



**Minutes of Special Meeting  
February 6, 2018**

**A. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. by Chair Thompson in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Municipal Building, 7500 West 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

**B. ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Authority Members Present: Thomas Abbott  
Tim Fitzgerald  
Chad Harr – arrived at 4:08 p.m.  
Janice Thompson  
Jennifer Walter

Authority Members Absent: None

Also Present: Kenneth Johnstone, Executive Director  
Lauren Mikulak, Staff Liaison  
Kat Douglas, Community Development Director for Jefferson County  
Tammy Odean, Recording Secretary

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**1. September 12, 2017**

**It was moved by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Ms. Walter to approve the minutes of September 12, 2017 as written.**

**Motion approved 4-0.**

**D. OFFICERS REPORTS**

Ms. Thompson mentioned she was glad to see the Fruitdale frame, hanging in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room at City Hall; it was a gift from Jim Hartman and Susan Ely.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked how many units are currently rented at Fruitdale.

Mr. Johnstone said 9 of the 16 are rented and Ms. Douglas added that 3 affordable units are still available.

Mr. Johnstone let the Authority know the tax credits are getting finalized with a repayment of \$1.5 million to the City and there will be a ceremonial check given at the March 26 City Council meeting plus a Fruitdale Lofts update. The Authority will be invited to attend.

**E. PUBLIC FORUM**

There was nobody present from the public to speak.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Strategic Planning Discussion Continued**

Ms. Mikulak gave a brief introduction of Ms. Douglas who is the Community Development Director for Jefferson County and thought she would be a good person to speak with the Authority because of her background and knowledge of what housing authorities and affordable developers do.

Ms. Douglas explained that most housing authorities are formed to provide affordable housing, most commonly in the form of rentals. There are some home ownership programs, but not much. She explained there are three large Authorities in Jefferson County: Jefferson County Housing Authority, Metro West Housing Solutions in Lakewood and Arvada Housing Authority. They all do development and rental housing and oversee the Section 8 choice voucher program.

Ms. Thompson and Mr. Abbott said that when the WRHA was established it was to help people with home ownership and to improve the neighborhoods. One of the goals was to have a neighborhood revitalization strategy where strong households were being encouraged. Mr. Abbott asked if it is possible to have people who work in Wheat Ridge get an incentive to live in Wheat Ridge.

Ms. Douglas discussed fair housing laws and said it comes down to housing authority policies on who is going to live in the units. A good example on this policy working is housing for teachers that live and work in the area. She explained that in urban settings, this is a hard model to implement and more common in rural communities.

Mr. Fitzgerald added that eventually the City will be in the process of updating the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy. Right now Wheat Ridge's income level is going down and the Counties income level is going up. He mentioned he would like to see a subsidized loan program for young couples/professional.

Ms. Douglas said this is not something you typically see housing authorities do, but is possible. She added that a down payment assistance program for 1<sup>st</sup> time home buyers is more likely, but deed restrictions are generally imposed on these properties.

Mr. Harr asked what the percentage split for market rate housing compared to affordable housing is in mixed income projects.

Ms. Douglas said it is determined by funding sources and there is not a huge amount of market rate housing in some of the development projects, most is affordable housing of varying levels of affordability. She shared the HUD Income Limits for different categories of average median income in Jefferson County.

Mr. Harr also asked if the WRHA could partner with a developer to create a mixed income program.

Ms. Douglas said yes, but there has to be a paid staff in place. It is easier to get funding, but there is extensive work that comes along with it. This would be one hurdles for the WRHA because there is not a full time staff in place.

Ms. Thompson, Mr. Harr and Mr. Fitzgerald asked if the WRHA is relevant to the community/City and if not, how does the WRHA become relevant. Also, they wanted to know if there is a need in the Wheat Ridge area for a housing authority.

Ms. Douglas said it is a difficult time to be a HA of this size and the relevance is based on the need of the residents. As a funder is would be hard to partner if WHRA has no funding. She reflected on the changes that have occurred in the affordable housing landscape in the last 15 years and noted that a lot of private developers are now doing affordable housing, and there are a number of nonprofits getting into housing development.

Ms. Thompson asked how much money is needed to partner.

Ms. Douglas shared a development proforma and operating budget, which indicated it would take tens of millions of dollars and right now she does not think it is feasible. She explained the cost of homes is more now than 10 years ago; developers today do not always need housing authorities as partners because they can apply for the tax credits on their own.

Mr. Abbott thinks there needs to be a niche for the WRHA to be a value.

Mr. Harr asked where the biggest need in the County for affordable housing is.

Ms. Douglas said affordable or attainable housing is needed. Jefferson County has the lowest vacancy rates so more units are needed so the residents aren't displaced.

Mr. Abbott asked about a home sharing program to match old and young together and if the WRHA can work as the middleman.

Ms. Douglas said there is a nonprofit called Sunshine Home Share program which is already doing this. For the WRHA there would likely be too much liability as a government entity to facilitate this kind of program. Jefferson County is not funding Sunshine Home Share for that reason.

Ms. Thompson said she thinks the Authority has a few options; 1) keep what money the WRHA has, in the bank, and see if something comes across our path, or 2) disband.

Mr. Fitzgerald does not like the option of disbanding at this time.

There was some discussion that upon updating the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy, a role for the Authority may become more clear. There was a recognition that the Authority has limited resources.

**It was moved by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mr. Harr that the WRHA go dormant until such time that staff lets the Authority know of a potential relevant role with at least one annual meeting.**

**Motion carried 5-0.**

2. Resolution 01-2018: Establishing a designated public place for the posting of meeting notices as required by the Colorado Open Meetings Law.

**It was moved by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Harr to approve Resolution No. 01-2018, a resolution establishing a designated public place for the posting of meeting notices as required by the Colorado Open Meetings Law.**

**Motion carried 5-0**

3. Budget/Audit Update

Lauren said there will be a need to approve the budget and audit exemption in the next month. Ms. Thompson asked staff to confirm whether there could be an alternate meeting for these approvals.

## **G. OLD BUSINESS**

## **H. OTHER**

Ms. Thompson thanked Ms. Walter for her time spent on the WRHA because her term ends in March and she is not renewing her seat.

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald to adjourn the meeting at 5:41 p.m.**

**Motion carried 5-0**

  
Janice Thompson, Chair

  
Tammy Odean, Recording Secretary