Nebraska Commission on Housing & Homelessness Meeting

Wednesday, August 16, 2023

10:00AM (Central Time)

RTG Medical Building - Conference Room

4611 East 22nd Street, Fremont, NE 68025

**Notice Published**: Nebraska Public Meeting Calendar (July 16, 2023)

NCHH Website (July 16, 2023)

**Open Meetings Act:** A copy of the Open Meetings Act was linked on the agenda and a copy was available on the sign-in table. All votes were taken by roll call vote of Commissioners, pursuant to [Nebraska Revised Statute §§ 84-1407 through 84-1414](https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=84-1407).

Start Time 10:07AM (CT)

## Roll Call (8/15 present) Quorum

Barb Pierce called roll.

Commissioners: Eight (8) of fifteen commissioners were present: Jeff Chambers, Ryan Durant, Paul Hamelink, Tera Kucera, Roger Nadrchal, Mindy Paces, Amy Thelander, and John Turner.

Absent commissioners: Lee Heflebower, Judy Pederson, Nancy Bentley, Kathy Mesner, Ashley Milner, Judy Petersen and Brent Williams.

Guests: Joey Spellerberg, Mayor of Fremont; Paula Kaslon, Midwest Housing Development Foundation; JaQuala Yarbro, Compete Institute of Socioeconomic Policy and Education; Evan Clark, Hoppe Development; Senator Lynn Walz, District 15; Therese Hoyle, Greater Fremont Development Council; Angie Olson, City of Fremont; Patricia Evans, GESU Housing; Julie Sleister, Care Corps LifeHouse; and Carla Kimball, Central Nebraska Economic Development District.

Department of Economic Development (DED) Staff: Lynn Kohout, Barb Pierce, Kim Jasa-Harris, Teri Doss, Cassandra Stark and Brittany Piper.

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Staff: Niki Tuzicka

1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Vice Chair Thelander declared a quorum with 8 of 15 commissioners present and 7 absent. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Thelander at 10:07 am (CT).

1. **Introductions**

Fremont Mayor, Joey Spellerberg was invited to address the Commissioners and gave a brief welcome and introduction to Fremont and took a few questions from Commissioners regarding projects of interest in Fremont. Vice Chair Thelander welcomed all commissioners and guests. All in attendance were asked to introduce themselves.

## Public Comments

**Vice Chair Thelander asked for public comments. None were made.**

## Approval of May 17, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Thelander asked for a motion to approve the May 17, 2023, meeting minutes.

Commissioner Nadrchal introduced a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Paces seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with 7 yeas and 1 abstention by Commissioner Durant. The Motion to approve the May 17, 2023, meeting minutes was carried.

## Reports from Standing Committees

## Executive Committee

Vice Chair Thelander reported the Executive Committee is working on reviewing the Commission’s by-laws. The Executive Committee welcomes suggestions and comments over the next month from Commissioners on items of concern or change that should be considered during revision.

Commissioner Nadrchal requested By-laws be sent out to all Commissioners.

## Continuum of Care

Committee Chair Turner provided a report. There are three Continuum of Care systems that address the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity in Lincoln/Lancaster County, Omaha/Douglas County, and the Balance of State (BOS), respectively. Turner reported on the progress of revising the *Opening Doors* plan, the current priorities of the Continuum of Care groups across the state, and updated Commissioners on the Emergency Rental Assistance 2 (ERA2) program which has recently hired a new ERA2 coordinator, Denise Packard.

Commissioner Chambers reported that the Housing and Homelessness Study was completed and clearly demonstrates that providing supportive services will save communities tremendously. He also reported that Lincoln CoC is making application to HUD for grant funding to provide housing for persons experiencing homelessness.

Commissioner Chambers also reported that the Strategic Housing Framework continues to convene and is currently working to get the planned actions started.

Commissioner Paces reported on Omaha CoC which, like Lincoln, is also currently applying for HUD grants.

* 1. **Education and Awareness**

Vice Chair Thelander provided a report received via email from Committee Chair Pederson. The committee will be working on plans for the annual Proclamation for the November Hunger and Homelessness Month at the State Capitol.

* 1. **Policy and Issues**

The Committee did not meet this quarter. Vice Chair Thelander reported that the Commission is still looking for a Commissioner to agree to Chair the Policy and Issues Committee since Commissioner Petersen’s term expired on June 30, 2023 and she does not have intentions of reapplying for a seat on the Commission. The Executive Committee has discussed the possibility of having Co-chairs for this committee. Commissioners interested in chairing the committee are encouraged to reach out to Chair Heflebower or Lynn Kohout if interested.

* 1. **Report/Communication on Nebraska Olmstead Plan**

Commissioner Turner provided a brief update. The Olmstead Plan is a statewide strategic plan comprised of new efforts and enhancements to support community integration via community-based services and supports for persons with disabilities.

Goal 2 of the Olmstead Plan is to increase “access to safe, affordable, accessible housing.” Turner mentioned recent legislation (Section 74 of LB92) directs DED, NIFA, and DHHS to collaborate on finding additional state and federal funding to assist with the Olmstead goals. Turner reported that DHHS has been working to deliver the Olmstead Plan to different audiences. Developers have been growing in their awareness of the need to make units visitable.

## Reports from Agencies

**A. Department of Economic Development - Lynn Kohout**

DED Director of Housing, Lynn Kohout, provided an update to the Commission on the State and Federally funded housing programs administered by the Department of Economic Development including the Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund (NAHTF), Rural Workforce Housing Fund (RWHF), Middle Income Housing Fund (MIHF), HOME Investment Partnerships Fund (HOME), National Housing Trust Fund (HTF), HOME-ARP, Rural Workforce Housing Land Development Program and Pandemic Relief Housing Program. Kohout requested feedback from Commissioners on how best to get feedback from current and potential customers regarding the next NAHTF Qualified Allocation Plan which is typically posted as a draft for public comment in December.

**B. Department of Health and Human Services Agency – Niki Tuzicka**

Nebraska Homeless Assistance Program (NHAP) Coordinator, Niki Tuzicka, provided a report.

1. **Reports from Partner Organizations**
   1. Assistive Technology Partnership

No report.

* 1. Community Action Agencies of Nebraska

No report.

* 1. Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka

No report.

* 1. Housing Opportunities for Persons with HIV/AIDS

No report.

* 1. Nebraska Chapter of Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)

No report.

* 1. Nebraska Housing Developers Association

Vice Chair Thelander gave a report received from Carole Bodeen via email.

* 1. Nebraska Investment Finance Authority

Commissioner Turner provided a report.

* 1. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development

Vice Chair Thelander gave report sent via email from Krista Mettscher, USDA Single Family Housing Program Director.

I. Department of Housing and Urban Development

No report.

J. Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

No report.

K. Other Agency/Organizations Present

No report.

## 2023 NCHH Meeting Dates

* 1. NOTE CHANGE - TUESDAY, November 14, 2023, in Lincoln

## Other Business

* 1. Commissioner Terms

The following commissioners have terms that expired June 30, 2023: Nancy Bentley, Ashley Milner, Judy Petersen, Amy Thelander, and John Turner.

Kohout reminded Commissioners it is the Department’s understanding that the positions all serve until re-appointments are made by the Governor’s office. We have not received any communications about re-appointments to date.

Commissioner Petersen is retiring from her position at CNEDD at the end of the year and has indicated she will not seek another term on this Commission. As Commissioner Petersen is also the Chair of the Policies and Issues Committee, the Commission must identify a new chair to fill her vacancy. According to By-laws, Commissioner Petersen serves until she is replaced unless we receive an official letter of resignation.

**XII. Adjournment**

Vice Chair Thelander adjourned the meeting of the Commission at 12:00 PM (CT).

**Adjourn Time 12:00PM (CT)**