

MINUTES
HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
Neighborhood Resources Department
235 South Arizona Avenue, Chandler, AZ 85225
Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Commission Vice Chair Heather Mattisson called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Commissioners present: Heather Mattisson, Cecilia Hermosillo, Cynthia Hardy, David Gonzalez, *Jeff Reynolds, Karen Tepper, and Ryan Magel.

*Commissioner Reynolds attended telephonically.

Commissioners absent: Tony Alcala (excused), Greg Rodriquez (unexcused), Julie Martin (excused), and Lisa Loring (excused).

Staff present: Riann Balch, Community Resources Senior Manager, Amy Jacobson, Housing & Redevelopment Senior Manager, Deborah Cooke, Housing Assistance Senior Program Manager, Karin Bishop, Community Development Senior Program Manager, and Monica Thompson, Community Development Associate.

Public present: None.

SCHEDULED/UNSCHEDULED PUBLIC APPEARANCES/CALL TO PUBLIC

(Members of the audience may address any item not on the agenda. State Statute prohibits the Board or Commission from discussing an item that is not on the agenda, but the Board or Commission does listen to your concerns and has staff follow up on any questions you raise).

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Items listed on the Consent Agenda may be enacted by one motion and one vote. If a discussion is required by members of the Board or Commission, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion and determination will be made if the item will be considered separately.

1. Minutes of the November 9, 2022, HHSC Meeting Minutes.
2. Minutes of the January 11, 2023, Basic Needs, Special Populations, and Youth Subcommittee Orientation Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Hardy made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Magel seconded the motion.

Discussion: None.

Results: The motion was approved 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING

3. City of Chandler 2023 Public Housing Authority Plan.

Vice Chair Mattisson opened the public hearing at 6:12 p.m. and introduced Housing Assistance Senior Program Manager, Deborah Cooke, to provide a staff presentation.

Ms. Cooke explained that every year the Public Housing Agency (PHA) updates policies for its housing programs and is required to submit the PHA Annual Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Annual Plan is a comprehensive guide to PHA policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. Ms. Cooke explained that the PHA is required to submit the Annual Plan to HUD by April 14, 2023.

The City of Chandler Housing and Redevelopment Division, which serves as Chandler's Public Housing Agency (PHA), currently administers 303 units consisting of Low Rent Public Housing and 486 Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly known as Section 8). Ms. Cooke informed the Commission that Federal regulations require the City of Chandler Housing and Redevelopment Division to hold a public hearing annually to collect public input regarding the Public Housing Authority Plan (Annual Plan). She shared that the City is currently in a public comment period from February 2, 2023, to March 19, 2023. In addition to the public comment period, a Resident Advisory Board (RAB) meeting is scheduled for February 16, 2023. She informed the Commission that the board is comprised of Section 8 and Public Housing residents who are given the opportunity to review policy updates and ask questions.

All proposed policies are available at the Housing Office in hardcopy and on the website at <https://www.chandleraz.gov/residents/neighborhood-resources/housing-and-redevelopment/public-notices>. Residents may contact the Housing and Redevelopment office at 480-782-3200 with any questions or comments.

Ms. Cooke also provided a briefing on the changes made to the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan and Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP). Changes are related to utility allowance schedules and denial of admission. Ms. Cooke explained that "a conviction will be given more weight than arrest" and that a record or arrest(s) will not be used as the sole basis for denial or proof that the applicant engaged in disqualifying criminal activity.

Ms. Cooke also discussed additional changes to the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan, which included updating the waiting list, special programs, and project-based vouchers. Updates to the Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) included updating the waiting list and informal hearing for rejected applicants.

Ms. Cooke asked if any Commissioners had questions regarding the updates. Vice Chair Mattisson asked if giving convictions more weight than arrests is related to changing times or a specific incident. Ms. Cooke shared that HUD has been changing its stance regarding criminal behavior and these policies are reflective of those changes. The PHA fully investigates cases as arrests do not always lead to convictions. Commissioner Tepper asked if a conviction was a basis for denying admissions. Ms. Cooke shared that even when there is a conviction, the PHA investigates each case to ensure there is enough evidence to support a denial. The PHA takes denials and terminations of

assistance very seriously and only proceeds when the reasons for denial are clear. Commissioner Magel asked if the change to the denial of admission policy only applies to the Housing Choice Voucher program. Ms. Cooke explained that the policy update applies to all the City's housing programs. She also shared that the City of Chandler Housing and Redevelopment Division subscribes to a service that provides federal changes and updates that affect both the ACOP and Administrative Plan and that the Division works with a consultant to integrate the changes and new policy opportunities into both policies. Ms. Cooke informed the Commission that in cases where the convicted person is not the head of the household, the family is given the option to remove that individual from the household to avoid the entire family from losing housing assistance and this is especially beneficial when children and elderly persons reside in the household.

Commissioner Magel asked for further explanation regarding the 60-day timeframe for applicants to contest the removal from the waiting list. Ms. Cooke explained that previously applicants had 10 days to respond by submitting a formal request for an Informal Review. She said this process changed during COVID-19 when HUD issued waivers that allowed applicants more time to respond and request an Informal Review. She explained that this update would make the waivers issued by HUD permanent.

Commissioner Magel asked if the addition of the project-based vouchers included the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) and Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) Vouchers. Ms. Jacobson indicated that the special program vouchers, EHV and VASH, were not project-based vouchers but rather vouchers that are mobile within communities. She explained the PHA's plan to redevelop Public Housing Sites 2 and 3 would require residents be moved to a new site (Villas on McQueen) that is not public housing but will be project-based Section 8 and Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Since residents will be housed at temporary sites, the PHA added a new chapter on project-based vouchers to the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan. Ms. Jacobson explained that HUD will pay subsidies for project-based vouchers through the Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) between HUD and the Project Owner. Ms. Jacobson explained that EHV is housing rental assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness and the VASH vouchers are for Veterans who are experiencing homelessness. The City was recently awarded the VASH vouchers. Commissioner Tepper asked for the total number of vouchers that have been awarded to the City. Ms. Jacobson responded that the City has approximately 495 Housing Choice Vouchers, including 10 new VASH vouchers, and 28 EHV vouchers. She further explained that the number of vouchers utilized may be less than the number awarded because the total funds received by HUD may not support the full number of vouchers. There were no other questions from the Commission.

There were no comments from the public. Vice Chair Mattisson closed the public hearing on the 2023 Public Housing Authority Plan at 6:26 p.m.

4. City of Chandler 2023 Annual Action Plan.

Vice Chair Mattisson opened the public hearing at 6:26 p.m., and introduced Community Development Senior Program Manager, Karin Bishop, to provide a staff presentation.

Ms. Bishop explained that each year, the City receives federal CDBG funds from HUD, and HOME funds, administered by HUD through the Maricopa HOME Consortium. Ms. Bishop informed Commissioners that the City of Chandler is in the process of preparing its draft Annual Action Plan (AAP) for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, which details the use of the Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) funds for the fiscal year. The AAP will identify priorities for use of the following estimated annual resources.

- CDBG: Approximately \$1,402,691
- HOME: Approximately \$453,008

Ms. Bishop explained that HUD will release formulas for allocations later this year and that the projected funding is based on last year's funding. She further explained that the AAP is a reassessment of how the City plans on utilizing the funding and that the action plan guides the allocation of resources and other investment decisions and includes projected performance goals for the upcoming year.

The purpose of this public hearing is to solicit feedback regarding housing and community development needs for the upcoming draft of the Annual Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Ms. Bishop shared with the Commission the efforts taken by the City to increase feedback from residents with the creation of a 2023 Annual Action Plan Survey. Ms. Bishop explained that residents can take the survey from their phones using the QR Code displayed in the lobby of the Neighborhood Resources Building, and other City facilities. She also stated that the survey link is available on the City website at: <https://www.chandleraz.gov/residents/neighborhood-resources/community-development/plans-and-reports>, and that hardcopies of the survey are available. Ms. Bishop reported that the QR code to the survey was distributed to several other key stakeholders in Chandler. Commissioner Tepper shared that she received the QR Code for the survey from the Maricopa Association of Government (MAG). Ms. Bishop encouraged Commissioners to take the survey and share it with the community. She welcomed everyone's feedback and indicated that the survey was anonymous. Commissioner Hermosillo suggested that the survey be distributed to local health clinics and Chandler Unified School District.

Ms. Bishop informed the Commission that the survey will close at the end of February. She also mentioned that the draft of the 2023 AAP will be made available for review during the 30-day public comment period beginning on March 17, 2023, and will be presented to the Housing and Human Services Commission (HHSC) at the April 12, 2023, meeting. Ms. Bishop stated that public comments received will be included in the finalized report submitted to HUD.

There were no comments from the public. Vice Chair Mattisson closed the public hearing at 6:39 p.m.

BRIEFING

5. Agency Tour Reviews.

Community Resources Senior Manager Riann Balch presented on the agency tour reviews. She shared that over 20 organizations completed agency tours. Ms. Balch said that staff and commissioners who attended the agency tours completed feedback forms during the agency tour. She explained that the ratings were calculated using the average score of the ratings received for an agency in a specific category and that the additional feedback were direct comments received on the forms from staff and Commissioners that attended the agency tour. Ms. Balch asked if Commissioners had any questions or would like to speak about their experience of the agency tours. Vice Chair Mattisson shared that she attended two agency tours, one in person and the other virtually. She said she appreciated the care of the organization and how they serve the residents of

Chandler. Ms. Balch added that the agency tours are a way for the City to conduct an informal monitoring of the organization. Commissioner Hermosillo said organizations appreciate the opportunity to share how they serve people in the community. Ms. Balch thanked Commissioners for participating in agency tours.

MEMBERS COMMENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Magel announced to the Commission that the 2023 Chandler State of the City is on February 16, 2023. Ms. Balch added that Commissioners are invited to attend the event, which will be held at Chandler Center for the Arts, with doors opening at 5:30 p.m., and the program beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. Balch shared that Chair Alcala apologized for not attending tonight's meeting. She explained that Chair Alcala's school, Galveston Elementary, is currently planning for a complete rebuild and he is attending a series of meetings in support of the effort.

CALENDAR

- 6. HHSC Youth Subcommittee Meeting Monday, February 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.
- 7. HHSC Basic Needs Subcommittee Meeting Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.
- 8. HHSC Special Populations Subcommittee Meeting Thursday, February 16, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.
- 9. HHSC Meeting Wednesday, March 1, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Commissioner Hardy shared that the Chandler Men of Action will hold their African American Banquet on February 24, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Chandler Community College Agave Conference Room.

Ms. Bishop shared that the Chandler Museum has a survey to solicit feedback regarding the museum's role.

Ms. Bishop also informed the Commission that a Special Meeting will need to be scheduled for the Commission to finalize its funding recommendations and contingency plans for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 before going to City Council for approval. Ms. Bishop let the Commission know that scheduling the Special Meeting was forthcoming.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

Dated: _____

Vice Chair Heather Mattisson

Recording Secretary Monica Thompson