

**Michigan State Housing Development Authority
Minutes of Special Authority Meeting
December 1, 2020 – 2:30 p.m.**

**Special Meeting held via Microsoft Teams accordance with Senate Bill No. 1108
amending Section 3 (MCL 15.263) of the “Open Meetings Act” (1976 PA 677)**

AUTHORITY MEMBERS PRESENT AND LOCATION:

Regina Bell, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan
Mark Burton, Meridian Township, Ingham County, Michigan
Susan Corbin, Petoskey, Emmet County, Michigan
Carl English, Village of Bingham Farms, Oakland County, Michigan
Rachael Eubanks, East Lansing, Ingham County, Michigan
Jennifer Grau, Tamarac, Broward County, Florida
Tyrone Hamilton, Belleville, Wayne County, Michigan
Deb Muchmore, Laingsburg, Shiawassee County, Michigan

AUTHORITY MEMBERS ABSENT:

None.

OTHERS PRESENT VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS:

Maria Ostrander, Executive
Richard Norton, Legal Affairs
Lisa Ward, Legal Affairs
Mary Cook, Office Services
Ronald Farnum, Office of Attorney General
John Millhouse, Office of Attorney General
Michael Fobbe, Office of Attorney General
Keri Lardie, Michigan Civil Service Commission
Lori Fedewa, Human Resources
Katie Bach, Communications
Butch Edlinger, Icebreaker Resources

Twenty-seven additional members of the public participated via the following Conference Line:
+1 248-509-0316, Conference ID: 244 020 361#.

Chairperson Susan Corbin opened the meeting at 2:32 p.m. In accordance with Senate Bill No. 1108 amending Section 3 (MCL 15.263) of the “Open Meetings Act” (1976 PA 677), a roll call vote confirmed the presence and physical location of each Authority member. A quorum was established with all eight members.

Ms. Corbin requested public comments from teleconference participants. There being none, she noted that the purpose of today’s special meeting is to conduct two interviews for the position of Executive Director; two additional interviews will be conducted on December 3, 2020. Ms. Corbin noted that a fifth candidate, Paula Carethers, recently withdrew from consideration for the position.

As part of the Chairperson’s Report, Ms. Corbin followed up on an issue raised by Authority member Carl English at the last meeting. Mr. English previously asked whether a severance package could be part of the job offer for this position. Ms. Corbin had Ms. Keri Lardie, Human Resources Director for the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, respond to this question. Ms. Lardie indicated that she reviewed the nature of the position and how it fits into the state civil service structure. As a part of the senior executive service, this is a classified civil service position, subject to a limited term employment agreement. This agreement cannot exceed two years, although it can be renewed. The rights of the employee depend on whether they previously held status in the State of Michigan classified service. All other conditions of employment fall under civil service rules for classified employees, which do not allow severance packages for specific individual appointments. As such, neither the Authority nor Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity can grant such a benefit.

Mr. English asked whether the candidate ultimately chosen for the position could be replaced if there was a change in administration and how that might affect their civil service benefits, if applicable. Ms. Lardie confirmed that the Letter of Appointment stands for the term as indicated in the letter. There are only a couple of conditions where an appointment can be ended early and civil service rules and procedures would apply. In response to additional questions, Ms. Lardie noted that whether a particular candidate could return to another position within the Authority would depend on the individual circumstances of that person and their work history with the State of Michigan.

VOTING ISSUES:

Approval of the Agenda:

Deb Muchmore moved approval of the agenda. Jennifer Grau supported. The following Roll Call was taken:

Regina Bell	Yes	Rachael Eubanks	Yes
Mark Burton	Yes	Jennifer Grau	Yes
Susan Corbin	Yes	Tyrone Hamilton	Yes
Carl English	Yes	Deb Muchmore	Yes

There were 8 “yes” votes. The agenda was approved.

DISCUSSION/NONVOTING ITEMS:

Proceeding with the interview portion of the meeting, Ms. Corbin explained that to maintain consistency and ease of process, she would ask the candidates the questions prepared ahead of time by Keri Lardie and Authority members. Authority members could then ask follow-up questions; Candidates would be permitted time at the end to ask questions. The prepared questions were shared with candidates ahead of time.

Ms. Corbin announced that the first candidate they would interview was Mr. Wesley Butler. She provided a brief background of Mr. Butler, noting his experience in affordable housing, particularly with Minnesota’s state housing agency. She then requested that Mr. Butler be invited to join the Teams meeting. Once he joined, Mr. Butler was asked to respond to the Presentation Topic and Interview Questions as listed below.

Presentation Topic:

How has your background has prepared you for the role of Executive Director at MSHDA? This should include your education, work experience and knowledge of the State of Michigan and its housing industry and programs.

Interview Questions:

1. This position requires an individual who possesses strong leadership skills to head the agency during a public health and economic crisis. Please describe your experience in leading an organization through a crisis and the specific things you did to ensure the organization was still able to meet their mission and goals during an uncertain time.
2. How does MSHDA play a role in the economic recovery of the State of Michigan and do you believe that now is a time for change or stability within MSHDA?
3. What would your plans and objectives be for the first month in this role? Six months? Twelve months?
4. Michigan is a very diverse state with both rural and urban areas. What is your experience with housing programs for each? How would you ensure a focus on housing needs for the entire state and not just one particular region or type of community?
5. Please describe the steps you would take to ensure that MSDHA is able to creatively and quickly respond to the needs of the state's low- and moderate-income residents.
6. As MSHDA's Executive Director, you would be responsible for supervising MSHDA's Director of Legal Affairs, who also acts as the ethics officer for the Authority. What are your views about ethics in the workplace, particularly in government?
7. Describe a situation where you inherited a staff and had to assess the team and understand the dynamics of the work environment. What is your process for doing so and what would be your approach within MSHDA? How have you used a strategic plan to develop measurement tools for your team?
8. How is diversity and inclusion important to MSHDA and its mission, and what specific steps have you taken to foster diversity and inclusion in your workplace in the past year?
9. Gaining commitment to a new vision can be very challenging. Tell us about a time you were successful in developing and maintaining partnerships with stakeholders to take actions that supported a change or new vision. Why were your efforts successful and how did you measure that success?
10. What specific traits, skills or abilities would you bring to this role and how would those benefit MSHDA?

Following the prepared questions, Mr. Butler provided additional information on the types of projects in which he had experience. He also discussed how he believes affordable housing and economic development go hand in hand. In reference to balancing the needs of urban versus rural communities, Mr. Butler provided specific examples of that balance at work. He further explained his approach to community engagement, as well as how he has experience utilizing partnerships across different agencies to ensure success.

Once Authority member questions had concluded, Mr. Butler asked how work was being conducted at the Authority during the Covid-19 pandemic. Ms. Corbin answered that 90% of state employees are working remotely. The Governor believes that it is safest to work from home and has announced that State employees will remain working from home until at least March 1, 2021. She expects more guidance in January 2021 whether that may be extended further. Additionally, there are strict protocols in place for any employee wishing to go into the office.

Ms. Corbin requested a five minute break before proceeding to the next candidate, Mr. Clarence Stone, who is the Authority's current Director of Legal Affairs. Mr. Stone was invited to join the Teams meeting and his interview began once the Board reconvened. His interview consisted of the same set of prepared questions.

After responding to the standard questions, Mr. Stone was asked to elaborate on how he would measure success against the Authority's mission and goals. Additionally, there was discussion concerning his views on community engagement, as well as how the Authority works with other state agencies to accomplish its goals.

Mr. Stone was also asked to discuss how he would assess or gain insight as to how the Authority is seen as a partner within the larger community. Moreover, in response to Mr. Stone previously noting the Authority's high staff turnover for outside opportunities, Ms. Eubanks asked why Mr. Stone had never left the Authority for other opportunities. In response, Mr. Stone noted his personal interest with housing and how he believes in the importance of the Authority's work.

Following the interview, Ms. Corbin asked Authority members whether they wanted to share any thoughts now or wait until after the remaining interviews on Thursday. Ms. Grau responded that she would prefer to hear from all the candidates first.

There being no additional comments, Ms. Corbin stated that the next Special Board meeting is December 3, 2020 and requested a motion to adjourn. Jennifer Grau moved approval and Rachael Eubanks supported. The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

REVIEWED
By Lisa Ward at 8:47 am, Dec 07, 2020

REVIEWED
By Richard Norton at 1:03 pm, Dec 07, 2020