



MESA HOUSING SERVICES GOVERNING BOARD

April 8, 2004

The Mesa Housing Services Governing Board of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on April 8, 2004 at 7:30 a.m.

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT	BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT	STAFF PRESENT
Keno Hawker, Chairman Rex Griswold Kyle Jones Dennis Kavanaugh Janie Thom Claudia Walters Mike Whalen Janet Brandon	None	Mike Hutchinson Joe Padilla Barbara Jones

1. Conduct a public hearing to discuss the Mesa Housing Services' Five-Year Plan (Update).

Housing Services Director Ruth Anne Norris and Senior Housing Specialist Debbie Cooke addressed the Boardmembers relative to this agenda item.

Ms. Norris reported that as a result of recent changes in the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, in January 2004, the City Council established the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board. She explained that the Governing Board consists of the Mayor, the Councilmembers and one member of the community who is participating in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Ms. Norris advised that as part of the Mesa Housing Services Division's requirements for continued funding from HUD, staff is required to provide the agency with an Annual Plan and Five-Year Plan and noted that the plans must be reviewed and approved by the Governing Board prior to their submission to HUD on April 17, 2004. She also stated that the Mesa Housing Services Division is in the final year of the Five-Year Plan. Ms. Norris added that the Governing Board is mandated to review and make decisions only on issues related to the Section 8 Program.

Chairman Hawker announced that this is the time and place for a public hearing regarding the Mesa Housing Services' Five-Year Plan (Update).

There being no citizens present wishing to speak on this issue, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed.

2. Conduct a public hearing to discuss the Mesa Housing Services' Annual Plan.

Chairman Hawker announced that this is the time and place for a public hearing regarding Mesa Housing Services' Annual Plan.

In response to a series of questions from Chairman Hawker, Ms. Norris clarified that the Mesa Housing Services Division has implemented a strong de-concentration policy, whereby eligible low-income families or individuals who receive a voucher are encouraged to relocate to newly developed areas beyond west Mesa and central Mesa locales. She explained that landlords throughout the City are also encouraged to participate in the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and to accept the voucher as partial payment of an individual's rent (with the renter and Mesa Housing Services paying the remainder). Ms. Norris commented that in addition, the Section 8 Program contains a portability feature which allows those individuals and families who have received a voucher and resided in Mesa for one year to utilize the voucher for housing in a surrounding community if they so desire.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that Mesa Housing Services has adopted 93% of the published Fair Market Rate as its payment standard for the Section 8 Program; that as a result of the current housing market, participants are able to find newer and larger units at rents below the Fair Market Rate in certain areas; and the fact that an individual or family cannot pay more than 40% of their income for rent and utilities.

Boardmember Whalen expressed concerns that there are many elderly and low-income residents in his district who reside in manufactured housing that they own, but are required to pay a monthly space rent to the mobile home park. He requested input from staff as to whether such space rent could qualify under the provisions of the Section 8 Program.

In response to Boardmember Whalen's comments, Ms. Cooke advised that the Mesa Housing Services Division currently does not cover the cost of space rent on manufactured homes under the Section 8 Program. She stated that it was her belief that in the past such costs were covered by the Division's regulations, but said that she would be happy to research the issue further to address Boardmember Whalen's concerns. Ms. Norris added that staff will soon commence the development of its new Five-Year Public Housing Agency Plan and will assess whether a community need exists regarding the matter, as well as appropriate mechanisms with which to address it.

Chairman Hawker requested that staff conduct research relative to the pros and cons of including space rent on manufactured homes as a component of the Section 8 Program.

Boardmember Thom concurred with Boardmember Whalen's concerns relative to the issue of space rent on manufactured homes.

In response to a series of questions from Boardmember Thom regarding the Section 8 homeownership program, Ms. Norris explained that the funds utilized by the City for the program are derived from the Federal government and not from Mesa's General Fund; that applicants in the program must go through a rigorous process in order to qualify to purchase a home; that the homeownership voucher program allows qualified individuals and families to use their voucher for a period of 15 years to purchase a home (30 years for disabled and elderly

families); that as with typical homebuyers, eligible individuals and families in the Section 8 Program must assess the availability of public transportation and jobs in the area in which they wish to rent an apartment or purchase a home; that HUD establishes the Fair Market Rents and that the Mesa Housing Services Division has adopted its payment standard at 93% of the current limits and does not allow landlords to charge rent above that amount; and that two individuals have successfully completed the homeownership process.

Boardmember Walters commented that the intent of the homeownership program was to place qualified individuals on a path of self-sufficiency and to utilize rent payments for the purchase of a home. She stated that Mesa and Yuma are the only two communities in Arizona currently participating in the homeownership program and reiterated the fact that no General Funds are used for the program. Boardmember Walters also expressed support for the portability feature of the Section 8 Program voucher and said that it provides an individual with the opportunity to choose the area in which he or she wishes to reside and thereby reduces the concentration of low-income families in specific neighborhoods.

Further discussion ensued relative to the relationship between the Mesa Housing Services Division and Housing for Mesa; the process by which individuals and families become qualified to participate in the Section 8 Program; the standards that must be met in every rental unit to ensure that the residents are living in safe, clean and suitable housing; and the fact that an estimated 1,462 families and 600 landlords are currently participating in the Section 8 Program.

There being no citizens present wishing to speak on this issue, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed.

3. Consider a resolution authorizing approval and submission of the Five-Year Plan (Update).

It was moved by Boardmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Boardmember Walters, that a Resolution authorizing approval and submission of the Five-Year Plan (Update), be adopted.

Boardmember Griswold concurred with Boardmember Whalen's comments regarding staff conducting research relative to the possibility of including the space rent of manufactured housing as a component of the Section 8 Program. He also questioned whether language addressing those concerns could be included in the submission of the Five-Year Plan (Update).

In response to Boardmember Griswold's inquiry, Ms. Cooke clarified that the Mesa Housing Services Division is in the final year of the above-referenced Five-Year Plan (Update), but noted that staff will commence work this summer on a new Five-Year Plan. Ms. Norris added that the Five-Year Plan does require broad community input and commented that if the Governing Board wishes to participate in that process, staff will provide the Boardmembers with updates and solicit their feedback as well.

Boardmember Walters emphasized the fact that the Section 8 Program may not allow the City to remedy the issue of individuals who own, as opposed to rent, manufactured housing and also pay space rent. She added that Housing staff might wish to research this matter, which is of great concern to many community residents, but not under the auspices of the Section 8 Program.

Boardmember Whalen commented that Mesa cannot be the only city in the country that is unique with regard to the manufactured housing space rent issue and suggested that it may be appropriate to address this issue on a national level.

Carried unanimously.

4. Consider a resolution authorizing approval and submission of the Annual Plan.

It was moved by Boardmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Boardmember Walters, that a Resolution authorizing approval and submission of the Annual Plan, be adopted.

Carried unanimously.

Chairman Hawker expressed appreciation to Ms. Norris and Ms. Cooke for their presentation.

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board Meeting adjourned at 8:07 a.m.

KENO HAWKER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 8th day of April 2004. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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A Resolution of the Mesa Housing Services
Governing Board of the City of Mesa,
Maricopa County, Arizona Authorizing
Approval of the Public Housing Agency
Annual Plan.

Therefore, Be it Resolved by the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board:

Section 1: That, approval of the PHA Annual Plan is recommended to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and

Section 2: That the Chairman of the Board, or his designee, be authorized to submit the plan to HUD on behalf of the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board; and

Section 3: That the Chairman of the Board or his designee be authorized to execute all documents necessary for such submission.

Passed and Adopted by the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board of the City of Mesa, Maricopa County, Arizona, this 8th day of April, 2004.

Approved

Chairman

A Resolution of the Mesa Housing Services
Governing Board of the City of Mesa,
Maricopa County, Arizona Authorizing
Approval of the Public Housing Agency
Five-Year Plan (Update).

Therefore, Be it Resolved by the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board:

Section 1: That, approval of the PHA Five-Year Plan (Update) is recommended to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and

Section 2: That the Chairman of the Board, or his designee, be authorized to submit the plan to HUD on behalf of the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board; and

Section 3: That the Chairman of the Board or his designee be authorized to execute all documents necessary for such submission.

Passed and Adopted by the Mesa Housing Services Governing Board of the City of Mesa, Maricopa County, Arizona, this 8th day of April, 2004.

Approved

Chairman