

**WASHINGTON STATE  
HOUSING FINANCE COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**March 26, 2020**

The Commission meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Lowel Krueger, at the request of the Chair, at 1:00 p.m. via teleconference. Those Commissioners present on the line were Richard Nafziger, Diane Klontz, Karen Miller, Wendy Lawrence, Jason Richter, Randy Robinson, Ken Larsen and Alishia Topper.

Karen Miller left the teleconference at 1:09 pm.

**Approval of the  
Minutes**

The minutes of the February 27, 2020 special meeting were approved as mailed.

**Public Hearing:  
The Bush School,  
OID # 20-31A**

The Vice Chair opened a public hearing on OID # 19-51A, The Little School Campus, at 1:10 p.m.

Lisa Vatske, Director of Multifamily Housing and Community Facilities Division, said this is a proposed issuance of one or more series of tax-exempt revenue bonds to finance: (i) the construction and equipping of an approximately 22,000 square foot educational facility; (ii) the rehabilitation of existing academic facilities; and (iii) the payment of all or a portion of the costs of issuing the bonds. The project is located at 3400 E. Harrison Street and 408 - 433 Lake Washington Blvd. E., Seattle, WA 98112, owned and to be owned by The Bush School, a Washington 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. The total estimated bond amount is not expected to exceed \$22,950,000. Ms. Vatske introduced Percy Abram, Head of the Bush School.

Mr. Abram stated that The Bush School is the Seattle's only K-12 independent school currently with 680 students. Twenty-three percent of the students are on

need based financial aid, 36% of the students are people of color. This financing will help the school build 10 new classrooms and a multipurpose room. He also mentioned that the school is a Salmon-Safe school, the first Passive House School west of the Mississippi and the new construction will also be Net-Zero. There has been positive support from the families and community for this project as well.

There were no other comments from members of the public and the hearing was closed at 1:15 p.m.

**Public Hearing:  
Cedar Crossing,  
OID # 19-137A**

The Vice Chair opened a public hearing on OID # 19-137A, Cedar Crossing, at 1:15 p.m.

Ms. Vatske said this is a proposed issuance of one or more series of tax-exempt and taxable revenue notes to finance a portion of the costs for the acquisition of land and the construction and equipping of a 254-unit multifamily housing facility located at 6600 Roosevelt Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115, to be owned by 6600 Roosevelt LLLP, a Washington limited liability limited partnership. The total estimated note amount is not expected to exceed \$65,000,000, a portion of which may be taxable. Ms. Vatske introduced Alicia Luber from Mercy Housing Northwest and Heather Burns representing Bellwether Housing.

Ms. Burns stated that this project is a partnership with Bellwether Housing and Mercy Housing Northwest. This project will be on the same block as the new Roosevelt link light rail station and will have King County and City of Seattle funding.

The project will have 254 units of housing including 2 staff units and an on-site childcare center. Thirty-six percent will be 2- and 3-bedrooms family size units. There will be forty units at 30% AMI (Area Median Income), 40 units at 50% AMI, and the remaining units will be at 60% AMI.

The project will have a 6500 sq. ft. childcare center will be operated by El Centro de la Raza that will serve 68 children. There will be 1300 sq. ft. of retail space that is included in the Code requirement for this neighborhood.

Ms. Luber stated that Mercy Housing will operate resident services programs while Bellwether will provide property management services.

There were no other comments from members of the public and the hearing was closed at 1:24 p.m.

**Public Hearing:  
Polaris at SeaTac,  
OID # 19-65A**

The Vice Chair opened a public hearing on OID # 19-65A, Polaris at SeaTac, at 1:25 p.m.

Ms. Vatske said this is a proposed issuance of one or more series of tax-exempt and taxable revenue notes to finance a portion of the costs for the acquisition of land and the construction and equipping of a 365-unit multifamily housing facility located at the Northwest corner of International Blvd. S. and S. 154th Street, SeaTac, WA 98199, to be owned by Polaris at SeaTac, LLC, a Washington limited liability company. The total estimated note amount is not expected to exceed \$90,000,000, a portion of which may be taxable. Ms. Vatske introduced Keith James, Development Manager at Inland Development.

Mr. James said that the occupancy will be restricted to households earning less than 60% of the King County AMI. Twenty percent of the units will be set aside for large households and persons with disabilities. The amenities for this project include a fitness center, business center, media room, fitness trail, and indoor/outdoor playcenter. The project is close to a light rail station.

**Public Hearing:  
Policy waivers for  
the 2020 9%  
allocation**

The Vice Chair opened a public hearing on a policy waiver for the 2020 9% allocations at 1:26 p.m.

Ms. Vatske gave an overview of the 2020 9% allocations and stated each geographic pool has a unique opportunity to be responsive to the specific situations

of the competitive round in coordination with the many additional layers of publicly leveraged funds. Staff and the State Housing Trust Fund (HTF) and local public funders are proposing to fund deeper in the metro and non-metro pools in order to move some additional ready to go projects forward, sooner, rather than have them wait and potentially jeopardize the funding awards that have been made. There are some nuances and potential policy waivers that are needed to implement these recommendations. Commission staff have weighed the cost benefits of going deeper into these projects and allowing for some modification from current policies. Outlined below are the specific considerations for your review.

The Commission's current policy allows up to 20% of the next year's allocation to be forward committed. The current list of projects being proposed would bring the total forward commitment to closer to 30%. There are several mitigating factors, one being that there are several prior year projects that have run into legal or regulatory issues that may mean that we recapture credit later this year. If this turns out to be the case, then we could easily be back within our stated policy.

One of the nuances of this policy is that a forward commitment is allowed when at least half of a project could be funded, and this would get the full project funded. The Seattle/King county pool utilizes this policy as part of their allocation strategy and has years been able to invest deeper in projects in order to get an additional project funded. In both the Metro and Non- Metro pools, although full projects are being funded and this is a slight nuance from the stated policy, it gets us the same underlying result and the benefit of funding an additional project.

In the Metro Pool, the Commission has received a request from the local public funders to fund an additional project in Tacoma/Pierce county. This project was recently one of only two projects that received competitive and special HUD funding. This project also received and has been sitting on an HTF award from over a year ago. Although funding this project keeps it within the forward commitment policy, based on a previous agreement and approach in a similar situation, Tacoma/Pierce is willing to sit out next year's allocation round in

exchange for the additional project this year. This helps balance and mitigate the impact to the other counties in the pool for next years' allocation round. The only other project in this pool that won't receive funding is a third project from Spokane that wouldn't be funded due to the policy that no more than 35% of the allocation can go to any one county. The only policy change is taking the full project allocation instead of just a partial. This keeps this project moving forward, leverages scarce federal funds, uses HTF funds and serves an important target population in Tacoma.

In the Non- Metro Pool there is a slightly more complex situation, but an important pilot and collaboration with the State HTF. Stakeholders and the HTF have begun a discussion regarding the definition of rural and the statutory requirement for the HTF to target at least 30% of the resources to rural projects. Our non-metro allocation category and the HTF definition don't sync up well, especially this last allocation round, which has made it difficult to align our resources. This discussion has highlighted the importance of the financial capacity of organizations when seeking tax credit investors and that some of the rural sponsors don't have the financial strength to meet some of the liquidity and financial requirements. In addition, pricing of tax credits in these rural markets is often less than what projects in the Metro or Puget Sound Region can attract. Ensuring the right sizing and financial capacity of these rural projects is key as some may be better tax credit candidates than others. This collaboration with the HTF starts this analysis and strategy. It includes the Commission going deeper in the non-metro pool to fund an additional 2 projects from the 9 projects on the waiting list, at the same time, HTF will fully fund an additional project off the wait list, resulting in an additional 3 more projects being funded, creating 162 units. See the letter distributed to Commissioners.

This has a couple of policy implications. One is the farmworker policy. When we increased the Farmworker points to make these types of projects competitive with permanent supportive homeless (PSH) projects, we also put in place a policy stating that no more than 2 farmworker projects could be funded in a round. This round we received 5 farmworker projects, 4 of which were funded by HTF. As we still had some available credit to allocate, we looked at our

waitlist and strategized about additional projects. Although we originally discussed having the HTF “buy-down” the credit amount in some additional projects, what ultimately made the most sense was to test or pilot the concept of the HTF fully funding a project. Assessing what were the next projects to be funded on our list and how those would help the Department of Commerce meet their rural and PSH unit goals, we developed the strategy to allocate additional credit to fund an additional farmworker project in Entiat, WA, the Mountainview project, and an additional PSH project, the Skagit County PSH project. In addition, the HTF would fully fund the next PSH project on our waitlist, a PSH project in Raymond, WA. The main downside is the potential impact to next year’s round, but it is mitigated by the fact that it gets units on the ground a year earlier than waiting until next year and reapplying, it helps clear the existing pipeline and gives us some analysis and a road map for how we can redefine leverage in the future.

The main two considerations for the Commissioners are to allow the additional farmworker project to move forward as well as the allocating up to 30% of our forward commitment or up to an additional 10% beyond our current policy. Staff recommends your approval of these policy adjustments.

Ms. Vatske also stated that there are letters of support from the City of Mt. Vernon and Skagit County Board of Commissioners.

Paul Purcell, representing the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, testified in support of the policy waiver. He said it is critical to support these waivers and he appreciates the Commission being flexible.

Ken Dahlestedt, Skagit County Commissioner, testified that this Skagit County Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) project will provide 70 new apartments for homeless and low-income households, including 57 units of coordinated entry referred permanent supportive housing with 24/7 on-site support. This project is a critical step toward meeting the growing needs of those living on the street in Skagit County. An allocation from WSHFC to the Skagit County PSH project will leverage \$1.5 million in Washington State Housing Trust Fund, \$3.3 million

in County and City capital funding, and up to \$1 million annually in local services and operating funding, making it possible for this project to break-ground by fall of 2020.

Jill Boudreau, City of Mount Vernon, Mayor, stated she was in full support of this and said Mt. Vernon currently has zero projects with this type of supportive units.

There were no other comments from members of the public and the hearing was closed at 1:47 p.m.

**Public Hearing:  
Low Income  
Housing Tax  
Credits from the  
2020 Round**

The Vice Chair opened a public hearing on the recommended allocation of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits at 1:47 p.m.

Ms. Vatske said that there will be one project to consider today.

**DESC Hobson Place - Phase 2**

Mr. Vatske introduced Daniel Malone, Executive Director of the Seattle Downtown Emergency Service (DESC). Mr. Malone stated that this project is the second phase of DESC's mixed use residential and integrated healthcare development, The Bill Hobson Supportive Housing and Integrated Healthcare Clinic. Phase 2, also referred to as Hobson Place 2 in this application, will provide 92 units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals, built over three floors of a comprehensive health clinic designed specifically to serve the needs of people with complex medical and behavioral health conditions. The behavioral health side will be managed by DESC and the medical side will be managed by Harborview Medical Center. He mentioned the few people that are currently out and about outside during this pandemic are suffering and this is what this project is for.

In response to a question from Commissioner Richter regarding the reasons for a cost waiver, Ms. Vatske mentioned this project had to pay commercial wages and required a special HVAC system which resulted in a total development cost waiver.

There were no other comments from members of the public and the hearing was closed at 1:58 p.m.

**Action Item: Policy  
waivers for the  
2020 9% allocation**

Ms. Vatske request approval of the recommended policy waivers to enable allocation of the 2020 9% project allocations, including allocating up to 30% in a forward commitment and an additional Farmworker project in the non-metro pool.

Mr. Larsen moved to approve the request. Ms. Topper seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:  
Resolution No. 20-  
42, a Resolution for  
the 2020 Allocation  
of Credit for the  
Housing Tax Credit  
Program**

Lisa Vatske, Director of the Multifamily Housing and Community Facilities Division, said this was a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to make reservations and/or allocations of 2020 Housing Tax Credits to the following project:

- DESC Hobson Place - Phase 2

Mr. Larsen moved to approve the resolution. Ms. Lawrence seconded the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:  
Resolution No. 20-  
35, St. Thomas  
School, OID # 20-  
28A**

Ms. Vatske said this is a resolution approving the issuance of one or more series of tax-exempt revenue bonds to: (1) refinance the construction and equipping of existing school facilities; (2) finance the construction and equipping of additional school facilities, including a gymnasium and performing arts center; and (3) pay all or a portion of the costs of issuing the bonds. The project is located at 8300 NE 12th Street, Medina, WA 98039, and is to be owned by St. Thomas School, a Washington 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. The total estimated bond amount is not expected to exceed \$20,000,000. The public hearing was held February 27, 2020.

Mr. Larsen moved to approve the resolution. Ms. Klontz seconded the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:  
Resolution No. 20-36, Holly Ridge Apartments, OID #18-131A**

This item was pulled from the agenda.

**Action Item:  
Resolution No. 20-37, La Madera Apartments, OID #19-127A**

Ms. Vatske said this is a resolution approving the issuance of one or more series of tax-exempt and taxable revenue notes to finance a 76-unit multifamily housing facility located at 28620 Pacific Highway S., Federal Way, WA 98003, to be owned by Federal Way La Madera LLC, a Washington limited liability company. The total estimated note amount is not expected to exceed \$12,000,000 (a portion of which may be taxable). The public hearing was held February 27, 2020.

Mr. Larsen moved to approve the resolution. Ms. Topper seconded the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

**Action Item:  
Resolution No. 20-47, a Resolution authorizing the use & acceptance of electronic signatures**

Mr. Walker said this is a resolution of the Washington State Housing Finance Commission authorizing the use and acceptance of electronic signatures in accordance with RCW 19.360.020 and ESSB 6028 and further authorizing the development of procedures for implementation of the electronic signature policy.

Mr. Richter moved to approve the resolution authorizing the use and acceptance of electronic signatures. Ms. Klontz seconded the motion. The resolution was unanimously approved.

**Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Walker stated that he wanted to begin his report talking about how organizationally the Commission is navigating these uncharted waters. Being able to ground our response to this pandemic in our Business Resumption Plan proved very valuable and helped set the tone for our business continuity approach. The Commission now has two full weeks of office-wide telecommuting experience and he admires the way staff have responded. Commission staff are all adjusting to major change in their lives and in work. Staff have been accepting that some of these changes will work smoothly and some will need tweaking. Some changes will feel efficient and others will feel awkward or clunky, but without exception staff are dealing with change gracefully, compassionately and collaboratively.

The Commission has created work plans for all staff to work productively from home, addressed individual IT needs, created a number of on-line forms and workflows for routing --for example timecards and leave requests, embraced Microsoft Teams (MS-Teams) and Zoom Video Conference to facilitate staying connected and staying productive both internally as well as with our stakeholders, embracing DocuSign to facilitate electronic signatures and even e-notary where possible.

With the help of Margret Graham, our Communications manager. and Tera Alborn, the Executive Director sends a Daily Update to all staff to stay connected and communicate important announcements from the Governor, Public Health or Building Management, or to share on-line training opportunities or provide IT tips or solutions. This daily touch point is also a way to lighten the mood. Staff now have a MS-Teams page dedicated to the pets of staff with some wonderful pictures.

A number of staff are staying in close contact with NCSHA and other national organizations as the Commission advocate for regulatory relief as well as resources to support those most acutely impacted.

The Executive Director receive almost daily updates from several groups including the NCSHA, Executive Director regarding the stimulus conversation and strategy.

Staff are tracking a variety of important issues, be it:

- a homeowner or renter who cannot afford their housing payment due to illness or job loss,
- or a property owner or a manager dealing with an outbreak in their building,
- or one of our developers who are under construction or soon to be trying to interpret the impact of the Governor's – Stay Home, Stay Health order,
- confirming that publicly finance affordable housing construction is allowed to proceed.

Staff is being told to expect Congress to start work soon on another stimulus package, focused more on state and local government and housing needs and longer-term economic recovery.

Lisa DeBrock, Director of Homeownership Division, stated that in February, for Home Advantage, the Commission had over \$201 million in reservations assisting 662 families. For House Key Opportunity, we had over \$9.5 million in reservations assisting 45 families, totaling \$191 million and 210 families for the month. Although we didn't break any overall production records, it was by far our largest February on record.

The Commission reserved our first University Housing Assistance Program (UHAP) loan this week which is our Employee Assisted Housing Program with the University of Washington. HomeStreet Bank is the originating lender and the loan is expected to close on April 21st.

In the budget that just passed, there is \$607,000 of general funds in a state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 for a statewide nonprofit to assist current and prospective homeowners, and homeowners at risk of foreclosure in which the Commission will be involved.

Valeri Pate, Director of Asset Management and Compliance Division stated that Asset Management has been working to continue their monitoring processes around the current pandemic situation. Unfortunately, our monthly training sessions were cancelled, however staff is working on developing online training solutions going forward. AMC will continue to monitor rule changes and revisions and implement them as they become available.

Bob Cook, Senior Director of the Finance Division, gave a high-level market update, that focused on the Single-Family side.

Ms. Klontz from the Department of Commerce (“Commerce”) gave a report as follows:

### **2020 Legislative Session**

#### ***HB 2849***

The bill that combined the two RCWs governing the Housing Trust Fund, as well as addressing the program’s future administration and codifying loan terms, did not make it through the Ways & Means Committee and did not pass this session. The final amended version identified loan terms that Commerce leadership is discussing and is planning to implement for new contracts, despite the bill not passing.

#### ***Supplemental Operating and Capital Budgets***

The supplemental operating budget appropriates \$55 million to the Housing Trust Fund – \$40 million for “traditional” HTF projects, \$10 million for expiring United States Department of Agriculture or other low-income restricted projects, and \$5 million for the preservation of existing HTF projects.

The supplemental capital budget passed with some changes in the list of direct appropriations, and added \$5 million for cottage villages (e.g., tiny homes). It also added \$7.8 million to be granted to 11 member-selected shelters, and \$1 million added to a rapid pilot for ROC Northwest to preserve mobile home parks.

#### **HTF 2019 Funding Round**

Award letters were sent to organizations that received awards in the 2019 funding round. A total of \$91.5 million was awarded. Commerce and the Housing Finance Commission collaborated on the next steps for the projects that received an HTF award, but could not secure tax credits in the non-metro 9% tax credit pool. One project (Willapa Center) is being fully funded by the HTF instead of tax credits. Two others (Mountainview and Skagit County Permanent Supportive Housing) are anticipating forward-committed credits, thanks to the Commission’s approval. The remaining projects received conditional awards pending discussions whether the applicant has a Plan B for securing the necessary funding to move the project forward.

### **Preservation Funding Round**

Award recommendations will be made shortly for the available portfolio preservation funding round. We anticipate announcing them at the end of March. These funds are for existing HTF projects needing significant building improvements, preservation, and system replacements. Approximately \$16 million has been requested from projects seeking these funds.

### **Rural Workgroup**

A rural workgroup has been created to continue the discussion on how to incentivize more housing investments in rural communities. A draft of strategies was provided at the PAT and AHAB meetings. The strategies were formulated from stakeholder suggestions at the December PAT meeting. Emily Grossman will help the HTF team with convening the workgroup and leading these discussions. Thank you to the Commission (Lisa and Bob) for agreeing to be a part of this important topic.

### **Affordable and Supportive Housing Sales and Use Tax**

Affordable and Supportive Housing Sales and Use Tax Rulemaking is complete. Fifty-two jurisdictions have adopted the tax so far.

### **Farmworker Housing Study**

Outreach events have been postponed due to COVID-19, and may be rescheduled for late summer.

### **Housing Assistance Unit**

The Housing Assistance Unit is working to distribute \$30 million in emergency grants to counties to help respond to the COVID-19 crisis. HAU is working with grantees to provide guidance and information on how to support their vulnerable clients during the COVID-19 crisis.

### **Office of Homeless Youth**

The Office of Homeless Youth is providing guidance and information to grantees as they work to support their vulnerable clients during the COVID-19 crisis.

**Growth Management**

Growth Management Services and Community Services and Housing Division staff are planning to remotely present a Short Course on Housing Affordability for planners in Dayton on May 12.

**Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda was approved as mailed.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

**Signature**

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