

FINAL - Draft Posted June 28, 2022
VHFA Board of Commissioners Meeting
Vermont Housing Finance Agency
Board Room
164 St. Paul St., Burlington VT
June 27, 2022

VHFA Board Members Present:

Commissioners: Katie Buckley (Chair), Scott Baker (designee for Beth Pearce), Tom Leavitt, and Fred Baser (attended in person) Gus Seelig, Jeanne Morrissey, Emily Kasicki (designee for Kevin Gaffney) and Josh Hanford (designee for Lindsay Kurrle) (attended electronically).

Staff Present:

Maura Collins, Chris Flannery, Seth Leonard, Jacklyn Santerre, George Demas, Josh Slade, Bill Schrecker, Alejandro Flores-Howland, Mia Watson, Chad Simmons

Guests:

Tyler Labrie and Jess Neubelt (Evernorth), Andrew Winter, Bill Kelsey, Christina Herald (TPHT), Miranda Lescaze, Javier Garcia (CHT), Elise Schanbacher and Alix O'Meara (ACCT), Susan Whitmore (John Graham Housing), Nicola Anderson, Kaziah Haviland, Angie Harbin (Downstreet), Cindy Reid (Cathedral Square), Tom Getz and Zeke Davisson (Green Mountain Development), Elizabeth Nickerson (Nickerson Development), and Julie Iffland (Randolph Area Community Development Corporation)

BOARD MEETING

Ms. Buckley called the Board meeting to order at 9:01 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 prior meetings had been posted on the Agency website not less than 5 days after the meetings as required.

Ms. Buckley noted that Kevin Loso would not be able to attend the meeting and asked if there were any other changes to the Agenda and there were none.

Ms. 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. Buckley noted that Commissioners would have to vote by roll-call since there were Commissioners participating by electronic means.

BOARD MINUTES

Mr. Baser moved to accept the minutes of the May 23, 2022 Board meeting, and Mr. Seelig seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by roll call vote, except that Mr. Baker abstained, and Mr. Hanford had not yet joined the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Buckley opened the meeting to public comment, and there were none.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Leavitt requested that Staff provide background regarding the request for additional bonding authority. Mr. Flannery and Mr. Leonard noted the large number of construction financing requests driven by the availability of ARPA funding that require both bonding authority and an increase in the Agency's credit lines.

Ms. Morrissey moved that the Board adopt the proposed resolution for Multifamily bonding authority. Mr. Leavitt seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted by roll call vote except that Mr. Hanford, who had just joined the meeting electronically, abstained.

Mr. Baser then moved that the Board approve the proposed TD line increase, and Ms. Morrissey seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote, except that Mr. Leavitt abstained.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

State Rental 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:

ACCT Supportive Housing, Vergennes & Middlebury

Ms. Schanbacker and Ms. Whitmore reviewed the current status of the project. They noted that the project would provide needed upgrades to modernize historic properties and bring units that currently cannot be used back on line. Mr. Slade reviewed the Staff project memo.

Bay Ridge New Construction, Shelburne

Ms. Lescaze and Ms. Neubelt provided updates on the project since the Board's last review in May. They noted that approval from the Town Development Review Board had been received. Mr. Schrecker reviewed the Staff project memo.

Bay Ridge Rehab, Shelburne

Ms. Lescaze reviewed the plan to convert existing transitional housing units to permanent supportive units. Mr. Slade reviewed the Staff project memo.

Little Creek, Vergennes

Ms. Schanbacker and Mr. Labrie described the project and noted that the project was on a short timeline in order to be able to retain the benefits of the basis boost that will be lost if the project is not completed by the end of 2023. Mr. Schrecker noted that the project was currently only requesting state tax credits and would be returning with a further request for debt.

Granite City, Barre

Ms. Anderson and Mr. Labrie provided information regarding the project status and described how the project would create new housing units in the old Ward 5 School building. Mr. Slade reviewed the Staff project memo.

Summit at O'Brien Farms (Lot 10), South Burlington

Mr. Getz described the project, noting that it would benefit from coordination with construction on the Summit at O'Brien Farms (Lot 11) project previously approved by the Board for "ceiling" credits. Mr. Schrecker reviewed the Staff project memo.

Salisbury Square Phase II, Randolph

Ms. Iffland reviewed the project status, noting the infrastructure work to be performed. Mr. Schrecker reviewed the Staff project memo.

Staff Recommendation

Mr. Leonard thanked the board, staff, and other state funding agencies for their partnership on this process. He gave a high-level overview of the process before Mr. Schrecker and Mr. Slade reviewed analysis by Staff with respect to the compliance by the various projects with the threshold requirements of the QAP, QAP priorities for state housing credits, readiness to proceed, possible use of Vermont Housing Investment Fund dollars in lieu of credits for certain projects and the historical use of credits in certain of the projects. Mr. Slade then reviewed the Staff proposals related to the projects above.

After a general discussion Mr. Baker moved the staff recommendation as presented. Mr. Hanford seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Bond Credit and Loan Requests

Mellishwood, Woodstock

Mr. Kelsey and Mr. Winter reviewed the project status. He noted that the loan request for acquisition only to purchase the property from the original owner and give time to allow for an in-depth review of long-term project needs before putting together a tax credit project in a couple years. Mr. Schrecker reviewed the Staff project memo.

Mr. Baser moved the staff recommendation as presented. Mr. Baker seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Taft's Flat, Hartford

Ms. Herald reviewed the project plan, noting that the project was next to the Upper Valley Haven, which would be providing supportive services. Mr. Slade reviewed the Staff project memo.

Mr. Leavitt moved the staff recommendation as presented. Mr. Seelig seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

WRJ Hotel Conversion, Hartford

Mr. Kelsey reviewed the project plan for converting an existing hotel to apartments. Permanent supportive housing in the project would be serviced by the Veteran's Administration and the Upper Valley Haven. Mr. Slade reviewed the Staff project memo.

Mr. Baser moved the staff recommendation as presented. Mr. Seelig seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

At this point Ms. Morrissey left the meeting

Summit at O'Brien Farm (Lot 11), South Burlington

Tom Getz reviewed the request for construction and permanent debt. Mr. Schrecker reviewed the Staff project memo.

Mr. Hanford moved the staff recommendation as presented. Mr. Baker seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

East Calais General Store, East Calais

Mr. Leonard reviewed the Staff project memo, noting that the request was for Vermont Housing Investment Fund only. Mr. Seelig noted that the project had strong community support.

Mr. Baker moved the staff recommendation as presented. Mr. Leavitt seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Kelley's Field II

Ms. Reid noted that all other funding approvals had now been received and updated the Board on the status of project permits. Mr. Slade reviewed the Staff project memo.

Mr. Baser moved the staff recommendation as presented. Mr. Seelig seconded the motion which was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

STAFF REPORT

Ms. Collins advised the Commissioners that the process for distributing Board packets would be changing for the August meeting and welcomed Emily Kisicki as the Board designee for the Commissioner of the Department of Financial Regulation. Ms. Collins also noted that there would be a public event to announce the Capital Magnet Fund award of \$4 million to the Agency's Vermont Housing Investment Fund on June 28 to which all Commissioners were invited. Mr. Flannery reviewed the status of the Agency's upcoming bond issuance and the effects of the rising interest rate environment on Agency funding sources.

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

Ms. Collins reviewed her memo reviewing actions taken in FY 2022 and actions to be taken in FY 2023 in furtherance of the Agency's 3-year strategic plan.

PROPOSED FY2023 OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS

Mr. Flannery reviewed his memo, noting that during the last year the Agency has done well despite stresses both to the financial markets and to Staff associated with the pandemic. He noted that the biggest long term effect of the pandemic is the new programs the Agency is being tasked with developing and staffing. He also noted that inflation would affect Agency operational costs and the rising interest rate environment would affect the Agency's financing operations. Mr. Leavitt noted that the Audit Committee had reviewed the proposed budget and recommended it for approval by the full Board, and Mr. Seelig noted that the Human Resources Committed had supported the proposed budget as well. After a general discussion, Mr. Seelig moved that the Board adopt the FY 2023 budget as presented, and Mr. Hanford seconded the motion which was adopted unanimously by roll call vote.

At this point, upon motion by Mr. Leavitt, seconded by Mr. Hanford and unanimously approved by roll call vote, the Commissioners voted to go into Executive Session to discuss an employee evaluation at 12:27.

At 12:42 the Commissioners came out of Executive Session. Upon motion by Mr. Seelig, seconded by Mr. Hanford and unanimously approved by roll call vote, the Board approved the Executive Director salary as reflected in the FY 2023 budget.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion made by Mr. Baser, seconded by Mr. Leavitt and unanimously approved by roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at 12:48 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 June 27, 2022. The Minutes were approved at a lawful meeting of the Commissioners held on August 15, 2022.



Maura Collins
Executive Director and Secretary
Vermont Housing Finance Agency