HOUSING AUTHORITY FOR THE CITY OF ANACORTES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 24, 2026
Anacortes Housing Authority, 719 Q Avenue, Anacortes, Washington

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 3:30pm. Commissioners Barrett, Carroll-Gillis, Rooks and Mu in attendance. Also in attendance were Brian Carroll, Interim ED, Ashley Anshus, staff note-taker, and Barbara Hartsock, Operations Manager. In addition, there were 9 tenants in attendance and former Commissioner Nicole Ohana.

AGENDA APPROVAL: It was moved by Terry Carroll-Gillis and seconded by Susan Rooks to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion passed**.

MINUTES APPROVAL: Susan Rooks pointed out numerous typographical errors in the proposed August Meeting Minutes. Terry moved approval of minutes with corrections. Seconded by Xuhua Mu. **Motion passed**.

PUBLIC COMMENT: 1. Tenant reports some suspicious activities outside her apartment door (sticky spill) thought to be possible harassment. Another tenant told of UPS delivery that broke/spilled liquid delivery. Situation solved. 2. Tenant reported concerns about hole in Harbor House parking lot and expressed safety concern. Referred to maintenance department. 3. Several tenants spoke to thank Brian for his efforts as Interim Director.

BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS: Pat Barrett recognized this as Brian's last Board Meeting as Director and thanked him for his performance. Pat reported that he has been attending community meetings and service clubs to inform and educate of the AHA role in the community and the plans and progress of the Olson Building project. Susan Rooks also expressed her Thanks to Brian for doing a wonderful job!

INTERIM DIRECTOR REPORT: Brian reviewed the focus of the Interim Director role stating that the **Administrative Restructuring** of the agency was nearly complete. He took this opportunity to introduce **Barbara Hartsock, newly hired Operations Manager**, of the AHA. Barbara has worked 7 ½ years for the Island County Housing Authority and came to us through the Executive Director hiring process. She brings amazing knowledge and expertise in the housing industry. She is bilingual and is a Navy veteran. Brian said that Barbara was 'already bringing solutions to things that we didn't even know were problems'—which is exactly what the AHA needs at this time.

During the interim period there was a 70% turnover of AHA staff members through involuntary separation, resignation or termination. With the hiring of a new Executive, the AHA will be fully staffed as of October 1, 2026. Kim Montgomery of Valdez, Alaska has been hired as the second Occupancy Coordinator and Chris Bowlin and James Cummins have joined the maintenance team over the past two months. In August, two staff members were terminated due to unprofessional behavior with tenants involving professional boundary violations. Brian re-emphasized the agency expectation for dignity and respect to be demonstrated to all persons at all times by agency

personnel. A letter to all tenants from the AHA Administration was sent recently that referenced these terminations. All tenants involved in this issue were heard and appreciated for their participation in the investigation, as well as being counseled about their own actions that were problematic.

Brian briefly outlined the work done by Meghan Vaughn and Patti Tilchin in conducting the financial reconstruction and ongoing financial activities of the agency over the past five months. The goal of this work is the creation of an internal staff position, currently proposed to be a Director of Finance, or a staff Bookkeeper, depending on the level of administration that is assigned to this new post. The big needs are oversight of purchasing and procurement, accounts receivable, and Board-related financial work specific to property categories. Payroll functions would be returned to the agency from a contracted provider and local internal controls would be greatly enhanced through a functioning finance position. Brian pointed to the complexity of the Housing Authority profile, with several different funding sources in play, two limited-liability businesses and 11 AHA owned-properties and stated that good planning will save money over time. Cost distributions will enhance budgeting processes and long-term capital needs to sustain current capacity in aging buildings. The Fiscal Manager issue will be addressed in a later agenda item.

Brian introduced two brief issues from the City of Anacortes, 1. A DRAFT document was received outlining a proposed sales tax revenue re-distribution plan. This will replace the current document which is outdated to completion of the AHA roofing projects. The BOC is aware of the previous process and outcome so can respond to the Mayors office. 2. The Governor's Office is planning to include significant funding for Housing in the Governor's Capital Budget. The Mayor sent along this information to encourage us to apply. Brian added that our 40th District legislators may also include the AHA in Capital budget requests or even sponsor and advocate for them.

Fidalgo Flower Company is open for business. The repairs from the flooding incident at the Wilson Hotel were completed via 3-bid process. Insurance reimbursement will be $35,000 to include repairs to the commercial tenant unit and Wilson Hotel studio unit #201. The reimbursement will cover all of the costs incurred on these projects, including the insurance deductable of $5000..

OLD BUSINESS:
Executive Director contract: An extensive executive search for the Executive Director of the AHA has occurred over four months resulting in the selection and negotiation of employment terms with Crystal Simpson. These processes have been duly documented and recorded in Board resolutions. It was moved by Terry Carroll-Gillis and seconded by Susan Rooks to approve the final contract hiring Crystal Simpson as Executive Director. **Motion passed**.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

ONGOING REPORTS: OLSON BUILDING
Pat talked about the new sales tax funding agreement raising questions. The designation of specific tenant groups doesn't cover some existing and projected populations—including 'work-force' housing which has been a publicized Olson Building goal. BOC members involved in original document creation will follow-up. The interlocal agreement with the Port of Anacortes for

demolition is completed. Terry spoke about our desire to preserve historical materials from the Olson Building, especially since the building cannot be saved in total.
We still need to replace Kim as Project Manager and have waited to ensure we follow the required RFQ/RFP processes for the position.

NEW BUSINESS: Finance Manager Position. Because the Director's Report included an extensive discussion of this position, the Board reached a general consensus to hold a two-hour work session with Meghan Vaughn and Patti Tilchin as soon as possible. The session will focus primarily on the position's scope, responsibilities, and potential fiscal impact. Brian will discuss with Crystal and Meghan for scheduling.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business before the Commissioners, It was moved by Xuhua Mu and seconded by Susan Rooks to adjourn the meeting. **Motion Passed.**

The next regular meeting of the AHA Board of Commissioners is
Thursday, October 22, 2026

Submitted by Brian Carroll, Interim Executive

Approved: Pat Barrett, Board Chair