

MESA HOUSING AUTHORITY GOVERNING BOARD

December 6, 2012

The Mesa Housing Authority Governing Board of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on December 6, 2012 at 7:32 a.m.

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT

Scott Smith, Chairman
Alex Finter
Christopher Glover
Dina Higgins
Dennis Kavanaugh
Scott Somers
William M. Egan, Sr.

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT

Dave Richins

STAFF PRESENT

Christopher Brady
Debbie Spinner
Linda Crocker

(Items on the agenda were discussed out of order, but for purposes of clarity will remain as listed on the agenda.)

Chairman Smith welcomed Mr. William Egan, Sr. who is a public member of the Mesa Housing Authority Governing Board.

1. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

2-a. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction and approval on revisions to City of Mesa Housing Authority Administrative Plan and open both the Web-based wait list for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the wait list for Desert Leaf Apartments Project-Based Vouchers.

Director of Housing and Community Development Tammy Albright displayed a PowerPoint presentation and provided a brief overview of the revisions made to the Housing Authority Administrative Plan. She stated that the changes that have been made will correct inconsistencies within the Plan. **(See Pages 3, 4 and 5 of Attachment 2)** She said that staff is requesting that the Board complete the following actions:

- Approve the revisions and updates made to the City of Mesa Housing Authority Administrative Plan
- Approve the opening of the online waiting list for Housing Choice Vouchers for two days in January
- Approve the opening of the waiting list for Project-Based Vouchers for Desert Leaf Apartments

Ms. Albright explained that staff is currently working with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to resolve a conflict between the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grant regulations and Project-Based Voucher rules. She said that staff will bring the resolution back to the Board unless the Board wishes to approve the changes made to the Administrative Plan contingent upon a resolution being reached with HUD. She added that staff is seeking a resolution that will include families who are participating in support services. (See Page 10 of Attachment 1)

It was moved by Boardmember Kavanaugh, seconded by Boardmember Finter, that the revisions made to the City of Mesa Housing Authority Administrative Plan be approved and that the Web-based Housing Choice Voucher Program waiting list and the waiting list for Project-Based Vouchers for Desert Leaf Apartments be opened contingent upon a resolution being reached with HUD.

Carried unanimously.

2-b. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction and approval to reallocate 18 Housing Choice Vouchers to Project-Based Vouchers to Desert Leaf Apartments to serve homeless and disabled individuals or families.

Director of Housing and Community Development Tammy Albright displayed a PowerPoint presentation (**See Attachment 1**) and provided brief background information regarding the allocation of 18 Housing Choice Vouchers to Project-Based Vouchers (PBV) for Desert Leaf Apartments. She said that the apartments were purchased and rehabilitated as part of a joint venture between the City of Mesa and the City of Phoenix. She added that the project, which will target the City's chronic homeless population, is near completion.

Ms. Albright stated that staff is requesting that the Mesa Housing Governing Board approve the designation of 18 PBV for the Desert Leaf Apartments. She explained that these 18 vouchers will exceed Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) 25% per project cap, which means that the project will need to meet mandatory HUD requirements. She said that HUD requirements state that program participants must meet one of the following criteria:

- Elderly
- Disabled
- Families receiving supportive services

Responding to a question from Chairman Smith, Ms. Albright explained that in order to receive a PBV, individuals will be required to participate in services.

Chairman Smith pointed out that the requirements for PBV are mandated and housing is just one of many services available to homeless individuals.

Ms. Albright explained that staff is currently working with HUD to resolve a conflict between the NSP grant regulations and PBV rules. She said that requiring families to participate in supportive services is not allowed under NSP guidelines.

Ms. Albright displayed a series of photographs that illustrate some of the improvements made to the units at Desert Leaf. (See Pages 4 and 5 of Attachment 1) She said that staff is recommending that the Board approve the allocation of 18 Housing Choice Vouchers to PBV for Desert Leaf Apartments.

In response to a series of questions from Boardwoman Higgins, Ms. Albright explained that the City currently has a total of 1,486 regular housing vouchers and 20% of those vouchers could be allocated towards PBV. She added that 30 vouchers were previously allocated to the La Mesita project and that another 30 would be requested for the Escobedo Project.

Chairman Smith pointed out that the philosophy of the program is changing from an individual-based service to a project or program-based service. He noted that Mesa currently has an estimated 1,500 individuals utilizing housing vouchers.

Director of Housing and Revitalization Mary Berumen explained that individuals who participate in the PBV program will be eligible to receive regular tenant-based vouchers after one year. She said that transitioning individuals over to regular housing vouchers allows the PBV to be used by someone else.

Chairman Smith stated that if some of the units set aside for the project were unoccupied, they would be considered "off the market" and could only be used by PBV participants.

Ms. Albright explained that if after one year an individual decided to leave the PBV program they would be eligible to receive the next available tenant-based voucher.

Chairman Smith commented that when units are set aside for a specific project there is a potential that there could be unused vouchers.

Ms. Berumen advised that individuals receiving PBV are housed as quickly as possible. She said that there are special vouchers for veterans who are housed within five to ten days.

Chairman Smith remarked that the administrative aspects are the only downside to PBV.

Responding to a question from Boardwoman Higgins, Ms. Albright explained that the City of Phoenix contributed \$1,295,873 in Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) 2 funds and the City of Mesa contributed \$159,025 in NSP 1 funds towards the acquisition and rehab of the units. She noted that the City of Phoenix would not be contributing any vouchers.

City Manager Christopher Brady clarified that the City of Phoenix was looking for a project to allocate their NSP 2 funds towards and the Desert Leaf project was ready to go.

In response to a question from Boardmember Finter, Ms. Albright explained that each housing project has different criteria that individuals will need to meet in order to qualify for PBV. She said that the Desert Leaf Project will specifically target the City's hard to serve homeless population.

Ms. Albright advised that initially Desert Leaf Apartments will be able to house elderly and disabled individuals. She indicated that staff is working with HUD to also include families that are utilizing services. She noted that requiring families to participate in supportive services in order to obtain a PBV is not allowed under NSP guidelines.

Mr. Brady clarified that in order to receive housing benefits at Desert Leaf Apartments a family would be required to participate in supportive services. He noted, however, that under the NSP requirements families have the option to participate in services.

Boardmember Finter commented that he hoped that staff would be able to work through the bureaucracies so that families would have more services available to them.

Ms. Albright stated that it has been shown that individuals who participate in services are more successful when they move on to permanent housing. She indicated that there is usually an underlying reason why individuals are homeless and the services that are provided address those needs. She said that the types of services provided include help with finding a job, writing a resume and childcare assistance.

Responding to a series of questions from Boardmember Somers, Ms. Albright explained that there is a wide range of services available to PBV recipients. She said that drug and alcohol counseling is available, however, participants are not required to submit to drug and alcohol testing. She stated that case managers will work with the individuals to determine which mandatory services they should participate in.

Ms. Albright reiterated that program participants cannot be required to participate in services when NSP funds are used. She noted, however, that the PBV program has a mandatory requirement that states that recipients must be participating in services.

Chairman Smith commented that the PBV program doesn't just provide housing, it is a program that has services available to assist individuals who may have other problems besides homelessness.

In response to a question from Boardmember Finter, Ms. Albright explained that individuals currently located in Mesa will take first priority on the housing waiting list.

Responding to a series of questions from Boardmember Somers, Ms. Albright explained that elderly or disabled individuals or those who have a family member that is elderly or disabled will not be required to participate in services. She said that mandatory participation in services is only required for individuals who do not fit into one of those categories. She added that staff is working with HUD to resolve this issue.

Ms. Albright stated that according to PBV rules, individuals can be evicted if they do not comply with the mandatory requirements. She noted, however, that under NSP rules they cannot be evicted. She pointed out that no other city in the Valley has ever exceeded the 25% rule and, therefore, the City of Mesa is taking the lead and will work with the City of Phoenix to find a solution.

Chairman Smith remarked that the individuals participating in the housing program understand the rules.

Ms. Albright indicated that most individuals will take advantage of the services offered. She said, however, that staff wants to ensure that rules are in place in an effort to avoid any potential problems.

Boardmember Somers remarked that there is always someone who doesn't want to play by the rules. He stated that it will be important to have a process in place so that individuals who don't follow the rules will not have a negative impact on the program. He added that there are people who will participate in the services provided because they want to improve their situation.

Ms. Berumen reported that case managers from A New Leaf and Megellan Health Services will be available to program participants. She also indicated that support staff will be living on the premises to address any issues that may arise.

Boardmember Somers remarked that he did not want to have a "cancer" stuck in what would otherwise be a good program.

Chairman Smith thanked staff for the presentation and said that all too often entire programs are eliminated out of fear of the exception.

Chairman Smith stated that it was the consensus of the Board to approve the allocation of 18 Housing Choice Vouchers to Project-Based Voucher for Desert Leaf Apartments.

2-c. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide direction and approval to provide Save the Family with a letter to grant 30 Project-Based Vouchers to Escobedo Phase 2 provided they are successful in obtaining 2013/14 Arizona Low Income Tax Credits.

Director of Housing and Community Development Tammy Albright discussed Save the Family's request for a support letter to grant 30 Project-Based Vouchers (PBV) to Escobedo Phase 2. She said that the letter will state that if Save the Family is successful in obtaining 2013/14 Arizona Low Income Housing Tax Credits the City will grant them 30 PBV for their project. She added that Save the Family is requesting the same letter that was provided to La Mesita last year.

Chairman Smith noted that Save the Family did not request vouchers for Phase 1 of the project.

In response to a series of questions from Chairman Smith, Ms. Albright advised that the City is providing HOME funds for Phase 1 of the Escobedo Project. She explained that there is a specific category for supportive services and that last year La Mesita was the only project in that category. She said that Save the Family is refining the services they provide so that the Escobedo Project can be included in the supportive services category.

Chairman Smith noted that with the addition of the Escobedo Phase 2 vouchers, the City would be providing a total of approximately 78 PBV.

Chairman Smith stated that it was the consensus of the Board that Save the Family be provided a letter granting 30 Project-Based Vouchers for the Escobedo Phase 2 project.

Mr. Egan commented that he has served on the Mesa Housing Authority Governing Board for eight years and he hopes to continue to serve for a few more years. He expressed his appreciation for staff's efforts and said that unanimously voting to support these projects demonstrates a vote of confidence for the staff. He added that the citizens of Mesa may not be in agreement with all of the projects, but they will agree that they are in the best interest of the City.

Chairman Smith thanked Mr. Egan for his comments.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Mesa Housing Authority Governing Board meeting adjourned at 7:53 a.m.

SCOTT SMITH, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, INTERIM CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Mesa Housing Authority Governing Board Meeting of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 6th day of December, 2012. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, INTERIM CITY CLERK

bdw
(attachments 2)

Housing Governing Board

December 6, 2012

Presented by:

Tammy Albright, Housing and Community Development
Director

and

Mary Berumen, Housing and Revitalization Director





Current Request

- Approve 18 Project-based Vouchers for Desert Leaf Apartments – exceeding HUD 25% per project cap.
- Located at 44 S. Horne
- To serve homeless elderly or disabled



Desert Leaf Development

- 20 unit complex
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for homeless
- Serving clients at or below 50% of the Area Median Income
- Serving Homeless Elderly and Disabled only at this time



Before and After
Photos of Kitchen

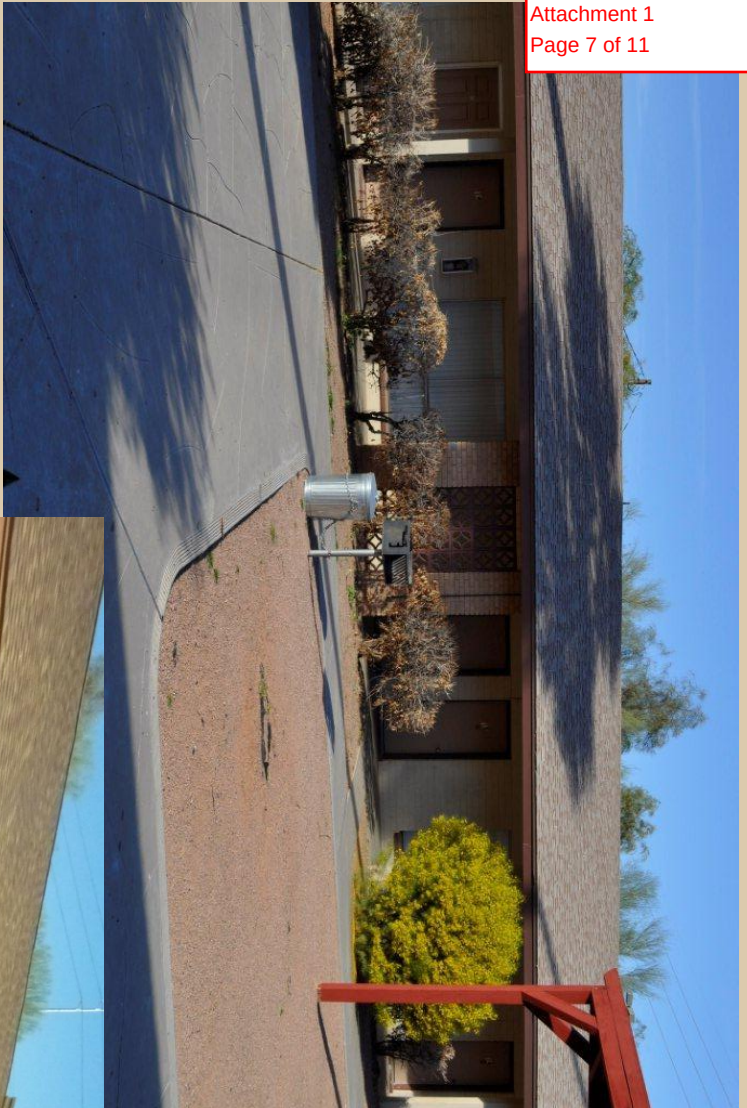


Before and After
Photos of Bathroom



Budget

- City of Phoenix NSP2 funds (\$1,295,873),
- City of Mesa NSP1 funds (\$159,025),
- Megellan Health Services (\$325,000) and
- A New Leaf (\$200,065).
- A total investment into our community of **\$1,979,963.**



Before and After
Photos of New
Landscaping





- Other Improvements:
- New Laundry Area
 - Interior paint and fixtures
 - Exterior paint and new landscaping





Desert Leaf Program Requirements

- Separate Waiting Lists will be opened and maintained for each Project Based Property
- Waiting List for Desert Leaf Property will open **end of December or 1st of January** and will remain open
- Preferences are:
 - Mesa resident, homeless, disabled



HUD Regulations & Issues

- To exceed the 25% limit on PBV per project, the project must serve:
 - Elderly
 - Disabled
 - Families using Supportive Service
- Conflicts with NSP grant regulations
- Currently working with HUD to resolve conflict
- Additional Changes to Administrative Plan



Questions?



Housing Governing Board

December 6, 2012

Presented by:

Tammy Albright, Housing and Community Development
Director

and

Mary Berumen, Housing and Revitalization Director





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Action Items

- Approve revisions and updates to City of Mesa Housing Authority Administrative Plan.
- Approval to Open the new On-line waiting list for Housing Choice vouchers for two days in January
- Approval to open the Desert Leaf apartment wait list for Project Based Vouchers



Plan Changes for Consistency

Consistency Change

Increase the time frame to deny assistances for engaging in illegal drugs from 6 months to 12 months.

Outline a list of where a public notice will be published when the waiting list is opened

Decrease the definition of “Temporarily Absent Family Members” from 180 days to 90 days

Clarification that annual criminal background checks will be conducted for all adult household members



Plan Changes to Incorporate New Processes

New Processes

Outline processes for the new on-line application process

Limit requests to be returned to the waiting list to a maximum of three times before a customer needs to reapply

Define the lack of air conditioning when temperatures are over 90 degrees as a life threatening condition



Plan Changes for Project Based Vouchers

Proposed change

Outlining procedures for implementation of Project
Based Vouchers

Define Desert Leaf apartment preferences for their
waiting list





Questions?

