

Draft

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

MINUTES

Monday, July 17, 2023

Zoom

11:00

Board Members: Neil Mickenberg, David Marvin, Emily Wadhams, Seth Leonard, (VHFA), Ryan Patch (designee for VAAF), David Riegel (designee for AHS); Clarence Davis, Billy Coster (designee for ANR), Amy Richardson (All Board Members called/zoomed in)

VHCB Staff: Gus Seelig, Elizabeth Egan, Anne Duffy, Marcy Christian, Leah Sare, Emily Phillips, Pollaidh Major, Brenda Riddle, Anna Foltz, John Grosvenor; Ariane Kissam

Chair David Marvin called the meeting to order at 11:30 am. He welcomed everyone to the special meeting to consider these resolutions and to update the board on the impact of the flooding around the state.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

There were flood reports from around the state from board members and staff. Gus spoke about how VHCB could help with the recovery efforts. The Farm and Forest Viability Program will likely be asked to help farmers access funding to help with crop losses. Also in Central Vermont, Downstreet Housing has had properties with damage and the Good Samaritan Haven's shelter and new Hub in Berlin were evacuated. Lamoille Housing Partnership's properties in Johnson and Cambridge were also flooded. Statewide the affordable housing portfolio fared well but we anticipate that homeownership centers will be busy. The Do Good Fest raised over \$1 Million to support Flood Recovery over the weekend.

David asked Gus to review the resolutions that were before the board at this meeting. Gus explained that many of these resolutions are a result of the June 20 veto session where the legislature passed Act 81, 2023 (H.171). This amendment authorizes a number of policies that impact VHCB and our FY 2024 funding. He talked about additional reporting requirements that require staff to report monthly to the legislature on the number of units coming on line before April 1, 2024. Because the legislature was not in a position to alter the budget, the amendment requires that VHCB transfer funds to support other housing programs administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Vermont State Housing Authority. Several of the resolutions authorize these fund transfers.

There was board discussion concerning the requirement placed on VHCB by the legislation to increase units set aside for households exiting homelessness to 30% and to prioritize households exiting the hotel program. Gus pointed out that our partners are concerned about staffing, including high turnover in maintenance and social service staff. There was a conversation about the importance of having social service providers to make these numbers work within projects. There was a brief

conversation about the Manufactured Home Community Infill Development Pool and energy efficient homes that would be used. There was some concern about the increased cost of the Zero Energy Ready Homes and whether their added energy efficiency was enough to justify these costs. Staff will continue to look at this issue and report to the board. There may be some opportunities for energy funding for these units.

Deliberations:

Establishment of Manufactured Home Community Infill Development Pool

Emily made a motion to approve the resolution. Billy seconded the motion. Brief discussion about the criteria process. All voted in favor of the motion.

Roll Call:

Neil Mickenberg - Yes
Emily Wadhams - Yes
David Marvin – Yes
David Riegel – Yes
Amy Richardson – Yes
Seth Leonard – Yes
Billy Coster - Yes
Clarence Davis - Yes

Authority to award funds to the Manufactured Home Improvement and Repair Program

Neil asked that the resolution be amended to include by reference the three conditions included in the board memo. Clarence made a motion to approve the resolution. Neil seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Roll Call:

Neil Mickenberg - Yes
Emily Wadhams - Yes
David Marvin – Yes
David Riegel – Yes
Amy Richardson – Yes
Seth Leonard – Yes
Billy Coster - Yes
Clarence Davis - Yes

Authority to award funds to the Vermont Housing Improvement Program

Billy made a motion to approve the resolution. Neil seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Roll Call:

Neil Mickenberg - Yes
Emily Wadhams - Yes
David Marvin – Yes
David Riegel – Yes

Amy Richardson – Yes
Seth Leonard – Yes
Billy Coster - Yes
Clarence Davis - Yes

Authority to Accept Emergency Rental Assistance Funds and authorize potential transfer of General Funds

Gus informed the board that VHCB has heard from the Agency of Administration that it no longer plans to transfer these funds to VHCB. Gus recommended that the board take up a resolution that authorizes the Special Committee of the board to accept the funding and authorize a corresponding transfer of General Funds should this again be necessary, noting that this is highlight unlikely. Seth made a motion to approve the resolution as amended. Emily seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Roll Call:

Neil Mickenberg - Yes
Emily Wadhams - Yes
David Marvin – Yes
David Riegel – Yes
Amy Richardson – Yes
Seth Leonard – Yes
Billy Coster - Yes
Clarence Davis - Yes

Water Quality Restoration Formula Grants Awards Process

Emily made a motion to approve the resolution. Neil seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.

Roll Call:

Neil Mickenberg - Yes
Emily Wadhams - Yes
David Marvin – Yes
David Riegel – Yes
Amy Richardson – Yes
Seth Leonard – Yes
Billy Coster - Yes
Clarence Davis - Yes

Other Business

Neil asked about staff capacity to support the work to manage all of this funding. There was a discussion about staffing needs for the upcoming year and Gus informed the board that there may be recommendations to address additional needs at the September Board Meeting.

David commented that he would like VHCB to continue to balance the need for additional housing units with the need to mitigate climate change. He emphasized that, in light of the recent climate change related flooding, VHCB should continue to take into account energy saving and renewable

energy building technics as it invests in housing. He also expressed concern that a number of the other initiatives funded through VHCB as a result of the fund transfers mandated by the legislature do not have elements of permanent affordability. He emphasized wanting to see VHCB continue to adhere to this tenant moving forward.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcy Christian