

Nebraska Commission on Housing and Homelessness (NCHH)

**Kearney Public Library
2020 1st Avenue
Kearney, NE 68847**

Minutes of Wednesday, June 27, 2018 1:30 p.m.

Notice Published: Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar
NCHH Website

Open Meetings Act – A copy of the Open Meetings Act was located on the table as you enter the room.
All votes were taken by roll call of the members.

I. Roll Call

Pamela Otto called roll.

Eight of fourteen Commissioners were present:

Nancy Bentley; Ryan Durant; Lee Ann Heflebower; Thomas Judds; Kathy Mesner; Judy Pederson;
Judy Petersen; and John Turner.

Absent Commissioners: Charles Coley; Paul Hamelink; Roger Nadrchal; Carna Pfeil; Sara Tichota;
and Brent Williams.

Guests present were: Lois Versaw; Paula Rhian; Matthew Cavanaugh; Pam Otto, Lynn Kohout,
Sheryl Hiatt, and Kylee Bischoff, DED.

II. Call meeting to order:

Chair Durant declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:44 p.m.

Chair Durant indicated the Opening Meetings Act was on the table by the sign in sheet.

III. Introductions

IV. Public Comment

None

V. Approved March 12, 2018 meeting minutes.

Motion: Commissioner Bentley moved that the March 12, 2018 meeting minutes be approved.
Commissioner Turner seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

YES – Nancy Bentley; Ryan Durant; Lee Ann Heflebower; Thomas Judds; Kathy Mesner; Judy Petersen; John Turner.

NO – None

Abstain – Judy Pederson

Motion carried with a 7-0-1 vote.

VI. Executive Committee

Commissioner Durant stated that the Executive Committee met several times this year to discuss strategic planning and they are relooking at the Commission and the by-laws to determine if revisions are necessary, as well as advocating for the Trust Fund. Durant stated that the executive committee would like to create an Ad Hoc Committee to review the current by-laws and recommended changes. The goal is to have the Ad Hoc Committee in place in the next 60 days. The by-laws have not been updated for several years and there should be representation across the State. Matthew Cavanaugh, Lara Huskey, and Tim Keelan expressed an interest in being on the Committee and Durant stated that he has been in contact with a couple others to gauge their interest in being on the committee.

Motion: Commissioner Pederson moved to create an Ad Hoc Committee for strategic planning. Commissioner Bentley seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

YES – Nancy Bentley; Ryan Durant; Lee Ann Heflebower; Thomas Judds; Kathy Mesner; Judy Pederson; Judy Petersen; and John Turner.

NO – None

Motion carried with a 8-0-0 vote.

VII. Report from Standing Committees

1. Continuum of Care Committee (CoC)

Commissioner Turner stated that on May 22nd there were around 40 people that attended the Continuum of Care meeting, Turner stated that the attendance continues to pick up since Technical Assistance (TA) collaborative has ended. TA Collaborative is pushing housing authorities about mainstream vouchers for individuals with disabilities and the chronically homeless. The Innovative Accelerated Program with Medicaid is working on a program that will to identify individuals that do not need to live in an assisted living facility to assist with the Innovation Accelerated Program. Turner has been going through stories on mental health and homelessness in the Lincoln Journal Star. NOFA came out and HUD funding availability for grants related to rapid housing and a bonus for domestic violence grants. There will be a NIFA Conference in Kearney on Workforce Housing October 23rd. Turner stated that there is money through DHHS for a Statewide Housing Coordinator, and stated he would like this position to be filled as it will aid in collaborating between all of the Continuum of Cares.

Commissioner Heflebower stated that the Point of Time count on January 23rd showed that the homelessness count in the Balance of State was fairly steady. Lincoln saw a significant drop in homelessness and 25% was just from this last year. Transitional Housing programs have reallocated to permanent housing. Things are really coming together. One year ago the balance of state announced that they had reached a functional zero in ending homelessness for Veterans. Once veterans become homeless they are found quickly and assisted. Omaha has seen a significant drop in veteran homelessness as well. Coordinated entry systems list veterans by name. Some vets are utilizing VASH vouchers and case workers are assisting in helping identify veterans

2. Education and Awareness Committee

Commissioner Pederson stated that the Education and Awareness Committee has been discussing new ways to get information out to the public, since some of the ways that were done in the past were not effective. Pederson stated that she would be discussing working with Commissioner Petersen from the Policy and Issues Committee to create one page flyers for the Nebraska

Affordable Housing Trust Fund to educate the public and Legislatures. Lynn Kohout passed out a flyer for the CDBG Program and is working on a similar flyer for NAHTF.

3. Policy and Issues Committee

Commissioner Petersen discussed the motion and discussion around the motion with the committee. Petersen provided the responses to the questions that were provided to DED Legal for review. Dave Dearmont from DED provided an update to Legislative Bills that affected housing across the State of Nebraska. Dearmont stated housing may be a qualifying activity under the Opportunity Zone Act. Petersen stated that Matthew Cavanaugh from Nebraska Housing Developers Association (NHDA) provided information on the Interim Hearing Session for Legislative Resolution 461 on September 7th from 9 a.m. to Noon. Cavanaugh stated that he will be coordinating the testimony to provide and is looking for individuals to testify. DED provided balances for the Trust Fund and will be working on providing a simple report.

Matthew Cavanaugh from NHDA reported the following: the Land Bank Legislative Bill failed and he will be meeting to talk about that bill tomorrow with the League of Municipalities. Cavanaugh stated that NHDA will be very involved and will be identifying the challenges of the bill. There is a need to be more diligent about the technical aspects. Cavanaugh stated he does not know why there is so much hostility to the bill and understands that this may compete with private industry but Habitat is willing to help with this because they are a member. The Governor said there is not a need for it. The push back is from feeling that this is another tax authority and the community being left with debt but that is not correct. It will be a non-profit and competing with private businesses. The individual can rent for up to one year and it will also include the reselling of the homes or lots. It's an unaccountable board and they think there may be a conflict of interest as well as questioning the quality of the local boards.

VIII. Reports from Agencies and Organizations

Department of Economic Development – Sheryl Hiatt
Department of Health of Human Services Agency – Lois Versaw
Midwest Housing Development Fund- Lara Huskey
Nebraska Chapter of Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials – Nancy Bentley
Nebraska Housing Developers Association – Matthew Cavanaugh
Nebraska Investment Finance Authority – John Turner

IX. Other Business/Next Meeting

Commissioner Durant asked the Committee to send him the names of individuals they would recommend to be a part of the Ad Hoc Committee.

There are still two open Commissioner positions, as Carna Pfeil did not renew and Suzanne Brodine resigned from the Commission.

X. Adjourn

Chair Durant adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.