

# Housing Commission Minutes [SUBJECT TO APPROVAL]

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**May 21, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.**

*This meeting was conducted in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-20-20 and N-35-20 and COVID-19 pandemic protocols.*

## **1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairperson Gaidos called a teleconference meeting of the Housing Commission to order at the hour of 7:02 p.m.

### Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

## **ROLL CALL**

- Present: Commissioners Kate Duggan, Jay Galvin, Tony Soby, and Chairperson Matthew Gaidos.
- Absent: Commissioners Zarina Kiziloglu and Anne Welsh
- Staff: Steve Hernandez, Housing Manager; Brian Dolan, Assistant City Manager; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

## **AGENDA AMENDMENTS**

None.

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of January 16, 2020 and Special Meeting Minutes of April 30, 2020**

A motion was made by Commissioner Galvin, seconded by Chairperson Gaidos, to approve the January 16, 2020 regular meeting minutes. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

A motion was made by Chairperson Gaidos, seconded by Commissioner Galvin, to approve the April 30, 2020 special meeting minutes. **The motion was approved unanimously.**

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

None.

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## **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

### **2. Introductions / Awards / Recognitions**

None.

### **3. Public Comment from the audience regarding items not listed on the agenda**

None.

## **MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

### **4. Review and Approve Proposed Emergency Rental Assistance Program for Renters Affected by COVID-19 Pandemic**

Mr. Dolan indicated that he and Mr. Hernandez were happy to be able to bring this item to the commission for their consideration. He advised that staff has discussed the amount and budgeting for this and have receive the City Manager's approval to move forward with the item.

Mr. Hernandez reviewed a PowerPoint presentation with commissioners advising that the COVID-19 Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is being put together to help mitigate potential homelessness and displacement of people living in Pleasanton who are having difficulties due to a decrease in household income due to the pandemic and now cannot pay their rent.

Commissioners were informed that the intent of ERAP is for the city to be able to assist those who are unable to pay the rent due to the health emergency. ERAP would only pay delinquent rents, and the payments would be made directly to landlords. People eligible for the program will be required to meet the following criteria: 1) be current Pleasanton resident and have a lease with a third-party individual for at least six continuous months; 2) their household income cannot exceed 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) established by Alameda County that is adjusted for household size; 3) have to be in good standing with the payment and terms of their lease that will be verified by their landlord; and 4) will be required to show documentation of loss of income because of COVID-19.

Mr. Hernandez also noted that applicants will be required to submit applications electronically and support the application with documents that include: a) a current Pleasanton Residential Lease Agreement; b) proof of household income of 80% AMI or below; c) verification from the landlord that the tenant's rent was current prior to the Shelter-in-Place date of March 16<sup>th</sup>; and d) financial impact verification due to COVID-19.

Additionally, Mr. Hernandez reviewed with commissioners' graphs showing the 2020 Maximum Income Limits and the 2020 Housing Affordability Maximum Rent. He advised that staff is proposing that an amount of \$500,000 from the Lower Income Housing Fund be allocated for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, of which approximately \$50,000 will be allocated to administer the program, possibly by ECHO Housing, and the remainder to assist approximately 200 Pleasanton households by providing grants with a maximum of \$2,500.

Chairperson Gaidos indicated he would be calling on commissioners individually for their questions and comments.

Commissioner Duggan questioned whether the amount of rental assistance grants would be

affected if individuals are receiving unemployment and if the loss of employment would need to be the COVID-19 criteria. She also questioned if people would be considered for a grant if their income has been reduced because of a reduction in an individual's hours of employment.

Mr. Hernandez indicated that a request for a grant would need to be COVID related and the objective for consideration would include the applicant showing that their income has been reduced because of COVID-19 causing them to become unable to pay the rent.

Mr. Dolan indicated that staff would need to add a parameter to the recommendation that includes consideration being given to people whose hours of work have been lowered causing their incomes to be reduced. Commissioner Duggan stated that she would like for people who have been put on work furlough to also be able to apply for the grant.

Commissioner Galvin asked for a clarification on the term "furlough" employment. Mr. Dolan provided details and indicated the program details would need to include added details for people who are still working but have received a reduction in employment hours.

Commissioner Duggan was provided information by Mr. Hernandez on how information about ERAP would be promoted through social media, press releases, notification to nonprofit organizations, etc. He commented on over-exposure of the program being detrimental because too many applications would be received. Mr. Hernandez provided information on how other cities have been handling similar programs, reviewing applications, and timeframe for distributing the funds to applicants.

Commissioner Galvin was advised by Mr. Dolan that staff hopes to have City Council consider this recommendation at their June 2, 2020 meeting.

Commissioner Galvin questioned whether there would be a citizenship requirement on the application and if people having trouble paying their mortgage would also be able to apply. Mr. Dolan advised that this program is to provide help for people having difficulty paying their rent and those having difficulties paying their mortgages have other avenues available to them.

Commissioner Soby commented on people receiving unemployment and stimulus checks and whether these amounts would be factored into the amount of rent assistance they receive. Mr. Dolan advised that applicants would need to be delinquent in paying their rent to be considered and this would be a one-time assistance.

Commissioner Soby was advised by Mr. Hernandez that staff has been considering ECHO Housing for administering this program, at this time however no recommendation has been made as staff is also considering CityServe and other organizations. Mr. Hernandez also indicated that staff has not made any decision on whether a Request for Proposal (RFP) should be issued or whether it would be best to just work with nonprofits. Mr. Dolan noted that the plan is to do this program as abbreviated as possible.

Commissioner Soby questioned whether people receiving Rapid Rehousing assistance would also be eligible for ERAP and the number of people who could possibly apply for this assistance. Mr. Hernandez stated that people receiving Rapid Rehousing assistance would likely be disqualified. He also commented on how over-exposure of the program could be detrimental. Mr. Dolan felt that referrals for the ERAP applications would most likely come from nonprofits.

Chairperson Gaidos commented and agreed with administration terms of the program and the

six-month lease requirement with a third-party landlord and recommended that applicants also be asked to provide a declaration showing at least three-months income prior to COVID-19. He was concerned about people being creative and taking advantage of the program. Chairperson Gaidos also felt that ECHO Housing would be a good administrator for the program.

Commissioner Soby questioned if Chairperson Gaidos' intent was not to award the grant if the applicant could not provide information about their prior income. Chairperson Gaidos confirmed that was the intent. Mr. Dolan noted that the program will require income verification, and Mr. Hernandez advised that documents will also be required for showing the individuals last three months' of income along with verification from the employer that income loss is due to COVID-19.

Commissioner Galvin commented on a neighbor's situation, and Chairperson Gaidos noted that ERAP is not a program that will need to be in existence all the time but should include details for people who have been furloughed and are not necessarily low-income individuals and need assistance because of COVID-19. He reiterated his recommendation that individuals be required to provide verification for January/February/March 2020 income and then verification of what their income has been for April/May/June 2020.

Mr. Hernandez and Mr. Dolan indicated that staff would contact agencies working with other cities on similar programs to assist with the framework for the recommendation that is presented to City Council.

Commissioner Duggan had questions about residency requirements and whether essential workers would be given priority for receiving this assistance. Mr. Dolan indicated that this has not been considered, and Mr. Hernandez stated that other cities had provided the assistance through a lottery program.

A motion was made by Commissioner Galvin, seconded by Chairperson Gaidos, to approve moving forward to City Council the staff recommendation for the proposed Emergency Rental Assistance Program for renters affected by the COVID-19 pandemic after staff tailors the program to include applicants providing income verification for 3-months prior to COVID-19 and income verification during the pandemic.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

AYES: Commissioners Duggan, Galvin, Soby, and Chairperson Gaidos.  
NOES: None  
ABSENT: Commissioners Kiziloglu and Welsh  
ABSTAIN: None

**MATTERS INITIATED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Duggan asked about a RHNA housing summary discussed at the December 2019 meeting and if this could be included on the agenda for the next commission meeting. Mr. Dolan advised that this is typically provided once a year and housing production has been low for the past year. He noted that the primary obligation is zoning for units which is out of the city's control and supports affordable projects as they go forward.

Commissioner Duggan discussed the East Pleasanton project. Mr. Dolan noted it is unclear at this time what will take place for East Pleasanton. He advised that new numbers RHNA should be available soon at which time they will be made available to the commission.

Mr. Hernandez noted that the RHNA Annual Progress Report is tied to the Housing Element which should have been provided at the April meeting but was not done because of COVID-19. He will send the report to commissioners, and Mr. Dolan advised that an agenda item showing new numbers can be included for the next meeting.

Commissioner Soby noted that the commission had agreed to review this and have a report provided each year. Commissioner Galvin questioned if there would be a meeting in June and whether RHNA numbers were imminent. Mr. Dolan advised that numbers are imminent but are currently changing.

Chairperson Gaidos thanked staff for keeping on top of things and keeping the commission informed.

### **COMMISSION REPORTS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

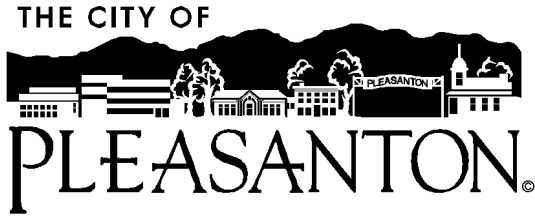
The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. by Chairperson Gaidos.

DATED:

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Steve Hernandez, Housing Manager





# Housing Commission Minutes

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**October 29, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.**

*This meeting was conducted in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-20-20 and N-35-20 and COVID-19 pandemic protocols.*

## **1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **SPECIAL MEETING**

Chairperson Gaidos called a teleconference special meeting of the Housing Commission to order at the hour of 7:00 p.m.

#### Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited.

## **2. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Kate Duggan, Jay Galvin, Zarina Kiziloglu, Tony Soby, and Chairperson Matthew Gaidos.

Commissioners Absent: Commissioner Ann Welsh.

Staff Present: Steve Hernandez, Housing Manager; and Edith Caponigro, Recording Secretary.

## **3. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **4. Review of Housing & Human Services Grant (HHSO) Program Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 for Housing Related Programs**

Mr. Hernandez reviewed with commissioners a PowerPoint presentation with details of the City of Pleasanton FY 2019-2020 CAPER-HHSG Program Funding that outlined the agencies and the funding they had received. The presentation provided information about persons assisted including household characteristics, race/ethnicity and income. He advised that more than 4,500 individuals were assisted in FY 2019-2020 with 96% of the individuals being below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) and 47% were below 30% of AMI (Extremely Low Income).

Mr. Hernandez informed commissioners that because of the COVID pandemic HUD had extended the submittal deadline for reporting till the end of the year and the public comment period had been changed to 5-days instead of the usual 15-days, but because of upcoming holidays city staff had agreed to send in the CAPER by October 30, 2020.

The meeting was opened for agency reporting.

Abode Services (Rapid Re-Housing Program) – Christian Gutierrez – provided information about the Re-Housing Programs and how they assisted fifteen households during the COVID pandemic thirteen of which were households in the Extremely Low Income category.

Commissioner Soby commented on the fact that Abode had underspent the funds received. Mr. Gutierrez indicated this was because of the reporting period and the time constraints for getting people into housing. He noted that two additional families have been housed since the report.

Mr. Hernandez confirmed for commissioners that they were reviewing agency accomplishments for FY 2019-2020.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked about the housing location of the families and was advised they were in Pleasanton and others, on the verge of eviction, had been assisted with Abode negotiating with landlords to help keep them in Pleasanton. Mr. Gutierrez confirmed all clients had been housed in Pleasanton and eleven had been female head of households.

Mr. Gutierrez discussed with Mr. Galvin the many challenges Abode had to navigate through because of COVID and how within 30-days they have been able to get things working rather smoothly.

Commissioner Duggan was informed by Mr. Gutierrez that funds received were used for rental subsidies and typically Abode provides assistance for one year after which the assistance needed is reviewed.

CRIL (Housing & Independent Living Services) – Michael Galvan – thanked the commission for supporting CRIL and advised that the agency now has a fully staffed office in Livermore but COVID has changed many things. He noted that the low numbers shown in their report were because of changes the agency had to make to their in-person meetings. Mr. Galvan advised that the agency addressed two new programs to help overcome some of the issues and have been encouraging clients to learn these. He also noted that the agency has worked with clients on what they need to do in the case of fires and power outages.



Additionally, Mr. Galvan informed the commission that CRIL has given out masks, face shields, and gloves and re-adapted programs because of COVID.

Commissioner Kiziloglu was informed that CRIL does not provide mental health services, but does have access to and provide information to clients about other agencies in Pleasanton that provide such services.

ECHO Housing (Housing Counseling Services) – Jonathan Torres – informed commissioners that ECHO served 225 unduplicated account providing Fair Housing, Tenant/Landlord, and Rental Assistance services. Mr. Torres advised that ECHO has tried to have more visibility through COVID and their goal is to insure the public receives housing information and changes by the States by providing the best possible education possible.

Habitat for Humanity (Housing Rehabilitation Program) – Dona Gomez – commented on the problems that were incurred in the past getting this Housing Rehabilitation Program to work.

Ms. Gomez discussed procedures that were modified and approved and how Habitat was able to work hard through the pandemic issues and by April 2020 start working on exterior repairs and will in the future be able to work on interior repairs for clients. She noted that a change in some marketing ideas has enabled Habitat to get ten new clients.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked about providing assistance to people, especially seniors, who are in need of air-conditioning repairs. She commented on someone she had met during her recent campaigning. Ms. Gomez advised that the program does offer HVAC as a possible repair using the grant funds, however, it is limited to a \$10,000 amount and often such repairs are more costly which would require making a loan to the individual who are resistant to taking out a loan.

Commissioner Galvin questioned if this was something that could be considered by the Human Services Commission. Mr. Hernandez indicated it would need to be an eligible CDBG purchase and suggested Commissioner Kiziloglu contact him with the individual's information so he and Ms. Gomez can check on whether this is something that could be considered.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked air conditioning repairs for people who live in a mobile park. Ms. Gomez asked for the name of the mobile park and confirmed that people living in mobile homes can receive assistance. Mr. Hernandez indicated that he would work with Ms. Gomez on a marketing blitz for this program.

Commissioner Soby stated that he would be interested in receiving an update from Mr. Hernandez on what services can be provided for people living in mobile parks.

Commissioner Duggan asked about other types of repairs Habitat is able to provide and wondered about of any of the projects. Ms. Gomez advised that no projects were completed in FY 2019-2020 but three have been completed to date in 2020 and with the revised procedures Habitat hopes to get more people approved in the program.

Tri-Valley REACH (Housing Prevention Maintenance/Repairs) – Kay King – advised that REACH has 11 properties and service 35 to 36 adults with disabilities. Ms. King advised that REACH is grateful for the support they received from the City of Pleasanton that was earmarked for repairs at two of their projects. The first property on Vineyard Avenue required spending \$12,000 of the funds received for a sewer lateral project; the second project was renovation of a master bedroom/bathroom at the home on Tanager which would enable REACH to add a fourth tenant in the property and offer a shared bathroom. The cost for this second project was \$19,000.

Commissioner Kiziloglu was provided information about rents for the property with Ms. King noting that a minimum for low-income tenants is \$350.

Ms. King provided Commissioner Soby information about funds REACH receives from the cities of Pleasanton and Livermore and how funds are raised from fundraising. She also noted that REACH currently has 6 homes in Pleasanton and 5 in Livermore. Ms. King commented on COVID noting that none of the homes/clients have been impacted.

Commissioner Kiziloglu discussed her overall concerns with the CDBG funding and the CAPER indicating she was uncomfortable with many of the aspects and its approval. Mr. Hernandez stated that the intent of this meeting is to hold a Public Hearing and hear from the agencies and the Housing Commission's responsibility is only that which relates to the housing portion of the CAPER.

Commissioner Kiziloglu indicated she did not have a problem in approving this report but did have issues with other related matters.

Chairperson Gaidos suggested Commissioner Kiziloglu's concerns should be discussed at another meeting and that he would be interested in receiving a motion to approve the CAPER.

A motion was made by Commissioner Galvin, seconded by Chairperson Gaidos, to approve housing portion of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for fiscal year 2019-2020.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

AYES: Commissioners Duggan, Galvin, Kiziloglu, Soby, and Chairperson Gaidos.

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Welsh

ABSTAIN: None

**5. Information: Update on the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERAP) for renters affected by the COVID-19 pandemic including proposed modification to the program to allow applicant to be eligible to receive a second month of rental assistance.**

Mr. Hernandez provided details about the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) that the commission approved in May 2020. He advised that while the program has been able to assist 143 households, people are still in need of assistance and a proposal to City Council is for a modification to be made that would allow providing help for a second month.

Commissioners were advised by Mr. Hernandez that staff is anticipating all 143 of the households already assisted will be asking for help again and that new people, who have now learned of the program, will also be asking for assistance. He noted that when the program was initially launched it was intended to be to provide assistance for one month, but the city now realizes that people need additional assistance.

Commissioner Duggan indicated she liked the idea of providing additional assistance, she wanted to understand that before offering assistance whether staff anticipated there might be another rush of people needing help. Mr. Hernandez indicated that the funds could run out and this will be part of the conversation that staff will be having with City Council and it is possible that some people who have already received assistance will need to be dropped so assistance can be provided to new people.

Commissioner Soby was advised by Ms. Hernandez that funds for this program are coming out of the Lower Income Housing Funds and as well as a third round of CDBG COVID funds will be proposed to supplement the funding for this program.

Chairperson Gaidos commented on learning that some funds were still available from the first round of assistance. He also questioned whether the services of Abode could be utilized to help people with landlord negotiations and referring people of other available services. Chairperson Gaidos wanted to be certain people needing assistance were aware of other programs and thought shared information would be helpful.

Commissioner Kiziloglu felt problems people are experiencing will likely continue for some time and felt a third round of assistance was going to be needed.

Commissioner Duggan stated that people are in need of these funds now and this staff recommendation for a second round of assistance should be agreed to by the commission, she also felt this was something this commission would still be discussing in the months to come. Mr. Hernandez noted that City Council was supportive of putting more funds into this program so it should be easier to explain if a third round is needed.

Commissioner Galvin questioned whether staff had any numbers pertaining to how many people in the city have been evicted. Mr. Hernandez indicated that numbers were not available because of the anti-eviction notices put in place because of COVID, but the notices have not prevented landlords from filing eviction paperwork and the result of that will depend on the Alameda County Court and how they are dealt with legally. He noted that the courts had re-opened October 1<sup>st</sup>, but the State has stated landlords can't evict someone until March 2021.

Commissioner Kiziloglu questioned what would happen to people who have been unable to pay their rents. Mr. Hernandez stated that he anticipates landlords will be evicting tenants because they have not paid rents since the anti-eviction notices were put in place.

Commissioner Kiziloglu asked Mr. Hernandez if landlords had been contacting him asking for help. He indicated that they have been questioning what they can do because tenants have not been paying rents and they still have bills to pay. Mr. Hernandez commented on how COVID is affecting everyone and that ERAP is a way to try and help some people and unpaid rent is still considered consumer debt. The City hopes that two months assistance will help some people.

Commissioner Kiziloglu noted that while campaigning for her run for City Council she has learned about a lot of information that is not being provided to the Housing Commission, for example recent information about RHNA. She feels like the Housing Commission is considered to be irrelevant and feels that the city should be involving this commission more so they are better educated. Commissioner Kiziloglu feels the Housing Commission is essential and are under-utilized in the community.

Chairperson Gaidos indicated he understood Commissioner Kiziloglu's concerns but the purpose of this meeting was to consider only items on the agenda and he felt the meeting should be adjourned.

Commissioner Galvin had questions about additional upcoming meetings for the commission and Mr. Hernandez indicated that a November 19<sup>th</sup> meeting was being planned for the commission to consider the Ridgeview budget and review the RHNA numbers that were recently published. He noted that in 2021 numbers will be reviewed for 2023 and the commission will be involved in that review process. Mr. Hernandez further advised that RHNA is a planning process and more about zoning which is not a part of the Housing Commission jurisdiction, but he will relay the commissions concerns to Mr. Dolan.

Commissioner Soby noted that during the last RHNA go-around commissioners at that time expressed similar concerns to those raised by Commissioner Kiziloglu and some changes did occur. He felt comfortable that the Housing Commission would be able to get more involved during the next process and provide input.

Commissioner Kiziloglu felt staff should meet with the commission to discuss the RHNA numbers so the commission could be involved in the methodology. Mr. Hernandez reminded commissioners that they are discussing an item that is not on the meeting agenda and that Ellen Clark will be attending the November meeting to discuss this item with them at that time.

Commissioner Duggan expressed her concern about the commission not meeting for the past 3 or 4 months and felt they should begin meeting so they can be more involved.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

To be decided.

