VHFA Board Members Present:
Commissioners: Katie Stuart-Buckley (Chair), Lamont Barnett, Tom Leavitt, Gus Seelig, Jill Rickard (designee for Michael Pieciak), Josh Hanford (designee for Lindsay Kurrle), Jeanne Morrissey, Fred Baser and Michael Clasen (designee for Beth Pearce) (all attended by electronic means)

Staff Present:
Maura Collins, George Demas, Chris Flannery, Seth Leonard, Leslie Black-Plumeau, Josh Slade, Megan Roush, Bill Schrecker, Kim Roy, Mia Watson, Jacklyn Santerre, David Chien and Steve Gronlund (all attended by electronic means except that Mr. Demas and Ms. Santerre were present at the meeting location)

Guests: Tom Getz, Lindsay Getz and Charlie Brush (Summit Properties), Elizabeth Bridgewater and Peter Paggi (Windham & Windsor Housing Trust), Jeff Kantor, Cindy Reid and Miranda Lescaze (Cathedral Square), Meg Pond (CIDER), Julie Curtin (Downstreet), Elisabeth Kulas and Melissa Disorda (Housing Trust of Rutland County), Christine Hart and Christine Hazzard (Brattleboro Housing Partnership), Kathy Beyer, Matt Moore, Samantha Dunn and Nancy Owens (Housing Vermont), Amy Demetrowitz (Champlain Housing Trust), Robin Jeffers (SD Ireland), Jim Lovinsky (Lamoille Housing
Partnership), Kristine McDevitt (Twin Pines Housing Trust), and Richard Williams (VT State Housing Authority) (all attended by electronic means)

**BOARD MEETING**

Ms. Stuart-Buckley Chair, called the Board meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

Staff confirmed that a Notice of this meeting was provided to the requesting parties and was posted on the Agency website and with State Department of Libraries, and that the Agenda for this meeting was provided to the requesting parties and posted on the Agency website, all within the statutory time requirements.

Staff confirmed that Minutes to all meetings after July 1, 2014 had been posted on the Agency website not less than 5 days after the meeting.

Ms. Stuart-Buckley asked if anyone had any changes to the Agenda and there were none.

Ms. Stuart-Buckley confirmed that the Commissioners attending by electronic means could hear the conduct of the meeting and be heard throughout the meeting by the other attendees. Ms. Stuart-Buckley noted that Commissioners would have to vote by roll-call since there were Commissioners participating by electronic means.

**BOARD MINUTES**

Mr. Clasen moved to accept the minutes of the February 3, 2020 Board meeting, and Mr. Barnett seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by roll call vote, except that Mr. Hanford had not yet joined the meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Stuart-Buckley opened the meeting to public comment. Nancy Owens of Housing Vermont commented to indicate her appreciation of the stresses caused by the COVID 19 emergency and of the work all the various agencies and organizations are doing collaboratively in response. Stay Home/Stay Safe only works if everyone has a home to go to. Richard Williams of the Vermont State Housing Authority commented that he was glad to see all the work being done to coordinate and maximize the benefit of the project based vouchers.

Mr. Hanford joined the meeting.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Seelig moved that the Board adopt the resolutions regarding the extensions of the TD facilities, and Mr. Clasen seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
Ms. Rickard moved that the Board adopt the proposed revision to the HR Committee Charter, and Mr. Barnett seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

COVID 19 UPDATE
Ms. Collins discussed the need for the Agency to remain flexible in its responses to the COVID 19 emergency and to the various state and federal programs being developed as a result. Mr. Flannery provided information on how the emergency’s effects on capital markets and had affected the Agency’s costs of funds and noted that because the Agency was able to price its most recent bond offering in February, the bond sale closed cleanly last week at rates that allow the Agency to fund mortgages at the lowest interest rates in its history.

FINANCE
VCF Loan Facility
Mr. Flannery reviewed the status of discussions with the Vermont Community Foundation to extend and increase its existing funding facility with VHFA. After discussion, Mr. Seelig moved that the Board adopt the proposed resolution authorizing Staff to negotiate, finalize and enter into the facility, and Mr. Barnett seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Tax Credit Investment and Housing Data
Ms. Black-Plumeau reviewed her presentation regarding Vermont housing needs and the use of the low income housing tax credit (LIHTC) historically to finance the development of affordable housing in the state.

9% “Allocated” Credit Applications
Each of the various sponsors for the projects applying for credits provided a short presentation regarding the nature and status of their projects:

223 East Allen St., Winooski – Tom Getz (Summit Properties) noted that the project would result in creation of nine units of housing targeted to homeless or at-risk persons through relationships with COTS but still would be a fully mixed income property with market rents targeted at up to 90% of area median income. He also noted that the project was not looking for any other state resources and that they had received back up letters of interest for tax credits to limit concerns that a tax credit investor might pull out.

Bellows Falls Garage, Rockingham – Elizabeth Bridgewater and Peter Paggi (Windham & Windsor Housing Trust) and Jeff Kantor. Ms. Bridgewater provided background on the difficulties in developing new units of affordable housing in Bellows Falls. Mr. Paggi
noted that the conversion of this old parking structure would both remediate a blighted property and create needed good-quality affordable housing.

**Champlain Islands Senior Housing, South Hero** – Cindy Reid (Cathedral Square Corp.), Meg Pond (CIDER) and Jeff Kantor. Ms. Reid provided background on the need for affordable senior housing in Grand Isle County and the efforts of CIDER in providing services, including transportation services, to seniors. Ms. Pond notes the difficulty in finding a suitable site, and that the location is ideal both for buildability and its proximity to services in the town of South Hero. Ms. Reid notes that if it becomes available, the project would apply for HUD 202 funds which would allow it to be developed using 4% “Bond” credits.

**Fox Run Apartments, Berlin** – Julie Curtin (Downstreet) and Matt Moore (Housing Vermont). Ms. Curtin noted that the project is located in an area close to services and employment opportunities that the town is supportive of developing. Mr. Moore provided additional details regarding location and noted the overall lack of rental housing in the town.

**Lincoln Place, Rutland** – Elisabeth Kulas and Melissa Disorda (Housing Trust of Rutland County) and Jeff Kantor. Ms. Kulas described the need for fully supportive housing for the homeless in Rutland and the support the community has provided for converting this former school property for that purpose.

**Red Clover II, Brattleboro** – Christine Hart and Christine Hazzard (Brattleboro Housing Partnership) and Kathy Beyer (Housing Vermont). Ms. Hart noted the importance of building the project to take in the remaining residents of the old Melrose Terrace project which was regularly in danger of being flooded due to its location near Whetstone Brook. Ms. Hazzard described the benefits of reuniting all the former Melrose Terrace residents and the services provided at the Red Clover facility. Ms. Beyer noted that the project was now officially in a Neighborhood Development Area and would be ready to start construction in June.

**Stuart Avenue, Colchester** – Amy Demetrowitz (Champlain Housing Trust), Robin Jeffers (SD Ireland) and Kathy Beyer (Housing Vermont). Ms. Demetrowitz notes the need for additional affordable units in Chittenden County and the location of this project in the New Town Center area in Colchester that has been building for a number of years. Ms. Jeffers describes development in the area, the need for affordable units, and the proximity of the project to shopping and recreational opportunities in Colchester. Ms. Beyer noted the investments that the town has made to encourage growth on this site and also pointed to the low targeted rents for this project.
Village Center, Morristown – Jim Lovinsky (Lamoille Housing Partnership) and Samantha Dunn (Housing Vermont). Mr. Lovinsky reviewed the need for additional affordable housing in the area and the proximity of the project to jobs, services and transportation. Ms. Dunn discussed design features of the project and its readiness to proceed in the fall.

Wentworth II, Hartford – Kristine McDevitt (Twin Pines Housing Trust) and Samantha Dunn (Housing Vermont). Ms. McDevitt reviewed the demand for the project and its integration with the existing Wentworth project. Ms. Dunn noted the energy efficiency design features and also discussed the site remediation that will be performed on the Wilder site which will result in taking what had been an abandoned “brownfield” and making it useful housing.

Staff Recommendation
Mr. Leonard then led the Development Staff through a review of the scoring of the proposed projects and the Staff recommendations for the Board. Mr. Leonard noted that Staff had reviewed the projects based on the terms of the QAP as written. Mr. Leonard and Mr. Slade also discussed the effects of the overallocation that was done last year and the loss of the temporary “bump” in total credits that had been made available in the tax code starting next year on the total amount of credits available to be awarded. Mr. Slade noted that the recommendations left approximately $350,000 in unawarded credits that could be available to deal with unexpected funding shortfalls due to cost overruns or credit pricing shortfalls resulting from the effects of the COVID 19 emergency.

Mr. Seelig noted his general support for Staff’s recommendations, but suggested that funding the Village Center and Stuart Avenue projects would create more lower cost housing than the 223 East Allen project. There was a general discussion regarding the scoring issues relating to why the 223 East Allen project scored higher than Village Center and Stuart Avenue and the Board’s authority to provide waivers from QAP criteria. In addition, there was discussion regarding how to compare rents between a project like 223 East Allen that was only receiving tax credits versus other projects that not only were relying on tax credits but other public funding sources as well. Amidst the discussion Mr. Seelig offered that he was prepared to make a motion to fund the four projects in the southern half of the state (Red Clover, Lincoln, Bellows Falls, and Wentworth) and wait to discuss East Allen further, but since more board members were waiting to speak he decided to allow the conversation to continue before making a motion.

Mr. Hanford pointed out that from the perspective of readiness to proceed only Red Clover II and 223 East Allen had all funding in hand, and that other projects that were all relying on obtaining Community Development Block Grant money would not likely all
receive the amounts they needed given the limited amount of funds available and the other demands for those funds.

After further discussion, Mr. Hanford moved that the Board approve the Staff recommendations as presented. Mr. Barnett seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by roll call vote, except that Mr. Seelig voted no with respect to the 223 East Allen project and Ms. Morrissey abstained from voting.

Ms. Stuart-Buckley confirmed with Staff that Minutes of the meeting had been kept and would be posted to the Agency’s website within five days.

ADJOURNMENT
Upon motion by Mr. Barnett duly seconded by Ms. Rickard and unanimously approved by roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at 1:19 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the Vermont Housing Finance Agency Board of Commissioners meeting held on March 30, 2020. The Minutes were approved at a lawful meeting of the Commissioners held at Burlington, Vermont on May 11, 2020.

Maura Collins
Executive Director and Secretary
Vermont Housing Finance Agency