

Housing Authority of Alameda County  
Commission Meeting Report  
September 11, 2024  
Peggy McQuaid

The Housing Authority of Alameda County (HACA) Commission met for the regular meeting on September 11, 2024.

### **3. Public Comment:**

There was no public comment

### **4. Executive Director Report**

#### **County-wide Fair Housing Assessment Update:**

In July, the Housing Commission approved HACA's participation in the County-wide Assessment of Fair Housing. Beginning August 26, the survey to obtain feedback on fair housing in Alameda County was released, and participating agencies, including HACA, began advertising the survey's availability to stakeholders. The survey is available until September 13, 2024. Additionally, community meetings are underway. Next steps include analysis of information received from the survey, community meetings, and stakeholder meetings, and drafting a plan to address identified fair housing challenges.

#### **HACA Waitlist Openings:**

As previously discussed in the June Executive Director's Report, HACA opened several waitlists in April and May 2024. HACA has conducted the lotteries to randomly select those applicants who will be placed on the waitlists. HACA will place 5,000 applicants on the HCV (Section 8) waitlist. HACA has determined that it will accept all applications received for HACA-owned 3- and 4-bedroom project-based voucher (PBV) units. The new PBV waitlists will now include approximately 1,600 applicants on 3-bedroom waitlists and approximately 850 applicants on 4-bedroom waitlists. By August 29, all applicants were mailed notices of their lottery status. HACA continues to work with the vendor to finalize and transmit data into our software. HACA will provide more information for the Commission and on its website in the coming months.

### **5. New Business**

#### **5-1 Recognize Janella Wheeler as HACA's Shining Star for August 2024 January 2025**

##### **BACKGROUND**

In 2011, a committee of HACA employees created a recognition program called the "HACA Shining Star." The purpose of the program is to foster the concept of community by providing employees the opportunity to recognize a person who they work with for outstanding performance, exceptional contributions, and their positive impact on overall agency operations. Once the nominations are submitted, a sub-committee of HACA employees is formed then tasked with reviewing the nominations and selecting the HACA Shining Star. The recognition

runs every 6 months and the awardees receive various honors including a reserved parking spot, vacation time, recognition and acknowledgement from the Housing Commission, a trophy, and “news coverage” on HACA’s intranet.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

HACA is privileged to have on its staff Janella Wheeler, an Eligibility Technician, in HACA’s Special Programs Department. Janella’s selection as HACA Shining Star for the months of August 2024 – February 2025 was announced at an All Staff meeting held on July 26. The comments below were submitted by those who nominated Janella and describe her outstanding work and impact on HACA’s operations:

*I would like to nominate Janella “STAR” Wheeler. Since day one, she has exceeded my expectations of what to do and not to do as a temporary employee. As a permanent employee, she continues to exceed my expectations. Janella has a sweet spirit and the capacity to go the extra mile and take on more than the average person. She has been the only ET in our department for the last 9-10 months and has single-handedly processed every case that comes her way with a smile. Whenever asked to do additional work – she says, “okay,” without any hesitation. Although she has a lot going on, she is always willing to help other ET’s with how to keep track of their work, by having 50-60 spreadsheets... LOL!!*

### **5-2 Adopt Resolution No. 07-24 Approving the Budget/Audit/Negotiations Committee Bylaws**

#### **BACKGROUND**

In February 2011, HACA’s Housing Commission established the Budget/Audit/Negotiations (BAN) committee as an ad hoc committee by combining two separate ad hoc committees, the Budget/Audit and Negotiations ad hoc committees. The BAN Committee discusses, reviews, comments, and makes recommendations in matters related to HACA’s operating budget, fiscal year-end financial audits, and employee labor contract negotiations. Recently, HACA Counsel has advised staff that the BAN Committee should be established as a standing sub-committee of the Housing Commission, rather than an ad hoc committee. Specifically, though the BAN Committee does not have a regular meeting schedule, it does have recurring and specific subject matter jurisdiction. As a standing sub-committee, the Housing Commission needs to establish BAN Committee Bylaws and formalize the format of meetings for the committee, to ensure compliance with California Government Code Section 54950, commonly known as the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act).

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The proposed BAN Committee Bylaws were created in consultation with HACA Counsel. On August 27, 2024, staff reviewed the proposed bylaws with the BAN

Committee in detail. The BAN Committee recommended the addition of the teleconferencing requirements, which were added to the proposed bylaws after input from HACA Counsel.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

After detailed consideration, the BAN Committee and staff recommend that the Housing Commission adopt Resolution No. 07-24 approving the BAN Committee Bylaws.

Motion to accept Resolution #07-24 passes unanimously

**5-3 Adopt Resolution No. 08-24 Approving Revisions to the Personnel Committee Bylaws**

**BACKGROUND:**

The Housing Commission's Personnel Committee Bylaws were last updated in March 2021. To ensure consistency across the Housing Commission's standing sub-committees, staff has reviewed the Personnel Committee Bylaws and is proposing revisions to include provisions related to the general meeting and teleconferencing requirements in accordance with California Government Code Section 54950, commonly known as the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act), improve the overall organization of the provisions in the bylaws, and to provide clarification for the committee's membership, officers, and meeting format.

**DISCUSSION:**

The proposed revisions were developed in consultation with HACA Counsel. The proposed revisions to the bylaws were presented to the Personnel Committee at a committee meeting on September 11. Staff recommends that the Housing Commission adopt the resolution to approve the revisions.

Motion to accept Resolution #08-24 passes unanimously

**5-4 Authorize use of Housing Development Fund (HDF-Local) as Bridge Funds for County Programs Administered by HACA**

**BACKGROUND:**

HACA currently has four contracts with the County of Alameda to administer several housing programs for and on behalf of the County. The four programs are:

- Health Care Services Agency Flexible Housing Subsidy Program (HCSA)
- Mental Health Services Act Housing Subsidy Program (MHSA)
- Shelter Plus Care (S+C) Program
- Homes for Wellness (H4W) Program

HACA performs housing related services, such as unit inspections and payment of rental assistance to the landlord and bills the County for expenditures incurred along with an administrative charge.

The HCSA and MHSA programs are pre-funded. For HCSA, the County deposits program funds in advance, and HACA draws down the funds each month as they are expended. For MHSA, HACA bills the County each quarter in advance, and funds are received from the County generally by the end of the first month of each quarter.

In contrast, the S+C and H4W programs have been set up on an after-the-fact billing process. HACA bills the County in the month following the month in which the expenditures have been incurred, and the County is required to pay within 30 days.

#### **DISCUSSION and ANALYSIS:**

The County has experienced significant recurring delays in executing grants for the S+C and H4W programs, often due to HUD delays in making grant funds available to the County. These delays result in HACA not getting paid in a timely manner, for numerous months. HACA is put in a difficult position of needing to advance funds for the rental assistance payments to ensure that program participants are not adversely affected. The approximate expense per month is \$250,000, and as of August 20, 2024, the County owed HACA \$1,239,316.15.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

After detailed consideration, the BAN Committee and staff recommend the Commission approve the use of HDF-Local funds as bridge funds for County programs administered by HACA in an amount up to \$2,000,000 per fiscal year.

Resolution 09-24 passed unanimously

#### **5-5 Program Activity Report**

Currently there are 6961 Section 8 HCV (Housing Choice Voucher) program units under contract. The average HAP (housing assistance payment) subsidy is \$1866, the average tenant paid rent is \$604, the average contract rent is \$2470.

PACH (Preserving Alameda County Housing, Inc) has 230 PBV (Project Based Voucher) Units. These are properties owned by HACA.

Albany currently has 11 HCV contracts. The average contract rent is \$1804 the average HAP payment is \$1449, the average rent paid by family is \$355 (20% of total rent).

#### **The Family Self Sufficiency Program (FSS)**

The FSS Program is a partnership between low-income families on the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher program and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This five-year program, which

began 30 years ago, helps families who are receiving rental assistance move to economic independence.

## **FSS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

### **HACA Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Resource Fair**

The FSS program held its annual Resource Fair on Saturday, July 27, 2024. Forty-one families attended the fair and received information from fourteen community-based organizations including homeownership programs, employment preparation programs, and community health agencies. A representative of HACA's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Homeownership program was in attendance along with an HCV Homeownership program participant to answer questions about the program. Families enjoyed ice cream and refreshments. The Hayward Fire Department stopped by and provided tours of a fire engine. Story Book Express handed out free books to children and adults. Resource Fair attendees were entered into a raffle for door prizes. HACA staff volunteered their time and helped make this event a success. Vendors were pleased with the turnout, networking opportunities, and expressed an interest in attending the fair again next year. Program Coordinating Committee (PCC)

### **Participant Spotlight**

This participant joined the FSS program in 2018. Her employment goal was to become a special education teacher. She earned her associate of arts degree in liberal arts in 2021. The next year she earned her bachelor's degree in early childhood development. She began working for the San Leandro School district in 2023. In 2024, she earned her master's degree in special education. She also increased her credit score by 161 points. She accomplished all of this as a single mother of three. The FSS team is immensely proud of her accomplishments.

## **FSS PROGRAM SUMMARY**

### **July 2024**

Total Clients Under Contract: 211  
Graduates: 5  
Escrow Disbursed: \$127,702.21  
Ports In: 0  
Ports Out: 0  
Terminations: 1  
New Contracts: 0  
Case Management Referrals: 6

Job Referrals: 30

August 2024

Total Clients Under Contract: 209

Graduates: 0

Escrow Disbursed: 0

Ports In: 0

Ports Out: 1

Terminations: 0

New Contracts: 0

Case Management Referrals: 14

Job Referrals: 45