



## Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

March 28, 2025

Daniel Valdez  
2406 N 25<sup>th</sup> Place  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

*Hand delivered*

### **Re: Removal from Housing Authority of Skagit County Commission**

Dear Mr. Valdez,

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners (the Board) has made the determination that it appears the interests of the Housing Authority of Skagit County (HASC) and the low-income people it is charged with serving would be better served by removing you from its commission.

This letter, accompanied with a copy of the charges, serves as our written notice of the intent to remove you from the Housing Authority Board of Skagit County per state law. According to [RCW 35.82.060](#), you have ten days from the date of this notice to have the opportunity to be heard in person or by counsel at a public hearing on April 14, at 2:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Hearing Room, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273. You may also respond in writing to the notice. After the hearing your removal will be considered by the Board.

This action comes as we were recently made aware of concerns about the ways in which HASC Commission meetings have been conducted under your leadership as Chair, and about your apparent unwillingness to provide your commission colleagues with financial and other information they have requested. Your colleagues provided substantial documentation of their attempts to gain access to documents and reports related to the financial health of the organization, in furtherance of their fiduciary duties. A review of the HASC minutes indicate that substantial matters are not being appropriately addressed at regular meetings.

As a consequence, we engaged an outside consultant to conduct a thorough review of electronic correspondence, as well as board agendas, reports, and minutes. That review and the resulting charges have been evaluated by the Skagit County's Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Our conclusion from this review is that there is sufficient basis to believe you have failed in your responsibilities as Chairperson and a member



March 28, 2025

Letter to Mr. Daniel Valdez

Page 2 of 2

of a governing body of a public agency operating in Washington state and have been negligent in ensuring conformance with federal regulations related to governance of a local public housing authority administering Housing Choice Vouchers.

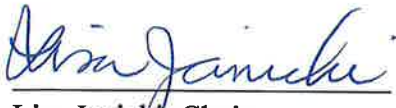
The relevant materials that we reviewed are provided to you in the attached packet.

We regret the need to take this action. The seriousness of the facts available, and our own obligations related to appointments to officials positions such as yours, leave us no choice.

Please direct future communications to our attorney, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor Erik Pedersen at [erikp@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:erikp@co.skagit.wa.us)

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Lisa Janicki, Chair



Ron Wesen, Commissioner



Peter Browning, Commissioner



**Notice of Intent to Remove of Housing Authority of Skagit County (HASC)  
Commissioner Daniel Valdez Pursuant to RCW 35.82.060**

**RCW 35.82.060 Removal of commissioners.** For inefficiency or neglect of duty or misconduct in office, a commissioner of an authority may be removed by the mayor (or in the case of an authority for a county, by the governing body of said county), but a commissioner shall be removed only after he or she shall have been given a copy of the charges at least ten days prior to the hearing thereon and had an opportunity to be heard in person or by counsel. In the event of the removal of any commissioner, a record of the proceedings, together with the charges and findings thereon, shall be filed in the office of the clerk.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners (the Board) intends to remove HASC Commissioner Daniel Valdez, based on the following charges constituting **inefficiency or neglect of duty or misconduct in office**.

**I. Blocking financial and operational oversight by Housing Authority of Skagit County Board (HASC Board).**

Mr. Valdez, as Chairperson of HASC, has failed to provide fellow HASC Commissioners with information they have requested, and instructed the Executive Director of HASC not to comply with information requests of another HASC Commissioner pertaining to financial and operational oversight. **See Exhibit A** (email thread). Such actions fail to recognize that members of the HASC Board are entitled to obtain records under the RCW chapter 42.56 Public Records Act in the same manner as any other citizen. The HASC Board consists of five commissioners. RCW 35.82.040. The direction to deny requests for information fails to recognize that doing so impacts the ability of other HASC Board members to comply with their duties.

**MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION**

The Board believes that the information requested from at least one HASC Commissioner is reasonable, customary, and appropriate to the sound fiduciary oversight of HASC and in violation of the Public Records Act which would constitute an inefficiency or neglect of duty and misconduct in office.

**II. Exceeding the scope of authority as HASC Chairperson.**

Mr. Valdez, as Chairperson, has acted outside the authority granted to the Chairperson under the HASC Bylaws and RCW in directing the Executive Director not to provide information requested by another commissioner. The Chairperson's authority is limited to **presiding at meetings, signing all contracts, deeds and other instruments** unless otherwise authorized by resolution and **at each meeting**, shall submit recommendations and information as he may

consider concerning the business, affairs and policies of HASC. **See Exhibits A, B** (HASC Bylaws noting Article II, Section 2 pertaining to authority of Chairperson.)

### **MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION**

The Board believes that the pattern of repeatedly declining requests for reasonable information exceeds the scope of authority of the HASC Chairperson and thus constitutes an inefficiency or neglect of duty and misconduct in office.

### **III. Failure to ensure conformance with the federal Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.**

Mr. Valdez was appointed to the HASC Board on January 2, 2023, and assumed the Chairperson position on January 10, 2024. The HASC Board must meet its oversight obligations prescribed by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) related to reviewing HASC's administration of the federal Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. The following communications and events that have occurred indicate a failure to comply with required procedures.

- a. The Board has engaged in numerous communications with HASC about the importance in assuring the HCV program is maximized so that the program can continue to have sufficient funding. **Exhibit C** (Commissioner Correspondence from 2022 to 2024).
- b. The minutes of meetings of the HASC Board fail to include information about HCV-related matters, including relevant contracts, voucher utilization, reserve status, HUD reports or monitoring, or performance information. **Exhibit D** (Meeting Minutes from January 2024 through March 2025).
- c. The minutes of meetings of the HASC Board fail to include evidence of the SEMAP Certification. 24 CFR sec 985.101 which requires a Public Housing Agency (PHA) administering a Section 8 tenant-based assistance program to submit an annual SEMAP Certification within 60 days after the end of its fiscal year. **Exhibit E** (Copy of SEMAP Certification form).
- d. Failure to conduct HASC Board meetings and supplying information to the HASC Board in conformance with HUD guidance and training expenses and revenues. **Exhibits F** (HUD Guidance Training at pages 15, 18, 19); **Exhibit G** (Foundations: Roles and Responsibilities at page 1).
- e. Failure to convene and consider the input and advice of a HUD-prescribed Resident Advisory Board in approval of the annual Public Housing Authority Plan. **Exhibits H** (28 CFR 903.13); **Exhibit I** (Streamlined Annual PHA Plan).

### **MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION**

The Board believes that as a member of the HASC Board since January 3, 2023, and Chairperson since January 10, 2024, Mr. Valdez was aware of the importance and requirements for use of HCV's and the failure to adequately use the resources and provide information on HCV use constitutes an inefficiency or neglect of duty.

The Board of County Commissioners assumes a fiduciary duty in appointing HASC Commissioners to ensure that HASC is governed in the best interests of the County for the benefit of the public and plan participants, and in conformance with state and federal laws and regulations. It appears the failings by Mr. Valdez as Chair of HASC have undermined the effectiveness of HASC and are detrimental to the well-being of Skagit County residents with low incomes. Accordingly, the Board of County Commissioners believes it has a duty to remove Mr. Valdez.

### **NOTICE OF HEARING DATE**

These charges are being presented to you today, Friday, March 28, 2025. Following the process outlined in RCW 35.82.060 you will be provided an opportunity to be heard in person at a meeting of the Board of Commissioners on Monday April 14, 2025, after which the Board of Commissioners are expected to vote on removal.

#### **List of Exhibits:**

- A: Email correspondence between HASC Commissioners and the Executive Director in February and March 2025 related to requests for certain financial and other documents, which requests were denied by Mr. Valdez.
- B. HASC Bylaws which state that the duty of the Chair is to preside at meetings, and to sign certain contracts.
- C. Skagit Board of County Commissioner correspondence from 2022 to 2024.
- D. HASC Board of Commissioners meeting agendas, minutes and relevant materials.
- E. Excerpt from HUD Commissioner Training which outlines the fiduciary duties of a local public housing authority, including the kinds of documents that should be reviewed by Commissioners.
- F. "Lead the Way" quick reference that delineates roles and responsibilities for commissioners of public housing authorities.
- G. HUD CFR describing Resident Advisory Boards
- H. HASC 2024 Annual Plan indicating that no Resident Board was consulted (Section C.1)





## EXHIBIT A

**From:** Crystle Stidham [cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)  
**Subject:** FW: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week  
**Date:** March 6, 2025 at 4:45 PM  
**To:** Jennifer Johnson [jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us)

CS

This is the email where Daniel tells Melanie that she does not have to respond to my requests and then directs me to stop asking her for information.

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**From:** Crystle Stidham  
**Sent:** Friday, February 21, 2025 11:56 PM  
**To:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Good evening, Daniel and Melanie,

I am following up on my emails below and once again respectfully requesting the following:

- Salary schedule for all employees (requested February 9<sup>th</sup>, February 11<sup>th</sup>, February 12<sup>th</sup>, February 18<sup>th</sup>, and February 19<sup>th</sup>)
- Current org chart (requested February 18<sup>th</sup> and February 19<sup>th</sup>)
- Minutes where the Housing Development Director position was approved by the Commissioners (requested this information February 19<sup>th</sup>)
  - Did we follow the Procurement Policy when selecting Prothman, e.g., competitive proposal (requested this information February 19<sup>th</sup>)
- Please provide the contact information for the HASC attorney. (requested this information February 19<sup>th</sup>)

The request for the above information was denied on February 19<sup>th</sup> citing insufficient time to provide it prior to the Board meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

I have spent some time this evening reviewing the Board of Commissioners packet that was provided to me by staff last week and will be sending a separate email asking for clarification on a number of items. I'm hoping that there will be a sense of urgency in responding to all requests. It's quite lengthy, but I would appreciate both of you reading it in its entirety and providing responses.

Best,

Crystle

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**From:** Crystle Stidham  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 19, 2025 1:26 PM  
**To:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** Tina Tate <[t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)>; Peter J. Cavan <[peter@cavan.us](mailto:peter@cavan.us)>; Luis Reyna <[lui.reyna95@gmail.com](mailto:lui.reyna95@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week  
**Importance:** High

Daniel,

How is anyone on the Board expected to request documentation related to items on the agenda two weeks in advance when the agenda is only sent out the Friday before the meeting?

Secondly, while I recognize that you are the Board Chair, the by-laws or RCW related to Board governance do not give you the exclusive right to dictate anything. Your primary role is to lead the Board meetings, and you are out of line directing me to stop asking for documents or information from the Executive Director. If you are confused about that, you should seek the guidance of the Housing Authority attorney or HUD. That being said, I absolutely will NOT stop asking for documents or information, and my expectation is that I receive every single document I ask for in a timely manner.

Further, I'm dumbfounded that you have given the Executive Director of a public agency the sense that she doesn't have to do her job. I think the taxpayers of this community would share my dismay.

We can discuss further in our meeting tonight.

Crystle

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**From:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 19, 2025 12:41 PM  
**To:** Crystle Stidham <[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)>  
**Cc:** Tina Tate <[t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)>; Peter J. Cavan <[peter@cavan.us](mailto:peter@cavan.us)>; Luis Reyna <[lui.reyna95@gmail.com](mailto:lui.reyna95@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week  
**Importance:** High

Good afternoon Crystle,

It was decided in strategic planning at the retreat, as one of the strategic goals under "successful board governance," that requests be made at our board meetings through the agenda, and that agenda items and requests be sent to the executive committee at least two weeks prior to our board meetings. This allows for board consensus in order to determine what is appropriate for the agenda and time allotted for. Furthermore, there are other strategic goals, such as timely meetings, that board members expressed desire for that this process accounts for.

I realize your intent is to help and work collaboratively, and I appreciate that. However, requesting information days, or even hours prior to board meetings creates undo stress, unreasonable timelines, unnecessary work and in some cases disruption in the preparation for board meetings which staff work hard to prepare.

Going forward, please stop sending work requests to the Executive Director or staff independently, please follow our established and agreed upon process that are now established through strategic planning.

Additionally, I have instructed Melanie and staff not to respond to request until we have consensus on the board. I have seen first-hand the disruption and stress it causes.

I appreciate your understanding. We can discuss at our meeting.

I appreciate your understanding. We can discuss at our meeting.

Respectfully,

Daniel Valdez  
HASC Board Chair

On Feb 19, 2025, at 8:34 AM, Crystle Stidham  
<[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)> wrote:

Good Morning, Melanie,

I'm sure you've been busy the last few days, so putting this at the top of your email again. I do want to document that this is my third request for your employees' salary schedule and second request for the org chart.

Also, please provide the Board minutes where the Commissioners approved the position you have posted on the Prothman website. I do recognize that this is a last-minute request so if your staff doesn't have time to provide that, then I will be recommending that we hold off on filling that position until we confirm that was a Board approved position and you can show that we have the funding to support the position long-term. This is another example of why we should be putting our agendas and minutes on our website.

Did we go out to bid for the recruiting firm? If so, I don't recall seeing it on our website.

Lastly, please provide the contact information for the attorney(s) that represent the HA.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Looking forward to our meeting this evening.

Best,

C

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**From:** Crystle Stidham  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2025 9:27 AM  
**To:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Cc:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week  
**Importance:** High

Good Morning, Melanie,

I'm putting this request at the top of your email since you were out last week. I am also requesting a current org chart.

As a Board Commissioner, it is well within my purview to request any information related to the HASC. As the ED who reports to the Board, it is your responsibility to provide any information requested by **any** Board Commissioner. Since lack of transparency has been identified as an opportunity for improvement within the organization, I'm certain that my request will be handled with a sense of urgency. Please provide this information before the Board meeting tomorrow.

Hope you are feeling better.

Looking forward to the meeting tomorrow.

Respectfully,

Crystle

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**From:** Crystle Stidham <[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 12, 2025 5:50 AM  
**To:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Cc:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Good Morning, Melanie,

To follow up on this email, I am still requesting a salary schedule for your employees. Please provide that by the end of the week.

Thanks,

C

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

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**From:** Crystle Stidham  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 4:46:43 PM  
**To:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Cc:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Melanie,

Thank you for providing the salary information. I respectfully disagree that staff salaries fall outside the Board's purview, particularly when we are being asked to approve the agency's budget. The Board's responsibilities include safeguarding the agency's assets, ensuring effective controls, overseeing prudent resource allocation, maintaining compliance with legal and ethical standards, and ensuring financial sustainability. It is unreasonable to suggest that any aspect of the budget is beyond the Board's oversight.

I have only abstained from voting on budget and financial matters because, despite repeated requests for a comprehensive understanding of our revenues and expenses, transparency has been lacking. At our September meeting, the Board was presented with a one-page spreadsheet containing minimal detail and was expected to approve a multi-million-dollar budget without

sufficient explanation or context. Frankly, I would have been embarrassed to present such limited information to my own Board and request their approval.

Furthermore, I want to remind you that as Executive Director, you report to the Board of Directors. It is the Board's responsibility to provide oversight and governance to ensure the agency operates effectively, ethically, and in alignment with its mission. Dismissing the Board's role in financial oversight undermines this fundamental structure and is unacceptable.

While I recognize your efforts to meet expectations, the claim that all Board requests have been fulfilled is inaccurate. I agree that we must continue the work initiated during the strategic Board retreat, which includes enhancing transparency and providing the Board with a clearer understanding of the laws, processes, procedures, and funding mechanisms of the housing authority.

That said, my goal is to work collaboratively with you to ensure we fulfill the agency's mission and continue serving our community effectively. I believe that by improving transparency, strengthening communication, and fostering a cooperative approach, we can work together to achieve long-term success for the agency and those who rely on us.

Looking forward to our meeting tomorrow.

Best,

C

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**From:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 2:24 PM  
**To:** Crystle Stidham <[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)>  
**Cc:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>; Luis Reyna <[lui.reyna95@gmail.com](mailto:lui.reyna95@gmail.com)>; Peter J. Cavan <[peterjcavan@gmail.com](mailto:peterjcavan@gmail.com)>; 't.tate@skagithabitat.com' <[t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Good afternoon Crystle and Commissioners,

As important as this matter is to me personally, it would not be fair to staff to add work at such a late date, nor would it be respectful of the full board, which decided to follow procedures to create better governance. It is important to continue the great work the Board began at the Strategic Planning Retreat - leading as a team and not back-tracking into past patterns.

You have abstained from voting on several matters in the past few months, and we had hoped the Retreat would have helped build a comfort level with the HASC's processes, clean/balanced finances, and demonstrated successes, to enable you to make decisions.

The matter of staff salaries is a management task at the staff level. The only salary within the Board's purview is that of the Executive Director. This is contemplated in the By-laws and has been clarified in attorney's trainings, and past Board meetings. The Board approves the budget annually in September. The budget includes all staff salaries, which to date have not exceeded budgets the Boards have approved. This is proper governance.

If it helps to know details, the following is shared:

HASC adjusts entry level wages to remain 11% above minimum wage.

Currently, entry wages at HASC is \$10.10. Front-line staff (general specialists and

Currently entry wage at HASO is \$18.10. Front line staff (rental specialists and maintenance personnel) earn between \$18.10 and \$24/hour. Mid-level staff (coordinators & assistance managers & certified staff) earn from \$24 to approximately \$30/hour. Managers start at \$67,724.80/year, due to L&I setting minimum wages for exempt staff. (currently facing legal challenges.) The Development Director position was posted at \$102,000. The Finance Director was promoted to \$140,000 as a Senior Finance Director, in line with her experience, education, and the CBIZ study I provided.

My salary has been in discussion since October, the start of the fiscal year/my anniversary. To date, I have provided all requested items and met all Board requests, including planning/executing the Strategic Planning processes and Retreat, updating the website, addressing all County issues (including holding multiple outreach events and starting a Resident Advisory Board – which was not required by HUD. Ultimately HUD's Regional Administrator felt compelled to resolve County matters himself in person last November.) These extra projects were completed, while I maintained all the other requirements for all programs, and succeeded in applying for new funding for more development.

To delay my increase another month would simply be raising the bar again, after I have met all previous requests.

I respectfully request that the Board continue the great work it began at the Retreat - operating as a team, addressing 30,000 foot level matters in open public meetings, and taking action more timely. There were several missed opportunities last year, as some Board members focused on management instead of governance matters. There are many more matters to bring to the Board regarding the established goals – especially new programs and projects, and we cannot progress if action items continue to take up time at ongoing meetings. It is time for the Board to decide what my work is worth and if the compensation is reasonable in light of work expectations and industry standards and to move on from this topic. I don't intend to bring it back up in March. Board members have asked for meetings to be more timely, and so we need to stick to the Agendas and move on the next month to new matters. And I personally would like this agency to make more sustained progress and to increase its impact towards many more housing options than are currently contemplated.

This email is long, because there have been several discussions going on separately, and it is important for all Board members to know. But going forward, please hold discussions as a group, at the regular meetings. I am uncomfortable continuing email conversations, as this potentially runs contrary to the Open Public Meetings Act. The Board needs to engage in discussions/action in open public meetings – tomorrow being the next opportunity.

Thank you so much. Looking forward to seeing all of you tomorrow,

Melanie Corey  
Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington WA, 98233  
360.438.1050 Ext. 212

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**From:** Crystle Stidham <[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 10:41 AM  
**To:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Cc:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Thanks Melanie. I think it's critical for the Board to have the salary schedule for all employees prior to recommending a salary increase for the Executive Director. If we don't have that information for the February meeting, I'm going to recommend that we move the ED salary increase discussion to the March meeting.

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**From:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:40 AM  
**To:** Crystle Stidham <[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)>  
**Cc:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Good morning,

Thank you for confirming receipt of the board reports and that you have reviewed them. This is one of the goals brought forth in Strategic Planning, so thanks for remembering that.

In alignment with another Strategic Planning goal (potential agenda items to be submitted to the executive committee two weeks prior to the next Board meeting), I will forward this to the executive committee for review to see if they want to include it in the agenda/discussion for March.

Best wishes for a great week!

Melanie Corey  
Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington WA, 98233  
360-428-1959 Ext. 212

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**From:** Crystle Stidham <[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 9, 2025 7:38 PM  
**To:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Good Evening, Melanie,

I just finished reviewing the Board packet for our next meeting and I have a question. I see that you are reporting that your Director has received a raise that exceeds your salary (see the screenshot below). Prior to the next BoD meeting, can you please send the Board a copy of the salary schedule for all HASC employees.

## General Administrative Updates

**\*In Administration/Finance, staff are working on audits. Illness is still hampering this team. The Director has been promoted, with a salary that exceeds the Executive Director's salary.**

Thanks,

Crystle

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**From:** Melanie Corey <[mcorey@skagitcountyha.org](mailto:mcorey@skagitcountyha.org)>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 7, 2025 4:32 PM  
**To:** Daniel Valdez <[dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)>; 't.tate@skagithabitat.com' <[t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)>; Luis Reyna <[lui.reyna95@gmail.com](mailto:lui.reyna95@gmail.com)>; Peter J. Cavan <[peterjcavan@gmail.com](mailto:peterjcavan@gmail.com)>; Crystle Stidham <[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Board Reports for next week

Good afternoon Commissioners,

Attached are the reports for next week. It is a full agenda. As we are still working through strategic planning, I have not included departmental reports. Sufficient time is needed for the continuing work on strategic planning, per Anthony's recommendations. One of the goals under Successful Board Governance related to meetings being more streamlined and timely, so we are trying to facilitate the goal of shorter meetings.

The consultant has provided the DRAFT Planning Document and a DRAFT One-Page Summary. Please do not forward these. The consultant recommends discussion at the February meeting to draft the external summary to be posted to the website and a second summary to be drafted for particular stakeholders.

The employee evaluation should also not be forwarded externally. It is a confidential form, which contains personnel information.

Please email me directly that you have received this packet. (This is one of the proposed communication/transparency goals from our recent strategic planning work.)


We are already making progress on our strategic plan, and staff look forward to continued teamwork with the Board!

Best wishes for a great weekend!

Melanie Corey  
Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington WA, 98233  
360-428-1959 Ext. 212

**WARNING EXTERNAL EMAIL:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Be vigilant in making sure this email is legitimate.



**From:** Crystle Stidham cstidham@skagittransit.org   
**Subject:** RE: [EXTERNAL]Re: Board Governance Concerns

**Date:** March 3, 2025 at 4:18 PM

**To:** Daniel Valdez daniel@fuerzalabor.com

**Cc:** Tina Tate t.tate@skagithabitat.com, Luis Reyna lui.reyna95@gmail.com, Peter J. Cavan peterjcavan@gmail.com, Melanie Corey mcorey@skagitcountyha.org



Good Morning, Daniel,

Thank you for your response. I think you missed my point about the County's authority, but we can discuss in the next Board meeting.

From your email below, am I to understand that you do not want to put Board Governance on the next agenda? Am I also to understand that the documents that I have requested are not going to be provided? For your convenience, I have provided the list again here:

- Salary schedule for all employees (requested February 9<sup>th</sup>, February 11<sup>th</sup>, February 12<sup>th</sup>, February 18<sup>th</sup>, and February 19<sup>th</sup>)
- Current org chart (requested February 18<sup>th</sup>, February 19<sup>th</sup> and February 21<sup>st</sup>)
- Minutes where the Housing Development Director position was approved by the Commissioners (requested this information February 19<sup>th</sup> and February 21<sup>st</sup>)
  - Did we follow the Procurement Policy when selecting Prothman, e.g., competitive proposal (requested this information February 19<sup>th</sup> and February 21<sup>st</sup>)
- Please provide the contact information for the HASC attorney. (requested this information February 19<sup>th</sup> and February 21<sup>st</sup>)

I would also like copies of any reports or routine filings the HA provides HUD in connection with the voucher program.

I am asking for these documents more than two weeks in advance of our next Board meeting, and have now asked multiple times for most of these documents.

I want to remind my colleagues about the importance of transparency for all public agencies. Transparency in a Housing Authority is essential to building trust with the community, ensuring accountability, and promoting fair and equitable housing practices. Open communication about policies, funding, and decision-making processes allows the Board and stakeholders to understand how resources are allocated and ensures that housing programs operate efficiently and ethically. Transparency also helps prevent fraud, discrimination, and mismanagement while fostering public confidence that the Housing Authority is working in the best interest of the community it serves.

If you and/or our Executive Director disagree on the importance of transparency for this publicly funded agency, please help me understand why.

Looking forward to your response.

Best,

C

**From:** Daniel Valdez <daniel@fuerzalabor.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 3, 2025 9:17 AM  
**To:** Crystle Stidham <cstidham@skagittransit.org>  
**Cc:** Tina Tate <t.tate@skagithabitat.com>; Luis Reyna <lui.reyna95@gmail.com>; Peter J. Cavan <peterjcavan@gmail.com>; Melanie Corey <mcorey@skagitcountyha.org>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL]Re: Board Governance Concerns

Good morning Crystle,

It seems that your questions and interpretations of Housing Authority laws and policies stem from the belief that Housing Authority of Skagit County (HASC) is under the jurisdiction of Skagit County. I have heard you bring this up many times during our board meetings. This is not accurate. As one example, attached you'll find a letter from Skagit County Commissioners acknowledging that HASC is an independent entity and that the county has limited influence over the organization, which is limited to appointing board members and once a year confirming the PHA plan.

Additionally, in early 2023, HASC's attorney, CSD Law informed the board that HASC is an independent entity. No local jurisdiction, or federal agency, can direct HASC's allocation of Project Based Vouchers (PBVs). Skagit County does not have day-to-day authority over HASC decisions. Perhaps it would be helpful to invite the attorney to meet again with the entire board.

The board made great progress during our Strategic Planning retreat and jointly agreed to implementing strategic goals of the agency. We need to work within the framework of consensus and focus our attention and resources on meeting these strategic goals. The board decided that one of the strategic goals is "Successful Board Governance" and decided to direct the executive committee to meet monthly to review board proposed agenda items and topics. The executive committee will decide what items/topics will be added to the agenda, in keeping with strategic planning goals and the "3 year One Destination Vision". This helps facilitate more timely meetings, keeps staff focused on primary goals, and protects them from non-essential work and projects, and last but not least, keeps the board focused on the high level and broad focus of Board Governance.

The questions you bring up have been discussed several times before. The board monitors management practices by reviewing agency policies and approving changes to policies as needed. The board monitors financial practices by reviewing and approving financial statements and checks/expense monthly and by reviewing/accepting annual third-party audits. Staffing wages are approved by the board through the annual budget. The board does not enter into day-to-day decisions related to staffing augmentation and wages. The board has asked the Executive Director (ED) to hire an assistant several times in meetings and flagged this as high priority in Strategic Planning in order to meet 2028 goals. For these reasons, it is not clear to me why you disagree with rest of the board's decision.

If you would like to propose that HASC invest funds in the NAHRO Handbooks

If you would like to propose that I take my comments in the Public Hearings, we can discuss that with the Executive Committee as a potential Board expense.

All this being said, I am hopeful, as a board we can ride the momentum we created during Strategic Planning, focus on the goals we created as a board, and support the Executive Director in order to successfully implement the goals and meet our marks we set for 2028.

I appreciate your support. We can discuss further at our board meeting, so the rest of the board can contribute to the conversation and decision making.

Respectfully,

Daniel Valdez

HASC Board Chair

WARNING EXTERNAL EMAIL: This email originated from outside of the organization. Be vigilant in making sure this email is legitimate.

On Feb 22, 2025, at 9:16 PM, Crystle Stidham  
<[cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)> wrote:

Good Evening, Daniel and Melanie,

I apologize in advance for this email being a bit lengthy, but please read it in its entirety as I would like Board Governance to be added to the agenda for the next Board meeting. **Please consider this my request for this topic to be added to the agenda.** I will pull the major talking points into a document and send it to you prior to the meeting so that it can be included in the next Board packet.

I was appointed to the HASC Board of Directors in December of 2022, and I take this role very seriously. I have taken the online training that was provided by the County and administered through HUD. This training highlights the importance of the Board's oversight and governance which includes reviewing management practices, financial decisions, and program implementation. This includes ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, as well as internal policies. Not only is it our duty, but we owe it to our stakeholders to ensure that public funds are used efficiently and that housing programs serve the community effectively with the utmost transparency and accountability.

After reviewing the Board of Commissioners packet that was provided by staff last Wednesday, I have a few comments and questions:

**By-Laws of the Housing Authority of Skagit County**

**Narrative:**

- Section 4 – The Secretary shall be the Executive Director of the Authority and, as such, shall have general supervision over the administration of its business and affairs, subject to the direction of the Authority (the Board). The compensation of the Secretary (Executive Director) shall be set by the Authority.
- Section 8 – Additional Personnel – The Authority may from time to time employ such personnel as it deems necessary to exercise its powers, duties and functions as prescribed by the Housing Authorities Law, as amended, and all other laws of the State of Washington applicable thereto. The selection and compensation of such personnel (including the Secretary/ED) shall be determined by the Authority subject to the laws of the State of Washington.

**Question:**

- My interpretation of the language above is that the governing body of the Housing Authority of Skagit County—the group of Commissioners—is responsible for hiring and setting compensation for the Executive Director *and* new personnel. Is that your understanding of this language?

**Commissioner Job Description**

**Narrative:**

- The Purpose of the Position outlines the HA Board composition and the statute that grants the County the authority to appoint and remove Commissioners to/from the HA Board. RCW 35.82.070 permits the County Commissioners to remove a HA Commissioners from their position for inefficiency or neglect of duty or misconduct in office.

**Question:**

- My interpretation of this language is that while the HASC doesn't directly report to the County Commissioners, they do in effect have the authority to remove any of the HA Commissioners if they deem that we are inefficient, negligent of duty, or misconduct. Can we agree that the HA Commissioners in some sense do report to the County Commissioners?

**Narrative:**

- The Purpose of the Position also states that **“an individual commissioner has no independent power, and may not make decisions or take action independently, but instead acts as a member of the Board and shares in the Board’s collective responsibility for HASC and its activities.”**

**Question:**

- I think this is pretty self-explanatory. Would you disagree?

**Narrative:**

The HASC Board's responsibilities include the following:

- Set and monitor the HASC's strategic measures and performance measures;
- hire an executive director; direct, support, and evaluate his or her performance; and replace him or her as appropriate;
- approve and review HASC's budgets and expenditures and **ensure proper financial oversight of the Authority;**
- approve those HASC operational decisions and activities that, pursuant to applicable law and HASC policies, fall within the Board's scope of decision making;
- conduct its business in conformance with HASC Board by-laws and other applicable law, including the Code of Ethics for Municipal Officers, Ch. 42.23 and the Open Public Meetings Act, Chap. 42.30 RCW.

**Question:**

- It is the responsibility of the entire HA Board to fulfill the responsibilities listed above, to include ensuring proper financial oversight of the Authority. Do you disagree with that or how it should be carried out?

**Narrative:**

The HASC Board's duties include the following:

- advance the interests of the Housing Authority of Skagit County, its work, its mission and its values;
- adhere to high ethical standards, including but not limited to those set forth in HASC's policy on ethics and conflicts of interest; RCW 35.82.050, RCW 42.17A.555 and Ch. 42.23 RCW; and the doctrine of incompatible offices;
- participate regularly and attentively in Board meetings and committee meetings and other activities as the Board may assign;
- participate constructively in Board and committee deliberations;
- **ask questions and seek information so his or her decisions are adequately informed;**
- help the Board make decisions within the processes set forth in the Board's By-laws and applicable law;
- **understand that the Board makes decisions only as a Board convening pursuant to its Bv-Laws and applicable law: no**

**individual commissioner may make a decision or take action binding on the Board or HASC.**

**Question:**

- It is the duty of the entire HA Board to fulfill the responsibilities listed above, to include asking questions and seeking information so that decisions are adequately informed? It is also made clear that the Board makes decisions collectively (or by majority) and that no individual Commissioner has the sole authority to made decisions on behalf of the entire Board. Do you disagree with that or how it should be carried out?

**Employee Handbook**

**Narrative:**

- Recruitment and Selection – STAFFING - The number of staff employees will be held to the minimum necessary to ensure efficient operations and will be based on current budgets approved by the Board. **The establishment of new positions requires the recommendation of the Executive Director and the approval of the Board.**

**Question:**

- I think this is pretty self-explanatory. I ask again, was the new Housing Development Director position approved by the Board?

**Narrative:**

- On the Job – Performance Evaluations - Employees will generally receive a performance evaluation annually from their date of hire. More frequent performance evaluations, either verbal or written, may be conducted in HASC's sole discretion. The performance evaluation allows the employee and HASC to discuss the employee's overall performance, strengths, and point out ways to improve performance. Performance evaluations are part of an employee's Personnel File. An unsatisfactory review indicates employment may not continue unless performance improves and depending upon the circumstances, may result in immediate discharge. Participation by the employee being reviewed is essential. The employee's signature acknowledges having discussed and received the evaluation, not agreement with it.

**Question:**

- I don't believe the Executive Director has been receiving regular performance evaluations annually. The Board was told that old performance evaluations were discarded because there was no need to

keep them. The policy dictates that a performance evaluation should remain in an employee's Personnel File. Do we have all of the Executive Director's performance evaluations in her personnel file?

In reading the handbook, it looks like the Executive Director receives 160 hours of vacation per year and about 104 hours of sick leave per year. Does the ED have a separate employment contract? If so, can this be distributed to the Commissioners please?

It appears that we may have some opportunities to improve our internal controls to ensure that we are being compliant.

Lastly, I would like a copy of the National Association of Housing Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) Handbook for Commissioners to be provided to all HASC Commissioners. I tried to order it from the NAHRO website, but this is a cost that should be incurred by the HA.

Thank you in advance for taking my questions and concerns seriously.

Respectfully,

**Crystle Stidham | Chief Executive Officer**

**Skagit Transit**

600 County Shop Lane

Burlington WA 98233

Desk: 360-757-9155







## **Exhibit B**

### **By-Laws of the Housing Authority of Skagit County (adopted October 31, 1979; amended November 1, 1984; amended May 8, 2019)**

#### **Article I – The Authority**

Section 1. Name of Authority. The name of the Authority shall be “Housing Authority of Skagit County.”

Section 2. Seal of Authority. The seal of the Authority shall be in the form of a circle and shall bear the name of the Authority and the year of its organization.

Section 3. Office of Authority. The office of the Authority shall be at such place in the County of Skagit, Washington, as the Authority may from time to time designate by resolution.

#### **Article II – Officers**

Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Authority shall be a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary who shall be Executive Director.

Section 2. Chairperson. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Authority. Except as otherwise authorized by resolution of the Authority, the Chairperson shall sign all contracts, deeds and other instruments made by the Authority. At each meeting, the Chairperson shall submit such recommendations and information as s/he may consider proper concerning the business, affairs and policies of the Authority.

Section 3. Vice-Chairperson. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in the absence or incapacity of the Chairperson; and in case of the resignation or death of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall perform such duties as are imposed on the Chairperson until such time as the Authority shall select a new Chairperson.

Section 4. Secretary. The Secretary shall be the Executive Director of the Authority and, as such, shall have general supervision over the administration of its business and affairs, subject to the direction of the Authority. S/He shall be charged with the management of the housing projects of the Authority.

The Secretary shall keep the records of the Authority, shall act as secretary of the meetings of the Authority and shall record all votes, and shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Authority in a journal of proceedings to be kept for such purpose, and shall perform all duties incident to his/her office. S/He shall keep in safe custody the seal of the Authority and shall have power to affix such seal to all contracts and instruments authorized to be executed by the Authority.

S/He shall have the care and custody of all funds of the Authority and shall deposit the same in the name of the Authority in such bank or banks as the Authority may select. S/He shall sign all orders and checks for the payment of money and shall pay out and disburse such moneys under the direction of the Authority. Except as otherwise authorized by resolution of the Authority, all such orders and checks shall be countersigned by the Chairperson. S/He shall keep regular books of accounts showing receipts and expenditures and shall render to the Authority, at each regular meeting (or oftener when requested), an account of his/her transactions and also of the financial condition of the Authority. S/He shall give such bond for the faithful performance of his/her duties as the Authority may determine.

The compensation of the Secretary shall be determined by the Authority, provided that a temporary appointee selected from among the Commissioners of the Authority shall serve without compensation (other than the payment of necessary expense).

Section 5. Additional Duties. The officer of the Authority shall perform such other duties and functions as may from time to time be required by the Authority or the by-laws or rules and regulations of the Authority.

Section 6. Election or Appointment. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Authority from among the Commissioners of the Authority, and shall hold office for one year or until their successors are elected and qualified; except that the first Chairperson who is designated by the Board of Skagit County Commissioners, shall hold office as Chairperson until the expiration of his/her term as Commissioner.

The Secretary shall be appointed by the Authority. Any person appointed to fill the office of Secretary, or any vacancy therein, shall have such term as the Authority fixes, but no Commissioner of the Authority shall be eligible to this office except as a temporary appointee.

Section 7. Vacancies. Should the offices of Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson become vacant, the Authority shall elect a successor from its membership at the next regular meeting, and such election shall be for the unexpired term of said office. When the office of Secretary becomes vacant, the Authority shall appoint a successor, as provided in Section 6 of this Article.

Section 8. Additional Personnel. The Authority may from time to time employ such personnel as it deems necessary to exercise its powers, duties and functions as prescribed by the Housing Authorities Law, as amended, and all other laws of the State of Washington applicable thereto. The selection and compensation of such personnel (including the Secretary) shall be determined by the Authority subject to the laws of the State of Washington.

### Article III – Meetings

Section 1. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the Authority shall be held on the second Wednesday of November at 5:00 o'clock P.M. at the regular meeting place of the Authority, or on another date in November as established by the Board of Commissioners by majority vote at a previous meeting. In the event such date shall fall on a Sunday or a legal holiday, the annual meeting shall be held on the next succeeding business day.

Section 2. Regular Meeting. Regular meetings shall be held without notice at such time and place as may from time to time be determined by resolution of the Authority. In the event a day of regular meeting shall be a legal holiday, said meeting shall be held on the next succeeding business day.

Section 3. Special Meetings. The Chairperson of the Authority may, when he/she deems it expedient, and shall, upon the written request of two Commissioners of the Authority, call a special meeting of the Authority for the purpose of transacting any business designated in the call. The call for a special meeting may be delivered to each Commissioner of the Authority or may be mailed to the business or home address of each Commissioner of the Authority at least two days prior to the date of such special meeting. At such special meeting, no business shall be conducted other than as designated in the call, but if all the Commissioners of the Authority are present at a special meeting, any and all business may be transacted at such special meeting.

Section 4. Quorum. The powers of the Authority shall be vested in the Commissioners thereof in office from time to time. Three Commissioners shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting its

business and exercising its powers and for all other purposes, but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained. When a quorum is in attendance, action may be taken by the Authority upon a vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

Section 5. Order of Business. At the regular meetings of the Authority, the following shall be the order of business:

1. Roll call.
2. Reading of the previous meeting's minutes.
3. Bills and communications.
4. Report of the Secretary.
5. Reports of Committees.
6. Unfinished business.
7. New business.
  - Consent Agenda: Approval of previous meeting's minutes & previous month's expenses
8. Adjournment.

All resolutions shall be in writing and shall be copied in a journal of the proceedings of the Authority.

Section 6. Manner of Voting. The voting on all questions coming before the Authority shall be by roll call, and the ayes and noes shall be entered upon the minutes of the meeting, except on the election of officers which may be by ballot.

#### Article IV – Amendments

Amendments to By-laws. The by-laws of the Authority shall be amended only with the approval of at least three of the Commissioners of the Authority at a regular or special meeting.



## Exhibit C



# Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

**TO:** Housing Authority of Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
Chair Bruce Lisser  
Kati Collins  
Nikki Turner

**DATE:** December 28, 2022

**FROM:** Skagit County Commission Chair Peter Browning

**RE:** Our Upcoming Joint Work Session – January 11, 2023

**CC:** Commissioner Lisa Janicki  
Commissioner Ron Wesen  
Skagit County Administrator Trisha Logue  
Deputy County Administrator Jennifer Johnson  
HASC Executive Director Melanie Corey

---

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us in a joint work session January 11<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm in the Commissioners Hearing Room. With this memo we want to provide you with some background and context for our Board's renewed interest in deepening our collaboration with Housing Authority of Skagit County and set the stage for what we hope will be a generative and productive discussion.

### Background on North Star

As you know, earlier this year we launched the North Star project in partnership with the mayors of Anacortes, Burlington, Mt. Vernon, and Sedro Woolley. The impetus was our individual and collective recognition that increasing numbers of Skagitonians are suffering the effects of housing insecurity and untreated behavioral health disorders. Existing programs and methods for keeping people safe and stably housed are no longer working. We are compelled to act now, and we view the challenge as requiring significant changes to the underlying systems – including those operated by Skagit County – that provide a safety net for our lowest income residents.

North Star represents that systems change opportunity. It is a multi-phased, whole-of-government effort to address homelessness and behavioral health challenges Skagitonians are experiencing. [This page on the County's site](#) contains several of the founding documents, charters, and so forth. We encourage you to spend some time in particular on the [Guiding Principles](#) and the [Advisory Group Charter](#) to get a flavor of our aspirations, participants, and approach. North Star was informed by dozens of interviews with subject matter experts, including with your Executive Director Corey.

### Our Meeting Objectives

Within the North Star context, we see HASC as a key player. You are charged with stewarding this county's most valuable permanent housing resources for low-income people through your administration of the Housing Choice (and other specialty) Voucher program(s). We recognize the difficult choices you must make to keep these HUD-funded and -regulated vouchers effectively deployed. You also have demonstrated

a strong commitment to housing farmworkers and their families through your recent non-HUD housing developments.

Accordingly, we hope to discuss with you our hopes and expectations for HASC's participation in the collaborative exploration and problem-solving that will take place with North Star in 2023. Among our areas of interest are the following:

1. What will be required to lease greater numbers of authorized vouchers, including the Emergency Housing Vouchers.
2. What would be involved with bringing more vouchers to Skagit County.
3. We will formally ask you to reconsider the decision you have made regarding project-basing of vouchers for Martha's Place and other permanent supportive housing projects that may come forward.
4. The status of the Walter Street house donated to HASC by the County and creative ways to expedite readying it for occupancy by a needy family in our community.
5. The appointments of new HASC Commissioners we have made, and why we have refreshed our approach with the current vacancies.
6. The benefits of having a Housing Authority of Skagit County Board Commissioner join the Advisory Group to represent HASC.
7. Any other policy or programmatic asks you may have of us as the BOCC.

Inherent in these matters is our desire to see greater transparency, coordination, and alignment between the County and HASC. We appreciate that overseeing a small housing authority is complex and challenging, and we certainly don't feel a need to acquire the same level of expertise that you hold on these matters. Our time will best be spent discussing the policy and budget levers you as the governing body have to set HASC's priorities and programmatic direction. Naturally we hope to hear how the County can be a more effective partner in support of your operations.

Again, we thank you for your service to the community, and for taking time early in the year to deliberate with us about ways to lessen the burdens of homelessness within our jurisdiction. We have asked Deputy County Administrator Jennifer Johnson to work with Melanie Corey to draft an agenda consistent with the themes noted here.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Peter Browning, Chair

  
Ron Wesen, Commissioner

  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner



## Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District



January 19, 2023

Commissioners  
Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington, WA 98233

Via email:

Bruce Lisser, Chair - [bruce@lisser.com](mailto:bruce@lisser.com)  
Kati Collins, Vice Chair - [Kati.Collins@bannerbank.com](mailto:Kati.Collins@bannerbank.com)  
Nikki Turner, Commissioner - [Nikki.aya.turner@gmail.com](mailto:Nikki.aya.turner@gmail.com)

Tina Tate, Commissioner - [t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)  
Daniel Valdez, Commissioner - [daniel@fuerzalabor.com](mailto:daniel@fuerzalabor.com)  
Cori Peck, Commissioner Elect - [Cori.peck@secretharbor.org](mailto:Cori.peck@secretharbor.org)

RE: Follow-up from January 11 Work Session

Dear HASC Chair Lisser and Commissioners,

This letter will serve as a follow-up to our joint meeting last week.

At the meeting, we requested that the Housing Authority of Skagit County (HASC) strives to be more accountable and transparent with the Board of County Commissioners and the community at large given HASC's status as a public agency and as a critical component in addressing housing needs in Skagit County. This includes insuring compliance with Open Public Meetings requirements, as well as all local, state and federal requirements applicable to HASC's business and program requirements. The spirit of these regulations, of course, is transparency and access, including for non-English speakers and people with disabilities, so that members of the public have insight into the ways in which you are administering scarce public resources and reasonable opportunities to provide comments for your consideration.

To that end, we asked Tenfold Health to conduct a cursory review of HASC's general transparency. Their findings suggest that improvements can, and should, be made to ensure full compliance with both the letter and the spirit of relevant state and federal law.

We appreciated the presence of Latino families at the joint meeting. However, it was concerning that after the meeting some of those attending posed questions to county staff on process for signing up for housing. This was concerning because it was apparent that those asking questions at the meeting did not have appropriate information as to the purpose of the meeting, nor how to navigate access to housing which is one of the critical pieces of information the Housing Authority needs to communicate to the public to be effective and transparent. It is our expectation that people in need of housing must have clarity about your activities and opportunities to gain access to housing and provide input.

On a related note, in reviewing the information available for the joint meeting, we ask that for your meetings going forward you provide additional public notice and information concerning your meetings including meeting agenda, necessary background and reference material information, any applicable financial information, and an invitation for the public to provide comments or testimony, so that the public can be better informed. That includes ensuring that meeting notices are properly noted and advertised as required by law.

Along those same lines, we see significant opportunity for you to improve your website and increase transparency and better communicate important information. Such opportunities for improvement include additional information on current and past meeting agendas, meeting minutes, specific program information, HASC financial information, who serves on the Board, including contact information, and how the public can participate in or attend your meetings. In terms of meeting participation, it is especially important that there is information on how non-English speakers, or those with disabilities, can participate or access translation to information and other requirements to ensure ADA compliance.

We also were concerned looking at your website that your HUD 5-year and Annual Plans are not fully displayed, contrary to HUD's requirements:

*Availability of Information. In addition to the items listed in this form, PHAs must have the elements listed below readily available to the public. A PHA must identify the specific location(s) where the proposed PHA Plan, PHA Plan Elements, and all information relevant to the public hearing and proposed PHA Plan are available for inspection by the public. Additionally, the PHA must provide information on how the public may reasonably obtain additional information on the PHA policies contained in the standard Annual Plan but excluded from their streamlined submissions. At a minimum, PHAs must post PHA Plans, including updates, at each Asset Management Project (AMP) and main office or central office of the PHA. PHAs are strongly encouraged to post complete PHA Plans on their official websites. PHAs are also encouraged to provide each resident council a copy of their PHA Plans.*

*(Housing Agency Plan requirements 42 U.S. Code § 1437c-1 I(5))*

We ask that you also review the information that is currently on your website and letterhead to ensure that you are accurately describing services and program details. Specifically, we noted that your letterhead indicates HASC is a provider of Elderly and Family Housing, when clearly your federal vouchers are not restricted to those two populations.

Contrary to your assertion that a voucher-only Public Housing Authority is not required to establish a Resident Advisory Board (RAB), our consultant's reading of CFR 964.3(e) is that you are, in fact, required to establish a RAB. (42 U.S. Code § 1437c-1, C(2)A)

Lastly, we note that HUD's requirement in CFR Section 903.15 for a "certification by the appropriate State or local officials (i.e., the BOCC) that the Annual Plan is consistent with the Consolidated Plan and include a description of the manner in which the applicable plan contents are consistent with the Consolidated Plans" as part of your annual and 5-year plans. For the coming planning year, we look forward to seeing the ways in which HASC intends to align its policies and programs with those of the County. Our Board's willingness to execute a certificate of consistency will be dependent on this alignment.

We offer this review and the examples in hopes that HASC will take steps to improve overall transparency through its website and general practices. As noted during the meeting, Skagit County is prepared to offer funding for you to access technical assistance for these, and other, matters.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ron Wesen, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Browning, Commissioner



**Linda Hammons**

---

**From:** Commissioners  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 19, 2023 3:46 PM  
**To:** Melanie Corey (mcorey@skagitcounty.org)  
**Cc:** Jennifer Johnson  
**Subject:** FW: Follow-Up from January 11, 2023 Work Session  
**Attachments:** 01-19-2023 - Ltr to HASC Follow-Up from January 11 Work Session.pdf

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a follow-up letter that was sent to the Housing Authority of Skagit County Board of Commissioners today regarding the joint Housing Authority meeting that was held on January 11<sup>th</sup>. We greatly appreciate your time and commitment to Skagit County residents and look forward to working with you. For questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jennifer Johnson, Deputy Administrator, at [jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us).

Sincerely,

Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
Chair Ron Wesen  
Commissioner Lisa Janicki  
Commissioner Peter Browning

Skagit County Commissioners' Administrative Building  
1800 Continental Place, Suite 100 | Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
Commissioners' Office 360.416.1300 | E-mail: [commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us)  
Board of County Commissioners' Website: [www.skagitcounty.net/countycommissioners](http://www.skagitcounty.net/countycommissioners)

## Linda Hammons

---

**From:** Commissioners  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 19, 2023 2:28 PM  
**To:** 'bruce@lisser.com'; 'Kati.Collins@bannerbank.com'; 'Nikki.aya.turner@gmail.com'; 't.tate@skagithabitat.com'; 'daniel@fuerzalabor.com'; 'Cori.peck@secretharbor.org'  
**Subject:** Follow-Up from January 11, 2023 Work Session  
**Attachments:** 01-19-2023 - Ltr to HASC Follow-Up from January 11 Work Session.pdf

Good afternoon,

Please find attached a follow-up letter to the joint Housing Authority meeting that was held on January 11<sup>th</sup>. We greatly appreciate your time and commitment to Skagit County residents and look forward to working with you. For questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jennifer Johnson, Deputy Administrator, at [jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us).

Sincerely,

Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
Chair Ron Wesen  
Commissioner Lisa Janicki  
Commissioner Peter Browning

Skagit County Commissioners' Administrative Building  
1800 Continental Place, Suite 100 | Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
Commissioners' Office 360.416.1300 | E-mail: [commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us)  
Board of County Commissioners' Website: [www.skagitcounty.net/countycommissioners](http://www.skagitcounty.net/countycommissioners)



**North Star Project**  
Skagit County, Washington  
*Thriving Together*



January 20, 2023

Commissioners  
Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington, WA 98233

Via email:

Bruce Lisser, Chair - [bruce@lisser.com](mailto:bruce@lisser.com)  
Kati Collins, Vice Chair - [Kati.Collins@bannerbank.com](mailto:Kati.Collins@bannerbank.com)  
Nikki Turner, Commissioner - [Nikki.aya.turner@gmail.com](mailto:Nikki.aya.turner@gmail.com)  
Tina Tate, Commissioner - [t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)  
Daniel Valdez, Commissioner - [daniel@fuerzalabor.com](mailto:daniel@fuerzalabor.com)  
Cori Peck, Commissioner Elect - [Cori.peck@secretharbor.org](mailto:Cori.peck@secretharbor.org)

RE: Stewardship of Vouchers

Dear HASC Chair Lisser and Commissioners,

We write today as the North Star Leadership Team and on behalf of the jurisdictions each of us were elected to lead to express our concerns about HASC's stewardship of our communities' federal rent assistance vouchers. We also wish to amplify the Board of County Commissioners' requests that you (a) project-base a significantly greater number of vouchers for the Martha's Place permanent supportive housing project; and (b) take all possible measures to immediately deploy the 31 unused Emergency Housing Vouchers.

**Emergency Housing Vouchers**

We have been assured that Skagit County Public Health senior staff are prepared to work with HASC to activate new strategies to deploy EHV, including:

- Identifying specific individuals and households who can most likely lease EHV's by tapping into an existing outreach network that's using a by-names list.
- Convening both those partners you've already contacted (Community Action, DV SAS, Anacortes Family Center) and others to expand the search for eligible households.
- Conducting outreach to area landlords to increase their receptivity to leasing to a priority household upon turnover of units.
  - This will likely involve referring voucher-holders to Martha's Place when it opens in April.
- Helping you secure and pay for the services of a qualified technical assistance provider.

Likewise, each of our cities are prepared to assist as may be helpful to these efforts.

**Project Basing**

We know that you recognize the many reasons why project-basing vouchers at Martha’s Place is a top priority for North Star, as it is for the many partners who’ve invested in the project, and for the eventual residents of the property. The County Board of Commissioners have formally asked you to work collaboratively to take steps to project-base vouchers, and we echo that request.

During her presentation on January 11, Executive Director Corey indicated that HASC currently holds a total of 85 unused specialty vouchers (VASH and Mainstream). Ms. Corey also described funding challenges that make project-basing difficult, and her perception that the VA may prefer not to refer veterans to a PSH project. It’s our hope and expectation that HASC will work collaboratively and in all due haste to engage with the VA on this matter, and otherwise free up as many vouchers for project-basing as possible. To the extent you need technical assistance from HUD to manage use of reserves and deploy other funding strategies, please take advantage of Skagit County’s offer to pay for such TA.

**Stewardship Generally**

The North Star project has highlighted the depth of need in our community for stable housing. And while we applaud the work HASC has done to develop and preserve affordable rental units, we are concerned that the agency’s management of federal vouchers, including its pattern of under-utilization which has led to low lease rates and declining funding, is failing too many low-income community members.

We have learned in recent days that – contrary to representations made at the January 11 meeting – HASC has significantly lower lease rates for critical voucher programs than your similarly situated peers. At a time when our government and non-profit partners are reexamining practices so that we can together address Skagit County’s homeless and behavioral health crises, it is imperative that HASC improve its utilization of vouchers through every means possible.

	Housing Choice Vouchers					Emergency Housing Vouchers		
	Authorized Vouchers	Leased	%	PBV	%	Total	Leased	%
Housing Authority of Skagit County	697	469	67%	8	2%	32	1	3%
Housing Authority of Bellingham/Whatcom County	1768	1626	92%	308	19%	38	32	84%
Housing Authority of Snohomish County	3915	3601	92%	451	13%	71	62	87%
Housing Authority of Thurston County	2084	1808	87%	353	20%	68	57	84%
Penninsula Housing Authority	903	756	84%	291	38%	19	8	42%
Housing Authority City of Renton	584	559	96%	216	39%	54	42	78%
Kitsap County Housing Authority	407	281	69%	60	21%	0	-	-

Source: HUD HCV Data Dashboard, last updated October 2022  
[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/programs/hcv/dashboard](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/dashboard)

EHV data current as of Jan 11 2023  
[Emergency Housing Voucher \(EHV\) Data Dashboard | HUD.gov / U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/dashboard)

During Wednesday evening’s meeting, Executive Director Corey attributed HASC’s 67% lease-up situation to rising rents, program complexity, and HUD regulations. Moreover, Ms. Corey has continuously deflected responsibility for deployment of EHV’s, citing our tight housing market, and the absence of referrals from the community partner chosen by HASC. Yet when we compare leasing in neighboring Whatcom County<sup>1</sup>, which has a rental vacancy rate nearly identical to Skagit County, we find its PHA has fared much better, which causes us to question the explanations your agency has provided. Other communities we looked at have slightly more favorable housing markets but are reporting much stronger leasing rates. All of this suggests that there is room for improvement even in the current housing market.

<sup>1</sup> <https://wcrer.be.uw.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/2022/10/Washington-Apartment-Market-Report-Fall-2022-Final.pdf>  
 Page | 2

**Representation on North Star Advisory Group**


Notwithstanding indications made by the BOCC about Ms. Corey joining the North Star Advisory Group, this leadership team is not at this time prepared to offer a seat on that body to Ms. Corey. We are open to revisiting this once some of the issues outlined above have been resolved, and in the meantime, we will look to Tina Tate – your new Commissioner – to represent the interests of HASC.

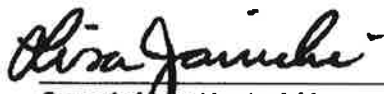
Thank you for your attention to these urgent matters. We understand that the HASC Board now includes three new commissioners and are hopeful that this leadership transition can bring renewed attention and urgency to your stewardship of your various voucher programs.


Staff from Skagit County will be in contact with Ms. Corey (if they haven't already), and we look forward to reports of renewed cooperation and collaborative problem solving.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Jill Boudreau  
City of Mount Vernon

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Peter Browning  
Skagit County

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Lisa Janicki  
Skagit County

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Julia Johnson  
City of Sedro-Woolley

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Matt Miller  
City of Anacortes

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Steve Sexton  
City of Burlington

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Commissioner Ron Wesen  
Skagit County



## Linda Hammons

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**From:** Commissioners  
**Sent:** Friday, January 20, 2023 12:22 PM  
**To:** bruce@lisser.com; Kati.Collins@bannerbank.com; Nikki.aya.turner@gmail.com; t.tate@skagithabitat.com; daniel@fuerzalabor.com; Cori.peck@secretharbor.org  
**Cc:** Melanie Corey (mcorey@skagitcounty.org); Jennifer Johnson  
**Subject:** HASC letter from North Star Leadership  
**Attachments:** 01-20-2023 - Housing Authority Letter from NS Leadership.pdf

Dear HASC Chair Lisser and Commissioners,

Please find attached a follow up letter from North Star Leadership regarding stewardship of vouchers. Thank you for your attention to these urgent matters. For questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to Jennifer Johnson, Skagit County Deputy Administrator, at [jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:jenniferj@co.skagit.wa.us).

Sincerely,

Skagit County Board of Commissioners  
Chair Ron Wesen  
Commissioner Lisa Janicki  
Commissioner Peter Browning

Skagit County Commissioners' Administrative Building  
1800 Continental Place, Suite 100 | Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
Commissioners' Office 360.416.1300 | E-mail: [commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us)  
Board of County Commissioners' Website: [www.skagitcounty.net/countycommissioners](http://www.skagitcounty.net/countycommissioners)



# Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

May 25, 2023

Melanie Corey, Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington, WA 98233

Re: Your report to the Skagit County Board of Commissioners of April 14, 2023

Dear Melanie,

Thank you for proactively providing a report on HASC's activities and challenges last month. We think that a regular written report like this would be very helpful to building the collaboration and coordination our Board seeks with you and the HASC Commission.

Going forward, we'd like your reports to focus particularly on utilization of vouchers. It is great to see that you've been able to increase your voucher pool, including more VASH, but we remain troubled that the vouchers aren't being deployed. And we think the County can help you with that.

We've been able to do some independent research and found this HUD monthly report useful:

<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiM2Y2OTQ2MTAtODVhNC00YmM2LThhOWEtZWY4MGU5YWVmZDFmIiwidCI6IjYxNTUyNGM1LTlyZTk0NGJjZC1hODkzLTExODBhNTNmYzdiMjI9&pageName=ReportSection4e575c8abb0ca2e1b6ab>

We culled some data points we're particularly interested in from last May, and the end of February, and would appreciate understanding more about the negative trends we're seeing here:

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>May 2022</i>	<i>Feb. 2023</i>
<i>Current units under Annual Contributions Contract</i>	689	722
<i>Current leasing</i>	485	463
<i>YTD leasing percentage</i>	70.6%	64.34%
<i>Leasing potential</i>	29	100
<i>Total budget authority</i>	\$4,191,809	\$4,597,963
<i>HCV Reserves</i>	\$611,630	\$704,744
<i>Reserves as % of total budget authority</i>	14.59%	15.33%
<i>(* HUD Benchmark is 4%)</i>		
<i>Non-Elderly Disabled Vouchers Leased</i>	194	176
<i>Total VASH Vouchers</i>	60	85
<i>Leased VASH</i>	42	41

This data suggests that the gap between your budget authority and your actual housing assistance payments is continuing to grow, meaning that next year's budget authority will shrink, as has been the case for several years. We are extremely troubled by this ongoing trend and must insist/request that you work with us to find avenues to increase leasing and utilization. We are aware that the extremely tight housing market is a barrier, and Skagit County stands ready to assist you and your team with creative avenues to secure rental units for voucher holders.

We also have a few specific questions and comments about the update you provided last month.

1. You reiterated the challenges you face as a small housing authority with project-basing but did so recognizing that project-basing can incentivize new development of affordable housing. You also note the concentration of project-based vouchers in Mount Vernon and suggest you may want to do any future project basing in other jurisdictions. These are the kinds of policy decisions that we'd hope you'd be transparently planning in public with the community and that we would hope to work together with you on.
2. Your description of the EHV suggests that HASC was not in control of the process because you'd signed an MOU with Community Action. You further describe that the first months yielded just one viable referral, and that after a period of 15 months you began reaching out to other potential providers. As we've indicated in previous meetings and correspondence, we remain disappointed with the lack of urgency and effort to deploy these vouchers in our community.
3. Your update goes on to point out the "excessive barriers" that the intended beneficiaries of EHV face and note that HASC doesn't have funding to provide services that the target population would need to be successful renters. We understand that service providers like Catholic Community Services have reached out to HASC on behalf of their clients offering to support them around EHV's and never received a response.

With your next quarterly update, we will look forward to gaining more information from you about these matters. We will also appreciate you providing a written update about other open matters discussed with you and the Board earlier this year. These include:

- a. Information about the demographics of people on your waiting list as well as the number of people on that list. This will help us develop strategies for increasing leasing and utilization.
- b. Efforts to improve public transparency, including publishing board agendas and materials in advance on your website.
- c. Establishment of a Resident Advisory Board.

We look forward to continued partnership between Skagit County and the Housing Authority. If you have any questions regarding our requests outlined above, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**



Ron Wesen, Chair



Lisa Janicki, Commissioner



Peter Browning, Commissioner





## Skagit County Board of Commissioners

**Ron Wesen**, First District

**Peter Browning**, Second District

**Lisa Janicki**, Third District

June 14, 2023

Melanie Corey, Executive Director  
Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington, WA 98233

Melanie,

We are writing to ask some questions and request additional information ahead of your presentation on the Housing Authority Annual Action Plan scheduled for June 27, 2023.

First, we wanted to reiterate a request that you attend the meeting this year. Given the importance of HASC resources in our community and the crucial relationship between our organizations, we think it is appropriate that the housing authority executive director attend the annual plan presentation.

Next, we have some questions about the timing of the annual plan and your public process. In looking at the HUD deadlines, it would appear that the action plan should be due to HUD in the middle of July, which is 75 days before your October fiscal year start date. We also understand that the plan should be made public for 45 days before a public hearing. To meet HUD deadlines that means a draft should have been completed and available for public comment by now. When our clerk asked for a copy of the plan, she was told it was not yet complete.

Given this schedule we would like to know:

- When did your 45-day comment period start, when is your public hearing scheduled for, and how did you make the plan available to the public and stakeholders?
- What outreach activities did you conduct to encourage broad public participation in the plan per 24 CFR 903.17?
- Per our request at the joint meeting in January and in follow-up correspondence, what have you done to establish a Resident Advisory Board as required in 24 CFR 903.13(b)?
- How did you engage your Resident Advisory Board in the plan as required in 24 CFR 903.13(c)?

We request a copy of the plan at least one week prior to the presentation. Without having a copy of the action plan available to review it is challenging to come up with specific questions on the plan. We might have some additional questions once we have had a chance to review the plan, but at a minimum we would hope your presentation would address:

1. You will be asking us to certify consistency with Skagit County's Consolidated Plan. Our plan identifies homelessness as a priority—beyond participating in VASH for veterans and EHV's, how does your action plan address homelessness in Skagit County?

2. Leasing and budget utilization appears to be at a 10 year low for HASC (465 vouchers leased of 722 or 64%). This is the lowest voucher leasing percentage in the state. How will your action plan reverse this downward trend?

We offer this review in hopes that HASC will take steps to improve transparency and community involvement through general practices, as we have previously requested.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

*Approved electronically to stamp in his absence:*



Ron Wesen, Chair



Lisa Janicki, Commissioner



Peter Browning, Commissioner

cc: Housing Authority of Skagit County Board Commissioners



## Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District

Peter Browning, Second District

Lisa Janicki, Third District

July 26, 2023

Dear Housing Authority Commissioners,

We are writing to follow-up on our recent Board action declining certification of the Housing Authority's Annual Action Plan. Although our decision to decline certification was not unanimous, as a Board we are all in strong agreement that the relationship between the Housing Authority and Skagit County is vital, and we wanted to communicate the rationale behind our decision to you.

Overall, a majority of our commissioners believe that HASC has not done enough to effectively deploy its precious housing resources in Skagit County. Since our joint meeting in January the County has been clear about our goals and expectations for aligning our work, and yet those concepts were not reflected in the Action Plan you submitted. From our perspective there are opportunities to serve unhoused populations that are going unanswered because of a general disinterest in collaborating with the County, Cities, and other housing providers. The fact that your Executive Director chose not to attend the meeting where our Board voted on certification gave the appearance of indifference and disrespect at a crucial time.

We have now sent several letters back-and-forth summarizing our Board's concerns. Rather than rehash these in detail, we would briefly describe our concerns as:

- HASC low voucher utilization rates, combined with high voucher reserves, and very slow deployment of Emergency Housing Vouchers
- Lack of HASC public and stakeholder engagement in prioritization and planning
- HASC inflexibility regarding program coordination generally, and in project-basing vouchers for unhoused populations specifically

Regardless of our disappointment in the Action Plan you submitted and our subsequent decision to decline certification, we stand ready to engage with HASC's Commissioners to discuss any of these issues and work productively toward solutions to improve housing services for Skagit County. We look forward to aligning our programs with yours, and with the collaboration and shared problem solving we can achieve together through the next versions of your required Annual and Five-Year Plans.

Sincerely,

### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
Ron Wesen, Chair

  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
Peter Browning, Commissioner



## Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

January 29, 2024

Board of Commissioners, Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive, Burlington, WA 98233

Via email:

Daniel Valdez, Chair - [dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)  
Luis Reyna, Commissioner - [lui.reyna95@gmail.com](mailto:lui.reyna95@gmail.com)  
Crystle Stidham, Commissioner - [cstidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:cstidham@skagittransit.org)

Tina Tate, Commissioner - [t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)  
Peter Cavan, Commissioner - [peter@cavan.us](mailto:peter@cavan.us)

### RE: Interim Updates

Dear Commissioners,

We write today to welcome your newest members, to thank you for your service, and to remind you of our continued support for your efforts overseeing the critical work of HASC.

Since we were unable to meet in December, we also thought it would be useful to check in on a few ongoing matters in advance of our next quarterly meeting, which is scheduled for March 13. The following matters are carried forward from past dialogues and correspondence.

- 1. HASC Annual Plan – Content.** We know that your staff will be preparing this document shortly, and we'd like to reiterate our expectation from last year that the plan include stronger linkages to the key priorities we've been discussing, especially ending chronic homelessness. These include:
  - a. an intentional focus on strategies to increase voucher utilization;
  - b. project-basing of vouchers in support of PSH unit development;
  - c. and engagement of community organizations and the public at large.
- 2. Annual Plan – Process.** In prior years we have not had sufficient time for review and discussion of the draft plan. This year, we ask that the planning calendar be adjusted so that we have an opportunity to influence the key elements of the plan before the official public comment period begins.

We also expect your Executive Director to be present in person for any presentations to, or discussions with, our Board. Naturally we will also welcome any Commissioners to attend these meetings.

- 3. Strategic Plan.** We have previously offered funding for your Board to hire a strategic planning consultant. This offer still stands, but it is time-limited as the funds we are able to direct to this purpose need to be fully spent by June 30. We hope you agree that with mostly new Commissioners, the HASC board would benefit from strategic planning. If you do not intend to take us up on this offer, please let us know at your earliest convenience so we can reallocate the funds to another one-time use.
- 4. Emergency Housing Vouchers.** We are eager for an update about your deployment of the federal Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV) that were the subject of many discussions last year, including our mediation.

5. **Housing Choice Voucher Utilization.** Similarly, we request an update on general housing voucher utilization, including your organization's progress increasing the number of vouchers leased up in Skagit County.
6. **Transparency.** We are aware that HASC has limited capacity for updating its website and outreach activities. Still, we continue to feel strongly that your critical role as a public agency stewarding some of our most precious housing resources requires HASC to take concrete steps to update the ways in which it communicates with the public, especially those in need of your Housing Choice Vouchers. Formation of a Resident Advisory Board comprised of people currently using vouchers (plus some on the wait list) could prove immensely helpful to your policy, planning, and programming work. (We also continue to believe that HASC is obligated to form and support a RAB under HUD rules.)

None of these issues are new, so we assume that you've taken steps to address them. To have a productive discussion at our March 13 joint meeting, we would appreciate a written response prior to the meeting.

We look forward to hearing from you, and to continuing to support your work to bring more federal housing vouchers to our community to improve access for Skagitonians facing homelessness or housing insecurity.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Browning, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ron Wesen, Commissioner



Second, we developed a streamlined reporting tool to replace the narrative updates your executive director has been sending to us. This tool – also imbedded as a tab in the attached file – contains the high-level performance metrics for the voucher programs about which we have been most concerned these past two years. If you have an alternative report that is routinely provided to HUD with these data points, we’re certainly open to reviewing it.

	Effective Date: 2/29/24		Prior Period 11/30/23		Explanation of Significant Changes
	Total (per ACC)	Rented	Total (per ACC)	Rented	
Housing Choice Vouchers			722	438	
Leasing Percentage				60.7%	
VASH Vouchers			85	47	
Emergency Housing Vouchers					
Other Special Purpose Vouchers			220	167	
Project Based Vouchers			18	17	
Average Rent per Unit			\$ 844.49		
Reserves			\$ 704,744		
Total Budget Authority			\$ 4,597,763		
Reserves as % of Budget Authority			15.3%		
# non-HASC Properties w/PBV Contract Executed					
# of Households on Wait List					
# of Participating Landlords					

Our expectation with this quarterly report would be that you would provide current figures for the items listed, as well as the prior period’s, along with a brief explanation of material changes.

Finally, with respect to our joint meeting agenda, attached, we will expect to engage with you on these new tools and hear your updates on the matters contained in our January 29, 2024 letter to you, a copy of which is attached. We are eager to hear how you anticipate including stronger linkages to the County’s key priorities around ending chronic homelessness in your upcoming planning work, and the methods you will deploy to increase and improve community and resident engagement.

We look forward to working together to bring more federal housing vouchers to our community to improve access for Skagitonians facing homelessness or housing insecurity.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
 SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
 Peter Browning, Chair

  
 Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
 Ron Wesen, Commissioner



## Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

June 17, 2024

Housing Authority of Skagit County  
1650 Port Drive  
Burlington, WA 98233

*Via email:*

Daniel Valdez, Chair - [dvaldez360@gmail.com](mailto:dvaldez360@gmail.com)  
Tina Tate, Commissioner - [t.tate@skagithabitat.com](mailto:t.tate@skagithabitat.com)  
Luis Reyna, Commissioner - [luis.reyna95@gmail.com](mailto:luis.reyna95@gmail.com)  
Peter Cavan, Commissioner - [peter@cavan.us](mailto:peter@cavan.us)  
Crystle Stidham, Commissioner - [estidham@skagittransit.org](mailto:estidham@skagittransit.org)

### **RE: HASC Draft 5-Year Plan**

Dear Housing Authority of Skagit County Board Commissioners,

We received the Housing Authority's draft 5-year plan from Cathy Kerr on June 6, 2024, and are writing to comment on the plan. We think you will find our comments are consistent with feedback we provided during the last annual plan review, and have been recurring themes in our recent joint board meetings.

#### **Voucher Utilization:**

- Your 5-year plan should reference specific goals and strategies to increase voucher utilization above the current rate (62%). When we provided this feedback in August of last year, the utilization rate (from the HUD PIH Dashboard) was 64% and voucher reserves were at 15%.
- Your plan should reflect the use of voucher reserves to increase utilization. We have frequently heard HASC staff use a checkbook analogy for vouchers, and it appears that your account has a sufficient balance to support more households. According to HUD data, HASC voucher reserves are at 23% or \$1.08 million. To ensure there's no misunderstanding about the data we are referencing, we have enclosed copies of the HUD dashboard that show decreasing utilization and increasing reserves.
- Your plan should include outreach to and engagement with area property owners and landlords designed to elicit greater participation in the program.

#### **Alignment & Consistency in Addressing Homelessness**

- The plan should show increased alignment with the County's Consolidated Plan goal of "Ending Homelessness;"
- A place to start would be for HASC to implement some of the [HUD guidebook strategies](#)<sup>1</sup> for assisting people experiencing homelessness. These could include:
  - Collaboration between HASC and Continuum of Care/Coordinated Entry
  - Establishing a wait list preferences and programs specifically for people experiencing homelessness
  - Helping people experiencing homelessness navigate the PHA application process.

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<sup>1</sup> [PHA Strategies to Assist People Experiencing Homelessness Guidebook - HUD Exchange](#)



- The plan should include more detail describing HASC's plan to project-base up to 10% of vouchers. Your plan references that up to 10% of vouchers may be project based, which would represent up to 72 vouchers. The HUD dashboard shows 18 current PBV and you have allocated 12 VASH to the VOA project in Burlington and 6 to a project in San Juan County. That leaves room to project base an additional 36 vouchers to stay within 10% of your total vouchers under contract.
- Given your high voucher reserves and low utilization, HASC should commit additional PBVs for Martha's Place or other projects for people that are experiencing homelessness.

In addition to the comments on the draft plan, we have lingering questions about your public engagement process in developing the plan. We noted that HASC updated its website, but in reviewing the new website we were still left with the following questions about your outreach process, which we would like you to answer:

1. What is the public comment period for the plan; when did it open and when will it close? Do you have a public hearing scheduled on the plan?
2. As you know, HUD requires that PHAs shall conduct reasonable outreach activities to encourage broad public participation in development of their plans. What outreach and public engagement efforts have you engaged in?
3. What efforts have you made to engage with other housing providers and stakeholders like cities, homeless service providers, outreach organizations, and non-profit housing providers in the development of the plan?
4. What efforts did you make to engage homeless and low-income communities in a meaningful way beyond a mailing to the section 8 list?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on your draft 5-year plan. We look forward to discussing our feedback with you soon.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Peter Browning, Chair

  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
Ron Wesen, Commissioner

cc: Housing Authority of Skagit County Executive Director Melanie Corey  
Housing Authority of Skagit County Section 8 Program Manager Cathy Kerr

Enclosure HUD PIC Voucher Dashboard

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Data Dashboard | HUD.gov / U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

### PIH Housing Choice Voucher - Leasing Changes

Select a State: WA | Select a Public Housing Authority: WA001 - Housing Authority of Skagit County | MTW: | Clear All Filters

Data is current as of March 2024

Current Units under ACC

**725**

Current Reported Leasing

**448**

2024 YTD Leasing Percentage

**61.91%**

**Largest Reductions**
**Largest Increases**

Top PHAs with Largest Reductions in Units Leased since December 2022

PHAs	Reduction	Current	Change	2023	2022
PHAs	1.5%	235,022			

**New Admissions Trend**

● New Admissions ● Attrition Rate

**New Admissions**

**EQP Actions**

**Attrition Rate**

**UMA & UML**

**VOS**

### PIH Housing Choice Voucher Comparison

Select a State: WA | Select a Public Housing Authority: WA001 - Housing Authority of Skagit County | MTW: | Clear All Filters

Data is current as of March 2024

**Comparison: Budget, Budget & Reserves**

2024 YTD Spending as % of Authority

**96.72%**

Reserves as % of Budget Authority

**23.64%**

2024 Total Budget Authority for HCV Program

**\$4,572,223**

Select PHA Size

48

2024 YTD Spending as % of Authority

**91.84%**

Reserves as % of Budget Authority

**12.22%**

2024 Total Budget Authority for this Program

**\$902,125,036**

**Budget and Unit Utilization since 2015**

● Budget Authority ● Leasing Utilization



# Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

September 23, 2024

Mayors and City Councils

Dear Mayors and Council Members,

In the spirit of collaboration and transparency we are writing to provide you with an update on some of our recent engagement and communications with the [Housing Authority of Skagit County](#) (HASC). In case you are not aware, HASC is an independent public entity that focuses on public housing activities—most importantly the organization administers our county’s housing choice voucher program, which many people know as the Section 8 program. Because HASC is an independent entity, we have limited influence over the organization, which includes appointing their governing board of commissioners, and once a year we are asked to confirm that plan documents HASC submit to HUD are consistent with the county’s consolidated plan.

This year our board unanimously declined to certify HASC’s annual plan with HUD. We wanted to share our reasons for declining certification with you. They fell into three categories:

**1. Voucher Utilization:**

- We think HASC’s plan should include specific goals and strategies to increase voucher utilization above the current rate (61.2%), which continues to decline. **The WA state average leasing percentage is 90.8%.**
- We think the plan should reflect the use of voucher reserves to increase utilization. According to HUD data, HASC voucher reserves are at 23.6% or \$1.08 million. The recommended reserve level from HUD is 4%.
- The plan should include outreach to and engagement with area property owners and landlords designed to elicit greater participation in the program.

The table below shows data from HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher dashboard, which allows you to compare performance to other housing authorities.

HUD HCV dashboard data				
Indicator	HASC May 2022	HASC May 2024 (most recent)	Snohomish County HA	Whatcom County HA
Current units under Annual Contribution Contract	689	725	3,942	1,783
Current leasing	485	444	3,803	1,744
YTD leasing percentage	70.6%	61.2%	96%	98%
Total budget authority	\$4,191,809	\$4,572,223	\$63,239,393	\$19,734,216
Housing Choice Voucher Reserves	\$611,630	\$1,080,916	\$6,470,885	\$1,916,069
Voucher reserves as % of total budget authority	14.6%	23.6%	10.2%	9.7%

**2. Alignment & Consistency in Addressing Homelessness**

- We believe HASC’s plan should show increased alignment with the [County’s Consolidated Plan](#) goal of “Ending Homelessness.” We have shared ideas with HASC, including implementing HUD’s recommended strategies for assisting people experiencing homelessness. Examples include better coordination between HASC and coordinated entry and helping people experiencing homelessness to navigate the HASC voucher application process.
- The plan should include more detail describing HASC’s plan to project-base vouchers, and we believe HASC should commit additional project-based vouchers for people that are experiencing homelessness. In tight rental markets like Skagit County, using a project-basing approach can help to improve voucher utilization for our most vulnerable populations.

**3. Improve Public Engagement and Transparency**

- We have asked HASC to implement a more robust strategy to solicit stakeholder comment on its annual plan and incorporate the comments into its plan. For example, we strongly feel that HASC should be engaging cities in its planning process.
- We think HASC should increase visibility and accessibility of its planning documents and make the plan and process for public comment more visible and accessible on its web site.

None of these topics are new and we have repeatedly communicated with HASC leadership about these issues for more than two years through written correspondence and a series of joint meetings.

We have appreciated the engagement of your city in our North Star Initiative, and our engagement with HASC is being conducted in the spirit of our shared North Star work. We know that to address unmet behavioral health and homelessness challenges in our community we will have to work differently and cannot accept the status quo. We are also keeping several of our guiding principles in mind including: using a systems approach to ensure policies and funding are integrated and coordinated, developing a coordinated network of community-based services that are people-centered and strength-based, and dedicating resources and funding to the people in our communities with the greatest need.

We are committed to continuing to engage with HASC’s leadership to problem solve the issues outlined in this letter. On September 30<sup>th</sup> we have scheduled a meeting with HASC to consider any changes they have made to their plan, and our board could consider certification at that time. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of us.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Peter Browning, Chair

  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
Ron Wesen, Commissioner



## Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

October 16, 2024

Washington State Housing Trust Fund  
Department of Commerce

**Re: Determination of Consistency with Skagit County HOME Consortium Consolidated Plan  
HASC Farmview Village; Skagit County, Washington**

The purpose of this letter is to affirm that the Housing Authority of Skagit County Farmview Village affordable housing development is consistent with the Skagit HOME Consortium's Consolidated Plan (2023-2027). The county's plan identifies a significant gap in available and affordable housing in Skagit County, and places high priority on the development of housing for low and extremely low-income households.

Farmview Village is a proposed 31 unit multifamily development which will house farmworker families at 40% and 50% AMI with two, three- and four- bedroom units. Housing options are extremely limited for this population in the Burlington and Sedro-Wooley area, and this project will provide both safe and affordable housing. The property is adjacent to other Housing Authority developments which will allow for greater access and connection to services and transportation.

We appreciate your consideration for this proposed development. If any additional information can be provided regarding how this project will meet the housing needs of Skagit County, please feel free to reach out directly to George Kosovich with Skagit County Public Health at [georgek@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:georgek@co.skagit.wa.us) or 360.416.1547.

Thank you for your partnership to build affordable housing here in Skagit County.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Peter Browning, Chair

  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
Ron Wesen, Commissioner



## **Exhibit D**

### **HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES January 10, 2024**

This meeting was conducted in person. Remote option was available.

#### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate  
Crystle Stidham  
Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna

#### **STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Cathy Kerr  
Gilberto Estrada  
Renee Sinclair  
Claudia Marken

#### **PUBLIC PRESENT**

Ed Johnson  
Brad Tinges  
Bob Sterbank

#### **ROLL CALL**

At 5:02 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Crystle Stidham, and Peter Cavan in person and Luis Reyna by zoom.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments, which were given by Ed Johnson.

Foster Garvey attorney Bob Sterbank gave an Ethics for Commissioners & Conflict of Interest training to the Board.

#### **MINUTES**

Minutes of the December 13, 2023 Regular Board meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

#### **BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Staff answered questions from the Board regarding the 2022 County communication, which was just received by a new board member and had not previously been shared by the County with the staff or Board.

#### **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

##### **Board Topics – Discussion & Materials**

1. Board Notifications
  - a. Daniel Valdez was appointed Chair and Tina Tate was appointed Vice Chair through November 2024.
2. Board Development, Trainings, & Requests
  - a. Please reach out to the Executive Director with questions. I will make myself available to Board members on a weekly basis, as needed, for programmatic training. Administrative staff have been out of the office for several weeks. Upon their return, board packets will be sent to new members.
  - b. We have invited legal consultants to the January and February meetings for the required trainings.
3. Executive Committee
  - a. The Executive Committee consists of the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary, which is the Executive Director.

## **Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: December 13, 2023 meeting minutes; December 2023 expenses
2. Discussion and potential approval of conducting a joint meeting with Skagit County in March 2023

## **General Administrative Updates**

1. **Finance:** The fiscal year ended September 30, and the unaudited submission was timely. HASC has multiple audits each year, as a regular course of business.
2. **Administration & Other:** There are new opportunities coming up related to revenue generating contracts and housing purchases. The programs have inherent risks, and we remain available to bring Board members up to speed, to reduce risks, judgments, and financial impacts of violating federal, state or funder regulations.
3. **Community Engagement & Other:** The first Community Impact Statement was shared with over 520 individuals and entities. HASC maintains a webpage, not a site, and the software is obsolete. Our IT firm will support a transition to new software, if/when HASC can allocate staffing to maintain it. HASC cannot allocate staff to this matter from sources of funds which are restricted. Perhaps the Board would like to discuss fund raising for this matter.
4. **Section 8:** This program is the largest and most complex program. Prior to my time at HASC, this department had two programs – Non-Elderly Disabled Vouchers and Family Vouchers. Since assuming the directorship at HASC, we have increased subsidy funds from approximately \$3,000,000/year to approximately \$5,000,000/year. I applied for and designed the following new programs: HUD-VASH for homeless veterans, the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, the Project-Based Program (currently serving Catholic Services with two projects, HASC with one project, and committed to one Volunteers of America project, and one San Juan County project), Emergency Housing Voucher Program, and the Foster Youth to Independence Program. We have entered partnerships with the Veterans Administration, DSHS, DCYF, Northwest Youth Services, Youthnet, Community Action of Skagit County, Anacortes Family Center, Family Promise, DV-SAS, Northwest Workforce Council, and many other local service providers. I have invited Cathy to provide a Power Point presentation regarding some of the current challenges facing this program. Due to federal and HUD priorities and local pressures during the pandemic HASC shifted its portfolio towards serving more homeless participants, who are in most cases 0-income individuals. Homeless vouchers cost four or five times as much as vouchers that serve low-income participants, so less people can be served. As fewer people are served, fewer funds are received by HASC to pay the staff and support the program. In 2023, HASC spent more than it received from HUD for administrative costs. Over the past ten months, staff time was diverted to responding to communications, attending meetings related to the PHA Plan, and shifting staff to serving emergency housing voucher participants. The result was the downward spiral the program is currently in. HUD would like HASC to refocus staff time to utilizing regular vouchers and serving more people. I remain available to answer questions regarding this program and how the Board can support the staff in repositioning the program for long-term success, sustainability, and growth.



5. **Migrant Homelessness Program:** In 2015 this program arose out of lawsuits filed by a farmworker’s union, which caused many farmworkers to be displaced from on-farm housing. I applied for and received funds - first from the State, and then from Skagit County - and designed a program to serve displaced and homeless farmworkers. Prior to this program, no local funds were designated to serving homeless farmworkers, due to local priorities to serve individuals with behavioral health issues over other categories of homeless people. As an agency, we have been instrumental in bringing equity to a marginalized and underserved population of homeless individuals and families.
6. **Properties / Maintenance:** Gilberto Estrada remains available for tours of the properties. Due to the size and capacity of HASC, I serve in two additional positions, which in larger agencies would be occupied by two additional staff members. One of those is the Development Director position. During the pandemic, I developed two new properties. The Skagit County Seasonal Farmworker project was a \$7,200,000 USDA -Rural Development project, with 14 units and 105 beds and serves seasonal farm workers and families over an eight-month season. This program has run for three seasons thus far. I also developed the \$18,000,000 Mount Vernon Family Housing project, with 51 units for individuals with disabilities, homeless veterans, and low-income farmworker families. This was a unique mixed income and diverse demographic development and received an unexpected visit from the Governor. Both projects had increased costs, supply chain issues, and contractor challenges and yet were successful. I had to raise approximately \$3,000,000 in additional funds for these two projects. A large portion of these additional funds received were re-allocated to our projects from other projects, which were unsuccessful during the pandemic. These have been remarkable times.
7. **Weatherization (WX):** Claudia Marken has a report to share.
8. **New Development/Farmview:** Per the Board’s approval, I submitted a Housing Trust Fund application in September 2023 for another farmworker project. HASC additionally released an RPF for Project Based Vouchers and awarded vouchers to two other projects, which are competing against HASC for these limited dollars. We made the difficult decision to support our competitors, reducing the potential success of our own project, due to the extreme need in our county for more housing to be developed. We would prefer to do another mixed income and mixed demographic program; however, due to our limited development units at our current site, we cannot compete in the tax-credit round. This limits the project to USDA-RD funds, which are for farmworkers.

Cathy Kerr, Section 8 Program Manager, explained her monthly report and answered questions. Gilberto Estrada, Property Manager, explained his monthly report and answered questions. He offered a tour of the buildings.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Dr. Renee Sinclair shared the financial report, and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. December 2023 expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in December 2023</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44312 - 44370	\$ 117,385.09

(9) Section 8	70242 - 70454	\$ 412,332.75
(20) LAP	7495 - 7499	\$ 4,344.59
(21) MBM	5090 - 5095	\$ 3,554.09
(22) Farmworker	80309 - 80321	\$ 9,127.23
(23) MVFH	5086 - 5092	\$ 48,911.30
(30) BT	11324 - 11336	\$ 20,194.96
(31) President	7837 - 7846	\$ 18,011.58
(40) RR 1	6120 - 6127	\$ 27,094.76
(43) RR 2	1186 - 1191	\$ 8,469.66

**Investments:**

	<u>Maturity Date</u>	<u>Bonds</u>	<u>CUSIP ID #</u>	<u>Yield</u>	<u>\$</u>
Burlington Terrace	2/13/2025	FHLB	3130AUVZ4	4.50%	\$ 400,000.00
To Be Allocated	9/1/2026	FFC	3133EPUW3	4.80%	\$400,000.00

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

None.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Tina Tate made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the December 2023 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the December 13, 2023 Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Peter Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Tina Tate made a motion to approve a joint meeting with Skagit County on March 13, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Crystle Stidham seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

None.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

Report of the Secretary  
February 14, 2024

**Board Topics –**

1. Board Notifications & Development
  - a. Daniel Valdez was appointed Chair and Tina Tate was appointed Vice Chair through November 2024. The Executive Committee includes these and the Secretary.
  - b. Please reach out to the Executive Director with questions and for program training. Updated board packets are expected to be ready this month.
  - c. Foster Garvey will present the required OPMA/PRA training.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: January 10, 2024 meeting minutes; January expenses.
2. Loan for the office building.
3. Consider a change in strategic planning processes at the board level and applying for funding.

**General Administrative Updates**

1. **Finance:** Staff have provided the loan acceptance letter for the Board to review and approve.
2. **Strategic Planning:** For the past few decades, the Board has carried out strategic planning at monthly meetings, and the Executive Committee has met regularly to evaluate opportunities, to then bring to the full board. If the new Board would like to do strategic planning with an outside consultant, the Board would need to fund that process. An outside process will require considerable staff support. We can re-allocate staff time for this process, but this would require new funds. Staff time is currently allocated to restricted funding. Strategic Planning with a consultant will require staff support for determining the scope of work, the applications for funding, public competitive RFP process and selection, access to client data and notifications, interviews, meetings with program staff, public meetings, support to the consultants after the data collection, and then implementation. I have begun the research, to move this forward. Strategic planning is very important. If the Board decides to proceed, then I would advise a measured and methodical approach. The shift in political priorities in 2023, and subsequent pressures, caused the HASC Board and staff to not meet the goals that had been planned and budgeted for the year. Specifically, HASC staff allocated the majority of work time to the PHA Plan (which normally would have taken approximately 8 – 10 hours/year) and to the Emergency Homeless Voucher program implementation, which should have been spread out over a longer time span. As a result, staff were not able to allocate sufficient time to use regular vouchers (119 potential vouchers and \$1,000,000 remained unused), nor were there sufficient housing units, as units were being prioritized for the new homeless vouchers (29). Additionally, a matter to consider is that even when all things go as planned, there simply aren't enough administrative funds to cover staff time for regular work. Therefore, several managers and I regularly work 50, 60 and 70 hours/week. As a result, there has been increased illness and burnout among staff. We have lost key staff to pressures, and current staff are at risk of departing. If it seems prudent to the Board to

engage in a robust strategic plan process, we advise a two-year timeline. HUD has made it clear that HASC must spend down the regular voucher funds (\$1,000,000) in 2024; therefore, this goal should be prioritized. By its part, the Board will need defend this action to HUD, should fund utilization suffer, as it did last year.

3. **Section 8 & Complaints:** The two-year Human Rights Commission investigation was decided in our favor. This required long hours addressing one issue with one client, which took time away from other deserving clients. Complaints are fully investigated by staff, as in the current complaint sent to the board. The complainant was drunk and disorderly and police were called. Cathy can answer questions; however, protected information about the complainant will not be shared, due to HIPPA laws. HASC attorneys recommend that board members who are approached by clients take a name, phone number, and brief notes about the request and forward the message to the Executive Director, who will route it to the appropriate department. Additionally, our insurance company requests that board members not make statements, but rather inform the complainant that someone will get back to them shortly.
4. **Migrant Homelessness Program:** Skagit County released the NOFA for homeless services, and staff plan to apply again for this program.
5. **Properties / Maintenance:** All properties are in good working condition; capital repairs are spaced appropriately. The margins are tight. The properties have multiple funders and varied regulations. Staff are working overtime to manage the properties.
6. **Weatherization (WX):** This program is growing. It takes about two years to train a new production staff member, after which work can be performed independently.
7. **New Development:** The farmworker application was unsuccessful. However, the two projects HASC supported with vouchers were successful in obtaining Housing Trust Fund dollars.

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
February 14, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person. Remote option was available, but the internet went down at approximately 5:10 p.m.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate  
Crystle Stidham  
Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Cathy Kerr  
Gilberto Estrada  
Renee Sinclair  
Claudia Marken

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Andrea Bradford, Attorney

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:00 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Crystle Stidham, Luis Reyna, and Peter Cavan.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments. There were no members of the public present, except for Foster Garvey attorney Andrea Bradford, who joined by zoom.

Foster Garvey attorney Andrea Bradford gave the Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act training to the Board. The internet went down at about 5:10 p.m., severing the zoom connection. Ms. Bradford continued the training by cell phone, all participants being able to hear and speak with Ms. Bradford in real time.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the January 10, 2024 Regular Board meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Staff answered questions from the Board regarding the Human Rights Commission complaint, which was decided in HASC's favor, as well as gave updates on the client complaint, which the full Board had recently received.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. Board Notifications & Development
  - a. Daniel Valdez was appointed Chair and Tina Tate was appointed Vice Chair through November 2024. The Executive Committee includes these and the Secretary.
  - b. Please reach out to the Executive Director with questions and for program training. Updated board packets are expected to be ready this month.
  - c. Foster Garvey will present the required OPMA/PRA training.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: January 10, 2024 meeting minutes; January expenses.
2. Loan for the office building.
3. Consider a change in strategic planning processes at the board level and applying for funding.

### **General Administrative Updates**

1. **Finance:** Staff have provided the loan acceptance letter for the Board to review and approve.
2. **Strategic Planning:** For the past few decades, the Board has carried out strategic planning at monthly meetings, and the Executive Committee has met regularly to evaluate opportunities, to then bring to the full board. If the new Board would like to do strategic planning with an outside consultant, the Board would need to fund that process. An outside process will require considerable staff support. We can re-allocate staff time for this process, but this would require new funds. Staff time is currently allocated to restricted funding. Strategic Planning with a consultant will require staff support for determining the scope of work, the applications for funding, public competitive RFP process and selection, access to client data and notifications, interviews, meetings with program staff, public meetings, support to the consultants after the data collection, and then implementation. I have begun the research, to move this forward. Strategic planning is very important. If the Board decides to proceed, then I would advise a measured and methodical approach. The shift in political priorities in 2023, and subsequent pressures, caused the HASC Board and staff to not meet the goals that had been planned and budgeted for the year. Specifically, HASC staff allocated the majority of work time to the PHA Plan (which normally would have taken approximately 8 – 10 hours/year) and to the Emergency Homeless Voucher program implementation, which should have been spread out over a longer time span. As a result, staff were not able to allocate sufficient time to use regular vouchers (119 potential vouchers and \$1,000,000 remained unused), nor were there sufficient housing units, as units were being prioritized for the new homeless vouchers (29). Additionally, a matter to consider is that even when all things go as planned, there simply aren't enough administrative funds to cover staff time for regular work. Therefore, several managers and I regularly work 50, 60 and 70 hours/week. As a result, there has been increased illness and burnout among staff. We have lost key staff to pressures, and current staff are at risk of departing. If it seems prudent to the Board to engage in a robust strategic plan process, we advise a two-year timeline. HUD has made it clear that HASC must spend down the regular voucher funds (\$1,000,000) in 2024; therefore, this goal should be prioritized. By its part, the Board will need defend this action to HUD, should fund utilization suffer, as it did last year.
3. **Section 8 & Complaints:** The two-year Human Rights Commission investigation was decided in our favor. This required long hours addressing one issue with one client, which took time away from other deserving clients. Complaints are fully investigated by staff, as in the current complaint sent to the board. The complainant was drunk and disorderly and police were called. Cathy can answer questions; however, protected information about the complainant will not be shared, due to HIPPA laws. HASC attorneys recommend that board members who are approached by clients take a name, phone number, and brief notes about the request and forward the message to the Executive Director, who will route it to the appropriate department. Additionally, our

insurance company requests that board members not make statements, but rather inform the complainant that someone will get back to them shortly.

4. **Migrant Homelessness Program:** Skagit County released the NOFA for homeless services, and staff plan to apply again for this program.
5. **Properties / Maintenance:** All properties are in good working condition; capital repairs are spaced appropriately. The margins are tight. The properties have multiple funders and varied regulations. Staff are working overtime to manage the properties.
6. **Weatherization (WX):** This program is growing. It takes about two years to train a new production staff member, after which work can be performed independently.
7. **New Development:** The farmworker application was unsuccessful. However, the two projects HASC supported with vouchers were successful in obtaining Housing Trust Fund dollars.

The Secretary informed the Board that a key staff member had been in a serious car crash, totaling the company vehicle and incapacitating the staff member for an extended period. The remaining staff had been further stressed, due to taking on her responsibilities. Additionally, several other staff have been out on medical leave for extended periods and the Directors and Managers have been working additional hours to cover duties and meet compliance deadlines. Burn-out has already occurred and the Board will need to take this into consideration, as there are compliance matters that cannot be defaulted on.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Due to technical difficulties, Dr. Renee Sinclair was unable to attend the meeting and to share the financial report, and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. January expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in January 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44354 - 44394	\$ 77,167.17
(9) Section 8	70455 - 70676	\$ 409,786.90
(20) LAP	7500 - 7507	\$ 14,803.63
(21) MBM	5056 - 5099	\$ 4,179.68
(22) Farmworker	80322 - 80328	\$ 5,826.93
(23) MVFH	5093 - 5106	\$ 60,728.41
(30) BT	11337 - 11349	\$ 25,107.72
(31) President	7847 - 7859	\$ 15,558.30
(40) RR 1	6128 - 6138	\$ 8,772.46
(43) RR 2	1192 - 1200	\$ 22,310.16

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

None.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Tina Tate made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the January 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the January 10, 2024 Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Tina Tate made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Letter of Loan Commitment with Banner Bank for the property on 1650 Port Drive, Burlington and to authorize staff to enter any and all contracts and agreements, and to expend resources which may be necessary in the furtherance of this action. Commissioner Peter Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

### **COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners discussed a change in the strategic planning processes. They acknowledged that a robust process with an outside consultant could not be completed within the County's timeframe, to conclude by June. The Executive Committee would do further research, which would include consideration of a scope of work and funding and would prepare to discuss this topic with the County in March. Additionally, the Board Chair and Executive Director would prepare a written response to the County's latest letter before the March meeting.

### **FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary



HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
March 13, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate  
Peter Cavan (by phone)  
Luis Reyna

**STAFF PRESENT**

Cathy Kerr  
Gilberto Estrada  
Claudia Marken

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

**ROLL CALL**

At 3:03 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Luis Reyna, with Peter Cavan attending by phone. Crystle Stidham was not initially present but attended the joint meeting at 5:00.

Chair Valdez provided time for members of the public to comment. There were no members of the public present.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the February 14, 2024, Regular Board meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. Board Notifications & Development
  - a. Daniel Valdez was appointed Chair and Tina Tate was appointed Vice Chair through November 2024. The Executive Committee includes these and the Secretary.
  - b. Please reach out to the Executive Director with questions and for program training. Updated board packets are expected to be ready this month.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: February 14, 2024, meeting minutes; February expenses.

**General Administrative Updates**

Due to the limited time for the joint meeting, we have reduced the reports down to the two main issues the County likely will discuss at the meeting.

1. **PHA Plan and Outreach:** Due to the County's need to spend down the funds offered for strategic planning by June 2024, and that the Board cannot meet this deadline, staff would suggest that the HASC Board request the County funds for the PHA Plan engagement and RAB (Resident Advisory Board). This is another County priority, and

HASC needs the funding to upgrade our efforts to encourage more civic engagement of our participants. Funds would be needed to hire personnel to conduct research, to survey all the Section 8 clients, to collate the data, and to invite participants to join a Resident Advisory Board. Additionally, funds would be needed to incentivize participation – such as gas vouchers, food vouchers, and childcare to remove the barriers to attendance and participation of our clients. As historical reference, HASC has been and continues to be fully in compliance with HUD requirements on this matter. HUD does not require HASC to have a RAB, if participants decline to participate, but HASC is required to try to elicit participation in a RAB. The Section 8 Department has followed HUD’s recommendations every year, in relation to this matter. Also, HUD has approved HASC’s PHA Plans year to year, with no required changes. Of note, the deadline for the PHA Plan coincides with the deadline for the County to spend down the funds they have offered to HASC.

2. **Strategic Planning:** The Executive Committee continues to move this matter forward and is in the planning and scoping stage of this process. It would be valuable to learn if the County would have funding later on in the year, after the required PHA Plan process is completed, hopefully with the added outreach, engagement, and development of a RAB.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Due to being on medical leave, Dr. Renee Sinclair was unable to attend the meeting but provided the financial report, and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. February expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in February 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44395 - 44446	\$ 225,350.26
(9) Section 8	70677 - 71124	\$ 441,604.20
(20) LAP	7508 - 7516	\$ 16,930.85
(21) MBM	5100 - 5107	\$ 9,042.49
(22) Farmworker	80329 - 80347	\$ 9,549.32
(23) MVFH	5107 - 5113	\$ 10,523.65
(30) BT	11350 - 11371	\$ 36,886.59
(31) President	7860 - 7878	\$ 35,053.74
(40) RR 1	6139 - 6148	\$ 20,563.08
(43) RR 2	1201 - 1214	\$ 17,029.48

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

None.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Tina Tate made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the February 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the February 14, 2024, Regular Meeting, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Chair Valdez reported that M. Corey, HASC Executive Director, and R. Sinclair, HASC Finance Director, were on medical leave until further notice.

HASC Regular Meeting was paused at 4:30 p.m. while the Commissioners travelled to the Hearing Room at the Offices of Skagit County, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA. The meeting continued from approximately 5:00 pm through 6:30 pm. with a remote option available to the public.

Present at joint meeting:

**HASC COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate  
Peter Cavan (online)  
Luis Reyna  
Crystle Stidham

**STAFF PRESENT**

Cathy Kerr  
Gilberto Estrada  
Claudia Marken

**County Commissioners Present**

Ron Wesen  
Peter Browning  
Lisa Janicki

**Others Present**

Jennifer Johnson, Dep. County Admin.  
Keith Higman, Skagit County Public Health Dir.  
George Kosovich, SC Public Health Analyst  
Jen Rodgers, Communication Mgr for Skagit County  
Andrea Harrison, Health Dept.  
Mayor Peter Donovan, MV  
Mayor Bill Aslett, Burlington  
Member of public came in later (name not given)

**Online attendance**

Margaret Van Vleet, Tenfold Health  
Shelley Kjos, SC Public Health  
Christi Brua Weaver, SC Public Health  
Sarah Hinman, SC Public Health Asst Dir

**Notes:**

Chair Browning said the meeting was an ongoing discussion between the two boards, especially regarding the homelessness crisis in our community.

Chair Valdez described the onboarding activities of the three new HASC Board Commissioners.

Chair Browning presented a timeline for the HASC Annual Action Plan submission (this year to be the five-year plan) based on HUD deadlines but incorporating dates for plan review periods for the County Commissioners in addition to the public comment period and the other annual deadlines. Chair Valdez confirmed that HASC was in agreement with the timeline. He noted that there are also changes to the plan that need to be incorporated because of new HOTMA regulations.

Regarding RAB, clarification was made by Chair Valdez that the idea of a RAB was based on housing authorities which operated public housing, which HASC did not have. Vice Chair Tate pointed out that incentives were needed to engage Section 8 residents to participate in a RAB, but that also staff time was very limited and needed to be incentivized. Vice Chair Tate estimated that \$8,000 could provide for a temporary hire to do outreach for two months and would include incentives for participants. The question of HASC reserves available for such expenses was brought up by the County. Commissioner Browning said he had connections at Western Washington for internships which he could connect HASC to if they needed a person for special projects (website development, outreach to community, etc.)

Chair Browning provided a sample spreadsheet containing specific data points that the Commissioners requested HASC use for quarterly updates. Emphasis was placed on HASC Board also updating the County Commissioners in person at quarterly joint meetings.

Commissioner Janicki proposed ARPA funds be diverted to setup-only costs for a more robust HASC website if other means were not available. She thought that a website could be a form of public outreach and landlord engagement. She suggested that in place of the funds going to strategic planning, they could go toward the website. Chair Valdez mentioned that strategic planning had already been started but that they could reevaluate if necessary.

Commissioners Janicki and Wesen requested that HASC provide a clear accounting of what reserves it has and what purposes each is available to be used for.

There was a County led discussion about increasing strategies to utilize the Section 8 voucher funding.

Commissioner Janicki commended HASC for recently project-basing vouchers with VOA for a future housing project in Burlington. Other commissioners agreed that this housing would help with the homelessness crisis because it would have supportive services connected that would help keep people housed who were experiencing behavioral health issues.

HASC Commissioner Stidham reported a perceived lack of cooperation between the Anacortes Housing Authority and HASC; however, HASC has regular communications with Anacortes and none are outstanding at the moment. Currently Anacortes Housing Authority is developing a new building. Commissioner Browning suggested perhaps Section 8 vouchers could be used there. (Executive Director Corey had a meeting with the Anacortes Housing Executive Director and Board Chair on September 29, 2023, during which the Anacortes Housing Authority determined that Section 8 vouchers could not be used there at this time.)

Commissioners Janicki and Browning stressed their belief that because of homeless issues, the HASC Seasonal Building should be used year-round and that USDA restrictions about this could possibly be waived. Commissioner Janicki planned to contact Marty Miller at ORFH and also speak with contacts at USDA to see what could be done about obtaining a variance.

Gilberto Estrada pointed out that many homeless families had been housed in HASC's properties, and Cathy Kerr confirmed that four of the families helped by the Homeless Farmworker Program had gone on to permanent housing this year.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned by Chair Browning at 6:37 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Beverly Sarchet, HASC Administrative Assistant, on behalf of M. Corey, Secretary.

Report of the Secretary  
March 13, 2024

**Board Topics –**

1. Board Notifications & Development
  - a. Daniel Valdez was appointed Chair and Tina Tate was appointed Vice Chair through November 2024. The Executive Committee includes these and the Secretary.
  - b. Please reach out to the Executive Director with questions and for program training. Updated board packets are expected to be ready this month.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: February 14, 2024 meeting minutes; February expenses.

**General Administrative Updates**

Due to the limited time for the joint meeting, we have reduced the reports down to the two main issues the County likely will discuss at the meeting.

1. **PHA Plan and Outreach:** Due to the County's need to spend down the funds offered for strategic planning by June 2024, and that the Board cannot meet this deadline, staff would suggest that the HASC Board request the County funds for the PHA Plan engagement and RAB (Resident Advisory Board). This is another County priority, and HASC needs the funding to upgrade our efforts to encourage more civic engagement of our participants. Funds would be needed to hire personnel to conduct research, to survey all the Section 8 clients, to collate the data, and to invite participants to join a Resident Advisory Board. Additionally, funds would be needed to incentivize participation – such as gas vouchers, food vouchers, and childcare to remove the barriers to attendance and participation of our clients. As historical reference, HASC has been and continues to be fully in compliance with HUD requirements on this matter. HUD does not require HASC to have a RAB, if participants decline to participate, but HASC is required to try to elicit participation in a RAB. The Section 8 Department has followed HUD's recommendations every year, in relation to this matter. Also, HUD has approved HASC's PHA Plans year to year, with no required changes. Of note, the deadline for the PHA Plan coincides with the deadline for the County to spend down the funds they have offered to HASC.
2. **Strategic Planning:** The Executive Committee continues to move this matter forward and is in the planning and scoping stage of this process. It would be valuable to learn if the County would have funding later on in the year, after the required PHA Plan process is completed, hopefully with the added outreach, engagement, and development of a RAB.

Report of the Secretary  
April 10, 2024

**Board Topics –**

1. Financial Training: Re-imbusement Programs:

- a. HASC's Weatherization Program is a re-imbusement program, which means that HASC spends its own money to hire contractors, pay staff, and cover all expenses prior to receiving any funding. This department owes HASC \$110,534 currently, and this is a continuous debt. HASC must pay staff in the current period and contractors within 30 days; however, the funders usually pay in 60 – 90 days, leaving an on-going deficit.
- b. HASC's Homeless Farmworker Program is also re-imbusement based, as are all County-funded programs. HASC spends up to \$46,000, prior to receiving any funds from the County.
- c. Dr. Sinclair has informed us we cannot incur additional reimbursable programs, as cash flow is stretched beyond current capacity. She is unable to pay the bills on time, due to funders not paying on time.
- d. There is no reserve account for the reimbursement programs. Therefore, finance has to decide what to pay and what to leave unpaid.
- e. Each program (Section 8, La Paloma, Raspberry Ridge 1, Raspberry Ridge 2, SCSFH, MVFH, President, Weatherization, Migrant, etc.) are separate and monies cannot be "borrowed" from one program to cover for another.

**General Administrative Updates**

The staff request understanding and compassion from the Board, due to the stress they have experienced. The past four months have seen unprecedented challenges for the HASC team. The team is somehow managing to meet deadlines, but they recommend HASC remain fiscally responsible in not incurring more debt. Some of the staffing and financial shortfalls are described below:

\*In Administration/Finance, all staff have been out due to illness in the past quarter. 50% of staff have been out for several months, including one person for four months. There is a lot to catch up on for audits, and sometimes bills are not able to be paid on time (see above).

\*Section 8 has lost 29% of its staff. Regardless of staffing challenges, this department must spend its regular funding, along with another \$700,000 this year. HUD did not recapture these extra funds in 2023; however, they must be spent in 2024. This increase in reserves occurred due to Skagit County's request that HASC prioritize 32 homeless vouchers in 2023. There is a zero-vacancy rate in Skagit County. The 32 homes which were used by these 32 individuals could not be used for families with regular vouchers (Family, Disabled, Foster Youth, etc.). We could not find housing for both groups at the same time. This caused utilization to go down significantly. In August of 2022 500 vouchers were in use. By December of 2023, that was reduced to 445 vouchers. Staff are making progress in pulling out of this downward trend, with 460 vouchers in use.

\*Properties have experienced a 25% reduction in staff, while they have increased by two properties. Significant financial losses have occurred due to fires caused by tenants.

Additionally, USDA RD is owing HASC \$36,000 for three months of operating subsidy at Skagit County Seasonal Farmworker housing.

\*Weatherization is fully staffed; however, the Department of Commerce is owing HASC \$70,000 for six months of expenses. PSE delayed reimbursing HASC \$30,000 and CNG delayed \$50,000 for expenses incurred since December. These utilities are beginning to catch up; however, HASC has carried these debts for over a quarter, and has had to pay contractors, utilities, staff, maintenance repairs, and more, even though the funders didn't pay HASC.

### **Action Items Background:**

1. **Section 8 Administrative Plan Update:** The Housing Opportunities through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) was signed into law on July 29, 2016. It includes significant changes to the HUD programs, and due to complexities, its implementation has been delayed until June 2024. This has required staff to take 80 hours of focused review and research to determine which rules apply to HASC and to include these in our Section 8 Admin Plan. These are required changes. The Plan is included in the agenda for your approval. This must be approved in April, so that the PHA Plan process can proceed in a timely manner for the HUD required July deadline.
2. **Potential Funding Applications:** HASC has been informed that the County desires for HASC to assist the County in spending down their ARPA funds by December 2024. The County desires HASC to produce a robust website and to pursue strategic planning.

### **Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: March 13, 2024 meeting minutes; March expenses
2. Review and approve updated Section 8 Administrative Plan, per HOTMA
3. Discussion and potential action on funding applications for strategic planning and website development



HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
April 10, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate

Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Cathy Kerr  
Gilberto Estrada  
Renee Sinclair  
Claudia Marken

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

None

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:01 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Luis Reyna, and Peter Cavan. Crystle Stidham was excused, due to travel.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments. There were no members of the public present.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the March 13, 2024 Regular & Joint Board meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. **Financial Training: Re-imbusement Programs:**
  - a. HASC's Weatherization Program is a re-imbusement program, which means that HASC spends its own money to hire contractors, pay staff, and cover all expenses prior to receiving any funding. This department owes HASC \$110,534 currently, and this is a continuous debt. HASC must pay staff in the current period and contractors within 30 days; however, the funders usually pay in 60 – 90 days, leaving an on-going deficit.
  - b. HASC's Homeless Farmworker Program is also re-imbusement based, as are all County-funded programs. HASC spends up to \$46,000, prior to receiving any funds from the County.
  - c. Dr. Sinclair has informed us we cannot incur additional reimbursable programs, as cash flow is stretched beyond current capacity. She is unable to pay the bills on time, due to funders not paying on time.
  - d. There is no reserve account for the reimbursement programs. Therefore, finance has to decide what to pay and what to leave unpaid.

- e. Each program (Section 8, La Paloma, Raspberry Ridge 1, Raspberry Ridge 2, SCSFH, MVFH, President, Weatherization, Migrant, etc.) are separate and monies cannot be “borrowed” from one program to cover for another.

### **General Administrative Updates**

The staff request understanding and compassion from the Board, due to the stress they have experienced. The past four months have seen unprecedented challenges for the HASC team. The team is somehow managing to meet deadlines, but they recommend HASC remain fiscally responsible in not incurring more debt. Some of the staffing and financial shortfalls are described below:

\*In Administration/Finance, all staff have been out due to illness in the past quarter. 50% of staff have been out for several months, including one person for four months. There is a lot to catch up on for audits, and sometimes bills are not able to be paid on time (see above).

\*Section 8 has lost 29% of its staff. Regardless of staffing challenges, this department must spend its regular funding, along with another \$700,000 this year. HUD did not recapture these extra funds in 2023; however, they must be spent in 2024. This increase in reserves occurred due to Skagit County’s request that HASC prioritize 32 homeless vouchers in 2023. There is a zero-vacancy rate in Skagit County. The 32 homes which were used by these 32 individuals could not be used for families with regular vouchers (Family, Disabled, Foster Youth, etc.). We could not find housing for both groups at the same time. This caused utilization to go down significantly. In August of 2022 500 vouchers were in use. By December of 2023, that was reduced to 445 vouchers. Staff are making progress in pulling out of this downward trend, with 460 vouchers in use.

\*Properties have experienced a 25% reduction in staff, while they have increased by two properties. Significant financial losses have occurred due to fires caused by tenants. Additionally, USDA RD is owing HASC \$36,000 for three months of operating subsidy at Skagit County Seasonal Farmworker housing.

\*Weatherization is fully staffed; however, the Department of Commerce is owing HASC \$70,000 for six months of expenses. PSE delayed reimbursing HASC \$30,000 and CNG delayed \$50,000 for expenses incurred since December. These utilities are beginning to catch up; however, HASC has carried these debts for over a quarter, and has had to pay contractors, utilities, staff, maintenance repairs, and more, even though the funders didn’t pay HASC.

### **Action Items Background:**

1. **Section 8 Administrative Plan Update:** The Housing Opportunities through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA) was signed into law on July 29, 2016. It includes significant changes to the HUD programs, and due to complexities, its implementation has been delayed until June 2024. This has required staff to take 80 hours of focused review and research to determine which rules apply to HASC and to include these in our Section 8 Admin Plan. These are required changes. The Plan is included in the agenda for your approval. This must be approved in April, so that the PHA Plan process can proceed in a timely manner for the HUD required July deadline.
2. **Potential Funding Applications:** HASC has been informed that the County desires for HASC to assist the County in spending down their ARPA funds by December 2024. The County desires HASC to produce a robust website and to pursue strategic planning.

### **Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: March 13, 2024 meeting minutes; March expenses
2. Review and approve updated Section 8 Administrative Plan, per HOTMA
3. Discussion and potential action on funding applications for strategic planning and website development

Cathy Kerr, Gilberto Estrada, and Claudia Marken gave updates on their programs.

### **FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair shared the financial report, and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. March expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in March 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44447 - 44487	\$ 109,425.18
(9) Section 8	70905 - 71139	\$ 459,654.91
(20) LAP	7517 - 7529	\$ 9,368.74
(21) MBM	5108 - 5110	\$ 4,601.02
(22) Farmworker	80348 - 80349	\$ 5,552.98
(23) MVFH	5114 - 5124	\$ 54,503.07
(30) BT	11373 - 11384	\$ 8,928.62
(31) President	7879 - 7885	\$ 25,869.20
(40) RR 1	6149 - 6153	\$ 6,718.70
(43) RR 2	1215 - 1217	\$ 3,404.09

### **REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Vice-Chair Tina Tate updated the Board on her progress related to preparing for Strategic Planning. She said she had received a bid from one consultant. Secretary Corey said she would provide names of several other consultants who had been recommended by other Housing Authorities, so an RFP could be prepared, per the Procurement Policies. Vice-Chair Tate indicated she would do a doodle poll for the quarterly meeting with the County. Chair Valdez indicated that the scope for strategic planning would need to be discussed.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the March 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the March 13, 2024 Regular & Joint meeting, as presented. Commissioner Peter Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the Section 8 Administrative Plan, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*The matter of a County funding application was tabled.

**COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners discussed resuming discussions about strategic planning at the following meeting. Commissioner Tate requested an orientation on the audit and income statements, to assist the board members in reading these.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
May 8, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate  
Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna  
Crystle Stidham (via zoom)

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Cathy Kerr  
Gilberto Estrada  
Claudia Marken  
Beverly Sarchet

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

None

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:01 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Luis Reyna, and Peter Cavan. Crystle Stidham joined via zoom.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments. There were no members of the public present.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the April 10, 2024 Regular Board meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. None this month, to allow sufficient time for Board discussion.

**General Administrative Updates**

\*In Administration/Finance, we continue to have health related absences, but there is improvement. Staff have completed the website upgrade, but it is not yet live.

\*Section 8 is working to rehire two positions. They will need to spend down their reserves this year, and this is a significant challenge.

\*The Properties Department is working to rehire one position, and progress has been made on the fire damaged units. USDA RD now owes HASC \$48,000 for four months of operating subsidy at Skagit County Seasonal Farmworker housing.

\*Weatherization is no longer fully staffed. A key employee was hospitalized for similar life-threatening issues that have been experienced by other staff. The prognosis is unknown at this time. The utility companies are catching up on what they owe HASC. They still owe about \$100,000. The Department of Commerce finally paid most of the six-month debt and currently owes HASC about \$15,000.

**Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Business as usual.

2. **Strategic Planning:** Vice Chair Tina Tate requested information regarding other consultants who may be interested in bidding for strategic planning with HASC. Other housing authorities have recommended: BDS Urban Planning & Design (now Uncommon Bridges), with Brian Scott; JH Brawner; and BerryDunn / ECONorthwest (which were found to be expensive). There are also current and retired housing authority executive directors who may be available as well, depending on price needs.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: April 10, 2024 meeting minutes; April expenses
2. Discussion and potential action on funding applications for strategic planning and website development

Gilberto Estrada gave an update on the Property Department. Secretary Corey and staff member Beverly Sarchet shared the draft website. Board members commented that it looked great. They suggested adding some positive statistics more visibly, changing the white text on blue background to black text, adding names/bios of board members, and adding board meeting times/locations. Vice Chair Tate said that she would contact board members to get their bios for the site.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Secretary Corey, in the absence of Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair, shared the financial report, and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. April expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in April 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44488 - 44523	\$ 136,028.46
(9) Section 8	71140 - 71364	\$ 436,081.35
(20) LAP	7530 - 7538	\$ 20,513.73
(21) MBM	5111 - 5117	\$ 4,707.16
(22) Farmworker	80352 - 80358	\$ 16,771.88
(23) MVFH	5125 - 5137	\$ 26,210.45
(30) BT	11385 - 11406	\$ 35,845.24
(31) President	7886 - 7903	\$ 39,075.09
(40) RR 1	6154 - 6168	\$ 24,795.84
(43) RR 2	1218 - 1223	\$ 18,768.21

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Vice-Chair Tina Tate updated the Board on her progress related to preparing for Strategic Planning. She discussed the scope and preparation of the RFP. Board members discussed having a four-phase strategic planning process, to include a data collection phase, a one-day retreat, a data collating phase, with a minimum of a 20-page summary, and a final follow up meeting. The data collection phase would include the board and staff. The remaining phases would include the board, directors and

managers. The process should address what a housing authority is, roles and responsibilities of the board and leadership, and goals with measurable outcomes. Proposals would be evaluated on housing authority experience, experience with strategic planning facilitation, depth of preparatory work, timeline, cost, and the capacity to provide in-person facilitation.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

#### **NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the April 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the April 10, 2024 Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Peter Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to direct staff to submit an application for funds to Skagit County in the amount of \$50,000 for strategic planning and website upgrades. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

#### **COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Peter Cavan would like to attend Resident Advisory Board meetings, once the Property Department creates one. Chair Valdez would like to join meetings with the police.

#### **FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
June 12, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Tina Tate  
Peter Cavan (via zoom)  
Crystle Stidham (via zoom)

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Cathy Kerr  
Gilberto Estrada  
Claudia Marken  
Beverly Sarchet (via zoom)

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

None

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:11 p.m., Vice-Chair Tina Tate called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Tina Tate, and via zoom: Peter Cavan and Crystle Stidham. Chair Daniel Valdez and Luis Reyna were excused for medical reasons.

Vice-Chair Tate gave the opportunity for public comments. There were no members of the public present.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the May 8, 2024 Regular Board meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. Commissioner Crystle Stidham a few weeks ago requested research on ADA requirements for websites. I spoke with one of our attorneys who said that the new requirements are at least two years out, and the implementation date has not been set. We will keep this in mind for making any necessary changes to the website by the deadline.

**General Administrative Updates**

**\*In Administration/Finance**, per the Board's direction, staff have prioritized the Strategic Planning RFP. Vice-Chair Tina Tate has provided directions and we have incorporated the wishes of the Board, as expressed in the May meeting. Also, per the Board's direction, we have instructed IT to push the new website live; however, they had to complete the Board's recommended changes. Once the site is live, and the Selection Committee has approved the draft RFP, it can be released to consultants. (Additionally, the Board decided to include their bios on the website. Those can be added when we receive them.) Hiring has been put on hold until these tasks can be completed.

**\*Section 8** has been prioritizing the Annual Plans and RAB instructions, per HUD, as the deadline is looming. Also, staff are attending numerous HUD required trainings, as HUD is rolling out multiple changes concurrently. Staff will need to spend down their reserves this year,



and this is a significant challenge, due to the zero % vacancy rate for affordable housing in Skagit.

**\*The Properties Department** is making progress on rehiring one position. A second position has been filled. USDA RD now owes HASC five months of operating subsidy at Skagit County Seasonal Farmworker housing.

**\*Weatherization** is working to address staffing issues and to manage projects, in light of the Department of Commerce’s funding delays and programmatic errors. This department will meet its Commerce expected production goals by the end of June.

**Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Business as usual.
2. **Annual Open House:** Staff recommend we resume the annual open house, to be held this year on July 10. The regional HUD director would like to attend a meeting in our community, and this would be an opportunity to arrange that meeting. Also, the Section 8 Department must conduct a Public Hearing for the PHA Plans, and this would potentially facilitate some public comments. As this item involves food, staff recommend the Board approve funding for logistics.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: May 8, 2024 meeting minutes; May expenses
2. Discussion and potential action on allocating up to \$1000 for the Annual Anniversary Open House

Cathy Kerr reported that rent increases in Section 8 exceeded the payment standard and all appropriate measures have been taken. Claudia Marken in Weatherization reported that the department would meet its required production for the year ended June 30. More applicants are needed. Gilberto Estrada reported that in Properties there would be repair projects in the summer, including the painting of the La Paloma roofs.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. May expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in May 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44524 - 44568	\$ 186,857.02
(9) Section 8	71365 - 71585	\$ 428,417.38
(20) LAP	7539 - 7547	\$ 16,817.03
(21) MBM	5118 - 5121	\$ 4,260.34
(22) Farmworker	80359 - 80364	\$ 4,529.49
(23) MVFH	5138 - 5148	\$ 17,155.37
(30) BT	11407 - 11420	\$ 19,354.94
(31) President	7904 - 7912	\$ 11,597.80

(40) RR 1	6169 - 6177	\$ 15,483.37
(43) RR 2	1224 - 1235	\$ 12,431.26

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Vice-Chair Tate reported that the RFP for strategic planning was moving forward.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Peter Cavan made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the May 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the May 8, 2024 Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Crystle Stidham seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Stidham made a motion to authorize staff to spend up to \$1000 towards supplies, snacks, and other miscellanea needed for the July 10, 2024 Anniversary Open House, which would be held at the Burlington offices from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

None.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
August 14, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate  
Peter Cavan  
Crystle Stidham  
Luis Reyna

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken  
Renee Sinclair

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Peter Ruffatto, CDS Law

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:02 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Peter Cavan, Crystle Stidham, and Luis Reyna.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments. No members of the public were present to comment.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 5:05 p.m. Chair Valdez announced a move into Executive Session for 45 minutes for the purpose of discussing litigation or potential litigation with HASC's attorney. At 5:50 p.m. Chair Valdez resumed regular session.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the July 10, 2024 Regular and July 17, 2024 Special meetings were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. The award for the strategic planning consultant was delayed, while HASC waited for the County funding award. It was received by HASC on August 5. The selection committee is expected to award the contract within a few days.
2. The open house anniversary event was a huge success, with approximately 106 members of the public in attendance. Two Skagit County commissioners attended, as did two Spanish media representatives, and many of HASC's local community partners. The newly established Resident Advisory Board (RAB), many HASC participants, and others attended. Fifteen applications were received for weatherization, as well as invitations to community events to promote the program. The cake was particularly well received. The Section 8 Department was successful in eliciting comments from the public (part of the

PHA Plan process) and a broader questionnaire was distributed to attendees. Comments are still being collated. Some of the great responses were as follows (color provided by staff):

***How has the Housing Authority helped you or someone you know?***

Es como salvar a mi familia después de una separación. Al ser miembro de la Sección 8 fue una bendición para mis hijos. Puedo dedicarles tiempo sin perder mi hogar ya que la reducción de la renta es un milagro.

(It was like salvation for my family after a separation. Being members of the Section 8 program was a blessing for my children. I have time that I can dedicate to them without losing my home since the reduction in rent is a miracle.)

me ha ayudado mucho gracias al housing tengo un hogar para mi familia  
(It has helped me so much. Thanks to Housing I have a home for my family.)

By making it possible to afford an apartment. I am so grateful.

**I work with VASH. Your housing program helps a lot of our vets find housing.**

**Housing has helped my family as well as myself in a major way. I have been hurt and I have a son that is autistic. If it was not for this program, I do not know what I would do.**

Provided me housing and helped me escape an abusive roommate.

The Housing Authority helped clients/farmworker family to gain housing stabilities in the area.

The Housing Authority has been helpful in many ways. I wouldn't have an apartment without them. They keep the rent affordable.

**General Administrative Updates**

**\*In Administration/Finance**, we have lost the Staff Accountant. Renee will begin recruiting soon. Due to excessive workload and absenteeism, many items are delayed, including the audit, recruiting for several positions, HUD funds utilization, repairs, and housing development. (With the goal in mind of helping me to retain our staff, please be supportive of staff at this time, as they and I did let you know in advance that the additional requirements of intense community engagement, starting and supporting a RAB, updating the website, and pursuing the strategic planning processes in less than a two-year timeframe would impact the tasks that are required by the funders. The Board made these choices, and staff have followed the Board's direction.)

**\*Section 8** must present the PHA Plans again to Skagit County on August 19. The plans were submitted on time to HUD, without the County signed document. We appreciate that the Board did its due diligence in approving the Plans timely and did not jeopardize HASC's \$5,000,000 program. Cathy will again try to work with the County to reach agreement. Many issues have been brought up by the County, which are not relevant to the Plans. We are unsure at this time what ramifications there will be if the County does not follow through. HASC's attorney will be in attendance for an executive session.

**\*The Properties Department** has started a Resident Advisory Board (RAB). This Board will also serve as the RAB for the Section 8 Department, as there has been no interest before from participants in joining a RAB. This Board and its processes will require significant additional time and work for staff. A current staff member will be assigned to assist the RAB, and we have hired another employee to take on her former roles. We will have to find a way to cover this additional position, as the Board requested this in the middle of the fiscal year, and it was not anticipated in the budget. A financial analysis has yet to be made on whether it can be funded through the Property Department. There is no funding available in Section 8.

**\*Weatherization** will likely reduce production, due to the loss of a staff member. Production may be increased in subsequent years.

**Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Business as usual.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: July 10, 2024 regular & July 17, 2024 special meeting minutes; July expenses

Secretary Corey also gave an explanation on grant allocations, stating that most of HASC's funds are grants with very specific regulations. Grants have allowed and disallowed expenses. All expenses, including payroll, are allocated according to the grant regulations. Staff members being paid by specific grants cannot perform work in other areas, while their salaries are being allocated to their grants. This holds true for all expenses.

Gilberto Estrada reported on the Burlington Terrace railings repair project and regarding an abusive rental client, who has made discriminatory comments to staff.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. July expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in July 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44623 - 44685	\$ 468,718.07
(9) Section 8	71819 - 72047	\$ 445,958.47
(20) LAP	7548 - 7559	\$ 23,461.12

(21) MBM	5127 - 5131	\$ 4,156.36
(22) Farmworker	80371 - 80377	\$ 4,974.43
(23) MVFH	5156 - 5168	\$ 24,525.21
(30) BT	11442 - 11460	\$ 46,903.00
(31) President	7925 - 7933	\$ 12,765.72
(40) RR 1	6188 - 6200	\$ 31,519.91
(43) RR 2	1247 - 1249	\$ 4,365.50

She also reported on the audit.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Vice-Chair Tina Tate gave a brief update on the strategic planning process, stating that the contract would be awarded to a consultant soon.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the July 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the July 10, 2024 Regular and July 17, 2024 Special meetings, as presented. Commissioner Stidham seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners discussed the August 19 PHA Plan meeting with Skagit County, stating that no Board members would be available to attend.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
September 11, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
  
Peter Cavan  
Crystle Stidham  
Luis Reyna

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken  
Beverly Sarchet

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:00 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Peter Cavan, Crystle Stidham, and Luis Reyna. Tina Tate was excused.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments. No members of the public were present to comment.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the August 14, 2024 Regular meeting was acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. The strategic planning contract was awarded to SME Strategy by the Executive Committee. SME will include some external input gathering, which is above and beyond what was requested in the original RFP but was contemplated by the Board after the RFP was released. The two-day retreat is planned for October 2024.
2. Skagit County did not certify the PHA Plans, which puts in jeopardy 450 households and \$5,000,000/year as of October 1, 2024. For context, this is the greatest risk HASC has faced in 15 years. Our funds are held by HUD. They are not in our bank account. If HUD chooses to withhold our funds, we will not be able to pay the rents for 450 families on October 1.

**General Administrative Updates**

**\*In Administration/Finance**, the audit was submitted late and accepted by HUD. Work begins on next year's audit.

**\*Section 8** presented the PHA Plans to Skagit County again on August 19. They were confused again about the Plans and County staff further confused the Commissioners with erroneous information. Staff and the Board Chair have been working to better inform the Commissioners, so that they can meet this requirement before September 30. Our attorney has prepared two

extensive memos on the project basing regulations and requires these to remain confidential and protected. He will provide a separate letter to the County stating that HASC cannot place more than eight (8) vouchers at Martha's Place.

**\*The Properties Department** has been working extensively on capital repairs during the dry weather.

**\*Weatherization** has informed Commerce that they will have to reduce production this year. We are working on strategies to meet all funding requirements over the next three years.

**Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Business as usual.
2. The new fiscal year begins October 1, 2024, and Renee has provided the 2024-2025 HASC Budget, which includes the annual 5% step increases for all eligible staff and the medical benefits renewals, which include an 11.6% increase in premium costs. Dental, Vision, and Life benefits are paid in full by HASC. HASC covers 95% of premium costs for medical benefits for eligible employees. The budget includes all staff positions and shows a positive net balance at the end of the year. Some programs appear to end in a deficit, but most are explained by the use of replacement reserves, per funder requirements.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: August 14, 2024 regular meeting minutes; August expenses
2. Approval of 2024 – 2025 HASC Budget, including the annual 5% step increases for all eligible staff and the medical benefits renewals, as presented.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

In the absence of Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair, Secretary Corey shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. August expenses and checks issued were as follow:

<b>Checks Issued in August 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44686 - 44725	\$ 271,304.42
(9) Section 8	72048 - 72282	\$ 474,036.70
(20) LAP	7560 - 7560	\$ 8,260.51
(21) MBM	5132 - 5136	\$ 4,929.69
(22) Farmworker	80378 - 80384	\$ 33,372.70
(23) MVFH	5169 - 5178	\$ 10,999.68
(30) BT	11461 - 11472	\$ 53,208.51
(31) President	7934 - 7943	\$ 10,852.37
(40) RR 1	6201 - 6203	\$ 7,325.69
(43) RR 2	1250 - 1251	\$ 25,588.26



She also presented the 2024 – 2025 HASC Budget, including the medical benefits renewal spreadsheets and the 5% annual step increases for all eligible staff.

### **REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

In the absence of Vice-Chair Tina Tate, Secretary Corey gave a brief update on the strategic planning process.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Peter Cavan made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the August 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the August 14, 2024, Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Luis Reyna made a motion to approve the 2024 – 2025 HASC Budget, as presented, with the medical benefits renewal and the 5% annual step increase for all eligible staff. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, there were three yes votes and one no vote from Commissioner Crystle Stidham. The motion passed.

### **COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners discussed the PHA Plan issues regarding Skagit County and how to address the lack of collaboration needed to get the Plans certified by the County. Commissioners discussed having a joint meeting, which would not be possible before the 9/30/2024 deadline, bringing a HUD expert to mediate, delivering the HASC attorney prepared letter regarding Davis Bacon matters related to Martha's Place, sharing the CCS letter in which CCS declined vouchers at Martha's Place and any emails of the same nature, promising several matters, which included delivering materials for upcoming meetings several days in advance, among other things. Commissioners decided that Commissioner Cavan would prepare an action plan to share with Chair Valdez and Secretary Corey for them to review for the County. Commissioner Stidham said that she was friendly with Skagit County Commissioners and staff and that she would request a meeting with the County for potential action by Skagit County on the PHA Plans and get the matter on the County agenda before the end of September. All Commissioners agreed that the staff should send the HASC attorney letter to the County, to inform them of the Davis Bacon matters and project basing related to Martha's Place

### **FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

Report of the Secretary  
October 9, 2024

**Board Topics –**

1. The strategic planning process has been delayed due to the PHA Plan delays and the additional external input/surveys that the Board would like the consultants to perform. SME is available the first week of December for the two-day retreat, and they plan to complete the full process before December 15. The data collection, surveys, and engagement are the most time consuming and happen before the retreat.
2. Skagit County agreed to support HASC's application for HUD funding and certified the PHA Plans on September 30, 2024. Commissioners Tina Tate and Peter Cavan attended and supported the staff at the meeting. Many thanks to all board members who worked hard and advocated for this. Chair Valdez was unavailable on the 30<sup>th</sup> but was instrumental in advocacy in the months leading up to this success. Staff also worked long hours internally and with Skagit County staff to get to this agreement.

**General Administrative Updates**

\***In Administration/Finance**, the fiscal year ended 9/30/2024. The department will be working on closing out the year and hiring a new staff accountant.

\***Section 8** is working on submitting the PHA Plans again, as the portal did not work on 9/30. Staff will be catching up on work and hiring a new specialist. HASC is overspending Section 8 funds, due to the extremely high costs of rents. HUD has told HASC to stop new leasing and to take precautionary measures to avoid shortfall. It is vital for HASC staff to follow HUD's guidance, even when it conflicts with local pressure and priorities. See attached HUD email.

\***The Properties Department** has been working extensively on capital repairs during the dry weather and taking required programmatic trainings.

\***Weatherization** is working on strategies to meet all funding requirements over the next three years.

\* **Development** has begun on the Farmview Family Housing. We are in the grant application phase. We will be looking at hiring someone to assist, as this work has been done by the Executive Director in the past, requiring her to work 80 hours/week.

**Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Business as usual.
2. Strategic Planning will incur logistical costs outside the approved grant allowances, such as site rental, food, and supplies – which are required by the consultant. Staff recommend the Board authorize staff to spend up to \$2500 for these miscellaneous expenses.
3. The tax credit application requires a board resolution.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: September 11, 2024 regular meeting minutes; September expenses
2. Approval of Strategic Planning logistical expenses
3. Approval of Farmview Family Housing Resolution

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
October 9, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate

Crystle Stidham (5:06 p.m.)  
Luis Reyna

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Ed Johnson  
Denise Rafnson

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:05 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, and Luis Reyna. Crystle Stidham arrived shortly after.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments. Ed Johnson made a statement about the hardships of the cost of living. He expected to be helped by HASC staff when he got locked out of his car. (HASC does not provide this service to tenants.)

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the September 11, 2024 Regular meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Secretary Corey shared the HUD email regarding the need for HASC to reduce spending and utilization in the Section 8 program, due to the increasing costs of rents. HUD is concerned that the program will be out of funds by the end of 2025. HASC staff will take precautionary measures, to avoid the “release of tenants from housing due to lack of funding,” per HUD. Cathy Kerr also shared that the waiver to increase rent maximums to 120% of FMR is expiring at the end of 2024. This waiver had helped voucher holders get on the program. It will likely be harder for voucher holders to get on the program going forward.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. The strategic planning process has been delayed due to the PHA Plan delays and the additional external input/surveys that the Board would like the consultants to perform. SME is available the first week of December for the two-day retreat, and they plan to complete the full process before December 15. The data collection, surveys, and engagement are the most time consuming and happen before the retreat.
2. Skagit County agreed to support HASC’s application for HUD funding and certified the PHA Plans on September 30, 2024. Commissioners Tina Tate and Peter Cavan attended and supported the staff at the meeting. Many thanks to all board members who worked hard and advocated for this. Chair Valdez was unavailable on the 30<sup>th</sup> but was

instrumental in advocacy in the months leading up to this success. Staff also worked long hours internally and with Skagit County staff to get to this agreement.

**General Administrative Updates**

**\*In Administration/Finance**, the fiscal year ended 9/30/2024. The department will be working on closing out the year and hiring a new staff accountant.

**\*Section 8** is working on submitting the PHA Plans again, as the portal did not work on 9/30. Staff will be catching up on work and hiring a new specialist. HASC is overspending Section 8 funds, due to the extremely high costs of rents. HUD has told HASC to stop new leasing and to take precautionary measures to avoid shortfall. It is vital for HASC staff to follow HUD’s guidance, even when it conflicts with local pressure and priorities. See attached HUD email.

**\*The Properties Department** has been working extensively on capital repairs during the dry weather and taking required programmatic trainings.

**\*Weatherization** is working on strategies to meet all funding requirements over the next three years.

**\* Development** has begun on the Farmview Family Housing. We are in the grant application phase. We will be looking at hiring someone to assist, as this work has been done by the Executive Director in the past, requiring her to work 80 hours/week.

**Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Business as usual.
2. Strategic Planning will incur logistical costs outside the approved grant allowances, such as site rental, food, and supplies – which are required by the consultant. Staff recommend the Board authorize staff to spend up to \$2500 for these miscellaneous expenses.
3. The tax credit application requires a board resolution.

**Governance & Legislative Matters – Action Items**

1. Regular consent agenda items: September 11, 2024 regular meeting minutes; September expenses
2. Approval of Strategic Planning logistical expenses
3. Approval of Farmview Family Housing Resolution

Gilberto Estrada reported that the maintenance department had completed 106 work orders. Cathy Kerr explained how the 120% of FMR waiver increased voucher utilization, and she shared about the new foster youth getting housed.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

In the absence of Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair, Secretary Corey shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. September expenses and checks issued were as follows:

Checks Issued in September 2024		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44726 - 44747	\$ 42,476.95
(9) Section 8	72283 - 72496	\$ 463,974.06
(20) LAP	7561 - 7571	\$ 25,557.87
(21) MBM	5137 - 5139	\$ 244.39

(22) Farmworker	80385 - 80393	\$ 27,868.40
(23) MVFH	5179 - 5182	\$ 15,060.54
(30) BT	11473 - 11477	\$ 1,553.27
(31) President	7946 - 7950	\$ 9,067.50
(40) RR 1	6204 - 6208	\$ 9,158.72
(43) RR 2	1252 - 1255	\$ 10,267.15

### **REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Vice-Chair Tina Tate and Secretary Corey gave a brief update on the strategic planning process. Due to the delays caused by the PHA Plan process, SME Consultants are unwilling to proceed with the strategic planning schedule. They feel there is insufficient time to produce a quality product. They are willing to do prework, surveys and data gathering this year and potentially hold the two-day retreat in the new year. Commissioners Tate and Stidham agreed to inquire with the Country about whether funds could be accessed in the new year. Commissioner Stidham believed that the funds did not expire in 2024. If not, Commissioners agreed that they would bill the County for the work in 2024 and look for an alternative way to pay the consultants in 2025. Commissioners would be available starting in mid-January.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the September 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the September 11, 2024, Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the resolution authorizing the submittal of grant applications for the Farmview Family Housing, including granting signature authority for the Board Chair and/or Secretary/Executive Director to enter into and execute any/all contracts/agreements and other documents necessary for the Tax Credit program. Commissioner Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

### **COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioner Tate requested that budget to actual for year-end be provided.

Public comments were allowed at the end of the meeting, as a new member of the public arrived late. Denise Rafnson questioned if President Apartments was in the process of being sold. Secretary Corey told her that it was not planned to be sold and that it had a covenant to serve low-income people. Ms. Rafnson also said that the alarms needed to be louder at President Apartments.

### **FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
November 13, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Tina Tate  
Luis Reyna  
Peter Cavan

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken  
Beverly Sarchet

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Ed Johnson

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:00 p.m., Vice Chair Tina Tate called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Tina Tate, Peter Cavan, and Luis Reyna. Daniel Valdez and Crystle Stidham were excused for travel conflicts.

Vice Chair Tate gave the opportunity for public comments. Ed Johnson made a statement about elections concerns and high rent burdens.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the October 9, 2024 Regular meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. The new strategic planning retreat dates will be January 16 - 17. Staff and Board members are diligently working on the logistics. The much-needed additional time is expected to facilitate a more pleasant process and a better result.

**General Administrative Updates**

**\*In Administration/Finance**, the fiscal year ended 9/30/2024. The department will be working on closing out the year. An internal candidate has been promoted to the staff accountant position. Our internal development processes are working well and creating efficiencies in hiring.

**\*Section 8:** HUD accepted the PHA Plans on October 17, as the portal did not work well since 9/30. Significant time and multiple submittals were necessary. Outreach will begin earlier this year, to mitigate external circumstances.

**\*The Properties Department** has managed multiple crises in the past month. The increase in vulnerable populations in HASC's portfolio has exponentially increased work and time spent supporting clients with special needs. The Resident Services Coordinator is helping alleviate some of the challenges.

\***Weatherization** has been unable to accept additional funds for a furnace replacement grant, due to Community Action not referring eligible clients. We will be looking at how to work around Community Action’s capacity challenges.

\* **Development:** Applications have been submitted for Farmview Family Housing. We are happy to report that Skagit County provided a needed letter of support for the tax credit application.

**Governance & Legislative Matters - Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Business as usual.
2. Strategic Planning will incur logistical costs outside the approved grant allowances, such as site rental, food, and supplies – which are required by the consultant. Staff recommend the Board authorize staff to spend up to \$2500 on these miscellaneous expenses.
3. The Executive Director Evaluation was due in October but delayed due to the urgent matters: PHA Plans and Strategic Planning.
4. Every few years the Board typically affirms the attorneys that HASC retains. HASC currently retains Foster Garvey, Skagit Law Group, Kantor Taylor, CSD Law, and Loeffler Law Group.
5. The November meeting is the annual meeting of HASC. Nominations and confirmations are held this month. Typically, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs have served for several years at a time, for continuity. Some of the reasons are as follows. The Chair must be listed as a signer on all the HASC bank accounts (which are substantial) and must be willing/able to accept the risk associated with this role. In October, the Board affirmed Daniel as the signer for the tax credit applications, so it would be best to retain the same signer throughout that process, which will be on-going. Also, the Vice-Chair is the lead on the Strategic Planning process, so it may be advisable to continue that leadership into the next year for that process. Of course, this is a Board decision and also that of the Chair and Vice Chair; however, continuity would facilitate the matters at hand currently from a logistical perspective. Staff have appreciated the support and efforts of the Chair and Vice-Chair this past year. Many thanks!

Claudia Marken reported that a recent outreach yielded 130 contacts. Cathy Kerr explained the SEMAP process. Gilberto reported that he had hired two new staff.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

In the absence of Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair, Secretary Corey shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. October expenses and checks issued were as follows:

Checks Issued in October 2024		
Project	Check #s	Total Amount
(10) HASC General	44748 - 44811	\$ 144,452.32
(9) Section 8	72497 - 72733	\$ 505,865.59
(20) LAP	7572 - 7589	\$ 21,895.88
(21) MBM	5140 - 5150	\$ 9,825.65

(22) Farmworker	80394 - 80410	\$ 37,413.21
(23) MVFH	5183 - 5198	\$ 22,242.78
(30) BT	11478 - 11507	\$ 49,096.55
(31) President	7951 - 7959	\$ 11,928.61
(40) RR 1	6209 - 6218	\$ 13,391.74
(43) RR 2	1256 - 1257	\$ 14,640.86

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Vice-Chair Tina Tate and Secretary Corey gave a brief update on the strategic planning process. The County has added requirements since the contract was signed, which will not be feasible – primarily requiring that the retreat dates be changed again. The consultant is unwilling to change the dates, without significant financial penalties, due to the many changes in dates that have already occurred. Secretary Corey said that HASC could afford to pay for the full Strategic Planning fees, as they will be under \$20,000. The Board members agreed to proceed without the County funds.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Cavan made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the October 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the October 9, 2024 Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Reyna made a motion to approve up to \$2500 in strategic planning logistical costs, including food for the retreat. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Cavan made a motion to approve the continued use of the HASC attorneys, per the Secretary’s report. Commissioner Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Tate tabled the motions regarding nominations and performance evaluation to the December meeting.

**COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners agreed to drop the County contract for the strategic planning consultant and to pay for this process internally with an unrestricted source of funding and to proceed with the confirmed dates in January, as it has not been possible to coordinate all board members schedules over the past several months.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 6:04 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary



HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
December 11, 2024

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate  
Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna  
Crystel Stidham (5:06 p.m.)

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken  
Beverly Sarchet

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:01 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Peter Cavan, and Luis Reyna. Crystle Stidham arrived shortly after.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments. No members of the public were present.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the November 13, 2024 Regular meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. The strategic planning retreat dates will be evaluated again this meeting; otherwise, the dates will be January 16 - 17. Surveys are in process. A Spanish version is needed.

**General Administrative Updates**

**\*In Administration/Finance**, the staff accountant and our outside accountant are helping alleviate the unwieldy workload, which has been caused by absenteeism, significant health issues, and underqualified front-line staff.

\*The Executive Director has sustained another injury, from performing work that should have been completed by staff. We continue to have challenges finding qualified new hires for front-line staff positions. Many staff arrive at HASC without the minimum qualifications required – such as language and math skills, attendance (some staff have been absent 50%+), work ethics, and relational skills. This has resulted in the managers and directors having to spend extra time on work product corrections and on outright performance of work that staff has left incomplete, besides the additional time and patience needed to onboard and train underqualified staff. This causes undo pressure on other staff who have to pick up additional duties. It takes time to investigate complaints, determine who is underperforming, retrain staff and follow corrective action procedures before exits can occur. The lack of a qualified workforce in Skagit is not new. The high performers at HASC have primarily come from outside the area. The

managers and directors, on the other hand, are highly trained and educated and subsequently have to work long hours. In-house training and staff development continues.

**\*Section 8:** Staff are attending much-needed trainings out of office. Significant changes are occurring, and the program has become more complex in recent years.

**\*The Properties Department** continues to struggle with uncooperative and destructive tenants, as well as absenteeism. Training of staff continues.

**\*Weatherization** has restarted production, after reorganizing.

**\* Development:** We are awaiting the decisions of the funders.

**Governance & Legislative Matters - Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Minutes & Expenses.
2. The Executive Director evaluation and salary increase was due in October.
3. It's time for nominations and confirmations. Typically, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs have served for several years at a time, for continuity. Some of the reasons are as follows. The Chair must be listed as a signer on all the HASC bank accounts (which are substantial) and must be willing/able to accept the risk associated with this role. In October, the Board confirmed Daniel as the signer for the tax credit applications, so it would be best to retain the same signer throughout that process. Also, the Vice-Chair is lead on the Strategic Planning process, so it may be advisable to continue that leadership into the next year.
4. Dates for the Retreat are being reconsidered, and a decision may be necessary regarding payment for the consultant.
5. It is close to the time to schedule a joint meeting with Skagit County. Discussion is advised.

Claudia Marken reported that the waiting list is increasing in Weatherization, and a recent Commerce audit was good. Cathy reported that two Section 8 staff attended FSS training out of office and that the FSS program was functioning well. Gilberto Estrada reported that staff were working on preparations needed before the holidays. He has a great team, and many staff have worked for over 20 years at HASC.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. November expenses and checks issued were as follows:

<b>Checks Issued in November 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44812 - 44859	\$ 249,776.38
(9) Section 8	72734 - 72958	\$ 489,967.15
(20) LAP	7590 - 7600	\$ 17,643.71
(21) MBM	5151 - 5155	\$ 7,914.04
(22) Farmworker	80411 - 80424	\$ 5,506.17
(23) MVFH	5199 - 5203	\$ 7,704.30

(30) BT	11508 - 11517	\$ 27,469.84
(31) President	7960 - 7977	\$ 16,734.19
(40) RR 1	6219 - 6233	\$ 32,227.97
(43) RR 2	1258 - 1274	\$ 17,433.87

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Vice-Chair Tina Tate informed the Board that the consultant would charge HASC an additional \$2000 for changing the date of the Strategic Planning Retreat again, but that Skagit County will cover the extra expenses, as part of the grant. The new retreat dates will be January 21 and 22, and Skagit County will reimburse the expenses if all members of the Board attend.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Cavan made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the November 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the November 13, 2024 Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously, except for Commissioner Stidham, who abstained from voting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 5:30 p.m. Chair Valdez announced a move into Executive Session for approximately 60 minutes to discuss the Executive Director’s performance evaluation. All staff, including the Executive Director, departed, as requested by the Chair. At 6:30 he moved back to Regular Session to announce that Executive Session would require an additional 30 minutes and invited the Executive Director into Executive Session. At 6:53 Chair Valdez announced a move back into Regular Session. The Executive Director requested that the CBIZ Housing Authority Compensation and Benefits Survey, which was commissioned by Everett Housing Authority and included 16 peer housing authorities, be considered when evaluating her salary, as well as the fact that she had restarted housing development and brought into the agency over \$30,000,000 in additional funds since her tenure. She also said that the Finance Director’s salary was very low compared to peer agencies and that the agency could not afford to lose the Finance Director. The Finance Director’s salary has been held back, due to the Executive Director’s salary ceiling. The Board said that they would reconsider the Executive Director’s salary in February. They requested another evaluation form, in addition to the three previous self-evaluations.

\*Commissioner Cavan made a motion to increase the Executive Director’s salary by 5%, retro-active to October 1, 2024. Commissioner Stidham seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Reyna made a motion to nominate and appoint Daniel Valdez to Chair and Tina Tate to Vice-Chair of the Board for another term. Commissioner Stidham seconded the motion. Daniel Valdez and Tina Tate accepted the positions for another term. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to move the Board Retreat Dates to January 21 and 22, 2025, to use the County funding for payment of the consultant, to cancel the Regular January Board meeting, and to hold a brief session for voting on the consent agenda at the Board Retreat on the 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup>. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

Commissioners discussed potentially holding a joint meeting with Skagit County the second or third week of March. They also discussed doing a salary study, beyond the CBIZ Housing Authority Compensation and Benefits Survey, and reconsidering the Executive Director's salary in February for potential increase.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
January 21 & 22, 2025

This January 21, 2025 meeting was conducted in person at the Rosario Beach Marine Laboratory in Anacortes.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez (9:30 a.m.)  
Tina Tate  
Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna  
Crystel Stidham

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken  
Beverly Sarchet

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

**ROLL CALL**

January 21, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., Vice-Chair Tina Tate called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Tina Tate, Peter Cavan, Crystel Stidham, and Luis Reyna. Daniel Valdez arrived shortly after.

No members of the public were present to give public comment.

Commissioners engaged in Strategic Planning with outside consultant SME Strategy.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

\*\*\*\*\*

This January 22, 2025 meeting was conducted in person at the Rosario Beach Marine Laboratory in Anacortes.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate (10:00 a.m.)  
Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna  
Crystel Stidham

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken  
Lillian Mariscal

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Denise Rafnson (3:15 p.m.)

**ROLL CALL**

January 22, 2025, at 8:35 a.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Peter Cavan, Crystel Stidham, and Luis Reyna. Tina Tate arrived shortly after.

No members of the public were present to give public comment.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the December 11, 2024 Regular meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

In the absence of Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair, Secretary Corey shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. December expenses and checks issued were as follows:

<b>Checks Issued in December 2024</b>		
<u>Project</u>	<u>Check #s</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
(10) HASC General	44860 - 44915	\$ 156,777.86
(9) Section 8	72959 - 73188	\$ 517,728.68
(20) LAP	7601 - 7604	\$ 6,324.29
(21) MBM	5156 - 5166	\$ 7,318.90
(22) Farmworker	80425 - 80438	\$ 32,193.35
(23) MVFH	5204 - 5216	\$ 51,897.23
(30) BT	11518 - 11534	\$ 35,245.82
(31) President	7978 - 7991	\$ 19,634.56
(40) RR 1	6234 - 6249	\$ 29,465.24
(43) RR 2	1275 - 1282	\$ 26,635.96

**NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Cavan made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the December 2024 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the December 11, 2024 Regular meeting, as presented. Commissioner Luis Reyna seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners engaged in Strategic Planning with outside consultant SME Strategy.

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

Report of the Secretary  
February 12, 2025

**Board Topics –**

1. Draft Strategic Planning Report – a “living” document for determining priorities and tracking results. Consultant Anthony suggested (2/3/25):
  - a. correcting some typographical errors
  - b. working to add missing details
  - c. tracking progress at regular meetings
  - d. retaining full report as an internal document
2. Strategic Planning One-Pager – Consultant Anthony suggested:
  - a. Website/external report to include One-Pager, less “vision 2028,” which he considers to be internal facing
  - b. Consultant suggested adding some smart goals (with more positive language) to be included in a summary potentially prepared for certain external stakeholders
  - c. Staff suggests Board/staff discuss details to include, so staff can begin drafting a positive external report
3. Consultant suggested scheduling his follow-up at the March Regular Meeting

**General Administrative Updates**

**\*In Administration/Finance**, staff are working on audits. Illness is still hampering this team. The Director has been promoted, with a salary that exceeds the Executive Director’s salary.

**\*Section 8:** Staff have completed the required compliance reports/deadlines. Much change is expected in reporting going forward.

**\*The Properties Department** has just completed annual State compliance reporting.

**\*Weatherization (WX)** was unable to accept the new \$250,000 grant for heating systems, due to not receiving referrals timely from Community Action. Commerce required jobs to be completed within the next five months. WX jobs require at least six months for completion.

**\* Development:** We have been awarded tax credits from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission with a market value of approximately \$7,700,000. Please join me in celebrating this Strategic Planning Goal success!

**Governance & Legislative Matters - Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Minutes & Expenses.
2. The Board agreed to review the Executive Director’s salary, with regards to the third-party study, at the February meeting, to include a salary adjustment that is more in line with local housing authority standards.
3. The Draft Strategic Planning Summary/Report can be accepted as a living/changeable document.
4. The External Strategic Planning Report could be discussed for staff to draft. A vote may or may not be needed based on how much progress is made on the details.
5. Staff recommend the Board invite the Consultant to the March meeting for follow-up.
6. It is close to the time to schedule a joint meeting with Skagit County. Discussion is suggested.

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SKAGIT COUNTY  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
February 19, 2025

This meeting was conducted in person and via zoom. Members of the public could attend either way.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Daniel Valdez  
Tina Tate (via Zoom)  
Peter Cavan  
Luis Reyna  
Crystle Stidham

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melanie Corey  
Gilberto Estrada  
Cathy Kerr  
Claudia Marken  
Renee Sinclair (via Zoom)

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Retired Dreamer (via Zoom)

**ROLL CALL**

At 5:00 p.m., Chair Daniel Valdez called the meeting to order, a quorum being present. Present were Daniel Valdez, Tina Tate, Peter Cavan, Luis Reyna, and Crystel Stidham.

Chair Valdez gave the opportunity for public comments from the member of the public which was online, but no comment was made. Commissioner Stidham announced that she was recording the meeting.

**MINUTES**

Minutes of the January 21 & 22, 2025 Special meeting were acknowledged as having been reviewed.

**BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**REPORT OF THE SECRETARY**

**Board Topics –**

1. Draft Strategic Planning Report – a “living” document for determining priorities and tracking results. Consultant Anthony suggested (2/3/25):
  - a. correcting some typographical errors
  - b. working to add missing details
  - c. tracking progress at regular meetings
  - d. retaining full report as an internal document
2. Strategic Planning One-Pager – Consultant Anthony suggested:
  - a. Website/external report to include One-Pager, less “vision 2028,” which he considers to be internal facing
  - b. Consultant suggested adding some smart goals (with more positive language) to be included in a summary potentially prepared for certain external stakeholders
  - c. Staff suggests Board/staff discuss details to include, so staff can begin drafting a positive external report
3. Consultant suggested scheduling his follow-up at the March Regular Meeting

**General Administrative Updates**



\***In Administration/Finance**, staff are working on audits. Illness is still hampering this team. The Director has been promoted, with a salary that exceeds the Executive Director's salary.

\***Section 8:** Staff have completed the required compliance reports/deadlines. Much change is expected in reporting going forward.

\***The Properties Department** has just completed annual State compliance reporting.

\***Weatherization (WX)** was unable to accept the new \$250,000 grant for heating systems, due to not receiving referrals timely from Community Action. Commerce required jobs to be completed within the next five months. WX jobs require at least six months for completion.

\* **Development:** We have been awarded tax credits from the Washington State Housing Finance Commission with a market value of approximately \$7,700,000. Please join me in celebrating this Strategic Planning Goal success!

**Governance & Legislative Matters - Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Minutes & Expenses.
2. The Board agreed to review the Executive Director's salary, with regards to the third-party study, at the February meeting, to include a salary adjustment that is more in line with local housing authority standards.
3. The Draft Strategic Planning Summary/Report can be accepted as a living/changeable document.
4. The External Strategic Planning Report could be discussed for staff to draft. A vote may or may not be needed based on how much progress is made on the details.
5. Staff recommend the Board invite the Consultant to the March meeting for follow-up.
6. It is close to the time to schedule a joint meeting with Skagit County. Discussion is suggested.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Finance Director Dr. Renee Sinclair shared the financial report and the monthly expenses for each project, including check numbers and payroll. Board members acknowledged having reviewed them. January expenses and checks issued were as follows:

Checks Issued in January 2025		
Project	Check #s	Total Amount
(10) HASC General	44916 - 44950	\$ 61,328.11
(9) Section 8	73189 - 73433	\$ 509,309.87
(20) LAP	7605 - 7613	\$ 23,179.51
(21) MBM	5167 - 5168	\$ 4,238.22
(22) Farmworker	80439 - 80461	\$ 9,635.35
(23) MVFH	5217 - 5221	\$ 11,610.25
(30) BT	11535 - 11543	\$ 11,313.38
(31) President	7992 - 8001	\$ 12,797.64
(40) RR 1	6250 - 6257	\$ 9,667.74
(43) RR 2	1283 - 1289	\$ 6,817.04

### **REPORT OF COMMITTEES**

Secretary Corey gave a brief update on the strategic planning process. Commissioners requested that the Secretary edit the Strategic Plan Overview Vision 2028 to be in future tense and to get the edited version on the website. Commissioners requested that the Secretary condense the Recap to include the Executive Summary, items from page 3 related to celebration, and goals from pages 12 and 13 for review at the March meeting, in the creation of a public facing Strategic Plan.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS & CONSENT AGENDA**

\*Commissioner Reyna made a motion to approve the consent agenda, including the January 2025 checks and expenses and the Minutes of the January 21 & 22, 2025 Special meeting, as presented. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously, except for Commissioner Stidham, who voted no due to voting no on the original budget.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 6:00 p.m. Chair Valdez announced a move into Executive Session for 35 minutes for the purpose of discussing the Executive Director's performance evaluation. At 6:35 p.m. Chair Valdez announced a move into Regular Session.

\*Commissioner Reyna made a motion to increase the Executive Director's salary to \$148,000/year effective the next pay period, not retroactively, and to create an Evaluation Committee including Commissioners Tate and Cavan, and that salaries cannot be raised above the Executive Director's rate until the Evaluation Committee reports back. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously, except for Commissioner Stidham voting "no."

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to approve the Strategic Planning Recap, as provided by SME, in that it fulfilled the intent of the contract to provide a final report. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Tate made a motion to invite SME to the March meeting for the one-hour follow-up session, as expressed in the contract. Commissioner Stidham seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

\*Commissioner Reyna made a motion to approve holding a joint meeting with Skagit County in late April (preferably April 30) or in May, and appointing Commissioner Tate to reach out to the County to coordinate the date. Commissioner Cavan seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

### **COMMENTS & REPORTS BY THE COMMISSIONERS**

None.

### **FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 6:43 p.m.  
Respectfully submitted, Melanie Corey, Secretary

Report of the Secretary  
March 12, 2025

**Board Topics –**

1. Draft Strategic Plan – as the Board requested in February, attached is a draft Strategic Plan, for the Board to edit and comment on. There is one more month to refine it. Due to empty spaces, I have added potential goals which reflect Board discussion at regular meetings. They can be deleted if desired.
2. Strategic Plan One-Pager – Staff are working to get it on the website, as they are newly trained in this task.
3. SME consultant Anthony will attend the meeting for the one-hour follow-up session.

**General Administrative Updates**

Staff have been working to update or create documents that have been requested through the attached public records requests, as well as requests from Commissioner Stidham. Managers and Directors are available for any questions on their programs. In the interest of time, no regular updates on HASC programs are contemplated. Topics to discuss, if time permits: Board members are invited to begin discussions about supporting staff in advocacy and in the search for land for the next project.

**\*In Administration/Finance**

**\*Section 8**

**\*The Properties Department**

**\*Weatherization (WX)**

**\* Development:**

**Governance & Legislative Matters - Action Items Background:**

1. Consent Agenda Items: Minutes & Expenses.
2. The Draft Strategic Plan is ready for the Board to edit/comment, in preparation for releasing to the County/public at the next Joint Meeting.
3. Commissioner Stidham has requested that HASC purchase the NAHRO Commissioners Handbook.
4. Commissioner Tate has been coordinating schedules for the Joint Meeting with the County and the Board may approve the day/time, if consensus is reached.
5. HASC Attorney has provided a resolution, which includes recent legal changes and charges and PRA policy update for Board approval.



# Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Certification

EXHIBIT E  
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
 Office of Public and Indian Housing

OMB Approval No. 2577-0215  
 (exp. 02/29/2020)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 12 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. This agency may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

This collection of information is required by 24 CFR sec 985.101 which requires a Public Housing Agency (PHA) administering a Section 8 tenant-based assistance program to submit an annual SEMAP Certification within 60 days after the end of its fiscal year. The information from the PHA concerns the performance of the PHA and provides assurance that there is no evidence of seriously deficient performance. HUD uses the information and other data to assess PHA management capabilities and deficiencies, and to assign an overall performance rating to the PHA. Responses are mandatory and the information collected does not lend itself to confidentiality.

**Instructions** Respond to this certification form using the PHA's actual data for the fiscal year just ended.

PHA Name	For PHA FY Ending (mm/dd/yyyy)	Submission Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
----------	--------------------------------	------------------------------

**Check here if the PHA expends less than \$300,000 a year in Federal awards**

Indicators 1 - 7 will not be rated if the PHA expends less than \$300,000 a year in Federal awards and its Section 8 programs are not audited for compliance with regulations by an independent auditor. A PHA that expends less than \$300,000 in Federal awards in a year must still complete the certification for these indicators.

**Performance Indicators**

1. Selection from the Waiting List. (24 CFR 982.54(d)(1) and 982.204(a))

(a) The PHA has written policies in its administrative plan for selecting applicants from the waiting list.

PHA Response Yes  No

(b) The PHA's quality control samples of applicants reaching the top of the waiting list and of admissions show that at least 98% of the families in the samples were selected from the waiting list for admission in accordance with the PHA's policies and met the selection criteria that determined their places on the waiting list and their order of selection.

PHA Response Yes  No

2. Reasonable Rent. (24 CFR 982.4, 982.54(d)(15), 982.158(f)(7) and 982.507)

(a) The PHA has and implements a reasonable written method to determine and document for each unit leased that the rent to owner is reasonable based on current rents for comparable unassisted units (i) at the time of initial leasing, (ii) before any increase in the rent to owner, and (iii) at the HAP contract anniversary if there is a 5 percent decrease in the published FMR in effect 60 days before the HAP contract anniversary. The PHA's method takes into consideration the location, size, type, quality, and age of the program unit and of similar unassisted units, and any amenities, housing services, maintenance or utilities provided by the owners.

PHA Response Yes  No

(b) The PHA's quality control sample of tenant files for which a determination of reasonable rent was required shows that the PHA followed its written method to determine reasonable rent and documented its determination that the rent to owner is reasonable as required for (check one):

PHA Response  At least 98% of units sampled  80 to 97% of units sampled  Less than 80% of units sampled

3. Determination of Adjusted Income. (24 CFR part 5, subpart F and 24 CFR 982.516)

The PHA's quality control sample of tenant files shows that at the time of admission and reexamination, the PHA properly obtained third party verification of adjusted income or documented why third party verification was not available; used the verified information in determining adjusted income; properly attributed allowances for expenses; and, where the family is responsible for utilities under the lease, the PHA used the appropriate utility allowances for the unit leased in determining the gross rent for (check one):

PHA Response  At least 90% of files sampled  80 to 89% of files sampled  Less than 80% of files sampled

4. Utility Allowance Schedule. (24 CFR 982.517)

The PHA maintains an up-to-date utility allowance schedule. The PHA reviewed utility rate data that it obtained within the last 12 months, and adjusted its utility allowance schedule if there has been a change of 10% or more in a utility rate since the last time the utility allowance schedule was revised.

PHA Response Yes  No

5. HQS Quality Control Inspections. (24 CFR 982.405(b))

A PHA supervisor (or other qualified person) reinspected a sample of units during the PHA fiscal year, which met the minimum sample size required by HUD (see 24 CFR 985.2), for quality control of HQS inspections. The PHA supervisor's reinspected sample was drawn from recently completed HQS inspections and represents a cross section of neighborhoods and the work of a cross section of inspectors.

PHA Response Yes  No

6. HQS Enforcement. (24 CFR 982.404)

The PHA's quality control sample of case files with failed HQS inspections shows that, for all cases sampled, any cited life-threatening HQS deficiencies were corrected within 24 hours from the inspection and, all other cited HQS deficiencies were corrected within no more than 30 calendar days from the inspection or any PHA-approved extension, or, if HQS deficiencies were not corrected within the required time frame, the PHA stopped housing assistance payments beginning no later than the first of the month following the correction period, or took prompt and vigorous action to enforce the family obligations for (check one):

PHA Response  At least 98% of cases sampled  Less than 98% of cases sampled

7. Expanding Housing Opportunities. (24 CFR 982.54(d)(5), 982.153(b)(3) and (b)(4), 982.301(a) and 983.301(b)(4) and (b)(12)).

**Applies only to PHAs with jurisdiction in metropolitan FMR areas.**

Check here if not applicable

(a) The PHA has a written policy to encourage participation by owners of units outside areas of poverty or minority concentration which clearly delineates areas in its jurisdiction that the PHA considers areas of poverty or minority concentration, and which includes actions the PHA will take to encourage owner participation.

PHA Response Yes  No

(b) The PHA has documentation that shows that it took actions indicated in its written policy to encourage participation by owners outside areas of poverty and minority concentration.

PHA Response Yes  No

(c) The PHA has prepared maps that show various areas, both within and neighboring its jurisdiction, with housing opportunities outside areas of poverty and minority concentration; the PHA has assembled information about job opportunities, schools and services in these areas; and the PHA uses the maps and related information when briefing voucher holders.

PHA Response Yes  No

(d) The PHA's information packet for voucher holders contains either a list of owners who are willing to lease, or properties available for lease, under the voucher program, or a list of other organizations that will help families find units and the list includes properties or organizations that operate outside areas of poverty or minority concentration.

PHA Response Yes  No

(e) The PHA's information packet includes an explanation of how portability works and includes a list of neighboring PHAs with the name, address and telephone number of a portability contact person at each.

PHA Response Yes  No

(f) The PHA has analyzed whether voucher holders have experienced difficulties in finding housing outside areas of poverty or minority concentration and, where such difficulties were found, the PHA has considered whether it is appropriate to seek approval of exception payment standard amounts in any part of its jurisdiction and has sought HUD approval when necessary.

PHA Response Yes  No

8. Payment Standards. The PHA has adopted current payment standards for the voucher program by unit size for each FMR area in the PHA jurisdiction and, if applicable, for each PHA-designated part of an FMR area, which do not exceed 110 percent of the current applicable FMR and which are not less than 90 percent of the current FMR (unless a lower percent is approved by HUD). (24 CFR 982.503)

PHA Response Yes  No

Enter current FMRs and payment standards (PS)

0-BR FMR \_\_\_\_\_ 1-BR FMR \_\_\_\_\_ 2-BR FMR \_\_\_\_\_ 3-BR FMR \_\_\_\_\_ 4-BR FMR \_\_\_\_\_  
PS \_\_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_\_ PS \_\_\_\_\_

**If the PHA has jurisdiction in more than one FMR area, and/or if the PHA has established separate payment standards for a PHA-designated part of an FMR area, attach similar FMR and payment standard comparisons for each FMR area and designated area.**

9. Annual Reexaminations. The PHA completes a reexamination for each participating family at least every 12 months. (24 CFR 982.516)

PHA Response Yes  No

10. Correct Tenant Rent Calculations. The PHA correctly calculates tenant rent in the rental certificate program and the family rent to owner in the rental voucher program. (24 CFR 982, Subpart K)

PHA Response Yes  No

11. Precontract HQS Inspections. Each newly leased unit passed HQS inspection before the beginning date of the assisted lease and HAP contract. (24 CFR 982.305)

PHA Response Yes  No

12. Annual HQS Inspections. The PHA inspects each unit under contract at least annually. (24 CFR 982.405(a))

PHA Response Yes  No

13. Lease-Up. The PHA executes assistance contracts on behalf of eligible families for the number of units that has been under budget for at least one year.

PHA Response Yes  No

14a. Family Self-Sufficiency Enrollment. The PHA has enrolled families in FSS as required. (24 CFR 984.105)

**Applies only to PHAs required to administer an FSS program.**

Check here if not applicable

PHA Response

a. Number of mandatory FSS slots (Count units funded under the FY 1992 FSS incentive awards and in FY 1993 and later through 10/20/1998. Exclude units funded in connection with Section 8 and Section 23 project-based contract terminations, public housing demolition, disposition and replacement; HUD multifamily property sales; prepaid or terminated mortgages under section 236 or section 221(d)(3); and Section 8 renewal funding. Subtract the number of families that successfully completed their contracts on or after 10/21/1998.)

or, Number of mandatory FSS slots under HUD-approved exception

b. Number of FSS families currently enrolled

c. Portability: If you are the initial PHA, enter the number of families currently enrolled in your FSS program, but who have moved under portability and whose Section 8 assistance is administered by another PHA

Percent of FSS slots filled (b + c divided by a)

14b. Percent of FSS Participants with Escrow Account Balances. The PHA has made progress in supporting family self-sufficiency as measured by the percent of currently enrolled FSS families with escrow account balances. (24 CFR 984.305)

Applies only to PHAs required to administer an FSS program .

Check here if not applicable

PHA Response Yes  No

Portability: If you are the initial PHA, enter the number of families with FSS escrow accounts currently enrolled in your FSS program, but who have moved under portability and whose Section 8 assistance is administered by another PHA

**Deconcentration Bonus Indicator** (Optional and only for PHAs with jurisdiction in metropolitan FMR areas).

The PHA is submitting with this certification data which show that:

- (1) Half or more of all Section 8 families with children assisted by the PHA in its principal operating area resided in low poverty census tracts at the end of the last PHA FY;
- (2) The percent of Section 8 mover families with children who moved to low poverty census tracts in the PHA's principal operating area during the last PHA FY is at least two percentage points higher than the percent of all Section 8 families with children who resided in low poverty census tracts at the end of the last PHA FY;

or

- (3) The percent of Section 8 mover families with children who moved to low poverty census tracts in the PHA's principal operating area over the last two PHA FYs is at least two percentage points higher than the percent of all Section 8 families with children who resided in low poverty census tracts at the end of the second to last PHA FY.

PHA Response Yes  No  If yes, attach completed deconcentration bonus indicator addendum.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the above responses under the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) are true and accurate for the PHA fiscal year indicated above. I also certify that, to my present knowledge, there is not evidence to indicate seriously deficient performance that casts doubt on the PHA's capacity to administer Section 8 rental assistance in accordance with Federal law and regulations.

**Warning:** HUD will prosecute false claims and statements. Conviction may result in criminal and/or civil penalties. (18 U.S.C. 1001, 1010, 1012; 31 U.S.C. 3729, 3802)

Executive Director, signature

Chairperson, Board of Commissioners, signature

Date (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

Date (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

The PHA may include with its SEMAP certification any information bearing on the accuracy or completeness of the information used by the PHA in providing its certification.

# SEMAP Certification - Addendum for Reporting Data for Deconcentration Bonus Indicator

Date (mm/dd/yyyy) \_\_\_\_\_

PHA Name \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Operating Area of PHA \_\_\_\_\_  
(The geographic entity for which the Census tabulates data)

**Special Instructions for State or regional PHAs** Complete a copy of this addendum for each metropolitan area or portion of a metropolitan area (i.e., principal operating areas) where the PHA has assisted 20 or more Section 8 families with children in the last completed PHA FY. HUD will rate the areas separately and the separate ratings will then be weighted by the number of assisted families with children in each area and averaged to determine bonus points.

1990 Census Poverty Rate of Principal Operating Area \_\_\_\_\_

## Criteria to Obtain Deconcentration Indicator Bonus Points

To qualify for bonus points, a PHA must complete the requested information and answer yes for only one of the 3 criteria below. However, State and regional PHAs must always complete line 1) b for each metropolitan principal operating area.

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ a. Number of Section 8 families with children assisted by the PHA in its principal operating area at the end of the last PHA FY who live in low poverty census tracts. A low poverty census tract is a tract with a poverty rate at or below the overall poverty rate for the principal operating area of the PHA, or at or below 10% whichever is greater.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Total Section 8 families with children assisted by the PHA in its principal operating area at the end of the last PHA FY.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Percent of all Section 8 families with children residing in low poverty census tracts in the PHA's principal operating area at the end of the last PHA FY (line a divided by line b).
- Is line c 50% or more? Yes  No

- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ a. Percent of all Section 8 families with children residing in low poverty census tracts in the PHA's principal operating area at the end of the last completed PHA FY.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Number of Section 8 families with children who moved to low poverty census tracts during the last completed PHA FY.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Number of Section 8 families with children who moved during the last completed PHA FY.
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Percent of all Section 8 mover families with children who moved to low poverty census tracts during the last PHA fiscal year (line b divided by line c).
- Is line d at least two percentage points higher than line a? Yes  No

- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ a. Percent of all Section 8 families with children residing in low poverty census tracts in the PHA's principal operating area at the end of the second to last completed PHA FY.
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Number of Section 8 families with children who moved to low poverty census tracts during the last two completed PHA FYs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Number of Section 8 families with children who moved during the last two completed PHA FYs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ d. Percent of all Section 8 mover families with children who moved to low poverty census tracts over the last two completed PHA FYs (line b divided by line c).
- Is line d at least two percentage points higher than line a? Yes  No

If one of the 3 criteria above is met, the PHA may be eligible for 5 bonus points.

See instructions above concerning bonus points for State and regional PHAs.



# BOARD COMMISSIONER TRAINING

## Board Roles and Responsibilities



**2021**

Developed in 2021 using HUD's Lead the Way training, adapted by Econometrica, as well as other sources.

**ECONOMETRICA, INC.**

## Housing Choice Voucher, Section 8 Program Basics

- **Purpose:** Assist very low-income families to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market.
- **Eligibility:** Determined by total annual gross income adjusted for family size. Families at less than 50 percent of area median income are eligible, but most served are at 30 percent of median income or below.
- **Housing:** Private market owned that meets HUD standards.



## Housing Choice Voucher, Section 8 Program Basics (Continued)

- **Rent/Housing Subsidy:** PHA sets rent based on a local payment standard. The tenant pays 30 percent of their adjusted income toward the rent and HUD pays the remainder as a subsidy to the landlord.
- **Voucher Allocation:** Varies based on the amount of budget authority provided by HUD and the subsidy amount needed on each voucher.
- **Subsidy:** PHA calculates the maximum amount of housing assistance allowable based on Fair Market Rent and the PHA determined payment standard.



## Annual Contributions Contract (ACC)

- Mechanism for receiving HUD funding.
- The ACC provides the terms and conditions between the PHA and HUD.
- HUD and the PHA's authorized official enter a Consolidated ACC.



## PHA's Mission, Goals, and Plan

- Annual Plan and 5-Year Plan – PHA Plan.
- Documents:
  - Housing needs (waiting lists, including site-based).
  - Various PHA policies.
  - Homeownership programs.
  - Designated housing.
  - Project-based assistance.
  - Conversion of public housing to tenant-based assistance.
  - Capital improvement funding, including demolition and disposition, repositioning, and/or development.
- Must consult with Resident Advisory Board, public, and other stakeholders.
- Obtain Board approval.



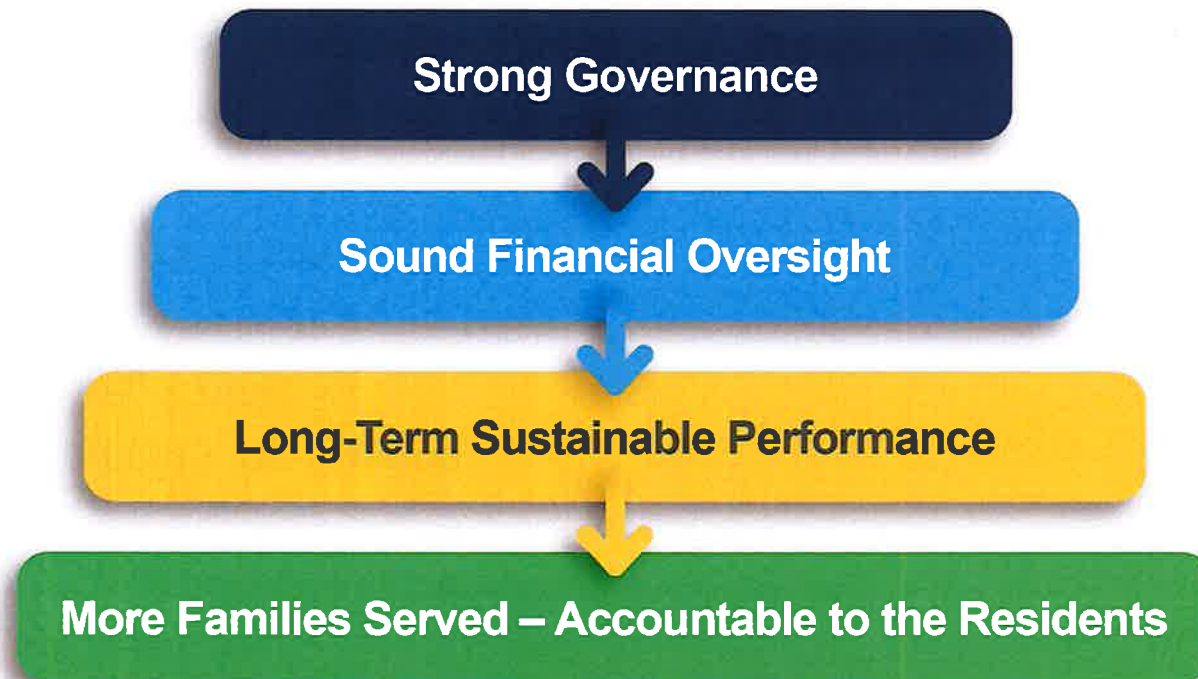
## Board Appointment

- Individual state laws dictate Board of Commissioners composition and size.
- Most appointed by the local elected official(s).
- Federal law dictates the Board must have at least one resident member.\*
  - Individuals who are residents of public housing are appointed to the Board through open elections.
  - Individuals bring unique skills and assets and perspective of living in public housing and the concerns of fellow residents.



\* This exception does not apply to PHAs of less than 300 units, Section 8 only PHAs and in other unique situations.

## Governance and Role of the Board



## Board Role Components

- Leadership
  - Set and champion the mission.
  - Provide strategic direction.
  - Ensure financial solvency.
  - Speak up regarding concerns.
- Oversight
  - Compliance: Statutory, regulatory, contractual.
  - Financial: Budgets, financial documents, corrective actions, audits, expenditures.
  - Performance: Quality of the housing, services, and adherence to policies.
- Board proceedings/Board conduct/minutes/resolutions



## Commissioner Responsibilities

- Stay informed on issues facing the PHA.
- Support, monitor, and evaluate the Executive Director.
- Represent the PHA within the community.
- Dedicate sufficient time to the job; review the materials, get training, and read trade publications.
- Provide fiduciary oversight; keep up to date on the agency financials.
- Ensure that the PHA remains financially viable.
- Evaluate PHA progress and recommend corrective actions when needed.
- Inspect the sites periodically.
- Respect staff, Board, and tenant confidentiality.

# What Should You Know



## Role of the Executive Staff, HUD, and Residents

Executive Director/ Managers	HUD
Manages PHA and staff.	Interprets congressional laws.
Oversees day-to-day operations.	Develops regulations.
Oversee PHA finances.	Resource for PHAs.
Executes Board-approved policies.	Distributes the funding to PHAs.
Ensures compliance with federal laws and guidance.	
Acts as a bridge between the Board, HUD, staff, residents, and the community.	
Responsible for all personnel functions.	
Maintains units and programs.	
Keeps commissioners informed.	

# HCV Integrity Issues

## Participant

- ✓ Nondisclosure of income
- ✓ Nondisclosure of family members
- ✓ Not using unit as prime residence

## PHA

- ✓ Ghost tenants
- ✓ Waiting list fraud
- ✓ Inspectors seeking/taking bribes

## Landlords

- ✓ Require side payments
- ✓ Misrepresent ownership
- ✓ Owner lives in assisted unit
- ✓ Owner receives HAP after tenant vacates
- ✓ Require tenant pay utilities included in rent
- ✓ Attempt to evict tenant for unpaid HAP
- ✓ Bribe or attempt to bribe PHA staff

## PHA Bylaws

- At a minimum, establish:
  - Definition of a quorum.
  - How often Board meets.
  - Location of meetings.
  - Meeting date and time.
  - Meeting attendance policy.
  - Regular agenda.



## PHA Bylaws (Continued)

- May also include:
  - Requirements for Board seat retention and attendance.
  - Participation on a committee or Board leadership.
  - Annual certification requirements for ethics, procurement, COIs, and others.
  - Training requirements.
  - Board selection and removal process.



## Board Meeting Basics

- Meetings must be conducted in a businesslike manner, using parliamentary procedures.
- Annual meetings must be held in accordance with the bylaws.
  - Officers are elected at the annual meeting.
- Board meetings are open to the public (i.e., Sunshine Law/Public Meetings Act).
- Notice of regular and special Board meetings must be provided in advance.
- All Board actions require a majority vote to pass.
- A quorum is required to hold regular, annual, and special meetings.
- Standardize agendas, minutes, and reporting; follow examples in the bylaws.
- Minutes must be approved and signed by the Board Chair and Secretary/Treasurer.

# Sample Agenda

- Call to order, roll call.
- Approval of the agenda.
- Approval of previous meeting minutes.
- Public comment.
- Report of the Secretary-Treasurer.
  - Financials.
  - Program performance.
  - Compliance: Corrective action plan status, audit findings, HUD reviews, other concerns.
  - Approval of financial statements/disbursements.
  - Correspondence.
- Reports of committees.
- Old business.
- New business.
  - Resolutions.
- Executive session (if necessary).
- Adjournment.



## Annually:

- Election of officers.
- Executive Director appraisal.



## Meeting Rules

- Follow Robert's Rules of Order and Public Meetings Act.
- Include meeting rules in bylaws.
- The Chair or Secretary-Treasurer run meetings and follow the agenda.
- Questions should be asked before an issue is voted on and approved. All votes should be recorded.
- Public comments should have time limits per speaker but allow for all those who wish to be heard have that opportunity.



## Board Packet

- PHA.
  - Copy of the agenda, prior meeting minutes, resolutions, and other materials to include financial, performance and compliance reports to be discussed at meeting.
  - Received at least several days prior to meeting.
  - Include written reports from the Executive Director and major departments, all of which can be data driven and brief.
- Board members.
  - Review materials prior to meeting.
  - Prepare questions.

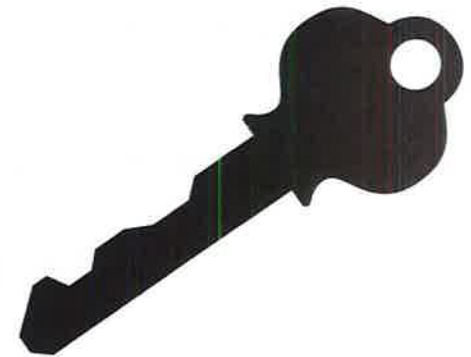


## Board Best Practices

- Provide a training and orientation to all new Board members prior to their first meeting.
- Provide each Board member with a notebook, which should include, at a minimum:
  - List and contact information for all Board members and PHA staff.
  - Board bylaws.
  - PHA ACCs.
  - Current PHA operating budget, Financial Data Schedule, and audit report.
  - Current PHA Plan and Capital Fund Plan/budget.
  - All current PHA policies (i.e., Procurement, Admission and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP), Administrative Plan, Personnel, Financial Management).
  - PHA lease.
  - Latest PHAS, Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP), and Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) scores.
  - Executive Director position description and performance evaluation form.
  - Last several Board packets.
- Ethics materials, a HUD acronym list, any management plans, or prior Board training is also helpful.

## Key Resources

- Admission & Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP).
- Section 8 HCV Administrative Plan.
- PHA Plan (Annual and 5-year).
- Capital Fund Plan (Annual and 5-year).
- PHA bylaws and code of ethics.
- Other policies:
  - Maintenance
  - Personnel.
  - Procurement.
  - Travel.
  - Vehicle.
  - Capitalization.
  - Drug-free workplace.
  - Financial management and internal controls.
  - Investments.
  - Nonsmoking housing policy.



# FOUNDATIONS: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



## Board of Commissioners

Being named a commissioner is a great opportunity to serve your community, and with your appointment you have assumed significant responsibilities. The Board of Commissioners is the legally and financially responsible governing body of a PHA and the first line of accountability for the PHA's performance.

### What Boards of Commissioners Do

#### **Provide Leadership**

- Set and champion the mission of the PHA
- Make strategic decisions to ensure the financial solvency of the agency
- Speak up when concerns arise

#### **Provide Oversight**

- Monitor the agency's ability to meet statutory, regulatory, and contractual obligations
- Assure PHAs meet obligations on audit recommendations
- Approve internal controls to safeguard the agency's assets
- Safeguard the financial integrity of the PHA, preventing fraud, waste, mismanagement, and abuse
- Approve, review, and monitor budgets, contracts, and other financial documents
- Conduct monthly reviews of budgets with actual expenses and revenues
- Ensure ethical, legal, and effective work performance
- Keep informed of subsidized housing industry rules and regulations

#### **Actively Participate in Board Meetings**

- Conduct and maintain an accurate record of board proceedings
- Follow open meeting requirements

### What Commissioners Should Know

- The agency's history, mission, programs, financials, and strategic plan
- Agency policies and procedures
- Agency-owned developments and properties
- Board and committee meeting processes, including open meeting requirements and confidentiality
- Federal and state laws and regulations

## Executive Director and Executive Staff

The commissioner's role is governance – establishing policy and ensuring oversight. The executive director's role is management. Commissioners and executive directors need to be cognizant of one another's roles without overstepping or undermining the other. Specifically, the executive director:

- Keeps commissioners informed
- Develops, implements, and oversees the operating budgets
- Ensures compliance with all federal laws and HUD guidelines
- Manages the day-to-day operations of the PHA
- Hires, evaluates, trains, and terminates staff
- Executes board-approved policies

The executive team at an authority includes more than the executive director or chief executive officer. Depending on the size of the PHA, there may also be other executive staff. These staff members are hired by the executive director, and are concerned with the day-to-day management of the PHA.

### RESIDENTS: AN ESSENTIAL VOICE

All PHAs must have a Resident Advisory Board (RAB) and Resident Commissioners. These voices can provide an important perspective on the most pressing issues facing the community of residents.

You should also get out, walk around these communities, and get to know the people you serve.

## U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD interprets the laws handed down by Congress, developing regulations to guide PHAs. These regulations are distilled in the Annual Contributions Contract (ACC), a legally-binding contract between HUD and the PHA. HUD is a resource for PHAs. HUD guidebooks, notices, and handbooks are important tools to guide your oversight. The PHA may also contact the HUD Field Office, Regional Office, and Headquarters for resources and support.

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This content is from the eCFR and is authoritative but unofficial.

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## **Title 24 – Housing and Urban Development**

### **Subtitle B – Regulations Relating to Housing and Urban Development**

#### **Chapter IX – Office of Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing, Department of Housing and Urban Development**

#### **Part 903 – Public Housing Agency Plans**

#### **Subpart B – PHA Plans and Fair Housing Requirements**

**Authority:** 42 U.S.C. 1437c; 42 U.S.C. 1437c-1; Pub. L. 110-289; 42 U.S.C. 3535d.

**Source:** 65 FR 81222, Dec. 22, 2000, unless otherwise noted.

### **§ 903.13 What is a Resident Advisory Board and what is its role in development of the Annual Plan?**

- (a) A Resident Advisory Board refers to a board or boards, as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, whose membership consists of individuals who adequately reflect and represent the residents assisted by the PHA.
  - (1) The role of the Resident Advisory Board (or Resident Advisory Boards) is to assist and make recommendations regarding the development of the PHA plan, and any significant amendment or modification to the PHA plan.
  - (2) The PHA shall allocate reasonable resources to assure the effective functioning of Resident Advisory Boards. Reasonable resources for the Resident Advisory Boards must provide reasonable means for them to become informed on programs covered by the PHA Plan, to communicate in writing and by telephone with assisted families and hold meetings with those families, and to access information regarding covered programs on the internet, taking into account the size and resources of the PHA.
- (b) Each PHA must establish one or more Resident Advisory Boards, as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.
  - (1) If a jurisdiction-wide resident council exists that complies with the tenant participation regulations in part 964 of this title, the PHA shall appoint the jurisdiction-wide resident council or the council's representatives as the Resident Advisory Board. If the PHA makes such appointment, the members of the jurisdiction-wide resident council or the council's representatives shall be added or another Resident Advisory Board formed to provide for reasonable representation of families receiving tenant-based assistance and/or project-based assistance where such representation is required under paragraph (b)(2) of this section.
  - (2) If a jurisdiction-wide resident council does not exist but resident councils exist that comply with the tenant participation regulations, the PHA shall appoint such resident councils or their representatives to serve on one or more Resident Advisory Boards. If the PHA makes such appointment, the PHA may require that the resident councils choose a limited number of representatives.

**What is a Resident Advisory Board and what is its role in development of...**

- (3) Where the PHA has a tenant-based assistance and/or project-based assistance program of significant size (where tenant-based assistance and/or project-based assistance is 20% or more of assisted households), the PHA shall assure that the Resident Advisory Board (or Boards) has reasonable representation of families receiving tenant-based assistance and/or project-based assistance and that a reasonable process is undertaken to choose this representation.
  - (4) Where or to the extent that resident councils that comply with the tenant participation regulations do not exist, the PHA shall appoint Resident Advisory Boards or Board members as needed to adequately reflect and represent the interests of residents of such developments; provided that the PHA shall provide reasonable notice to such residents and urge that they form resident councils with the tenant participation regulations.
- (c) The PHA must consider the recommendations of the Resident Advisory Board or Boards in preparing the final Annual Plan, and any significant amendment or modification to the Annual Plan, as provided in § 903.21 of this title.
- (1) In submitting the final plan to HUD for approval, or any significant amendment or modification to the plan to HUD for approval, the PHA must include a copy of the recommendations made by the Resident Advisory Board or Boards and a description of the manner in which the PHA addressed these recommendations.
  - (2) Notwithstanding the 75-day limitation on HUD review, in response to a written request from a Resident Advisory Board claiming that the PHA failed to provide adequate notice and opportunity for comment, HUD may make a finding of good cause during the required time period and require the PHA to remedy the failure before final approval of the plan.

*[65 FR 81222, Dec. 22, 2000, as amended at 89 FR 38293, May 7, 2024]*



## Exhibit I

<b>Streamlined Annual PHA Plan</b> <i>(HCV Only PHAs)</i>	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Public and Indian Housing	OMB No. 2577-0226 Expires 03/31/2024
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**Purpose.** The 5-Year and Annual PHA Plans provide a ready source for interested parties to locate basic PHA policies, rules, and requirements concerning the PHA's operations, programs, and services, including changes to these policies, and informs HUD, families served by the PHA, and members of the public of the PHA's mission, goals and objectives for serving the needs of low- income, very low- income, and extremely low- income families

**Applicability.** The Form HUD-50075-HCV is to be completed annually by **HCV-Only PHAs**. PHAs that meet the definition of a Standard PHA, Troubled PHA, High Performer PHA, Small PHA, or Qualified PHA do not need to submit this form. Where applicable, separate Annual PHA Plan forms are available for each of these types of PHAs.

**Definitions.**

- (1) **High-Performer PHA** – A PHA that owns or manages more than 550 combined public housing units and housing choice vouchers, and was designated as a high performer on both the most recent Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) and Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) assessments if administering both programs, or PHAS if only administering public housing.
- (2) **Small PHA** - A PHA that is not designated as PHAS or SEMAP troubled, that owns or manages less than 250 public housing units and any number of vouchers where the total combined units exceed 550.
- (3) **Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Only PHA** - A PHA that administers more than 550 HCVs, was not designated as troubled in its most recent SEMAP assessment and does not own or manage public housing.
- (4) **Standard PHA** - A PHA that owns or manages 250 or more public housing units and any number of vouchers where the total combined units exceed 550, and that was designated as a standard performer in the most recent PHAS and SEMAP assessments.
- (5) **Troubled PHA** - A PHA that achieves an overall PHAS or SEMAP score of less than 60 percent.
- (6) **Qualified PHA** - A PHA with 550 or fewer public housing dwelling units and/or housing choice vouchers combined and is not PHAS or SEMAP troubled.

<b>A.</b>	<b>PHA Information.</b>			
A.1	PHA Name: Housing Authority of Skagit County PHA Code: WA061 PHA Plan for Fiscal Year Beginning: (MM/YYYY): 10/2024 PHA Inventory (Based on Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) units at time of FY beginning, above) Number of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs): 722 PHA Plan Submission Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annual Submission <input type="checkbox"/> Revised Annual Submission			
<p><b>Availability of Information.</b> In addition to the items listed in this form, PHAs must have the elements listed below readily available to the public. A PHA must identify the specific location(s) where the proposed PHA Plan, PHA Plan Elements, and all information relevant to the public hearing and proposed PHA Plan are available for inspection by the public. Additionally, the PHA must provide information on how the public may reasonably obtain additional information of the PHA policies contained in the standard Annual Plan but excluded from their streamlined submissions. At a minimum, PHAs must post PHA Plans, including updates, at the main office or central office of the PHA. PHAs are strongly encouraged to post complete PHA Plans on their official website.</p> <p>The 5-Year PHA Plan, the Annual PHA Plan and the PHA Plan Elements are available on HASC's website, found here; <a href="http://www.skagitcountyha.org">www.skagitcountyha.org</a> and at the front desk located here; 1650 Port Drive, Burlington, WA 98233.</p>				
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>PHA Consortia:</b> (Check box if submitting a joint Plan and complete table below)				
Participating PHAs	PHA Code	Program(s) in the Consortia	Program(s) not in the Consortia	No. of Units in Each Program
Lead HA:				

<b>B.</b>	<b>Plan Elements.</b>
<b>B.1</b>	<p><b>Revision of Existing PHA Plan Elements.</b></p> <p>a) Have the following PHA Plan elements been revised by the PHA since its last Annual Plan submission?</p> <p>Y N</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statement of Housing Needs and Strategy for Addressing Housing Needs.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Deconcentration and Other Policies that Govern Eligibility, Selection, and Admissions.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial Resources.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Rent Determination.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operation and Management.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Informal Review and Hearing Procedures.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Homeownership Programs.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self Sufficiency Programs and Treatment of Income Changes Resulting from Welfare Program Requirements.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Substantial Deviation.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant Amendment/Modification.</p> <p>(b) If the PHA answered yes for any element, describe the revisions for each element(s): The Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) updates to HASC's Administrative Plan will not be implemented until HUD's Housing Information Portal (HIP) is active. When HIP becomes active, HASC will set a compliance date for the following HOTMA updates:</p> <p>Deconcentration, Eligibility, Selection and Admission- 1. Signing Consent Forms-Signing the HUD 9886 is mandatory for admission to the HCV Program, if consent is later revoked, assistance is terminated. 2. Families are not program eligible if they have net family assets &gt;\$100,000. 3. Families can self-certify that their net family assets are &lt; \$50,000, HASC will fully verify assets every third year. 4. Lump sum additions to net family assets are excluded from income but amounts may count toward net family assets. 5. Details added to income exclusions; temporary income, insurance payments, civil action settlements, Veteran regular aid and assistance, loans, ABLE accounts, civil rights settlements. 6. Applicants can self-certify their social security number with a third-party document listing their SSN.</p> <p>Rent Determination-1. The standard deduction for elderly or disabled increased to \$525. Both the dependent and elderly/disabled deductions are now adjusted annually for inflation. 2. Unreimbursed medical and attendant care that exceeds 10% of annual income can be deducted. HASC will phase-in the new deduction. The first 12 months unreimbursed medical expenses that exceed 5% of annual income, 2<sup>nd</sup> 12 months medical expenses that exceed 7.5% of annual income, and after 24 months, medical expenses that exceed 10% of annual income will remain in effect. If a family demonstrates a change in circumstances, they can apply for general relief (deduction from their income) of their unreimbursed medical, reasonable attendant care, auxiliary devices, or childcare expenses. 3. HASC is required to reimburse families for overpayment of the total family share of rent. Reimbursement of the tenant portion of rent will be made in current and future payments through an increase in HAP to the landlord and a decrease in the family rent until the family's overpayment is fully compensated. 4. Families must report all changes in household income and composition within 10 days. An Interim Review (IR) will be conducted when the family's income has decreased by 10%. HASC will conduct an IR when the permanent loss of household member results in a decrease in income of any amount. An IR for a 10% increase in income will be conducted when the family has previously received an income decrease during the same review cycle. A series of smaller increases may cumulatively meet the 10% increase threshold. 5. Households may be terminated when net family assets exceed \$100,000. Termination will be delayed, up to six months, allowing the family to cure the non-compliance with the asset limitation.</p>
<b>B.2</b>	<b>New Activities. – Not Applicable</b>
<b>B.3</b>	<p><b>Progress Report.</b></p> <p>Provide a description of the PHA's progress in meeting its Mission and Goals described in its 5-Year PHA Plan. 1. Achieve a high performance SEMAP rating. HASC SEMAP Rating was scored 2 of the last 5 years, a Standard Rating was achieved both of those years. 2. Apply for additional vouchers if available. HASC added 31 VASH Vouchers and 32 Emergency Housing Vouchers. HASC also added the FYI Program and is in partnership with DCYF and local providers in Skagit County. 3. HASC may project base up to 10% of its tenant-based vouchers to support its objective of producing more affordable housing. HASC added 10 Project-Based Vouchers in Mt. Vernon and committed to 18 more project-based vouchers; 12 VASH Vouchers in Burlington and 6 project-based vouchers in San Juan County.</p>
<b>B.4</b>	<b>Capital Improvements. – Not Applicable</b>
<b>B.5</b>	<p><b>Most Recent Fiscal Year Audit.</b></p> <p>(a) Were there any findings in the most recent FY Audit?</p> <p>Y N N/A</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(b) If yes, please describe: It was recommended that HASC establish internal controls regarding HQS Inspection Compliance and Utility Allowance Studies. Those recommendations have been completed and are in use.</p>
<b>C.</b>	<b>Other Document and/or Certification Requirements.</b>

C.1	<p><b>Resident Advisory Board (RAB) Comments.</b></p> <p>(a) Did the RAB(s) have comments to the PHA Plan?</p> <p>Y N  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(b) If yes, comments must be submitted by the PHA as an attachment to the PHA Plan. PHAs must also include a narrative describing their analysis of the RAB recommendations and the decisions made on these recommendations.</p>
C.2	<p><b>Certification by State or Local Officials.</b></p> <p><i>Form HUD 50077-SL, Certification by State or Local Officials of PHA Plans Consistency with the Consolidated Plan, must be submitted by the PHA as an electronic attachment to the PHA Plan.</i></p>
C.3	<p><b>Civil Rights Certification/ Certification Listing Policies and Programs that the PHA has Revised since Submission of its Last Annual Plan.</b></p> <p><i>Form HUD-50077-ST-HCV-HP, PHA Certifications of Compliance with PHA Plan, Civil Rights, and Related Laws and Regulations Including PHA Plan Elements that Have Changed, must be submitted by the PHA as an electronic attachment to the PHA Plan.</i></p>
C.4	<p><b>Challenged Elements.</b> If any element of the PHA Plan is challenged, a PHA must include such information as an attachment with a description of any challenges to Plan elements, the source of the challenge, and the PHA's response to the public.</p> <p>(a) Did the public challenge any elements of the Plan?</p> <p>Y N  <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, include Challenged Elements.</p>

**D. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH).**

**D.1 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH).**

Provide a statement of the PHA's strategies and actions to achieve fair housing goals outlined in an accepted Assessment of Fair Housing (AFFH) consistent with 24 CFR § 5.154(d)(5). Use the chart provided below. (PHAs should add as many goals as necessary to overcome fair housing issues and contributing factors.) Until such time as the PHA is required to submit an AFFH, the PHA is not obligated to complete this chart. The PHA will fulfill, nevertheless, the requirements at 24 CFR § 903.7(o) enacted prior to August 17, 2015. See Instructions for further detail on completing this item.

<p><b>Fair Housing Goal:</b></p>
<p><i>Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal</i></p>

<p><b>Fair Housing Goal:</b></p>
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Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal

**Fair Housing Goal:**

Describe fair housing strategies and actions to achieve the goal

## Instructions for Preparation of Form HUD-50075-HCV Annual PHA Plan for HCV-Only PHAs

**A. PHA Information.** All PHAs must complete this section. (24 CFR §903.4)

- A.1** Include the full **PHA Name**, **PHA Code**, **PHA Type**, **PHA Fiscal Year Beginning** (MM/YYYY), **Number of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs)**, **PHA Plan Submission Type**, and the **Availability of Information**, specific location(s) of all information relevant to the public hearing and proposed PHA Plan.

**PHA Consortia:** Check box if submitting a Joint PHA Plan and complete the table. (24 CFR §943.128(a))

**B. Plan Elements.** All PHAs must complete this section. (24 CFR §903.11(c)(3))

**B.1 Revision of Existing PHA Plan Elements.** PHAs must:

Identify specifically which plan elements listed below that have been revised by the PHA. To specify which elements have been revised, mark the "yes" box. If an element has not been revised, mark "no."

**Statement of Housing Needs and Strategy for Addressing Housing Needs.** Provide a statement addressing the housing needs of low-income, very low-income and extremely low-income families and a brief description of the PHA's strategy for addressing the housing needs of families who reside in the jurisdiction served by the PHA and other families who are on the Section 8 tenant-based assistance waiting lists. The statement must identify the housing needs of (i) families with incomes below 30 percent of area median income (extremely low-income); (ii) elderly families (iii) households with individuals with disabilities, and households of various races and ethnic groups residing in the jurisdiction or on the public housing and Section 8 tenant-based assistance waiting lists. The statement of housing needs shall be based on information provided by the applicable Consolidated Plan, information provided by HUD, and generally available data. The identification of housing needs must address issues of affordability, supply, quality, accessibility, size of units, and location. Once the PHA has submitted an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH), which includes an assessment of disproportionate housing needs in accordance with 24 CFR 5.154(d)(2)(iv), information on households with individuals with disabilities and households of various races and ethnic groups residing in the jurisdiction or on the waiting lists no longer needs to be included in the Statement of Housing Needs and Strategy for Addressing Housing Needs. (24 CFR § 903.7(a)).

The identification of housing needs must address issues of affordability, supply, quality, accessibility, size of units, and location. (24 CFR §903.7(a)(2)(i)) Provide a description of the ways in which the PHA intends, to the maximum extent practicable, to address those housing needs in the upcoming year and the PHA's reasons for choosing its strategy. (24 CFR §903.7(a)(2)(ii))

**Deconcentration and Other Policies that Govern Eligibility, Selection, and Admissions.** A statement of the PHA's policies that govern resident or tenant eligibility, selection and admission including admission preferences for HCV. (24 CFR §903.7(b))

**Financial Resources.** A statement of financial resources, including a listing by general categories, of the PHA's anticipated resources, such as PHA HCV funding and other anticipated Federal resources available to the PHA, as well as tenant rents and other income available to support tenant-based assistance. The statement also should include the non-Federal sources of funds supporting each Federal program, and state the planned use for the resources. (24 CFR §903.7(c))

**Rent Determination.** A statement of the policies of the PHA governing rental contributions of families receiving tenant-based assistance, discretionary minimum tenant rents, and payment standard policies. (24 CFR §903.7(d))

**Operation and Management.** A statement that includes a description of PHA management organization, and a listing of the programs administered by the PHA. (24 CFR §903.7(e))

**Informal Review and Hearing Procedures.** A description of the informal hearing and review procedures that the PHA makes available to its applicants. (24 CFR §903.7(f))

**Homeownership Programs.** A statement describing any homeownership programs (including project number and unit count) administered by the agency under section 8y of the 1937 Act, or for which the PHA has applied or will apply for approval. (24 CFR §903.7(k))

**Self Sufficiency Programs and Treatment of Income Changes Resulting from Welfare Program Requirements.** A description of any PHA programs relating to services and amenities coordinated, promoted, or provided by the PHA for assisted families, including those resulting from the PHA's partnership with other entities, for the enhancement of the economic and social self-sufficiency of assisted families, including programs provided or offered as a result of the PHA's partnerships with other entities, and activities subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 (24 CFR Part 135) and under requirements for the Family Self-Sufficiency Program and others. Include the program's size (including required and actual size of the FSS program) and means of allocating assistance to households. (24 CFR §903.7(l)(i)) Describe how the PHA will comply with the requirements of section 12(c) and (d) of the 1937 Act that relate to treatment of income changes resulting from welfare program requirements. (24 CFR §903.7(l)(iii)).

**Substantial Deviation.** PHA must provide its criteria for determining a "substantial deviation" to its 5-Year Plan. (24 CFR §903.7(r)(2)(i))

**Significant Amendment/Modification.** PHA must provide its criteria for determining a "Significant Amendment or Modification" to its 5-Year and Annual Plan.

If any boxes are marked "yes", describe the revision(s) to those element(s) in the space provided.

**B.2 New Activities.** This section refers to new capital activities which is not applicable for HCV-Only PHAs.

**B.3 Progress Report.** For all Annual Plans following submission of the first Annual Plan, a PHA must include a brief statement of the PHA's progress in meeting the mission and goals described in the 5-Year PHA Plan. (24 CFR §903.11(c)(3), 24 CFR §903.7(r)(1))

**B.4 Capital Improvements.** This section refers to PHAs that receive funding from the Capital Fund Program (CFP) which is not applicable for HCV-Only PHAs

**B.5 Most Recent Fiscal Year Audit.** If the results of the most recent fiscal year audit for the PHA included any findings, mark "yes" and describe those findings in the space provided. (24 CFR §903.7(p))

**C. Other Document and/or Certification Requirements.**

**C.1 Resident Advisory Board (RAB) comments.** If the RAB had comments on the annual plan, mark "yes," submit the comments as an attachment to the Plan and describe the analysis of the comments and the PHA's decision made on these recommendations. (24 CFR §903.13(c), 24 CFR §903.19)

**C.2 Certification by State of Local Officials.** Form HUD-50077-SL, *Certification by State or Local Officials of PHA Plans Consistency with the Consolidated Plan*, must be submitted by the PHA as an electronic attachment to the PHA Plan. (24 CFR §903.15). Note: A PHA may request to change its fiscal year to better coordinate its planning with planning done under the Consolidated Plan process by State or local officials as applicable.

**C.3 Civil Rights Certification/ Certification Listing Policies and Programs that the PHA has Revised since Submission of its Last Annual Plan.** Provide a certification that the following plan elements have been revised, provided to the RAB for comment before implementation, approved by the PHA board, and made available for review and inspection by the public. This requirement is satisfied by completing and submitting form HUD-50077 ST-HCV-HP, *PHA Certifications of Compliance with PHA Plan, Civil Rights, and Related Laws and Regulations Including PHA Plan Elements that Have Changed*. Form HUD-50077-ST-HCV-HP, *PHA Certifications of Compliance with PHA Plan, Civil Rights, and Related Laws and Regulations Including PHA Plan Elements that Have Changed* must be submitted by the PHA as an electronic attachment to the PHA Plan. This includes all certifications relating to Civil Rights and related regulations. A PHA will be considered in compliance with the certification requirement to affirmatively further fair housing if the PHA fulfills the requirements of §§ 903.7(o)(1) and 903.15(d) and: (i) examines its programs or proposed programs; (ii) identifies any fair housing issues and contributing factors within those programs, in accordance with 24 CFR 5.154; or 24 CFR 5.160(a)(3) as applicable (iii) specifies actions and strategies designed to address contributing factors, related fair housing issues, and goals in the applicable Assessment of Fair Housing consistent with 24 CFR 5.154 in a reasonable manner in view of the resources available; (iv) works with jurisdictions to implement any of the jurisdiction's initiatives to affirmatively further fair housing that require the PHA's involvement; (v) operates programs in a manner consistent with any applicable consolidated plan under 24 CFR part 91, and with any order or agreement, to comply with the authorities specified in paragraph (o)(1) of this section; (vi) complies with

any contribution or consultation requirement with respect to any applicable AFH, in accordance with 24 CFR 5.150 through 5.180; (vii) maintains records reflecting these analyses, actions, and the results of these actions; and (viii) takes steps acceptable to HUD to remedy known fair housing or civil rights violations, impediments to fair housing choice within those programs; addresses those impediments in a reasonable fashion in view of the resources available; works with the local jurisdiction to implement any of the jurisdiction's initiatives to affirmatively further fair housing; and assures that the annual plan is consistent with any applicable Consolidated Plan for its jurisdiction. (24 CFR §903.7(o)).

**C.4 Challenged Elements.** If any element of the Annual PHA Plan or 5-Year PHA Plan is challenged, a PHA must include such information as an attachment to the Annual PHA Plan or 5-Year PHA Plan with a description of any challenges to Plan elements, the source of the challenge, and the PHA's response to the public.

**D. Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH).**

**D.1 Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing.** The PHA will use the answer blocks in item D.1 to provide a statement of its strategies and actions to implement each fair housing goal outlined in its accepted Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) consistent with 24 CFR § 5.154(d)(5) that states, in relevant part: "To implement goals and priorities in an AFH, strategies and actions shall be included in program participants' ... PHA Plans (including any plans incorporated therein) .... Strategies and actions must affirmatively further fair housing ...." Use the chart provided to specify each fair housing goal from the PHA's AFH for which the PHA is the responsible program participant – whether the AFH was prepared solely by the PHA, jointly with one or more other PHAs, or in collaboration with a state or local jurisdiction – and specify the fair housing strategies and actions to be implemented by the PHA during the period covered by this PHA Plan. If there are more than three fair housing goals, add answer blocks as necessary.

Until such time as the PHA is required to submit an AFH, the PHA will not have to complete section D., nevertheless, the PHA will address its obligation to affirmatively further fair housing in part by fulfilling the requirements at 24 CFR 903.7(o)(3) enacted prior to August 17, 2015, which means that it examines its own programs or proposed programs; identifies any impediments to fair housing choice within those programs; addresses those impediments in a reasonable fashion in view of the resources available; works with local jurisdictions to implement any of the jurisdiction's initiatives to affirmatively further fair housing that require the PHA's involvement; and maintain records reflecting these analyses and actions. Furthermore, under Section 5A(d)(15) of the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, as amended, a PHA must submit a civil rights certification with its Annual PHA Plan, which is described at 24 CFR 903.7(o)(1) except for qualified PHAs who submit the Form HUD-50077-CR as a standalone document.

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This information collection is authorized by Section 511 of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act, which added a new section 5A to the U.S. Housing Act of 1937, as amended, which introduced the Annual PHA Plan. The Annual PHA Plan provides a ready source for interested parties to locate basic PHA policies, rules, and requirements concerning the PHA's operations, programs, and services, and informs HUD, families served by the PHA, and members of the public for serving the needs of low-income, very low-income, and extremely low-income families.

Public reporting burden for this information collection is estimated to average 6.02 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. HUD may not collect this information, and respondents are not required to complete this form, unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

**Privacy Act Notice.** The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development is authorized to solicit the information requested in this form by virtue of Title 12, U.S. Code, Section 1701 et seq., and regulations promulgated thereunder at Title 12, Code of Federal Regulations. Responses to the collection of information are required to obtain a benefit or to retain a benefit. The information requested does not lend itself to confidentiality.