

Minutes of the Ypsilanti Housing Commission

Thursday, March 16, 2017 – 6:00 p.m.

928 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Meeting called to order at 6:23pm by Commissioner Smith.

ROLL CALL:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| • Commissioner Brannon | Present |
| • Commissioner Hollifield | Present |
| • Commissioner Moore | Absent |
| • Commissioner Palmer | Present |
| • Commissioner Smith | Present |
| • Executive Director Z. Fosler | Present |

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: R. Smith asked if there were any changes to be made to the agenda. V. Brannon moved to approve the agenda as written, second by C. Hollifield.

Motion passed 4-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: R. Smith asked if there were any changes to be made to the meeting minutes of February 9, 2017. Z. Fosler stated that the final vote needs to be modified due to A. Moore leaving the meeting early. T. Palmer moved to approve the minutes as amended, second C. Hollifield.

Motion passed 3-0, Abstention 1 (V. Brannon)

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: None.

RESIDENT COUNCIL REPORT: None. R. Smith suggested that T. Palmer give resident council reports going forward.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Parkridge Historical Project (Ypsilanti Youth Video Project):** Z. Fosler gave an update of the project. He stated that A. Moore and the leadership team are planning to partner with MichiganWorks! to hire youth ages 16-19 to participate in the project over the summer, and are currently looking for a project lead. Z. Fosler stated that the goal of the project is to document the history of Parkridge and the YHC. V. Brannon asked how the project is being funded. Z. Fosler stated that YHC will most likely be funding the project, but outside sources of funding are still a possibility. R. Smith asked if MichiganWorks! has been approached concerning salaries for the summer. Z. Fosler stated that only out-of-school youth are qualified to be paid through MichiganWorks! and that YHC will need to cover salaries for in-school youth. V. Brannon asked about planned uses for the finished project. Z. Fosler stated that the video could be included as part of the permanent New Parkridge exhibit, placed on the website, or used for fundraising.

MONTHLY REPORTS:

- **Regulatory, Oversight, and Legal Actions:** Z. Fosler gave an update on the slip-and-fall lawsuit. He stated that the lawsuit was filed the day before the statute of limitations deadline and that the wrong party (Strong Future LDHA) was named in the legal documents in place of the Ypsilanti Housing Commission. He stated that he will update the Board with any further developments. R. Smith suggested that V. Brannon act as a resource to explain legal issues to the Board because of her law background. V. Brannon suggested that the attorney hired by the

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insurance company likely has greater expertise in this particular area, but agreed to help answer any questions that the Board may have.

- **RAD Construction Update:** Z. Fosler displayed a construction map that illustrates progress on the New Parkridge project. Z. Fosler stated that the project is on schedule. T. Palmer asked if units have already been assigned to applicants from the waitlist. Z. Fosler explained that applicants from the waitlist need to complete a more detailed application and background check before moving into a unit. T. Palmer asked if the entire site will be completed before families move in. Z. Fosler explained that the site will be occupied as units are completed so that tax credits can be collected as soon as possible and to avoid having vacant units that could be vulnerable to vandalism and squatting. R. Smith asked how many previous residents will be returning to the site. Z. Fosler stated that approximately 15 families are exercising their right to return to New Parkridge. V. Brannon asked if previous residents were relocated to other YHC sites. Z. Fosler stated that all previous residents were relocated to Strong Future Housing, with the exception of the few higher-income families that opted to permanently relocate offsite in exchange for financial incentives. R. Smith asked about the income requirements for the site. Z. Fosler explained that out of 86 units, 9 units will have tax credit rents without a subsidy, which are comparable to area market rents. Applicants for market rate units must fall under 60% Area Median Income (AMI) to qualify, and those applicants will have a fixed rent that does not fluctuate according to income. Applicants that have tenant-based Section 8 vouchers can use their vouchers in market rate units. Another 22 units will be set aside as permanent-supportive housing that includes case management services from Avalon Housing.

V. Brannon asked Z. Fosler to explain the process for accepting or rejecting PSH applicants and the process for evicting PSH residents that commit violations during residency. Z. Fosler stated that the YHC lease will be modified to include policies for PSH residents. V. Brannon suggested that policies for PSH residents be clearly documented and explained to potential residents before an application is even submitted. Z. Fosler agreed, stating that he is currently working with the Corporation for Supportive Housing and Avalon Housing to more clearly define these policies.

- **Financial Reports:** Z. Fosler and the Board reviewed and discussed the financial reports. Z. Fosler stated that unpaid water bills from November through February were discussed at the monthly construction draw meeting and will be paid out of the construction budget. Z. Fosler explained that because New Parkridge was vacant during that period, the cost can be attributed to threshold billing for water used during demolition. The YHC has received a large developer fee payment from Strong LDHA and will be receiving operating revenue from Hamilton Crossing. R. Smith asked if the payments received will need to be spent within 2 years. Z. Fosler stated that there is no longer a time limit on spending because the funds are not from the federal government. R. Smith stated that the option of RAD funding is gaining popularity amongst other housing commissions due to the possibility of HUD budget cuts. V. Brannon asked Z. Fosler to explain why the “Market Rent” and “Vacancy Loss” lines balance out to a value of zero for New Parkridge. Z. Fosler explained that this is an accounting technique and that no funds are being transferred. Z. Fosler stated that HUD owes New Parkridge three months of back vacancy payments. Staff at HUD Detroit Multifamily Office have been working to figure out how to release the funds, but at this point there is no concern that the payments will not be received. The YHC is using lease-up reserves to cover operational expenses for the site until the back payments are received. R. Smith asked Z. Fosler if he has started think about new investment projects for the YHC. Z. Fosler stated that he is exploring rehab development opportunities in the area. He also stated that Strong Housing has issues that need to be corrected: Towner parking lot drainage, Sauk Trail Pointe parking lot lights.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

- **Solar Panels:** The New Parkridge community building will be getting solar panels. Chart House Energy will own the panels for the first six years to take tax credits, and the YHC has the option to buy the panels after the six-year

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period at their fair market value. Also, the City is applying for a Sunshot grant that will cover the cost of training and compensating residents to install the panels. These residents will also have the opportunity to work on other solar panel installation projects in the area, most notably the large array planned for the old landfill near the Visteon plant. R. Smith asked if Z. Fosler has approached the African-American Contractors Association with this opportunity. Z. Fosler stated that the goal for this grant is to provide opportunities for residents.

- **County Commissioner Visit:** Z. Fosler toured finished New Parkridge units with Greg Dill, Washtenaw County Administrator. Z. Fosler stressed two important funding needs during the tour: funding for permanent supportive housing services, and funding to sustain the Family Empowerment Program.
- **United Way Visit:** Z. Fosler also toured new units with the Executive Director of the United Way, Pam Smith. Z. Fosler gave an update of YHC activities and stressed the same funding needs.
- **City Manager Meet and Greet:** Z. Fosler attended the meet and greet for the new City Manager, Darwin McClary. Z. Fosler gave an update of YHC activities and plans to have more in-depth meetings with McClary in the future.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Brannon: Thanks, Renée and Tasha, for attending the conference. Thanks, Zac and Tarah, for keeping RAD on track. We should consider putting workplan goals onto the agenda.

Commissioner: Hollifield: I had a good meeting. Very Informative.

Commissioner Palmer: The conference was very enjoyable. I've learned so much new information.

Commissioner Smith: I suggest that Board members meet in between regular meetings to discuss specific areas of the workplan. Then we can discuss progress as part of the Board meeting agenda. Z. Fosler's contract is up for renewal and should be discussed soon. The Building Michigan Communities Conference is taking place in Lansing and I encourage Board members to attend. I think we're doing very well. I'm looking forward to new developments and getting people in the County safe, affordable housing.

ADJOURN: V. Brannon moved to adjourn, second by C. Hollifield. **Passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:28pm**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

The Ypsilanti Housing Commission and its Board of Commissioners, of the City of Ypsilanti, Michigan, hereby authorize the Executive Director to sign the approved Board of Commissioners minutes of March 16, 2017.

	YEAS	NAYS	ABSENT
Commissioner Brannon	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Hollifield	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Moore	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Palmer	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Smith	_____	_____	_____

Zachary D. Fosler, Executive Director