

# MINUTES

Housing and Human Services Advisory Board (HHSAB)

April 11, 2024 from 6:30 PM-8:30 PM

**Members will meet in-person at: 200 N. Main Street, Ann Arbor, Lower Level, Large Conference Room.**

**Members of the public may participate in-person OR virtually using the Zoom link below.**

Zoom link: <https://washtenawcounty.zoom.us/j/85613002885?pwd=TGdBoGcEkHs6QK6Chpz7Ob8iVpbrA.dcB1BBog5fYd4BkA>

Meeting ID: 856 1300 2885 | Passcode: 286046

**Members Present:** Rob Boley, Amanda Carlisle, James Downing, Anna Erickson, Anya Ganger, Jean Leverich, Brenna McMahon, Ellen Rabinowitz, Faith Redwine-Otieno, Linh Song, Karen Wanza, Chris Watson.

**Members Absent:** James Daniel, Paul Sher, Peter Slutzker.

**Staff Present:** Tara Cohen (County OCED), Toni Kayumi (OCED), Jasmyne Townsend (OCED), Jennifer Hall (Ann Arbor Housing Commission).

**Guests:** None.

**I. Convene Meeting** (Brenna McMahon, Chair)

Brenna convened the meeting at approximately 6:35pm. As this was the first in-person meeting for several years, everyone went around the table to introduce themselves.

**II. Welcome/Announcements**

- a. The group welcomed the newest appointed HHSAB members, Rob Boley and Faith Redwine- Otieno.
- b. Tara Cohen announced that Pam Smith was recently hired as OCED's Human Services Program Administrator. She brings years of experience from her previous role as CEO of the United Way of Washtenaw County. Tara noted that Pam will be at some HHSAB meetings in the future to update the group on human services work of the County.
- c. Jennifer Hall announced that all are invited to a Ground Breaking event on Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup> at 3pm for the Catherine Street project. Free food trucks, live music, and celebration of forthcoming construction of 63 new units of affordable housing with community space that honors the African American history of Ann Arbor's West Side. She noted that construction is expected to begin the following Monday (April 15).

**III. Public Comment** – None; no members of the public joined in person or by Zoom.

**IV. Approval of Agenda (ACTION)**

Motion by Amanda Carlisle; Seconded by Ellen Rabinowitz. Motion carried.

**V. Approval of Minutes from February 8, 2024 (ACTION)**

Motion by Anna Erickson; Seconded by James Downing. Motion carried.

Next meeting: Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. | Location: Remote (Zoom)

## VI. Business/Updates

- a. Public Hearing on Washtenaw Urban County Draft 2024 Annual Action Plan
- Tara explained the purpose of the [Draft Action Plan](#) and briefly reviewed the [Summary of Planned Activities](#) included in the meeting packet, noting how the various grant types are disbursed (CDBG by formula, HOME by competitive RFP, ESG through the Continuum of Care's Funding Review Team).
  - She mentioned this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 public hearings on the draft 2024 Action Plan outlining proposed uses for HUD 2024 entitlement grants to the Urban County (CDBG, HOME, ESG).
  - She answered a variety of questions from attendees prior to Brenna opening the public hearing. Faith asked whether there are any efforts in the City to develop more cooperative housing, not only low-income housing. During discussion, it was noted that the particular funding stream used to develop existing income-restricted cooperatives such as Arrowwood Hills or Pinelake Village no longer exists. Councilwoman Song noted that City Council cannot dictate one particular type of housing be built versus another. James Downing mentioned his company (CSI) develops senior cooperative housing that is organized similar to student coops, in which members do not have a stake in ownership but they function democratically where each member has equal voting rights. Anna asked if a formula was used to determine the admin budgets for each grant. Tara explained we use the maximum allowable for CDBG (20% of grant) and HOME (10% of grant), and are currently noting the max 7.5% for ESG but this may be reduced for the Final Action Plan.

Brenna opened the Public Hearing at approximately 7pm. No comments. Hearing was closed at 7:01pm.

b. Policy Discussion: Ann Arbor Affordable Housing Fund (Tara Cohen, OCED) **(Discussion & Possible Action)**

- Tara reviewed the background document explaining the history and purpose of the Ann Arbor Affordable Housing Fund, and why the group revisited the policy in 2022 in light of Prop C passing (Affordable Housing millage).
- Jennifer Hall provided additional background, noting that when the AAHF was originally established, the City would put in \$100,000 from the General Fund annually; this practice stopped once developers began contributing to the fund as required (or permitted) by local zoning ordinances intended to encourage the development of affordable units. She also shared that the Housing Commission will likely tie up the majority of the Prop C millage funds for many years, but at some point in the future there could be millage dollars available for others to apply for.
- Tara and Jennifer mentioned that updating the AAHF policy is timely since the City anticipates somewhere in the ballpark of \$14million to be paid into the fund by private developers over the next 1-3 years.
- Tara walked the group through the tracked changes and comments; members had discussion throughout on changes being proposed.
- A few open questions from the discussion include:
  - What length of affordability should be required for those receiving AAHF grants?

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- Should affordability term be based on activity type and/or grant amount?
- Should AAHF dollars be folded into OCED's annual affordable housing RFP process for purpose of making awards? (downside: harder to get applicants who may think the federal HUD requirements apply to these funds too – they don't).
- What should the threshold be for announcing an open application process for the funds? i.e \$200k balance? \$500k?)
- What should threshold be for administering a competitive RFP process? (\$1million?)
- Members generally agreed with the changes being proposed, but no action was taken; Jennifer and Tara want to reconvene to review HHSAB input and recommend next steps.
- Amanda mentioned that her critique of the “open application” process used in the past is that HHSAB would review an application and make a determination without being able to compare it to other potential projects that need funding.
- To this point, group discussed having an open application process for a set period of 1-2 months, after which HHSAB could review all the applications at once to be able to compare projects requesting these limited funds.
- Members interested in seeing a list of past projects funded with AAHF grants for more context. Tara will share this info at future meeting.

#### **Updates**

c. HHSAB Membership/Recruitment (Tara Cohen) – This item was skipped due to lack of time.

d. Renters' Commission Update (Geoff Lowes) – Geoff was not in attendance so item was skipped.

#### **VII. City Council (Council Member Update)**

Council Members Song and Watson shared a few items that would be on upcoming Monday April 15<sup>th</sup> Council agenda:

- \$200k grant from City OSI to OCED's Weatherization program for collaborative projects serving LMI homeowners in Ann Arbor – aligns with the City's Climate Action Plan.
- PUD zoning request from LV Collective for Church Street 18-story housing project (“711 Church” project).

CM Watson noted at a May meeting, there will be a public hearing for 711 Church, and he encourages people to come out in support of more student housing. He noted that the developer is proposing to pay \$6.9mill into the Affordable Housing Fund, along with contribution of \$50k for public art installations, and some contribution for public restrooms downtown.

#### **VIII. General Updates - None**

#### **IX. Public Comment – No comment.**

#### **X. Adjournment (ACTION)**

Motion by Anna Erickson; Seconded by Jean Leverich. Motion carried.  
Adjourned at 8:30pm.