

## Minutes of the

### REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, February 22, 2022

**Committee Members Present: Chamblis, Cummings, Johnson, Lee, Lilligren, Lindstrom, Vento, Wulff**

**Committee Members Absent: Muse**

**Committee Members Excused:**

### CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Lilligren called the regular meeting of the Council's Community Development Committee to order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 22, 2022.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Vento, seconded by Wulff to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2022, regular meeting of the Community Development Committee. Motion carried.

[Click here to view the February 22, 2022 Community Development Committee meeting video](#)

### BUSINESS

1. **2022-50** 2022 Livable Communities Act Fund Distribution Plan – Livable Communities Manager Tara Beard presented the Business Item to the Community Development Committee.

It was moved by Vento, seconded by Chamblis, that the Metropolitan Council approve the 2022 Livable Communities Fund Distribution Plan

**Motion carried.**

One dissenting vote.

Council Members and staff discussed the FDP

Council Member Lindstrom asked about staff's response to a letter from Metro Cities that is included in the Business Item as Attachment 2. Ms. Beard stated that she had a follow up phone conversation with Metro Cities staff in response to the letter. Council Member Wulff requested a written summary of the conversation staff had with Metro Cities in response to their comments. Staff stated that they would create and provide a written summary.

Council Member Wulff expressed concerns about LCA scoring criteria that incentivize specific local policies and practices. Council Member Wulff stated her concern that those criteria go beyond the purpose of the LCA and make it more difficult to achieve broad political support for the program.

Multiple Council Members commented on the base amount of \$1.5M for the Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) and asked if there were conversations at the legislature to secure more base funding for the program. Community Development Director LisaBeth Barajas responded that especially in recent years there has been more interest from some legislators to seek additional sources of funding for LHIA.

## INFORMATION

### 1. Project Based Voucher Program – 2022 Offer and Award

Metro HRA Director Terri Smith presented the Information Item to the Community Development Committee. Ms. Smith provided current information voucher utilization and turnover, details from a Project Based Voucher Program Listening Session held on the Thursday, February 9, 2022 with developers and owners and next steps with the PBV program

The Council's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (Metro HRA) administers 6,894 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV). The majority of these vouchers are tenant-based and move from place to place with the tenant. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allows housing authorities the discretion to Project Base up to twenty percent (20%) of their vouchers, referred to as Project Based Vouchers (PBVs). The Metropolitan Council approved project basing *up to 20%* of vouchers as PBVs. Generally, the Administrative Plan sets the overall policy guidance (*up to 20%* PBVs) while staff puts the policy into operations, with Council Member input.

Staff considered many variables, as outlined in the [Metro HRA Administrative Plan](#), Chapter 17, when determining whether or not to offer PBVs in 2022. These include overall voucher utilization, current voucher turnover rates, funding and budget, and balancing PBV and waiting list admissions. The Metro HRA does not receive extra vouchers or a separate pool of funding from HUD for PBVs. Generally, all Housing Choice Vouchers are fully utilized. Rather, the PBVs come from a very limited pool of turnover vouchers from the standard Housing Choice Voucher program.

Over the last three years, the Metro HRA has had an average of 62 turnover vouchers per month. However, in 2021, the number of turnover vouchers decreased to 36 per month. This reduction is likely a result of the pandemic. People are not moving around, are not experiencing increased income and are not giving up their housing vouchers. Balancing the use of the limited turnover vouchers is incredibly difficult.

The Metro HRA awarded 85 PBVs in 2020. This is the largest number of PBVs awarded in the history of the PBV program, without a special allocation of vouchers. The Metro HRA did not offer any PBVs in 2021 to allow focus on waiting list admissions and directing staffing capacity to other initiatives.

The Council Members asked for data on success rates and the number of vouchers returned and for what reason. Ms. Smith explained the due to timelines the information is not available, and outreach to voucher holders with vouchers about to expire and the barriers experienced.

Discussion of how developers can time projects with deadlines, and the concern over losing projects. Ms. Smith explained PBV's are a small tool in the box for developers.

Another concern was the loss of a voucher due to the sunset constraints and lack of available housing.

Kat Vann, a volunteer with Beacon, requested in advance to speak to the Committee regarding Project Based Vouchers, Chair Lilligren honored the request. Ms. Vann attended the listening sessions offered by Metro HRA and agree the funding is too low for affordable housing and the need for more flexibility in lengths of vouchers before expiring. She suggested adoption of a priority process along with creative thinking.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Michele Wenner  
Recording Secretary