# MINUTES
## OF
### BOARD OF DIRECTORS
#### COLUMBIA DOWNTOWN HOUSING CORPORATION

March 23, 2021
WebEx Meeting

**Board of Directors Present**
- Patricia Sylvester, *President*
- Jeryl Baker
- Jolly Burks
- John DeZinno
- Gregory Fitchitt, *Ex-Officio*
- Christopher J. Fritz
- Gary Garofalo
- Bethany Hooper
- Leonardo McClarty
- Peter Morgan
- Bruce Rothschild
- Russell Snyder
- Reverend Dr. Robert Turner

**Board of Directors Absent**
- Pastor Mary Ka Kanahan

**Guests**
- Todd Arterburn, *Howard County Spending Affordability Advisory Committee*
- Kelly Cimino, *Howard County Dept. of Housing & Community Development*
- Quanita Kareem, *Howard County Dept. of Housing & Community Development*
- Kevin J. Kelehan, *General Counsel*
- Barbara Lawson, *Howard County Spending Affordability Advisory Committee*

**Recording Secretary**
- Tracy Deik

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## Call to Order and Housekeeping Matters
- With a quorum present, the March 23, 2021 CDHC Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 4:32 P.M. by President Sylvester.

### A. Approval of Agenda
- The March 23, 2021 Agenda was approved as submitted.

### B. Approval of January 2021 Minutes
- *John DeZinno motioned to approve the January 26, 2021 Minutes as submitted. Motion passed 12-0.*

### C. Introduction of Guests
- Todd Arterburn, *Howard County Spending Affordability Advisory Committee*
- Kelly Cimino, *Howard County Dept. of Housing & Community Development*
- Quanita Kareem, *Howard County Dept. of Housing & Community Development*
- Kevin J. Kelehan, *General Counsel*
- Barbara Lawson, *Howard County Spending Affordability Advisory Committee*
II. CDHC Ninth Annual Report- Review & Approval (attached)
- Board members received a draft copy of the CDHC Ninth Annual Report in advance of the meeting.
  - After discussion, Bethany Hooper motioned to approve the Annual Report as submitted. Motion passed 12-0.
- A copy of the final report will be emailed & mailed to the County Executive, the County Council & the Downtown Columbia Partnership before the March 31, 2021 due date.

III. Howard County Spending Affordability Advisory Committee FY 22 Report
- Steven Poynot and his team gave an overview of the FY22 Spending Affordability Advisory Committee Report.
  - Revenue is expected to increase by 2.4% (~$27M) in FY22, and the Committee recommended reducing GO Bonds to a maximum of $50M.
  - The Committee is asked to provide a reasonable estimate of revenue and make recommendations about spending with goal of maintaining the County’s triple A bond rating. It is not a policy group. It noted that the requests for funding was around $64M so there is a big gap between revenue and requests. The Committee emphasized focusing on needs versus wants. It does not weigh in on specific projects.
- The proposed County budget focuses on adjusting expenditures and managing debt to address the needs of the community. The budget supports emerging needs like schools, public facilities, maintenance, infrastructure, etc.
- The Committee noted the lack of developable land and the need for affordable/elderly housing in the County. It also is seeing trends such as a decrease in per capital income due in part to an aging population and the need to address the ongoing maintenance and repair of aging infrastructure throughout the county, not just related to schools.
- CDHC Board members were encouraged to get involved in the General Plan and participate in upcoming sessions/surveys by HoCo by Design

IV. Housing Opportunities Master Plan- Update
- Kelly Cimino updated the Board on the Housing Opportunities Master Plan (HOMP).
  - The Plan includes 80 recommendations to improve housing opportunities for existing/future residences and identifies strategies that the County will implement to accomplish this. Homeownership is a priority of the County Executive.
  - The Task Force will present the final Plan to the County Executive in April.
  - President Sylvester encouraged the Board to look at both the HOMP & the General Plan.

V. Live-Where-You-Work (LWYW)- Updates
A. Vantage Point Residences
- Vantage Point Residences signed the MOU and is now the second employer to participate in the LWYW program.
On March 12, DHCD hosted a LWYW information session for prospective Vantage Point participants; eleven employees attended.

B. Committee Meeting Update
- Jeryl Baker updated the Board on the LWYW Committee meeting that was held on February 23.
- Board members received a list of Downtown employers and were asked to help with LWYW outreach. The possibility of hosting & recording a Zoom meeting for Employers to learn more about the program was discussed.

C. Security Deposit Guaranties
- The Finance Committee met in February to discuss security deposit guaranties.
- Although current security deposit requirements for landlords participating in the LWYW program do not exceed $500, the Board discussed having a process in place that can be implemented when and if it becomes necessary. The Committee will continue to brainstorm the security deposit guarantee process and create necessary documents.
- The possibility of creating a letter of agreement between the landlord and tenant was discussed. Bruce Rothschild offered to share documents with John DeZinno & Bethany Hooper before the next committee meeting.

D. Other
- All four LWYW program participants employed by the Hospital have signed leases for an additional year.
- The Board discussed the possibility of reaching out to the Hospital to see if they would be interested in offering the program to additional employees.
- CDHC received its first bill from DHCD for administrative expenses related to LWYW program costs.

VI. Finance Committee
A. Artists Flats
- John DeZinno updated the Board on the current status of the LOI between CDHC and the Housing Commission.
- CDHC & the Commission will work on updating the LOI so that all documents can be completed before the land closing, which is estimated to occur by the end of the year.
- The Housing Commission agreed to provide John with the current cash flow projections and John will work with them on CDHC’s priority for receiving cash flow payments on its debt.

B. Options for Increasing Downtown Affordability
- The Board discussed ways to create more opportunities for affordable housing in downtown Columbia.
- The idea of extending the Downtown footprint was discussed but it was noted that legislation would be required making this an unlikely option.
- The Board discussed the possibility of investing in real estate and partnering with Bridges to Housing Stability. Kevin Kelehan will look at the legal requirements.
- Other ideas for increasing Downtown affordability included increasing subsidy payments
for LWYW participants; subsidizing Juniper’s MIU rents to 50-60% AMI for those in need; and reaching out to local restaurant owners to share information about the LWYW program.

VII. General Updates & Discussion
A. Housing Affordability Coalition
- President Sylvester gave an update on the Housing Affordability Coalition (HAC).
- HAC has been involved in housing issues related to COVID-19 like eviction & foreclosure prevention.
- HAC has also met with the County Administration to discuss some of the Master Plan’s recommendations like creating a housing trust fund.

B. North Columbia Fire Station
- Sam Sidh gave an update on the North Columbia Fire Station, which must be completed in order to move forward with the Banneker Fire Station and senior affordable housing. He noted that the No. Columbia Fire Station is needed to address fire safety issues in the county and to allow replacement of the Banneker Station which is past its useful life. He expects that there will be some opposition to the site from nearby homeowners.
- Additional funding has been included in the budget, and the County anticipates that the $3M in the contingency fund will be released. The project is estimated to be completed by the end of 2024 provided funding is provided in this budget cycle (FY 2022).
- A public meeting to discuss the project will be held on March 25. President Sylvester asked board members to show support for the project by attending the meeting. For more information visit [https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Bureau-Of-Facilities](https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Public-Works/Bureau-Of-Facilities) (click on “Selected Project Information”).
- The Board discussed ways of creating more unified efforts by reaching out to Council members. Board members interested in supporting these efforts should email President Sylvester. Rev. Turner will reach out to ex-members for support.

VIII. Upcoming Board & Committee Meetings
A. Committee Meetings
- LWYW & Finance committee meetings will be held on April 27 via WebEx.

B. Next Full Board Meeting
- The next CDHC Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 22 via WebEx.

IX. Adjournment
- The CDHC Board meeting adjourned at 6:34 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Tracy Deik