



## Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust (BJHT) Board Meeting Minutes

May 20, 2024

### **Attendance In Person**

Board Members: Matt Davis, Ashley Feaster, Matt Garnes, Christian Kata, Ethan James, Jan Malinowski, Caitlin Reid, Victoria Smalls, Dick Stewart, and James Williams

Staff: Claude Hicks and Jennifer Tuckwiller

Guest: Tom Henz (Hilton Head Bluffton Chamber of Commerce)

### **Attendance Virtually**

Board Members: Courtney Hampson and Wendy Zara

Guests: Scott Marshall (City Manager, City of Beaufort), Quincy White (Chief Housing Office, Town of Hilton Head Island)

### **Call to Order**

Chair Dick Stewart welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:02am.

A quorum was present, and Dick S. asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2024, meeting. Caitlin R. made a motion to approve, second by Christian K. The motion was approved unanimously, with Matt D. and Courtney H. abstaining.

### **Financial Report**

Treasurer, Michelle G., was unavailable to attend the meeting today. Executive Director, Claude Hicks, reported that he received an email from Michelle G. on May 15, 2024, and that she had reviewed and approved the reports, noting that all expenses are part of normal operations. Dick S. also inquired about the Carrington Manor funds that are reported on the balance sheet as an asset. This is a loan and should be reflected as such. Claude H. reported that BJHT had just received a copy of the loan document and that this would be updated in future financials.

### **Forms for Board**

Jennifer T. asked Board members to review the forms included in their packets: Conflict of Interest, Non-Disclosure and Board Commitments. She asked that Board members take the opportunity to complete these and returns before next month's Board meeting. She also informed Board members that she will be needing some additional information regarding an application to SC Housing that would allow BJHT access to state funds for Home Repairs. A request for this information will be sent out later in the month and she asked all Board members to complete the information so that the application can be completed.

## RFP Funding Decisions

Claude H. reported that last month we walked through the applications that had been received. Since the last meeting, BBR (Bennett & Reindel) has decided to delay their application for a year to secure higher scoring. They are trying to rearrange some of their land acquisition costs to score in the upper twenty percent of applications. Claude H. recommends that if the developer comes back to BJHT next year, he strongly encourages the Board to keep the same commitment. However, no funds are reserved specifically for this project currently. Dick S. further explained the level of competition to qualify for the housing tax credits is very high and necessary in affordable housing to bridge the funding gaps needed to complete a project. Dick S. also explained that the scoring matrix (Qualified Allocation Plan or QAP) is complicated and changes every year. Jennifer T. informed the Board that SC Housing has already begun its review of the 2024 QAP in preparation for the release of the 2025 version. There is an event being held in Columbia that she and Claude will attend either virtually or in person. Claude H. reiterated the need for gap funding and soft funding that will continue to be necessary for new affordable housing to be built.

Claude H. further explained that Ninety-Seven, LLC are still under review and staff is meeting with them this week to get more information. As of now, their application is incomplete. When the application is deemed complete, staff will bring it to the Board for consideration.

Claude H. moved on to discuss the Home Repair and First Time Homebuyer programs. To fund all the requests in their entirety, the Board would need to allocate additional funding. Staff have met with each applicant since the last Board meeting to conduct interviews and gain more information about each of the programs. Claude H. recommended the Board allocate additional funding to these programs. Since BJHT is not funding BBR, LLC (\$440,000 was approved in the April Board meeting) in the Rental Development category, there is additional funding available. The need is great and obvious by the number of applications and funding amounts requested. He recommends an additional \$169,000 to Home Repair and \$40,000 to Homebuyer Assistance. Claude H. reiterated that BJHT will be applying to SC Housing to participate as a Sponsor in their Housing Trust Fund program for additional monies (\$20 million available in the fund) that can be allocated to home repairs here in the region. If approved, we would be 1 of 2 approved Sponsors in the area. The Black Chamber of Commerce is currently the only other approved organization in Beaufort and Jasper County. Claude H. attended in person training to be eligible to apply for this funding. His experience combined with the net worth of BJHT gives an opportunity to do 3 things: get qualified, become the prominent player in the area for home repair and lastly but most importantly, help people. BJHT will develop a process that is efficient and gets results and, in the end, great things will happen for the citizens of our region. Having no further discussion, Claude H. asked for a motion to allocate an additional \$169,000 to Home Repair and an additional \$40,000 to Homebuyer Assistance from the Rental Development dollars. The motion was made by Victoria S., second by Matt G.

Claude H. said the next phase will begin with staff notifying the organizations about the funding decisions. We will also issue a press release regarding the funding. Staff will also be asking for due diligence packages from each of the organizations and once that is complete, we will arrange to go out and make check presentations. We will follow up with funding via wire transfers. There will also be a funding agreement (currently being reviewed by counsel) that will be signed by each organization that states funding will be used for what was stated in each application.

### **Board Committee Structure**

Claude H. started the discussion regarding committees. He indicated that some Board members had identified a committee that they were interested in and others did not respond. He also said there had been discussion around forming additional committees. He asked that the Board consider just starting with these four and then the Board can consider expanding. The first order of business will be to elect a chair then adopt a charter for each committee. Staff will draft a charter for each committee prior to the first meeting and during the first meeting, a chair will be elected, and the charter approved. The committees will look at agenda items, future issues, operational problems and finance structures at the 2500 feet level and then make recommendations to the full Board.

Dick S. reminded that the Board's charge is to set policy, allocate resources and establish priorities that effectively support the organization's mission. The Board needs to look at the committees to do all the above with a smaller view of the whole needs for BJHT.

Claude H. asked the Board if they are still in agreement to have Board meetings one month and committee meetings every other month. The Chair has the option to attend each committee meeting but is not eligible to be the Chair of the committee. Claude H. asked the Board to review the packet contents related to the Board and Committee meeting schedules. This will be discussed further and solidified at the June Board meeting. We will also discuss whether we should change the Board meeting from the third Monday of the month. Further discussion was held regarding meeting venues and moving meetings around the County to be able to accommodate visitors and guests that will want to attend BJHT Board meetings.

### **Executive Director Report**

Claude H. reported that he had already discussed items one and two in his report. His third item lists out the outreach and meetings held in his first six weeks as Executive Director of BJHT. He has met with many organizations that want to help and was invited to speak to other Boards in the region to familiarize them with our mission and vision.

Claude H. is meeting with Julie Davis, the new Executive Director for the Beaufort Housing Authority (BHA). The question of repositioning has probably come before the BHA Board and BJHT will bring the experience and expertise to the table to help them

make some decisions about properties. They have three options: keep the property and rehab yourself, partner with someone and rehabilitate together, or lastly, divest yourself of the property. All three options are complex and will need multiple voices at the table to help find the best way for the BHA to move forward. Claude will offer assistance and expertise to Julie and the BHA as they start a new chapter in their organization. One of the properties that is under discussion is the Sandalwood Apartment Complex on Hilton Head Island. Claude H. covered the next steps that the staff is working on.

- CCDC agreement is at the County for signature by the Interim County Administrator
- Jennifer T. is working on the application for SC Housing to access the home repair funds.
- Invoices for governmental members will be sent out shortly
- Staff will be drafting committee charters
- Staff will be making the funding announcements and will collect and analyze due diligence packages from recipients
- Claude H. is working/talking with several developers regarding projects in the region.
- 2025 budget will be presented at our June Board meeting.
- Jennifer T. has sent out an RFP for website and social media services.
- Staff proposes a half day retreat in September to get to know each other better, analyze the committee structure and how we sustain BJHT moving forward.
- Claude H. concluded his report by saying that there is a wide range of experience sitting at the table, this is a motivated organization that wants to do the right thing, affordable housing is a topic that is being discussed daily, and lastly, BJHT is in a position of opportunity to be in an area of growth.

### **Other Business**

It was requested the Board go into Executive Session; however, the decision was made that it was not necessary.

### **Adjourn**

Hearing no further business to discuss. Dick S. asked for a motion to adjourn. Matt D. made a motion and seconded by Christian K. The meeting adjourned at 11:21am.