

**BATTLE CREEK HOUSING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Regular Meeting July 22, 2025

Pending Board Approval

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular meeting of the Battle Creek Housing Commission (BCHC) was called to order at 3:02 p.m. by President Simmons in the Main Office of Kellogg Manor, 250 Champion Street, Battle Creek Michigan.

ROLL CALL:

Present:	Commissioner Simmons, President
	Commissioner Gillette, Vice President
	Commissioner Gray
	Commissioner Guzzo
Excused:	Commissioner Torrey

Also present: Lee Talmage, Executive Director; John Paternoster, Deputy Director; Abe Alassaf, Deputy Director; Visitors Tom Ralston & Nick Loveless of Union Suites LLC.

BUSINESS:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA & MINUTES

A motion was then made by Commissioner Gray and supported by Vice President Gillette to approve the Meeting Agenda with a revision: Moving the New Business before the Directors Report.

Vote: Ayes- Unanimous
Nays- None

A motion was then made by Commissioner Guzzo and supported by Commissioner Gray to approve the Minutes of the June 17, 2025 Regular Meeting.

Vote: Ayes- Unanimous
Nays- None

PUBLIC COMMENT & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:

President Simmons then welcomed two visitors, Tom Ralston and Nick Lovelace, of Union Suites, and invited them to introduce themselves and address the Commission. Ralston let the Commission know Union Suites LLC is a real estate development company based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, specializing in affordable housing projects. They have been successful in developing new construction in Grand Rapids and are interested in pursuing funding with Low Income Housing Tax Credits to construct a similar development with 52 townhouse units in Marshall, Michigan. If BCHC would be interested in partnering with them through its Housing Choice Voucher program, they

anticipate needing about eight Project Based Vouchers. Vice President Gillette then stated that the City of Battle Creek along with BCHC has been aggressively promoting LIHTC housing developments in the Housing Commission's jurisdiction, Battle Creek. President Simmons added that currently BCHC has already met with several Developers and set aside a significant percentage of its allowed PBV authority. An Outlook email between Abe Alassaf and Union Suites was included in the packet in pgs. 131-134. After further discussion Ralston then expressed an interest in looking at Battle Creek for future development and thanked the Commission for the opportunity to meet at such short notice.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 2025-08 2025 Annual Plan

Whereas under Quality Housing & Work Responsibility Act of 1998 it is the responsibility of Public Housing Authorities and Commission to submit a Five Year/Annual Plan or an Annual Plan documenting an ongoing housing strategy with attendant Certifications; a motion was made by Vice President Gillette and supported Commissioner Gray to adopt the 2025 Annual Plan as prepared.

Regarding the HUD-50077-SL, Local Official Certification, Commissioner Guzzo elected to abstain from the Vote.

Vote: Ayes- Unanimous
Nays- None
Abstention- Guzzo

Draft FYE 2026 PH/RAD/HCV Operating Budget

A draft copy of the FYE 2026 Operating Budget was included in the Commission packet in anticipation of approving a Budget at the August or September regular meeting. Deputy Director John Paternoster reviewed key elements of the Budget and answered questions of the Board.

As there was much discussion about these new business items and the agency's strategic planning, it was decided to plan for a special workshop for the Commission and administrative staff.

A presentation of possible options for utilizing Georgetown Estates revenue from the Georgetown property was also discussed. It was agreed a special presentation should be presented at the August 26, 2025 meeting.

Director Talmage was also directed to make a request to Eenhoorn LLC for a \$200,000 draw from the Georgetown Estates cash reserve.

Directors Report & Financials:

The Directors Report including Bills and Communications, are presented, attached, and made a part of these minutes.

Director Talmage added to his Report a Community Contributions request from BC Diaper Initiative for a \$1000 grant. This grant funding supports a Family Essentials Fair planned for Wednesday, August 27, 2025. Talmage expressed support for this event and continued collaboration with this organization. The request included a cover letter, the BCHC Contributions Application and a Flyer that promotes the event. The Commission unanimously approved the grant.

Talmage also added a story published in Southwest Michigan Second Wave

Deputy Directors Reports:

Deputy Director Paternoster's Reports on occupancy and Pest Control were presented, are attached and made a part of these minutes.

Deputy Director Alasaff's Report on Development was presented, is attached and made a part of these minutes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

OTHER BUSINESS:

Public Comments:

None

Commissioner Comments:

Commissioner Gray informed the Board that a Veteran Town Hall will take place at Kingdom Builders on July 25, 2025, featuring State Representatives Steve Frisbee and Ron Robinson.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 5:14 President Simmons adjourned the meeting. The next regular meeting of the Commission will be Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee Talmage
Secretary

