

FAYETTEVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
MTW Working Meeting & Action Items
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7th, 2021, 4:30 PM
Via Zoom

I. Call to Order

The MTW Working meeting of the Fayetteville Housing Authority Board of Commissioners was called to order at 4:30 PM.

II. Roll Call

All Commissioners were in attendance, forming quorum. Additionally in attendance: Interim Deputy Director Butler, Mr. Turner of HEAL Collective, FHA staff members, members of the public.

III. Review and Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Paxton made a motion to divide Agenda item VII into two items: discussion in open session regarding internal staff positioning to ensure continuity and separation of duties and hazard pay, as well as an executive session item to discuss staffing issue regarding interim positions for temporary promotions and corresponding pay scale adjustments for the Interim Deputy Director.

There was discussion regarding whether agenda approval required voting as per the bylaws.

There was discussion regarding the advertisement of this meeting as an agenda session versus a working meeting. Commissioner Paxton suggested posting the full agenda for public transparency.

Commissioner Paxton suggested posting the MTW segment from the recorded meeting on the website for the public. Chair Terry stated that the website should have a dedicated MTW section for the public. There was discussion of agenda session recordings being made available to the public.

There was clarification of the language and role of the Finance Committee chaired by Commissioner Breashears.

There was a motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

Jen Cole, Hillcrest Tower resident, wanted to know when there would be forward movement on the mold issue at Hillcrest.

V. Reports

A. Staffing Committee– Commissioner Paxton

Commissioner Paxton reported on the latest Staffing Committee meetings with the following recommendations:

- i. Relabeling the Community Engagement Coordinator to Move- to- Work Coordinator for funding purposes
- ii. reevaluate the Emergency Housing Voucher Housing Navigator position and determine if those resources could be better used as third- party resource

- iii. a four- hour Move- to- W ork workshop with the full Board of Commissioners, recommended staff, Mr. Turner, and Jasper
- iv. Hire a DI consultant that understands affordable housing to work with the HR consultant for immediate needs and long- term diversity & inclusion goals
- v. allow the fee accountant to participate in the interview of the Finance Manager, CFO positions respectively due to the specificity of the position.
- vi. Merging the Deputy Director & Finance Manager positions, and doubling the Finance Manager salary
- vii. That the Board becomes more familiar with the Move- to- W ork plan

He discussed the interview and hiring process, and TPC's role as contracted within those two processes.

Interim Deputy Director Butler gave clarification as to the funding for the EHV Housing Navigator. Commissioner Breashears asked how many vouchers were in that specific program.

Victoria Dempsey, former FHA staff member, asked about plans for continuing operations given that HUD has not approved of Mr. Turner's contract effective September 30 th

B. Hiring Committee – Commissioner Jones

Commissioner Jones stated that the ED from the NW A W omen's Shelter has not been an active participant in the Hiring Committee and recommended adding a fourth member to the committee to continue moving forward.

She recommended John Newman, Executive Director of Lifestyles. Chair Terry suggested Mr. Turner as a neutral third- party. Commissioner Scott suggested having Mr. Newman come in during the first interviews instead of the initial screening.

Commissioner Jones reviewed the timeline for interviews. There was a discussion regarding if the meetings should be structured as a special meeting.

A motion was made to hold a special meeting on Friday, October 15th from 3 pm to 5 pm for the stated purpose of the Hiring Committee interviewing the first three applicants for Executive Director, with the resumes initially restricted to only commissioners until then. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Jones discussed a recommendation to hire an interim Deputy Director.

C. Staff Report– Interim Deputy Director Butler

Interim Deputy Director Butler reviewed the timeline of past, current, and future processes regarding possible mold issues at Hillcrest Towers. Snyder Environmental had been brought in to conduct testing which was then sent to an outside lab for processing. An RFP was drafted to install adequate insulation in the chiller walls to help with efficiency of fan coil units and limit water accumulation within the walls.

She gave an update on the HUD DEC Review, ERA enrollment for FHA.

She reviewed the Organizational chart, highlighting open positions, and suggesting adjusting maintenance positions based on the budget process and projected sale of FHA

Development properties. She is currently working on having positions correctly labeled as salary in the HR portal before noting them in the organizational chart.

There was discussion about tabling events at the FHA Public Housing sites for ERA enrollment. Commissioner Scott asked if Mr. Turner would be able to assist residents with ERA enrollment.

Jen Cole, Hillcrest Tower resident, stated that residents have already done mold testing by outside labs and had forwarded the results to the Board. There was discussion about possible policy for reimbursing residents for the mold tests.

D. Attorney Report – Attorney Crouch

Chair Terry reviewed the letter from HUD regarding the HEAL Collective contract and the Board's request for HUD to reconsider and allow this contract to continue. Commissioner Scott initiated discussion regarding payments to Mr. Turner.

Mr. Turner clarified that currently he is working pro-bono.

VI. Staffing

A. Interim Deputy Director Butler suggested that the Board enter Executive session to discuss employee salaries that reflect increased responsibilities due to the multiple open positions. She also has recommendations for filling positions that would ensure continuity and separation of duties.

B. Interim Deputy Director Butler discussed hazard pay/retention bonuses due to the resurgence of COVID with the Delta variant and general difficult situations, broken into three lump sum payments once per month until the end of the calendar year.

Chair Terry asked about the model for the previous hazard pay. Commissioner Scott led discussion on salary adjustments for FHA employees.

Commissioner Paxton reviewed the three options for distributing the bonuses: a one-time lump sum added to the paycheck, a lump sum divided across each check for the remaining pay periods within the calendar year, and three separate one-time payments to encourage retention per month.

Commissioner Jones asked about how the retention bonuses would affect the budget. Chair Terry asked if CARES Act funding would be applicable. There was general discussion of the calculations for retention bonuses based on a flat rate.

Chair Terry asked if the budget had room to accommodate the retention bonuses, and then shared her support of the recommendations made by the Staffing Committee.

Commissioner Breashears asked if the staff had been consulted on how much payment they would like to receive.

Commissioner Scott asked for an update on the budget for fiscal year 2022.

Chair Terry clarified that the HUD Field Office had approved an extension on the budget.

A motion was made for \$2500 to be paid in three installments per month for \$500, \$1000, and then the remaining \$1000. The motion was seconded. Commissioner Paxton made an additional motion to amend the December amount to \$1500 instead of \$1000.

There was discussion regarding the increase of the total amount. Interim Deputy Director Butler recommended doing due diligence and that this decision could be postponed by a week.

Commissioner Breashears commented on how to calculate the amount possible from the financials.

The amendment was seconded, and carried with four Ayes (Commissioners Breashears, Paxton, Jones, Terry) and one Abstain (Commissioner Scott).

The next motion and a second is an amendment amount for the three payments for recognition of hazard pay and retention bonuses for FHA Staff.

Commissioner Paxton moved to table for seven days, seconded by Commissioner Scott for the purpose of due diligence. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. Executive Session

Commissioner Paxton moved to Executive Session to discuss a staffing issue regarding who will be interim positions for temporary promotions and the corresponding pay scale adjustment with the Interim Deputy Director. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Chair Terry called roll after returning from Executive Session- all Commissioners were present.

A. Action Item 1: Motion to approve additional compensation for the Voucher Housing Specialists, Housing Navigator, and Housing Property Manager for the additional duties undertaken up to the full point of staffing and/or December 31st, 2021- whichever comes first.

The motion was seconded, the question was called, and the motion was approved unanimously.

B. Action Item 2: Motion to approve the Housing Property Manager as the designated Separation of Duties Officer.

The motion was seconded, and the question was called. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. MTW Training – Mr. Turner

Commissioner Scott motioned to table Item IX with an understanding that the commissioners review the materials pertaining to the Move- to- W ork program, until next Thursday.

The motion was seconded. There was a recommendation to move this item to the top of the agenda for the next meeting to ensure it gets covered. The vote was called, and the motion was approved unanimously.

IX. Discussion of the iHire & Staffing Committee interview and selection process

Interim Deputy Director Butler stated her concerns regarding the candidate review and interview process, requesting clarification of expectations with having a Board member in the process.

Commissioner Paxton discussed his perspective of the interview process to ensure there is proper training for staff responsible for interviews. The Staffing Committee would be empowered to review the hiring for positions below management level, and for management level positions to come back to the board.

Commissioner Breashears pointed out that the Board reserves a part in hiring the Deputy Director and CFO.

Commissioner Jones reviewed the iHire platform as requested, and the tools it employs to review and interview applicants.

Commissioner Breashears recommended using this process up to the point of full staffing and/or December 3^{1st} 2021 – whichever comes first.

A motion was made to authorize the Staffing Committee to be responsible for executing the recruitment, interview, and ultimately hiring for all nonmanagement and/or director level positions. Those director and management level decisions will be referred to the full Board of Commissioners for approval until such time as the permanent ED is in place. The motion was seconded, and a vote was called. The motion passed with a majority of the quorum (Commissioners Scott, Jones, Breashears, Terry) and one Abstain (Commissioner Paxton).

X. Final Comments & Announcements

Chair Terry gave a reminder that tomorrow morning is the NAHRO conference plenary session with Secretary Fudge as the keynote speaker. She highlighted sessions that may be of interest for the commissioners.

Commissioner Paxton will have an agenda item for next week regarding the IT Audit for preservation of documents/retention records pertaining to the email systems.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:47 PM.