



MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 19, 2021
FROM: Drew Nelson, City Administrator
TO: Mayor PT Wood & City Council
SUBJECT: Chaffee Housing Authority – Board of Directors At-Large Seats

Background

As we ramp up the operational aspects of the new Chaffee Housing Authority, it is necessary for the City Council work with the other member jurisdictions to appoint two at-large members to the Board of Directors. The Intergovernmental Agreement that created the CHA states:

ARTICLE IV Establishment and Organization of Governance

- (a) Governance: *The Authority shall be governed by a Board of Directors (“Board”). All legislative power of the Authority is vested in the Board as described below.*
- (b) Board of Directors: *The inaugural Board shall be comprised of nine (9) members. The County shall appoint three members and Buena Vista and Salida shall each appoint two members to the Board **and two members-at large shall be appointed upon the approval of a majority of the Member Jurisdictions.** Each party shall be responsible for identifying its member(s) to the Board and deciding if it shall be an elected official or a designated member. Additionally, each party shall appoint an alternate or alternates, who may serve in the event a regular member is unable to attend a meeting and the parties, upon majority approval, may appoint an alternate or alternates who may serve in the event a member at large is unable to attend a meeting. When attending as described, alternate members shall have the same powers and duties as regular members.*

A call for applicants was sent out to the public in November, and the City of Salida appointed Jane Templeton (1 year term) and Eileen Rogers (2 year term) to two seats, along with Drew Nelson as alternate, of the inaugural board. The remainder of the Board is comprised as follows:

- Town of Buena Vista: Joseph Teipel (Chaffee County Community Foundation)
Amy Eckstein (Town Trustee)
Phillip Puckett (Town Administrator, alternate)
- Chaffee County: Justin Veltri (Silver Ridge Lodge)
Craig Nielson (Chipeta Mountain Project)
Janie Hayes (Community Member)
Bob Christainsen (County Administrator, alternate)

The Chaffee County Board of County Commissioners and the Buena Vista Board of Trustees have recommended that Patrick Post and Monica Haskell be appointed to the remaining two at-large seats. Additional information that the BOCC received on these two applicants is attached.

Analysis

The City Council discussed appointing other applicants to the Board of Directors at a prior meeting; however, with the recommendations of both Patrick Post and Monica Haskell by both the BOCC and the BV Trustees, it makes sense to consider making the same recommendations at the next Regular Meeting. This would fully seat the Board of Directors and allow the Chaffee Housing Authority to get underway with the business of meeting the community's affordable housing goals.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council utilize its time during the worksession to ask any questions regarding the applicants and discuss the Council's desired approach to filling the two remaining at-large Board of Directors seats for the Chaffee Housing Authority.

Housing Applicant Board Questions

Name: Monica Haskell

1. What do you think are the three most important areas of focus for the new housing authority?

The first priority would focus on affordable housing. The initial action step regarding this area is defining what affordable housing means to the housing authority and what population will be the focus of their goals. There are so many areas this group could focus on; it is imperative to designate main focus and first steps.

Poverty is significant to focus on. People living in poverty are often challenged by securing safe and stable housing. This is a significant stress for those with disabilities, fixed incomes, single parent families as well as our hospitality workers.

Generally, the work force of Chaffee County should be part of this focus when discussing affordable housing. Professionals are drawn to this area but require access to affordable housing. Individuals in the fields of nursing, law enforcement and education are vital to have for our communities but many are challenged with securing affordable housing.

The final priority is the development of a long-term plan that addresses how we can meet the growing needs of this challenge here in Chaffee County. While immediate initial steps are necessary in this process, a sustainable plan that will address the increase of population will be essential to the success of the Housing Authority's overall plan.

2. Are you comfortable compromising -not giving up-, but finding ways to reach a group goal?

Absolutely; collaboration is always the best and most productive method to finding solutions and ultimately taking action.

3. Do you have and will you put in the time to get this Housing Authority moving?

I intend to make a commitment to the Housing Authority. I feel very strongly about this topic as I observe the need in our community to be significant. I will do everything I can to be present and available when needed.

4. Workforce housing is becoming an increasing challenge for businesses and for economic development. What are your thoughts on working with the private sector to alleviate this

challenge?

I believe partnering with the private sector is a positive step to address this challenge. The private sector has been increasingly more supportive of ideas to assist in meeting the housing needs of our community members. Currently, the climate is right for this collaboration and formulating an action plan.

5. What are some barriers to entry into long-term housing solutions for economically- challenged people that more fortunate people may not appreciate?

This is a topic that I am very passionate about as I envision trying to bridge this gap. There is a training available called “Bridges out of Poverty,” which would be beneficial for others in this group to take part in. The training hones in on the disconnection between poverty and the middle class and how the goals of individuals in the groups are different. Often, it is difficult for individuals in the middle class to fully understand where individuals in poverty come from and what their priorities are. Changing our lens and expanding our perspective gives us the ability to meet the needs of both socio-economic groups equally.

Families in poverty typically require more assistance than a simple short-term solution. There are various layers to helping a family in poverty be successful; this is a long-term effort.

6. Please provide what you see as some of the consequences of inadequate housing, and how. Housing helps prevent or address them.

Inadequate housing presents a plethora of other stressors for individuals and families. These include: physical and mental health, substance abuse, lack of engagement in education, employment stability as well as child abuse. Stable housing is the pillar for our livelihood. It is one of the 3 main hierarchy of needs in Maslow theory: water, food and shelter (basic survival) . They say if you don't have these three needs met, then nothing else matters. Let me say that again: if you don't have these three needs met then nothing else matters.

Housing Applicant Board Questions

Name: Patrick Post

1. What do you think are the three most important areas of focus for the new housing authority?

1) To make home ownership a reality for low income residents of the County.

2) To provide housing options outside of home ownership to residents of the county in the form of medium to high density apartments.

3) To provide senior housing to residents of the County.

2. Are you comfortable compromising -not giving up-, but finding ways to reach a group goal?

Absolutely, we're lucky enough to live in an area that has brought together residents from numerous geographic locations and professional backgrounds. This lends itself nicely to getting to work alongside people with differing experiences and thoughts that when blended together can accomplish some great things.

3. Do you have and will you put in the time to get this Housing Authority moving?

One of the beautiful things about being a realtor is I get to set my own schedule. This allows for me to concentrate my time where and when I need to.

4. Workforce housing is becoming an increasing challenge for businesses and for economic development. What are your thoughts on working with the private sector to alleviate this challenge?

I welcome the ability to work with the private sector to accomplish housing needs in our communities. The public sector sometimes looks at a problem as a whole. This one size fits all model doesn't take into account the uniqueness of an area and thus what works in Denver for housing doesn't necessarily fit with what Chaffee, or Saguache, or Summit county may be experiencing.

At least with the private side, a group can get together and work through issues without the red tape.

5. What are some barriers to entry into long-term housing solutions for economically- challenged

people that more fortunate people may not appreciate?

There are numerous barriers including access to available credit, ability to provide substantial down payments or even first, last, and deposit funds. Also there may be instability in income as the seasonality of jobs in this area is prevalent.

6. Please provide what you see as some of the consequences of inadequate housing, and how housing helps prevent or address them

One of the big issues we see is for local businesses to hold on to staff. With elevated rental prices and lack of inventory, employees may be forced to move on. An area that can provide low income long-term housing helps to mitigate the issue and keeps the work force in the community. This in return has a trickle down effect as it allows for businesses to stay open as they can keep staff, this businesses and staff in return put their money back into the local economy.

Inadequate housing also causes inflated rental and purchase prices due to supply and demand. By providing more options the market will have a tendency to flatten.