

## MINUTES

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

Monday, January 23, 2017  
Hospitality Suite-Stocker Stadium  
11:30 a.m.

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### 1. Call to Order

Prior to calling to order the Annual Meeting of the Grand Junction Housing Authority (GJHA) at the Hospitality Suite in Stocker Stadium, guests enjoyed a buffet lunch and viewed a slide show highlighting several GJHA properties including the newest GJHA development, The Highlands, and activities for the year 2016.

The outgoing Board Chair Chris Launer called the Annual Meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. with approximately 70 invitees in attendance.

Chris Launer introduced Board Members that included the new Board Chair Tami Beard, the new Vice Chair Tim Hudner, John Howe, and Barbara Traylor Smith. Board Members in attendance represented a quorum. Board Member Ivan Geer joined the meeting at 11:50 a.m. and Board Member Jerry Schafer did not attend. Introduction of special guests included several Doors 2 Success Board Members; elected officials including the Grand Junction City Mayor, several City Council Members, and a staff member from Colorado Representative Scott Tipton's office. The group also recognized GJHA staff members in attendance.

Guests received both the table setting placemats illustrating financial information and interesting highlights and the tri-fold Annual Report containing a message from Chief Executive Officer Jody Kole and listing key achievements of the year.

### 2. Presentation of the Annual Report

Chris Launer mentioned the following specific accomplishments of GJHA for 2016:

- The Highlands Development is a new 64-apartment senior community under construction, with work on The Highlands 2 Development to follow with 72 senior units. Incorporated into the overall development will be a wide array of senior services provided by local partners.
- The Highlands provided work for 307 construction workers, of which approximately 238 are local residents.
- The Highlands Development will put approximately \$6M into the community in the form of wages, and most of the \$6M spent for construction material will be purchased locally.
- Current partners and service providers received acknowledgement and a special thank you for support to GJHA senior clients.
- GJHA acquired and plans to renovate the 96-unit Nellie Bechtel Apartments to preserve these affordable apartments for seniors.

- GJHA brought 59 units of additional rental assistance into Grand Junction through two new U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development contracts.
- GJHA secured and renovated the former KJCT property at 8 Foresight Circle, enabling the consolidation of staff with occupancy in May.
- GJHA partnered with HomewardBound of the Grand Valley and Cardinal Capital Management to provide 40 project-based Vouchers for homeless families at Pathways Village.
- A grant from Energy Outreach Colorado enabled substantial energy upgrades at the Ratekin Tower Apartments.
- GJHA achieved a perfect audit with no comments or findings.
- For the second year, a team representing GJHA participated in the Men in Heels Race, which is a community fund raiser for the Latimer House.

Chris Launer introduced incoming Board Chair Tami Beard who said the focus of the Annual Meeting this year is on senior clients and services provided to them. She shared the following statistics for 2016:

- The number of households served is 2,245, of which 28% are seniors.
- The number of people served is 4,262, of which 16% are seniors.
- GJHA owns and manages 616 units within 10 properties.
- The Highlands Development will provide 64 senior units with leasing beginning in May 2017.
- 1,228 Vouchers are available with some to specific project-based Vouchers, veterans, and to assist families in the child protection services system.
- \$6.4M in rental assistance was paid to community landlords.
- GJHA served 91 households with foreclosure counseling, of which 80% were Mesa County families.
- GJHA helped 93% of foreclosure mitigation clients cooperating with counselor requests.
- Statistics specific to senior clients include the following:
  - 19% of GJHA tenants are seniors.
  - 25% of Voucher Holders are seniors.
  - In Fiscal Year 2017, GJHA plans to complete and lease The Highlands, and to submit a Tax Credit Application to the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority for The Highlands 2. Upon completion, a total of 136 affordable senior units will be added to the community. Senior services will be provided at the development, which will aid all senior residents. The Highlands 2 is expected to be completed in the latter part of 2017 or the early part of 2018.
  - There is a three-year improvement plan for Nellie Bechtel that will extend the life of that complex for many years to come.

- Plans include the continued stability at Ratekin Tower Apartments and the Walnut Park Apartments that provides 197 affordable units to a combination of seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Tami Beard introduced CEO Jody Kole who thanked everyone for attending, and acknowledged friends and partners that help GJHA achieve its objectives.

Jody began her presentation by saying that GJHA provides a wide array of services covering areas such as:

- Homelessness and assisting Pathways Village in enabling 40 families with children to leave the homeless shelter, and take the first steps toward stability and self-sufficiency.
- Helping families take the next steps in their lives by providing self-sufficiency programs.
- Owning and operating GJHA properties that are safe affordable housing as well as managing one property for Mind Springs Health.
- Providing pre-ownership counseling and helping families acquire affordable entry-level homeownership.
- Serving households with foreclosure counseling, to which GJHA shows a tremendous success rate of 93% - well above the national average for similar programs.
- Providing safe affordable housing for families. The Waiting List at GJHA currently reflects 1,905 households that are still waiting for housing. GJHA takes pride in its accomplishments and continues to strive to do its best with community partnerships.

Jody Kole said that seniors and the services provided to them is the focus for this year's Annual Meeting. The first of two speakers today is Mr. Dave Norman, a leading advocate for seniors in the Grand Valley. Dave is the Director of the Area Agency on Aging of Northwest Colorado, the chairman on the Colorado Association of Area Agencies on Aging, and a member of the Colorado Strategic Planning Task Force on Aging.

Dave Norman discussed support needed for senior housing and services in this community and Mesa County. In supporting the effort "Aging in Place", Dave stressed the importance of collaboration between community partners in this endeavor. Statistics given by Dave show the aging tsunami has already reached Mesa County. Services are trying to be developed through the Mesa County Department of Human Services and with the Aging Disability Resource Center for Colorado that is serving the disabled and elderly to help those individuals age in place in their homes.

Dave Norman introduced key speaker, Mr. Jim Riesberg who is currently the Chairman of the Colorado Strategic Action Planning Group (The Planning Group) on Aging.

Jim Riesberg began the presentation by saying that The Planning Group, established by Colorado House Bill 15-1033 and appointed by Governor Hickenlooper, studied the positive and negative impacts of Colorado's aging demographic shift through the year 2030 and created a Strategic Action Plan. Coloradan's are aging at a record rate and our leaders need to act now.

Attendees received two documents, *Highlights and Recommendations from Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging* and the *Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging*, distributed by Jim Riesberg. Population growth estimates of elderly adults in Western Colorado are projected for a 45% increase in the age group of 65-74 and a 112% increase in the age 75+ category by the year 2030. The Report confirms that the aging population is increasing rapidly with limited options for housing that is affordable for seniors on a fixed income.

The Planning Group focused on three areas:

- Determine what it means to age well in Colorado.
- Measure how well those challenges are being met.
- Determine how to continue to adjust to the ongoing demographic shift.

Jim Riesberg discussed the 8 goals that described the vision of the Planning Group. These goals and the recommendations in the Strategic Plan set a course to ensure a high quality of life for older adults, their families, and caregivers living in Colorado.

With much work to be done, Jim encouraged more regional-level participation with community involvement and sharing the information gathered.

Scott Aker extended thanks to Dave Norman and Jim Riesberg for sharing local and state-wide progress on senior housing and services and challenging the community to become involved.

Scott Aker extended appreciation to all of the GJHA senior partners and service providers. Specific friends of GJHA housing partners received special recognition and awards for their work to seniors. They are as follows:

- Dan Olson of Gentiva Home Health, is a Home Health Specialist and provides services for seniors at Nellie Bechtel and Walnut Park Apartments. Dan coordinated skilled services of home health, and brought two programs to GJHA properties. "Safe Strides" is a balance program for seniors to prevent falls and injuries. "Step On It" is a walking program for seniors to get out and exercise.
- Joanne Stamp of the Center for Independence is the ALS Program Manager. Joanne helps GJHA seniors in many ways by giving presentations, demonstrations, and evaluations for low vision and hearing challenges to obtaining financial assistance for the purchase of items that aid in impaired vision.

- Mike Calabro is a volunteer with the Museums of Western Colorado. Mike gives monthly presentations to GJHA seniors at Ratekin Tower, Walnut Park, and Nellie Bechtel, teaching them about the history of Grand Junction, the Western Slope, and other Colorado areas.
- George Wheeler provided housing at the Nellie Bechtel complex for senior citizens long before GJHA's involvement and its recent acquisition of the Nellie Bechtel property. Thank you, George, for caring so deeply about housing for seniors. Board Chair Tami Beard presented the award to George.
- In the mid-1990s, The City of Grand Junction (City) invested \$100K for the Crystal Brook Townhomes, the first multi-family housing project that the Grand Valley saw in the affordable arena for more than a decade. In the past 22 years, the City demonstrated strong support from a leadership and financial perspective for affordable housing. The City invested \$3.15M encompassing 10 of the GJHA properties and leveraged loans, grants, and equity investments over \$60M. Mayor Phyllis Norris and GJHA Board and City Council Member Barbara Traylor Smith accepted on behalf of the City the first ever "Partner in Housing Award" presented by Jody Kole.
- Rich Krohn is a Grand Valley attorney, and for more than 24 years contributed to GJHA throughout its history. Being instrumental in the success of so many real estate transactions, particular achievements for Rich include negotiating land acquisition for the Village Park Apartments and The Highlands. The complicated financing mechanisms necessary to build these developments require effort from the entire team, of which Rich is a key player. Rich takes personal ownership in major GJHA endeavors and feels pride in accomplishments that will be lasting contributions these affordable housing developments will make in this community. Jody Kole honored and presented the "Legacy Partner Award" to Rich.

The audience bestowed one more honor along with a standing ovation to a surprised Jody Kole, who celebrates 25 years of service this year at GJHA. She is a true visionary leader, an action-oriented CEO, and a passionate community member when it comes to the housing and health of the community. A video shining the spotlight on Jody through the years at GJHA played in the background while Scott Aker briefly highlighted Jody's career walk. Jody joined the GJHA staff as Interim Executive Director on April 1, 1992. In September of 1992, Jody assumed the title of Executive Director and years later that title changed to CEO. Under Jody's leadership, growth exceeded in all areas at GJHA. Statistics from 1992 forward to today show GJHA managed approximately 215 units with an increase to 680 units including The Highlands, handled 314 Housing Choice Vouchers that totals over 1200 today, and managed an organization of 12 employees to 50 staff members today. In addition, creation of several programs falling under the

umbrella of supportive services during Jody's time at the helm are very successful and beneficial to GJHA clients. Jody is a leader at both the local and state level and served or is currently serving on numerous Boards, including being the Chair of the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority Board. On behalf of the Board and staff, the award presented by Scott Aker to Jody simply said, "She Believed She Could, So She Did". That reflects Jody's true self.

Jody Kole accepted the award and said this calling, this mission is placed on her heart by God, and she could not imagine a better calling. Jody expressed appreciation to everyone in the room, stressing that the success of GJHA is directly tied to the staff and the community. Jody continued by saying that people need homes and that everything "starts from home." People shouldn't have to choose between buying food and medicine and paying utility bills. She thanked everyone for helping what is done together as a community partnership, and asked for the community's continued support to GJHA.

As the final portion of the Meeting, attendees enjoyed viewing a video of three senior tenants sharing their personal stories, positive experiences, and appreciation for affordable housing while living independently at the Nellie Bechtel Apartments and Walnut Park Apartments.

Jody Kole concluded the meeting by saying that with a story behind every door, these testimonials are why GJHA does what it does. After all, it is all about people.

### **3. Adjourn**

The Annual Meeting concluded at 12:53 p.m.

All Board Packet documents and documents distributed during the Board Meeting are retained in the file.