



**NEW CASTLE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES &
DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE**

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

February 17, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

➤ **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:10 PM

Members in attendance: *Tiffany Earle, Michelle LaMonica, William McCool, Kevin Smith, Renee Spruiel, and Christian Willauer. New Castle County employees in attendance: Richard Hall, Laura Hay, Stephanie Rizzo and James Smith*

➤ **Approval of Minutes**

- *January 20, 2021*

Kevin Smith made the motion to approve the minutes. Michelle LaMonica seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

➤ **Chairperson's Report**

Renee Spruiel welcomed new member, Bill McCool. The County Executive was sent another name for consideration, Rachel Stucker. The HOMES Campaign was discussed and possibly having them present to the Board. As of 1/31/2021, the Housing Trust Fund total is \$1.785M. Encouraged members to participate in the NCC2050 Deep Dive Sessions.

➤ **HAB Business**

- *Review Subcommittee Recommendation Templates*

- *Housing Stock and Special Needs*

Tenant Services (Security Deposit and Utility Assistance) targeting low- to very low-income households, approximately 100 households. Require education and monitoring for tenants. RFP for agency to administer (Housing Case Manager). Look at utilization after first year and reconsider.

Tiffany Earle made the motion that the Board recommend \$235,000 of the Housing Trust Fund (HTF) be allocated towards tenant services (Security Deposit and Utility Assistance) for low- and very low-income households. Funds to be dispersed upon education completion. \$30,000 for the Case Management RFP. Require measuring and monitoring – annual review of program and evaluation after first year. Kevin Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Enhancing Housing Choice Voucher Program by increasing the program's rent payments from 92% to 100% fair market rent. Educating the landlords on benefits of accepting vouchers, and establishing a Landlord Mitigation Fund and security deposit assistance fund for voucher holders. Allowing landlords who accept vouchers be reimbursed up to \$10,000 per unit for tenant-caused damages or accessibility accommodations. Security Deposit Education. Ensure repairs be made, monitor. Affordable Housing Liaison to administer.

Recommend up to \$15,000 for educational/promotional materials, up to \$150,000 for Landlord Mitigation Funds for repairs, \$125,000 for Voucher Holders' security deposit assistance. There were some suggestions made to combine with another recommendation relating to the Landlord Mitigation Fund and determining how the Affordable Housing Liaison will administer/evaluate.

Tiffany Earle made the motion to table Enhancing Housing recommendations until updates are made and presented at the next Housing Advisory Board meeting, Christian Willauer seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

- *Building Affordable Housing and Maintaining Homeownership*

Increase Homeownership Opportunities for low- and very low-income households. Proposing 20% of annual HTF budget to subsidize the building of affordable homes for homeownership. Program would be run like the HOMES program. The award would be a grant and only would be repaid if there was a default. Reevaluate after the first year, rollover funds would return to the general fund.

Kevin Smith made a motion to approve the increasing homeownership opportunities for low and very-low income households to designate 20% of annual HTF budget to annual review of the monitoring and effectiveness. Michelle La Monica seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Help Low and Very Low-Income Homeowners Maintain and Stay in their Homes Proposing 10% of the annual HTF budget to provide funding for low to very-low income households requesting assistance for repairs, a grant up to \$15,000 per household. Targeting 25-50% AMI. Retention period (5 years) unless person is 65+ years old. Review annually. Administered by Community Services Department.

Christian Willauer made the motion to approve recommendation. Tiffany Earle seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Increase New Rental Housing Developments for Low and Very Low-Income Households. Proposing 20% of the annual HTF budget to incentivize developers using the Low Income Tax Credit (LITC) from the DE State Housing Authority to help fill the gap – specifically New Castle County outside the City of Wilmington. Target is for households making less than 50% AMI to match the LITC requirements. Annual evaluation.

Kevin Smith made the motion to approve the recommendation. Tiffany Earle seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

➤ Announcements

➤ Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 3/17/2021.

➤ Adjournment

Kevin Smith made the motion to adjourn. Tiffany Earle seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.