



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING

MARCH 20, 2024

9:00 A.M.

W. ANDREW BOSS BUILDING
555 N. WABASHA ST.

- I. ROLL CALL
- II. MISSION MOMENT
- III. INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF
- IV. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
- V. REVIEW OF BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS: BANK REGISTERS
- VI. SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE
- VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- VIII.A. NEW BUSINESS CONSENT ITEMS**

The following items are considered to be routine or non-controversial and will be approved in one motion, without discussion. If a Board member or other meeting attendee wishes to discuss a particular item, that person should inform the Chair and the item will be moved to the Discussion portion of the agenda.

NONE
- VIII.B. NEW BUSINESS DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - 1. HIRING A NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- IX. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

NONE

PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS FROM MISSY STAPLES THOMPSON
BOARD CHAIR

REGARDING Hiring a New Executive Director DATE March 20, 2024

The Chair recommends Board approval of Resolution No. 24-03/20-01, to do the following:

1. Offer the regular full-time position of Executive Director to Ms. Louise Toscano Seeba;
2. Begin negotiations for a three-year contract with Ms. Seeba; and
3. Employ Ms. Seeba at an agreed upon annual salary for each year of the agreement, including any annual increases, pending the successful completion of all required criminal history and driving history background checks.

Background: On May 24, 2023, and in preparation for the retirement of the current Executive Director on April 5, 2024, the Board approved the creation of a Search Committee of three Board members to do the following:

1. Engage and procure professional consultants or search firms and consult the community as necessary to assist with identifying, evaluating, and selecting candidates;
2. Create a profile and establish a new position description for the Executive Director position;
3. Create, propose, and support a transition plan for the new Executive Director, including a transition timeline;
4. Delegate responsibilities to PHA staff, consultants, and other individuals as may be prudent or necessary;
5. Provide monthly reports on the Committee's progress to the Board; and
6. Commend to the Board the hiring of a new Executive Director.

The Board had previously approved \$85,000 for Executive Director succession planning as part of the FY 2024 Operating Budgets, which were approved on March 15 and March 22, 2023.

Since its inception on May 24, 2023, the Search Committee expended \$30,000 of these funds to engage MDA Consulting to interview Board members, staff, tenants, and key stakeholders to create an Executive Director Profile that focused on the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a preferred candidate. Upon finalizing the Executive Director Profile, the Search Committee expended \$50,000 to engage the services of Gans, Gans and Associates (GGA) to conduct and lead the Agency through all facets of the search process. On January 17, 2024, the job announcement and position description were posted nationally by GGA, as well as on the PHA's website. The position was posted at a starting annual salary of \$250,000, and with a soft closing date of 30 days.

The Search Committee received a total of 14 letters of interest from potential candidates. Four of the applicants were selected for an initial interview, and two candidates were advanced to second interviews. The Search Committee's interviews focused on the candidates' experience in areas such as leadership philosophy; problem solving; commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion; strategic planning and goal setting; financial planning and budgeting; resident initiatives; and the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Ms. Seeba provided detailed and insightful answers that highlighted her deep affordable housing knowledge and experience, as well as her ability to successfully lead the Agency into the future. The Search Committee's decision to recommend Ms. Seeba for the Executive Director position was unanimous.

Ms. Seeba was selected as the PHA's General Counsel in 2012, under the PHA's contract with the City Attorney's office. In that role she provided oversight for the PHA's legal team, and provided legal advice and guidance to the PHA's Board of Commissioners, Executive Director, and staff regarding local, state, and federal laws affecting the Agency. In 2018, and in addition

to serving as General Counsel, Ms. Seeba took on the role of PHA Deputy Executive Director, still as an employee of the City Attorney's office. As the Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Seeba has provided management oversight of the PHA's Finance, IT, and Housing Policy Teams; helped prepare and lead the Agency through the conversion to RAD; led the Agency through continued operations during the COVID-19 crises, including rent recovery efforts; forged partnerships with the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County for increased affordable housing opportunities such as Families First and the development of the PHA's Faircloth units; helped reduce the PHA's carbon footprint through the creation of solar garden opportunities, thereby saving the Agency approximately \$100,000 per year; and most recently, she led staff through a strategic planning process that culminated in the Board's approval of the Agency Goals for the next two years.

In addition to her work at the PHA, and with the Board's approval¹, Ms. Seeba served as the Interim Executive Director for the Superior Housing Authority from 2017 to 2021, where she successfully stabilized and managed day-to-day operations and led the search for a new Executive Director for that housing agency. Ms. Seeba also served a four-year term on the Saint Paul Public Schools Board from 2012 to 2016; was a Senior Assistant City Attorney for the City of Saint Paul from 2004 to 2012; and was an attorney in private practice from 1999 to 2004.

Ms. Seeba holds a Bachelor of Science in Management Systems, Economics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a Juris Doctor from Albany Law School; and she is currently in the process of completing the Executive Director Education Program (EDEP) through the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association (PHADA).

¹ October 25, 2017

Upon the Board’s approval of this recommendation, the Board Chair, with the assistance of GGA and the Human Resources Director/Interim Executive Director, will begin the process of negotiating and entering into a three-year employment agreement with Ms. Seeba that would include a comprehensive benefits package similar to that of the current Executive Director and staff under the *Supervisory and Confidential Policies* (i.e., annual sick leave, vacation, and holiday accruals; health and dental insurance coverage; participation in the PHA’s retirement plan; a severance compensation plan; etc.). Subject to negotiation, the agreement would also state an annual starting salary of \$255,000 for Year 1 (start date through December 31, 2024); up to a 7% increase for Year 2 (January 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025); and up to a 5% increase for Year 3 (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026). The effective start date for the contract and Ms. Seeba’s employment would be determined during the contract negotiations and would depend upon the length of notice required for her to leave her employment with the City Attorney’s Office. As previously stated, Ms. Seeba’s hiring would also be contingent upon her passing all required PHA criminal history and driving history background checks.

MST/

Attachments: Resolution No. 24-03/20-01

**PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL
RESOLUTION NO. 24-03/20-01**

HIRING LOUISE TOSCANO SEEBA AS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WHEREAS, the PHA Board of Commissioners is responsible for selecting a new Executive Director to lead the Agency after the retirement of Jon M. Gutzmann on April 5, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Board has engaged in a thorough process, with the help of well-qualified consultants, to recruit and select the most outstanding candidate from a field of applicants; and

WHEREAS, following a thorough applicant screening process, the Board's Search Committee, with the consultants' assistance, have determined that Ms. Louise Toscano Seeba is the strongest candidate for the Executive Director position; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Seeba has extensive affordable housing knowledge and experience, and has demonstrated her ability to lead the PHA into the future; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Public Housing Agency of the City of Saint Paul as follows:

1. The Board hereby authorizes and directs the Board Chair, with the assistance of Gans, Gans and Associates (GGA) and the Human Resources Director/Interim Executive Director, to do the following:
 - Offer the Executive Director position to Ms. Louise Toscano Seeba; and
 - Begin negotiations for a 3-year employment agreement with Ms. Seeba; and
 - Employ Ms. Seeba at an agreed upon annual salary for each year of the agreement, including any annual increases, pending the successful completion of all required criminal history and driving history background checks.