

MINUTES

**Grand Junction Housing Authority
Board of Commissioners' Meeting**

**June 28, 2004
Conference Room
1011 North Tenth: 11:30 a.m.**

1. Call to Order

The Grand Junction Housing Authority's (GJHA) regularly scheduled June 2004 meeting was called to order on June 28th at 11:43 a.m. by Board Chair, Steve Heinemann. Individuals present included Kathleen Belgard, Harry Butler, Gabe DeGabriele, Erin Ginter, Jody Kole, Kristine Franz, Mary Gregory, Greg Hancock, Lori Rosendahl, Jon Wickre, and Ms. Sam Szymanski, with the City of Grand Junction. Cory Hunt joined the meeting later.

2. Consent Calendar

There being no changes to the April 29th or May 24th, 2004 Board Minutes, both sets of Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved with a motion from Gabe, a second from Erin, and a unanimous voice vote.

Following the Consent Calendar approval, today's guest, Ms. Sam Szymanski, the Communications and Community Relations Coordinator for the City of Grand Junction, was introduced. Ms. Szymanski is attending the Board Meeting to become more familiar with the GJHA and its mission. Subsequent introductions were made by GJHA Board Members and Staff.

3. Public Hearing for the GJHA Agency Plan

The public hearing on adopting the Agency's Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2005 and the 5-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2005-2009 was held during this portion of the meeting. Mary Gregory, Administrative Director, noted that no written comments had been received and that no one was present today, either, to express comments pertaining to the Plans. All proposed changes to the Plan have been reviewed and approved by the Resident Advisory Board.

4. Adopt Resolution No. 2004-04 Approving Agency Streamlined Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2005 and Streamlined 5-Year Plan for Fiscal Years 2005-2009

With a reminder that a copy of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) template of the streamlined annual plan was previously provided to the Board for information and review, Mary gave a quick overview of the GJHA

Agency Plan and associated documents by identifying and briefly discussing the components.

After her explanation to the Board that by signing Resolution 2004-04, both the Agency Annual Plan and the 5-Year Plan would be approved, Erin moved to adopt Resolution 2004-04. Kathleen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

5. Adopt Resolution No. 2004-06 Establishing a Waiting List Preference For People Involuntarily Displaced by Government Action or Natural Disaster

Mary prefaced group discussion by referencing her June 28th Board memorandum (memo) with attachments pertaining to the requested approval of a new ranking preference for the Housing Choice Voucher and Capital Terrace Waiting Lists. She explained that because of the City of Grand Junction's (City) Riverside Parkway project, the City expects to relocate some families whose property is needed to provide a public right-of-way for the project.

Because the GJHA's mission is to provide safe, decent and sanitary affordable housing for Grand Junction area residents, and in continuing to work with the City on affordable housing issues in conjunction with its Consolidated Plan, GJHA staff desires to provide a ranking preference for these displaced families. HUD does allow for a local preference that Public Housing Authorities (PHA) can adopt called "*involuntarily displaced as a result of local government action or a federally declared disaster*". If the Board approves this new preference, eligible families with this preference would rank first on the Waiting List. Discussion continued as Mary further explained how the ranking points were determined and answered additional Board questions.

Jody further explained that it is not certain, at this time, how many families would be involved in relocation and qualify for housing assistance, but that the City will issue letters to the affected families informing them of the displacement along with their rights and opportunities. The City has retained a consulting firm of Relocation Specialists to work with the families evaluating their needs, and to coordinate with GJHA staff in determining possible Agency assistance.

With no further dialogue, Gabe made a motion, which was seconded by Erin, to adopt Resolution No. 2004-06, and it was unanimously approved. Upon Resolution adoption, Mary informed the Board that an Amendment to the Waiting List will be included in the Annual Plan.

6. **Discuss Changes to Portability Policy**

Lori Rosendahl, Section 8 Supervisor, stated that the Section 8 staff is currently dealing with some portability issues because of recent HUD funding cuts, and referenced her June 28th Board memo with attachments for further explanation.

She cited current portability statistics, under the GJHA Voucher Program, identifying the number of Voucher families that **have previously moved** under portability to other jurisdictions (unfortunately with higher payment standards that the Agency continues to support), as well as the number of Voucher families that **have requested to move out of the area**. Figures show that for GJHA portability families, the per unit cost averages much higher than the current HUD awarded per unit cost, because of higher payment standards in jurisdictions where families choose to move. Lori offered one example in which the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) for one portability family exceeded three times the average HAP.

Therefore, in order to continue to serve as many families as possible within the HUD funding limitations, staff recommends revising GJHA's policies to deny a household's request to move under portability to another jurisdiction unless the other PHA has a lower payment standard or is willing to absorb the family into its Voucher Program. After one year of local residence, however, the family may move under portability if the jurisdiction they choose meets GJHA guidelines.

HUD will allow this change to be made, the Resident Advisory Committee agreed with the recommendation, and the Board was requested to approve this change, which will be formalized as an amendment to the Administrative Policy if approved.

Cory Hunt joined the meeting at noon.

Discussion continued with additional Board Member questions being clarified, and the assessment being made that one of the first casualties of the HUD funding cuts would be nation-wide portability.

Jody informed the group that there would be one more Voucher issuance, with Family Unification families, and that is likely to be the last issuance in this fiscal year.

She also gave an update on the impending Section 8 funding cuts from HUD. The original predictions of a 13.6% cut in the administration funds have been revised to a 6.2% cut which, needless to say, will be much easier to deal with. She also explained that any restricted Administrative Fees earned in past years are subject to recapture by HUD if not spent, which means that the money has to be expended, not just transferred to another Program.

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Erin moved to amend the Administrative Policy to read that after one year of local residence, a family may move under portability, if the jurisdiction they choose meets GJHA guidelines. Gabe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

7. Linden Pointe Update

GJHA Development Director, Greg Hancock, distributed his memo written to the Board on June 28, 2004, as well as circulated pictures showing the construction progress at the Linden Pointe development site.

With the prior concern over the water table depth, Greg mentioned that the water table is five feet below the original land surface so mud and slop are being pumped out of the trenches as the sewer lines are installed.

Greg addressed each memo topic (construction status, tax credit carryover allocation, foundation radon ventilation, clubhouse requests for proposals, and playgrounds) by thoroughly explaining the status of each and answering Board questions.

Greg emphasized that the furniture order is time sensitive and should be placed on or about August 1st to stay on schedule. Because the furniture fabrics and colors will be chosen after the vendor is selected, a question was posed to Board Members as to how quickly and by what means (special Board Meeting, electronic voting, etc.) should the vendor selection be made. With further discussion, the Board felt that the GJHA staff could “narrow the field”, look at fabrics/colors with the vendor finalists, and make recommendations prior to the Board making the final decision at the July 26th Board Meeting.

8. Discuss Board Annual Retreat

Jody advised that limited activity has occurred on planning the Annual Board Retreat, due to prior commitments. She distributed an information sheet on a facilitating firm whom she has prior knowledge of and would like permission to contact. Erin suggested that this firm’s references be contacted for feedback as well as possibly contacting the National Association of Housing & Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) and the Public Housing Agency Directors Association (PHADA) for other facilitator recommendations. The group discussed possible Retreat dates and September 23rd – 25th was tentatively reserved.

9. Other Business

Upcoming Conferences

October was unofficially dubbed “conference month” as three major conferences - Colorado Housing NOW!, NAHRO’s National Conference, and the Enterprise Foundation’s (ESIC) Annual Conference - are all slated for early to mid-October. Board members were asked to review the previously distributed conference information and confirm their selections within the next ten days.

Report on Colorado NAHRO’s Commissioner Board Development Seminar

Board Member, Cory Hunt, gave highlights of NAHRO’s Commissioner Board Development Seminar entitled “*Building a Better Board Team*”, that he attended in Denver in May. He shared ideas gleaned from the Seminar, commended Kris on a “job well done” in preparing thorough and accurate Meeting Minutes, made suggestions to incorporate into future Board Meetings, and felt that the Seminar was well worth his time.

Congratulations to Section 8 Staff

Gabe congratulated the GJHA Section 8 staff for receiving “no findings” upon completion of a Full Monitoring Review of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program done in early May by the Colorado Division of Housing.

Meeting with Mesa County Commissioner

Gabe reported on a very positive luncheon meeting between Doralyn Genova, Mesa County Commissioner; Jody; and himself. Topics discussed included evaluating the possibility of establishing an annual County budgeted line item for affordable housing; discussing the possibility of establishing a local source of funding for housing through a local Affordable Housing Trust Fund; and strengthening the Intergovernmental Agreement between the GJHA and Mesa County on affordable housing issues, and including the communities of Fruita and Palisade.

As a side note, Jody mentioned that an update on the City/County real estate search will be given at the July Board Meeting.

Affordable Housing on Cable TV Channel 12

Jody informed Board Members that the Agency is working with Janet Rowland, Volunteer Coordinator with the Mesa County Department of Human Services, by

participating in a three or four-part series on affordable housing issues which will be aired on Channel 12 television in hopes to establish community awareness, educate the general public, and encourage participation in the City's Affordable Housing Forum which will be held August 26th.

Housing Advocate Position Renewed

It was announced by Jody that the Mesa County Department of Human Services renewed the Housing Advocate contract for another year. The services provided are viewed as very valuable to needy families, which is a compliment to Cindy Reed's hard work.

Discrimination Complaint

Jody informed the group that a discrimination complaint has been filed by a former Ratekin Tower tenant. This individual needed to leave Ratekin so a Voucher was issued to her as a reasonable accommodation but now she feels that the GJHA steered her away from using her Voucher at Crystal Brook. The issue revolved around a pet (dog), and determining whether the pet would be classified as a service animal or a therapeutic companion animal. Jody stated that she is confident that staff did nothing wrong and that they really "bent over backwards" to assist this individual with housing options; it just took some time to resolve the issue.

Coordinator Position Open

The group was informed by Jody that the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Coordinator position is vacant. This is a part-time position with recent notification from HUD that this coming year is likely to be the last year for funding. The Grand Valley Housing Initiatives (GVHI) has an opening for a Homebuyers Education Coordinator which is also part time. It is felt that with the FSS Program ramping down and Homebuyers Education Program ramping up, the services could be merged into one position. With approval from the GVHI Board, a recruitment will begin for the combined job.

10. Adjourn

With a motion from Erin, a second from Cory, and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 1:01 p.m.