, Housing Director for Kalamazoo County, reminded the Board of the community forum meeting on February 23, 2021. Invitations were sent out as well. There is an opportunity to submit comments in advance of the meeting. She hopes that Board members will attend to give their feedback on the new housing millage.

**Review and consider approval of KCPHC FOIA Policy**

The PHC is working on developing their own FOIA Policy. There was a FOIA request from a citizen for information. Artley connected with Robert Dubault, an attorney from Warner Norcross & Judd LLP. Artley said his main purpose is to understand FOIA policy and get input from Dubault. Dubault looked over the draft policy and offered suggestions. The person who requested the information wants electronic copies attached in an email. There was motion at the previous meeting to authorize Artley of an expenditure of no more than \$1,500 for legal expenses to help with this undertaking. Artley said that if we were to enter into a full contract with Warner Norcross & Judd, we would look at that at the next scheduled PHC meeting. Artley added that he has been taking inventory on the information prior to 2016 to see if anything is missing. He is working with Dubault to get a policy in hand. The request has been documented and now they have 10 days to complete the request which would expire on 2/27/21. Willcutt provided all the documents from 2016-present to the requestor. The person who requested the information acknowledges that they have the documents from 2016-present.

The land bank FOIA policy that was drafted did not have enough detail according to Dubault. His recommendation is to draft a new policy. Artley is also estimating the cost of the copies that would need to be sent to the requestor in an email. At this time there is not a FOIA policy to review and approve, but Artley will continue working on this with the attorney.



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### **Discuss submittal to the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners regarding the 2020 Millage**

Artley distributed the position paper that was given to the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners (KCBC) in June 2020 when requesting the millage be placed on the ballot. The document focuses on the new millage requested and the history of the millage. Anderson suggested that the discussion today focus on the three questions asked by the KCBC and responses that the Board feels comfortable sharing at the February 23, 2021 meeting. He thinks it is important to take everyone's input and formulate this into a focus statement from the PHC. Anderson reviewed the three questions with the Board: 1) What types of rental subsidies should be included in the millage funding? 2) What types of housing do you envision? 3) What related support services are needed for residents in Kalamazoo?

The Board decided to look at each question individually. Anderson suggested providing simple answers to the questions in order to start the conversation. One of the main suggestions for what types of rental subsidies should be included is those that are time limited rental subsidies that are broad. The subsidy should serve as a bridge to a more permanent outcome. The goal is to serve as many people as possible during a certain time frame.

In response to the second question, the types of housing suggested were multi-family rental and home ownership. Types of housing should also include housing for individuals and single-family homes. There are homeless people who are single that need housing, but it is not affordable.

Board input on support services included services that can be tied to housing stability and success. This should not exceed 15% of the total millage amount. Another board member added that sometimes people with rental subsidies are ready for that bridge give up their subsidy and then challenging times come along and they need to continue. Another suggestion was engaging landlords to support housing for individuals who fall behind in rent or for events that are out of the tenant's control.

Willcutt will summarize feedback on each of the three questions in order to prepare a statement to the KCBC from the PHC. She will then send this document out to the PHC. The PCH can edit it more if needed or provide changes directly to Willcutt, but not to the other Commissioners. This document will encapsulate what the PHC wants to send to the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners. The Board may decide to hold another meeting prior to the February 23, 2021 meeting.

### **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items None**

### **Commissioner Member Comments**

Haywood shared that having these conversations warms her heart. She welcomes all of the input and appreciates the passion from board members.

Morales looks forward to the outcome. She will be in attendance for the February 23, 2021 meeting.



Lewis says she is listening to all sides as she is part of an organization that works with people in need of housing, the Kalamazoo County Continuum of Care, the PHC Board and is an individual has her own opinions. She sees the difference in opinion from all angles.

Artley feels comfortable with the conversation from the meeting this evening. He thanks the board members.

Submitted by: Melanie Gildea

Meeting adjourned at 7:19 pm.