



**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 5, 2022  
MEETING OF THE  
ASPEN/PITKIN COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Carson Schmitz called the APCHA Board Meeting of January 5, 2022 to order at 4:00 p.m. The APCHA Board Meeting was held through Zoom Meetings.

**ROLL CALL:** Rachael Richards, Carson Schmitz, John Ward, Skippy Mesirow, Alycin Bektesh, and Francie Jacober was present. Kelly McNicholas-Kury was absent. David Laughren joined the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

Staff Members in Attendance: Matthew Gillen, Executive Director; Diane Foster, Assistant City Manager; Cindy Christensen, Deputy Director; Bethany Spitz, Compliance, Policy and Systems Manager; Madelene Feder, Administrative Assistant II and Tom Smith, legal counsel for the APCHA Board.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Chairman Schmitz opened the regular meeting to Public Comment for items not on the agenda.

- Tim Anderson made a public comment.

Chairman Schmitz closed the public comment section of the meeting.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMENTS:** Executive Director Gillen updated the Board on the following:

- The new inspection policy that was implemented into the Regulations has started. An inspection of an ownership unit that comes up for sale is now required before listing.
- Deputy Director Christensen updated the Board on the current sales listings: One Burlingame 1 3-bedroom, one Centennial studio, two Hunter Creek 2-bedrooms, and one 3-bedroom home at Woody Creek.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:** Director Richards made a motion to approve the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held December 8, 2022. Director Bektesh seconded the motion. **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Directors Jacober, Richards, Schmitz, Bektesh, and Ward voted yes. Motion passed.

**DISCUSSION ON REGULATION/POLICY PRIORITIES – Bethany Spitz and Cindy Christensen**

- Compliance, Policy and Systems Manager Spitz began the presentation to the Board on the possible Regulation and Policy changes for 2022. Spitz stated that staff is looking for the Board's input on what topics should put on the top of the list to discuss first.
- The Board agreed that right sizing is the most important topic. Bektesh stated that while a right sizing program is needed and wanted, how useful would it be if people are not able to afford it and suggested that it is important to look at an affordability standard.
- Richards commented that in looking at an affordability standard, that it is important to take into consideration that employees in Pitkin County live in other counties within the Roaring Fork Valley and that those AMI's should be part of the mix.
- After further discussion, the most important topic to begin discussion will be right sizing.

Alycin Bektesh left the meeting at 5:00 p.m.

**SELLERS STANDARDS/CAPITAL REPAIRS:** Chairman Schmitz opened the regular meeting to Public Comment on this topic.

- Peg O'Brien made a public comment on what ramifications it would have with the owners at Woody Creek.
- Gus Filiss made a public comment on the use of Woody Creek for this program as well.

Assistant City Manager Diane Foster presented to the Board the recommended pilot program:

- Mesirow asked Foster that in the presentation there was a statement that there are opportunities for current owners to replace their homes as well. Foster stated that the intent is to keep the finished construction of a new home should not exceed the maximum price based on the category. If someone comes to APCHA today and stated that they wanted to replace their home, APCHA would go through the process and what the maximum build-out price could be. The other option would be that you could bring in public dollars to lower the maximum price. Foster stated that maximum value would be given to the current owner at the time they wanted to sell as long as the inspection didn't show any "willful neglect" of the overall condition of the property.
- Richards stated that she would like a more concise definition of "willful neglect". Richards wanted to make sure that the same standard is used throughout the program. She is concerned about what someone's new base price for resale would be and is concerned with the overall equity of the program.
- Schmitz stated that he agrees with Richards on her example of the 30-year-old faucet. The intention is not to penalize anyone for not replacing that faucet just because it's 30 years old. However, if that faucet is slowly leaking and the owner allows it to leak which creates mold in the house. That is the significant difference.
- Ward stated that while he understands Richards concerns on appreciation, what has been done in the past is that the standard of units has not had a significant weight on sales price; it has always been sold at whatever it appreciated. Ward suggesting giving everyone a token 1% appreciation and go to the City and County for funding on fixing maintenance issues
- Foster asked the Board if this is something that the Board wants to pursue further, in relation to reaching out to the owners at Smuggler Run as well and get one-on-one feedback from both them and Board members. The Board agrees that they would like to go down that path.

**APCHA BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

- Richard stated that we are seeing a lot of commentary in the paper about a recent opinion piece that was in one of the papers and that referred to how our workers should be treated. Richards addressed the opinion piece that had been in one of the papers over the weekend by Elizabeth Miliias. Richards stated that she had been getting a lot of feedback from people saying, "they did not know that they were that disposable as so many community people think they are." That the concept of never selling units again, they should all be rental, so that there is more control on people's lives and dispose of them more quickly when their bodies wear out. Richards stated that people ask her if we should continue to build bedrooms for children when we want the family to fill them immediately after they leave for college. There are more things that are coming out about what the community thinks about the working class. This commentary was very discouraging. After so many people have been essential workers, working the front line during a pandemic, dealing with people that want to ignore every COVID-19 guideline there was and then be told by a leading journalist supported by our local paper that they don't really belong here as soon as their labor is used up. This thinking is detrimental for people's desire to work with APCHA or our local leadership.

- Mesirow stated that this year has been tough, and Richards explained a lot of reasons why. To him, the town feels a lot different. We have experienced 19 years of growth pressure in 2 years. Policy and community response has not caught up to that yet and it feels really tenuous and unsettled. Also, those are also opportunities. The community has always risen to the challenge and found ways to continue to have people in various economic strata and a true sense of community. Mesirow stated that he is hopeful for this Board taking on the big challenges. He is hopeful for the moratorium although it is an uphill battle, but everyone will benefit from it in the end.
- Schmitz thanked Richards and Mesirow for their comments and added that he thinks that it is easy for people to sit back and offer unworkable and unrealistic solutions that don't work. He would challenge anyone who has criticisms of APCA and thinks there are better ways to listen to the meetings and offer workable solutions. Schmitz suggested that when establishing condo documents on new projects to do reserve study and fund it at 100% for maintenance down the line. Christensen did state that all new projects do have that requirement now.


**Director Jacober made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:25 p.m. Director Ward seconded the motion. ROLL CALL VOTE: Ward, Schmitz, Richards, Laughren and Jacober voted yes. Motion passed.**

THE ASPEN/PITKIN COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY



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Carson Schmitz, Chairperson



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Matthew Gillen, Secretary