

Minutes of the Ypsilanti Housing Commission

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96113746887>

Meeting ID: 961 1374 6887

Meeting called to order at 6:02pm by Commissioner Smith

ROLL CALL:

- Commissioner Azzaro Present
- Commissioner Brown Absent
- Commissioner Frankenhauser Present
- Commissioner Palmer Present
- Commissioner Smith Present

Others present:

- Executive Director/CEO Z. Fosler
- Tarah Hearn, YHC
- Ricky Jefferson, Washtenaw County Commissioner
- Lisa League, KMG Prestige
- Melvin Parson, New Parkridge Resident
- Lois Richardson, Mayor

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: R. Smith asked if there were any changes to be made to the agenda. Y. Azzaro moved to approve the agenda, second by H. Frankenhauser.

Motion passed 4-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: R. Smith asked if there were any changes to be made to the meeting minutes of May 12, 2021. T. Palmer moved to approve the minutes as written, second by Y. Azzaro.

Motion passed 4-0

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: R. Smith welcomed Lois Richardson and Ricky Jefferson to the meeting. L. Richardson and R. Jefferson thanked the board and administration for the work that they do.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS: Covered under new business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Discussion of Public Concerns about Contracted Security Service:** Z. Fosler gave a summary of concerns the community has expressed about racially insensitive posts discovered on the personal social media page of a security contractor at YHC properties. Z. Fosler stated that he spoke with the individual who stated that the posts do not accurately represent him or his beliefs. Z. Fosler stated that the YHC does not evaluate or hire contractors based on political affiliation or beliefs. He stated that the YHC is in the business of serving residents, and the job performance of the contractor has been satisfactory. Furthermore, the property management offices have not received any complaints from residents and security staff are in regular communication with the property management offices. R. Smith stated that she acknowledges that systematic racism is an issue, but she is most concerned with the safety and well-being of YHC residents and with whether a contractor is doing their job. Y. Azzaro stated that she is grateful for the responsiveness of the City and YPD. She stated that she is concerned about the contractor's affiliation with policing given the climate of systematic racism. She suggested that further investigation into the issue is necessary because she does not want community members to ask why this wasn't addressed. T. Palmer stated that she agrees with Y. Azzaro and there should be further investigation. R. Smith stated that administration can look up complaints about the contractor in LARA, Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs. H. Frankenhauser stated that there needs to be due diligence in investigating

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this contractor and looking into other options. She asked how the local community feels and who created the document. Z. Fosler stated that he does not know who created the document.

R. Jefferson stated that he agrees that further investigation of more than one source is necessary. He stated that the contractor should show that he is taking accountability for his actions. L. Richardson stated she is very concerned about the lack of accountability and she wants to know what YHC's course of action will be if an investigation uncovers other issues. H. Frankenhauser suggested that the YHC place an addendum on its contracts that outlines the values of our organization so that contractors can be terminated if these values are not demonstrated. Z. Fosler stated that he will have to follow up with property management and the legal team to see if this is possible. Y. Azzaro suggested that there be a special meeting with the contractor before the next regularly scheduled board meeting. L. Richardson asked if the contractor tried to claim that he did not post the messages on his social media page. Z. Fosler stated that he did not deny making the posts. L. Richardson stated that it is important to continue to have conversations with both sides regarding this issue. New Parkridge resident M. Parson expressed gratitude that traffic at New Parkridge has decreased. He stated that he has had great interactions with the security contractor's dispatch, but he hasn't seen the presence of security staff on the property. He also stated that he feels uncomfortable giving the contractor a pass just because service is going well. He suggested that some sort of sensitivity training be mandated.

H. Frankenhauser left 6:40pm

L. Richardson stated that she received a special report from YPD regarding a shooting incident along Hilyard Robinson Way, and she asked if there have been other similar incidents. Z. Fosler summarized a shooting incident involving two vehicles that occurred around 6pm on Monday. There were no injuries. The YHC maintenance vehicle was damaged. Z. Fosler stated that there have been a few other incidents, but this has been a trend throughout other areas of Ypsilanti this summer. R. Jefferson asked M. Parson to give an estimate of the number of loiterers since the new security contract began and police presence has increased. M. Parson stated that the numbers have significantly decreased. Z. Fosler asked L. Richardson for an update on whether "no overnight parking" signs will be installed in the Parkridge Community Center parking lot. Further discussion ensued.

- **Resolution #21-03-YHC PTO Policy:** R. Smith offered Resolution #21-03 for discussion, second by Y. Azzaro. The board reviewed and discussed the resolution to authorize the distribution of 20 PTO hours on July 1 of the current year and 40 PTO hours January 1 of each year moving forward. Z. Fosler explained that this is a process change and would not result in any additional leave being distributed than is customary.

Resolution 20-03 passed 3-0

MONTHLY REPORTS:

- **Regulatory, Oversight, & Legal Actions:** None.
- **Development Update:** Z. Fosler has been in discussion with the County about pandemic related housing development funds and potential development opportunities. He stated that the County will assist in making introductions to neighboring townships to discuss affordable housing development.
- **Facilities:** Z. Fosler stated that construction on the YHC office roof should begin in July. He stated that he met with architects to discuss preliminary building plans for the renovation of the office.

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- **Finance Reports:** The board reviewed and discussed financial reports and the finance cover sheet. Z. Fosler gave an update to the board regarding questions raised during the last meeting. He stated that the high “budget variance for NOI” for Hamilton Crossing Phase I is due to a vacancy issue caused by the influx of vouchers issued by MSHDA to Hamilton Crossing residents. The “2021 projected total reduction to rent” for Strong Housing is high due to a small number of vacancies on the property. This amount will decrease once vacancies are filled.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

- **Property Management Staffing:** Z. Fosler stated that the property manager for Deborah Strong Housing had to leave the position due to family issues. KMG is still working to fill the position.
- **Board of Commissioner Trainings:** Z. Fosler encouraged board members still in need of certification to participate in the Ethics & Fundamentals for Commissioners trainings virtual or locally.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Azzaro: No comment.

Commissioner Palmer: She stated that it was great to see everyone, and everyone is looking healthy.

Commissioner Smith: She stated that this was a great discussion and she is looking forward to the security contractor investigation. She stated that transparency is important and administration has done a great job of informing stakeholders about the issue. She stated that outgoing FEP Director Marquan Jackson should receive a plaque or some other sort of recognition for his service to the YHC. She stated that the annual review of the Executive Director’s contract is coming up. Each board member should schedule a one-on-one meeting with Z. Fosler to discuss his performance for the year 2020.

ADJOURN: T. Palmer moved to adjourn, second by R. Smith. **Passed 3-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:27pm**

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

The Ypsilanti Housing Commission and its Board of Commissioners, of the City of Ypsilanti, Michigan, hereby authorize the Executive Director to sign the approved Board of Commissioners minutes of June 9, 2021.

	YEAS	NAYS	ABSENT
Commissioner Azzaro	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Brown	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Frankenhauser	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Palmer	_____	_____	_____
Commissioner Smith	_____	_____	_____

Zachary D. Fosler, Executive Director & CEO