



**Business Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2022**

Commission Members Present: David Anderson, Gwendolyn Hooker, and Evelyn Thompson
Commission Members Absent: Patrese Griffin and LaToya Haywood
Kalamazoo County Commissioners Present: Tami Rey
Kalamazoo County Housing Director Present: Mary Balkema

LHAF Millage Monitor and Recording Secretary Present: Lisa Willcutt

Call to Order and Approval of Meeting Agenda

The meeting was called to order at the Kalamazoo County Building, Board Chambers, 201 West Kalamazoo Avenue by Anderson at 5:31 pm. Anderson made a motion to excuse Griffin and Haywood.

Motion by Anderson
Support by Hooker
Motion Approved

The agenda was approved as submitted.

Motion by Anderson
Support by Hooker
Motion Approved

Approve Minutes of the December 2, 2021, meeting

Hooker made a motion to approve the minutes for the December 2, 2021, meeting.

Motion by Hooker
Support by Anderson
Motion Approved

Approve Minutes of the December 22, 2021, Special Meeting

Hooker made a motion to approve the minutes from the special meeting.

Motion by hooker
Support by Anerson
Motion Approved

Public Comment on Agenda Items and Non-Agenda Items: None

Treasurer Position

Anderson said there had been discussion about the position at the December meeting. Both Hooker and Thompson agreed that all commissioners should be present to discuss the position.

Reports

Keystone House

Tyrone Thrash provided a written summary that he shared with the group about Keystone House and his background. Thrash is the Integrated Services of Kalamazoo Housing Specialist that provides services to the veterans at Keystone House. He said there are many challenges with Covid, but he is getting through it all.

Hooker inquired about VASH and what it is. Thrash explained that it stands for Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing and is a housing voucher that provides rental subsidy for veterans. Hooker also wondered why Keystone House provides services for ten men and only two women. Thrash said that it is based on need, and there were very few female veterans that seek Keystone House's transitional housing services.

Anderson thanked Thrash for the work he has been doing. He added that since Thrash has been in the industry there has been talk of the need for a veteran's shelter. Anderson is glad it has come to fruition with funding from the county and the work of the KCPHC. Thrash has taken this and turned it into a success. Anderson added that Thrash is the unsung hero and that often we do not hear the successes, but Keystone House is one of the successes.

Financial Reports

Willcutt shared the financial report for December 2021 and explained variances. Hooker asked about Miscellaneous Administrative Expenses and what those costs result from. Willcutt explained that Integrated Services of Kalamazoo (ISK) has grants that provide housing assistance vouchers to households in Kalamazoo. These grants come directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and must be spent in their entirety in order to comply with the terms of the grant and not lose the funding. As a result, there are times when ISK has to spend more than the grant. Any overage is paid by the KCPHC in the Miscellaneous Administrative Expense line item. There were no other questions from the board. There was a motion to accept the financial report.

Motion by Anderson

Support by Hooker

Motion Approved

November 2021 Housing Resources, Inc. Millage Reports

Hooker asked why HRI does not personally report to the Commission. Willcutt stated that HRI reports to her and then she presents the report to the board.

Balkema asked how much would be taken from the fund balance to pay HRI for the remainder of the year. Willcutt said not much. If the administrative costs were not retroactive, then costs for the month would have been far less.

There was a motion to accept the HRI December 2021 report.



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Motion by Anderson
Support by Hooker
Motion Approved

LHAF Millage Survey Responses

No addition responses were received, Willcutt reported

Bethany House

Willcutt did not have anything significant to report.

Fox Ridge Fire Victims Assistance

Willcutt stated that the checks were cut and delivered to the two hotels that residents were staying at. Anderson asked how many residents that were affected by the fire at Fox Ridge were provided temporary motel stays. Willcutt thought it was about seven adults and 12-15 children. Hooker said it was fourteen children.

Old Business

116 Fellows

Anderson said that the task to create LGBTQ+ youth transitional housing had been discussed for a decade or more until the KCPHC took it on using money from the county and grant funding. The KCPHC had been paying real estate taxes on the property but worked with Amy Hunter, Director of OutFront Kalamazoo, to tell her how to gain exemption. In the closing documents, it states that the KCPHC can buy back the property within 5 years if the program changes or ends.

Teresa Bingman Contract

Hooker learned that there was some duplication of services with the county's contract with the W.E. Upjohn Institute and the proposal from Bingman.

Balkema stated that there is a countywide housing study that the W.E. Upjohn Institute has been contracted to conduct. Their work will be completed in May of 2022 at a cost of \$30,000. As part of this work surveys will be sent to thousands of county residents. She added that the county is waiting for the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Work Plan for how the remaining 2015 Millage funds. Balkema said that money cannot be spent from the Millage until the Work Plan and Budget are approved by the county.

Hooker said that since the board approved the contract with Bingman, she should be compensated for the time that she spent preparing her proposal and presentation.

Bingman spoke and voiced a concern about the W.E. Upjohn study and whether the components of the work could be shared. She also asked about what entity is actually in charge of public housing overall, the county board or the KCPHC. Another concern Bingman raised was that there was nothing related to an equity assessment in work that the W.E. Upjohn Institute is performing.



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Willcutt read emails from Griffin and Haywood since they were not in attendance. Griffin apologized for her absence due to a prior commitment. She went on to state that she supports using Bingman's services to assist the KCPHC in defining a strategic/work plan that will include/inform how the remaining millage funds should be spent. Griffin recognized that there may be work in Bingman's proposal that may be getting done elsewhere. Griffin asked when the county's study would be completed and suggested that there may be information already available to help determine how to allocate Millage funds. She also suggested that the Bingman proposal should be altered in terms of scope of work, dollar amount and time. Finally, she asked some questions about the budget and availability of cash. She also thanked Hooker for bringing forth the discussion to assist those affected by the fire at Fox Ridge.

Haywood's emailed comments also apologized for her absence and that she missed the cost associated with Bingman's proposal. She expressed that had she realized the cost she would not have voted in favor of approving the proposal due to the fact that the cost seemed too high and the KCPHC does not have the funds to support this expenditure. Haywood stated that she likes the content of the proposal and would like to work with Bingman at a more reasonable cost as she seems knowledgeable.

Bingman asked the board to thoughtfully consider her proposal. She would be happy to adjust the proposal to exclude any duplication and collaborate as needed.

Anderson reiterated what Balkema had said earlier in the meeting. In order to have funds available, the KCPHC needs to have a Work Plan and Budget in place and submit it to the county for approval.

President Thompson agreed that the Work Plan and Budget need to be done first and then a decision could be made about Bingman's proposal. She said the first order of business is to schedule a special meeting. Thompson said she was sorry to waste Bingman's time. Bingman said she understood.

Hooker asked if Rey had any information on the timeline for the budget. Rey noted that the Work Plan is needed as soon as possible. She added that there is a spot on the county board's agenda once the Work Plan and Budget have been completed.

The budget will be scheduled for a special meeting. Willcutt will send out a Doodle poll to gauge everyone's availability after finding out from the county if space is available to hold a meeting.

Public Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items:

Meg Bauer found it hard to access previous meeting minutes. She said the website is a great improvement, but that she wishes the meeting information were available on the website as it is for other commissions.

Willcutt said that as a contractor herself, it is not the practice in Kalamazoo to pay contractors for providing proposals or travel expenses related to bidding work. She added that as a taxpayer in



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the city and county of Kalamazoo, she would not approve of her taxes paying for a contractor to provide a proposal.

Commissioner Member Comments

Thompson said that she may not be on top of everything but is hoping to get projects done.

Hooker appreciated Thrash and all his work with the Veteran's Homeless Initiative. She is happy that the LBGTQ+ project is complete. Hooker also highlighted the responsibility of the Commission. She thinks there needs to be more communication with the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners. She thinks it is important to create a path forward to determine what can and cannot be done. Hooker is pleased with the that the KCPHC did for the Fox Ridge families.

Anderson emphasized the importance of having full attendance at the next meeting. He looks forward to getting the Work Plan completed.

Balkema said she that instruction from the Board of Commissioners on the role of the KCPHC will not be provided. She said it is the responsibility of the KCPHC to define the work they will do and get approval by the Board of Commissioners.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:48 pm

Submitted by: Melanie Gildea and Lisa Willcutt