

July 20, 2015

Larsen, Lawrence named to Commission

SEATTLE, Wash.—Governor Jay Inslee has named two housing professionals to the Washington State Housing Finance Commission: Wendy L. Lawrence of Neah Bay and Ken A. Larsen of Bellingham. The two start their four-year terms on the Commission immediately.



“We are very pleased to welcome both Ken and Wendy to the Commission, and we look forward to learning from their expertise,” said Karen Miller, chair of the Housing Finance Commission.

As housing director for the Makah Tribe on the Olympic Peninsula, Ms. Lawrence has worked tirelessly to establish Makah Tribal Housing as a nationally respected program in the midst of a challenging and remote landscape and economy.

Thanks in part to her leadership, the Makah Tribe is currently building a 51-acre mixed-use, mixed-income housing development called Sail River Heights. It includes the Sail River Longhouse, which opened last summer with 21 apartments of supportive housing for very low-income homeless families.

On the state and national level, Ms. Lawrence has represented the Makah Tribe and Northwest Tribes on the executive committee of the Northwest Indian Housing Association (NWIHA) since 2006, and on the National American Indian Housing Council (NAIHC) board of directors from 2007 to 2012, where she chaired the NAIHC Legislative Committee. In 2007, she was voted Housing Director of the Year by her peers.



Mr. Larsen is Mortgage Banking Director and Senior Vice President at Banner Bank in Bellingham, where he oversees a team of 150 employees across Washington, Oregon and Idaho who finance more than 2,000 homeowners each year.

In 2009, in response to the recession-driven housing crisis, Mr. Larsen created and implemented a program called the Great Northwest Home Rush, which matched potential homebuyers with housing contractors.

A second generation mortgage banker, Mr. Larsen served as the 90th president of the Seattle Mortgage Bankers Association and is currently chairman of the board for the

Washington Mortgage Bankers Association, as well as director of Freddie Mac’s Community Lender Advisory Board. He is a lifelong resident of Washington State and a graduate of Eastern Washington University.

The two new Commissioners will vote in their first meeting this Thursday, July 23, at 1 p.m. at the Housing Finance Commission in Seattle. The Commission will also honor outgoing two-term Commissioners Mario Villanueva of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and M.A. Leonard of Enterprise Partners.

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The [Washington State Housing Finance Commission](#) is a publicly accountable, self-supporting team that brings private investment dollars to benefit families and achieve public goals throughout Washington. Over 30 years, the Commission has created and preserved affordable homes for more than 307,000 people across the state, while contributing more than \$42.5 billion and 240,000 jobs to the economy.