

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF  
THE FAIRMONT-MORGANTOWN HOUSING AUTHORITY

HELD February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, 4:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present:

Marcella Yaremchuk-Chair  
Jay Rogers-Commissioner  
Brian McAllister -Vice Chair

Commissioners Absent:

Ron Dulaney-Commissioner  
John Fallon-Commissioner

Also Present:

Christal Crouso – Secretary/Treasurer  
Lisa Darden  
Duane Makel

The meeting of the Fairmont-Morgantown Housing Authority Board of Commissioners was held on Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. at the administrative office located at 103 12<sup>th</sup> Street Fairmont, WV. Chair Yaremchuk called the meeting to order.

Christal Crouso started the meeting by congratulating Chair Yaremchuk for winning the Jefferson Award for her volunteerism in our community.

**CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Chair Yaremchuk thanked the Board of Commissioner for their kind words regarding her Jefferson Award.

**APPROVAL January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, MINUTES**

Chair Yaremchuk had a question regarding the meeting mentioned with the City Council and if it was both Fairmont and Morgantown?

Ms. Crouso stated that in the context of these minutes, it was Morgantown only.

Commissioner Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner McAllister seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

There is not a financial report for this meeting due to Duane Makel's absence from work last week.

Commissioner Rogers made a motion to dispense with the reading of the bills and communications. Commissioner McAllister seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

In addition to the secretary's report, Ms. Crouso gave the board an update on the Section 8 Voucher program and stated that we are in a good spot and are actually over leased. Going forward we will balance it out for the year. Our Project Management Specialist with HUD is pleased with our progress.

Ms. Crouso expressed her continued worry about the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) clients who have extreme case management needs. Conversations have been held with Valley Health in hopes that they can assist with case management. We have been talking with the WV Peers Group who are willing to help with our clients.

Chair Yaremchuk thanked Ms. Crouso for sharing pictures of the staff in the report.

Ms. Crouso informed the Board that the EITC/VITA event was very successful.

Ms. Crouso spoke about the breach in security that we experienced with one of our bank accounts that was discovered in a bank statement. The account was closed, and a new account was opened. Ms. Crouso has met with our banking representative and some special in-house monitoring will begin and we are now enrolled in a fraud mitigation program.

Ms. Crouso informed the commissioners that the Built for Zero MOU has been signed.

Ms. Crouso and Lisa Darden met with the new mayor of the City of Fairmont and spent about an hour talking with her about her programs. During that meeting we discovered that she was a participant in our homebuyer education program.

Ms. Crouso stated that Public Housing is at 98% occupancy and our HUD Project Management Specialist is pleased.

## **REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEES**

There are none.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

There is none.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### Discussion: Transfer of Funds for Certificate of Deposit (CD):

Ms. Crouso stated that \$175,000.00 has been transferred from the Morgantown Homecoming funds to a money market at MVB. \$500,000.00 has been transferred to CD's with MVB. We plan to meet with TRUIST Bank in March to get the additional funds transferred.

### Discussion: Dunbar School Joint Project:

Ms. Crouso updated the Board that we are still discussing the re-development of Dunbar School with Houston Richardson, President of the Dunbar Foundation. In the next few weeks, the Dunbar School Board will meet with FMHA to discuss the project. Ms. Crouso also stated that she had mentioned this project to the City of Fairmont Mayor as we may need some local support on this project and that she had already talked to Kris Cinalli with the County Commission.

### Discussion: Morgantown Interactions:

Ms. Crouso stated that she had approached the City of Morgantown about doing a project similar to the Dunbar project in the Morgantown area, however after discussion a property could not be located.

Ms. Crouso stated that the Morgantown office sign that was to be installed on Spruce Street may no longer be possible due to a line-of-sight issue. The City is looking into alternative signage, perhaps on the side of the building.

Another conversation was held regarding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The City's plan to acquire properties in need of demolition and donating the land for affordable housing is not an option due to regulations they have gathered from the Department of Treasury.

Ms. Crouso also stated that there was conversation in reference to small houses on Peninsula Avenue. Peninsula Avenue is currently designated to be in a flood plain and the city is petitioning for that to be changed. Another project discussed was the City's proposal to build "shed" (permanent tents) like homes. Ms. Crouso informed the city that this isn't really FMHA's expertise.

## NEW BUSINESS

### Discussion: Permission Requested to Hire an Additional Maintenance Person for Retirement Transition:

Ms. Crouso requested hiring an additional maintenance person to work under Mark Malone until his retirement in June. We are hopeful that a person can be hired by April and learn from Mr. Malone. Ms. Crouso stated that the funding would come from the Board account until this person transitioned into the position that Mr. Malone vacates. Ms. Crouso stated that she needs permission from the Board due to this position not being a part of FMHA's current organizational structure.

Chair Yaremchuk stated that this makes perfect sense to hire someone now to work alongside Mr. Malone.

Commissioner McAllister asked how long would these positions overlap? Ms. Crouso stated approximately three months, if we can get someone hired by April.

Commissioner Rogers made a motion to authorize the hire of an additional maintenance person for the retirement transition. Commissioner McAllister seconded the motion. Motion carried.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

There is none.

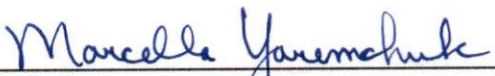
Commissioner McAllister made a motion to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. Motion carried. Executive Session began at 4:51

During the Executive Session, a legal issue and staffing issues were discussed.

Commissioner McAllister made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 5:07 p.m. Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioner Roges made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner McAllister seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned @ 5:09 p.m.

  
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Chair Marcella Yaremchuk

  
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Secretary/Treasurer Christal Crouso