



City of Milwaukee

P.O. Box 324
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0324

Meeting Minutes

HOUSING AUTHORITY EXECUTIVE SEARCH COMMITTEE

CHARLOTTE HAYSLETT, CHAIR

Karen Goetzler, Vice Chair

Michelle Bryant, Pstr. Willie Davis and Betty Newton

Friday, October 17, 2025

4:00 PM

Hillside Family Resource Center
1452 N. Seventh St., Milwaukee WI 53205

Stakeholder Forum

This is a hybrid meeting that will be conducted in person and via Microsoft Teams.

In Person: Hillside Family Resource Center, 1452 N. Seventh St., Milwaukee WI 53205

Virtual Link: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting>

Meeting ID: 254 733 674 024 4 Passcode: WR3wp7Lj

Call-in Number: 414-251-0392 Phone ID: 555 909 769#

The mission of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) is to foster strong, resilient and inclusive communities by providing a continuum of high-quality housing options that support self-sufficiency, good quality of life, and the opportunity to thrive.

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 4:11 p.m.

Roll Call

Present 4 - Gotzler, Hayslett, Bryant, Newton

Excused 1 - Davis

Chair Hayslett welcomed the attendees and expressed her gratitude for the insights, perspectives, and aspirations for HACM's leadership they will share today. She also thanked the Committee Members and the search firm for their commitment to HACM. The participation of all in this transparent and inclusive recruitment process will ensure a candidate that will guide HACM into its next chapter as a cornerstone of the community and for families city-wide.

Today's Stakeholder Forum is focusing on input specifically from HACM residents, partners and the general public, so they may provide insight based on their unique expertise of the state of Milwaukee, of HACM's place within the community, and their insider knowledge of HACM.

1. [R13655](#)

Presentation from executive search firm The Organizational Leadership Edge (TOLE) of the recruitment process for the next HACM Secretary-Executive Director, including efforts to date and the role of community input through the process

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Stan Quy of The Organizational Leadership Edge (TOLE) explained the process they will use as the search firm, the actions taken to date, the importance of the input they will receive at the two Stakeholder Forums, how the rest of the process will progress, and how the input provided today will be incorporated into the process.

In response to Mr. Quy's call for questions about the process, attendee Ann Wilson, HACM's Manager of the Hillside Family Resource Center, suggested during the interviews that questions involve presenting a real-life scenario, and asking for a response to that. Also, that an emphasis is made to engage with young adults during this process, to gain their insight, and to ensure the candidate can interact with them well.

To provide relevant background about HACM to the attendees, for context as they respond to the questions in the second item on the agenda, Ken Barbeau, HACM's Interim Secretary-Executive Director, offered a brief history of the organization, and described the multiplicity of HACM's housing types and funding sources, the services available to residents through HACM and challenges both industry-wide (for example, lack of funding, aging housing stock) and specific to Milwaukee (for instance, HUD Corrective Action Plans, cash status). The complexity of all of these factors makes the selection of the best candidate for the next Secretary-Executive Director critical.

2. [R13656](#)

Communication between executive search firm The Organizational Leadership Edge (TOLE) and the attendees regarding their input on the recruitment process, the characteristics, experience and qualities to be considered during the recruitment, and the challenges and opportunities facing, and goals for, the next Secretary-Executive Director

This item is an opportunity for the public to provide input to the Committee; for the Committee to receive that information for their consideration.

Persons who wish to comment may do so in person, virtually via the internet link above, via email at communications@hacm.org, and via mail.

Those wishing to speak in person should register in person at the meeting. Those wishing to speak online will have the ability to join remotely and sign up to speak once logged into the remote meeting. As a courtesy to others and to ensure the widest breadth of input, all speakers will be limited to speak for two minutes per question they are asked.

All comments received via email at communications@hacm.org will be shared with the Committee prior to their next regular meeting.

Those wishing to provide written comment via mail should send their correspondence to: Attention Executive Search Committee, Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee, P.O. Box 324, Milwaukee WI 53201-0324. All comments received via mail will be shared with the Committee prior to their next regular meeting.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Patricia Dee, HACM's Administrative Services Supervisor, provided an overview of the process for input from the public and explained that comments could be provided live in-person, live virtually, via mail and via email. Each respondent was allowed two minutes response for each question asked by the search firm.

Stan Quay of The Organizational Leadership Edge (TOLE), HACM's search firm, asked four questions, one at a time. Those who signed up to speak could then decide to respond in turn to each question, if they liked. While, due to Open Meetings regulations, the Committee Members could not respond to the comments made during a public comment period, Mr. Quay could respond or inquire about comments made, to gain further insight or provide explanation.

QUESTION #1: As a community stakeholder or resident what would be the one goal that you would encourage the HACM Board to prioritize with its next Executive Director?

Cornelius Sawyer (Highland Gardens resident): The next Secretary-Executive Director should have a deep understanding and commitment to establishing proper etiquette and knowledge of dealing with Resident Organizations and an understanding of the flow of finances between the Housing Authority and the Resident Organizations.

James Nelson, Sr. (Arlington Court resident, HACM Board of Commissioners): My highest priority is finance. Many of the current issues we're facing are finance-related. The next leader should be financially astute at all levels of the organization's funds. Someone who can dig us out of our hole.

Carrie Spears (Lapham Park resident, RO President, RAB member): The next Secretary-Executive Director should communicate more, and more deeply, more clearly. Get to know the residents, and be known by the residents.

QUESTION #2: What do you consider to be some of the most critical skills, abilities, and attributes that should be evaluated in the candidates for Executive Director?

Marquita Tidwell (Hillside resident, RO Secretary): Would like the candidate to be more of a people person – someone who can speak effectively with residents, can inspire them to be involved and explain things in more ways and via many methods to make things clear.

Ann Wilson (HACM's Manager of the Hillside Family Resource Center): The next candidate should have excellent customer service skills, and be able to inspire the staff to improve their customer service skills. The candidate must have the ability to respect the diverse residents and staff throughout housing and be respectful to all. They must also be able to recognize poor staff morale and be able to rally the staff to turn that around and get the staff invigorated about doing what is necessary. Related to that, is recognizing the needs of staff – in terms of training, or assessing if there is a better fit elsewhere in the organization, to ensure that staff can be most effective in serving residents.

Michael Clouthier (community stakeholder): Would like to echo some of what has been said about communication, and add an emphasis on working with media and political figures. The new Secretary-Executive Director should be transparent, especially when there are problems. They must not be afraid to bring those to light and be open.

QUESTION #3: How can the HACM Board most effectively engage, and seek contributions from, community stakeholders and residents later in the recruitment process as candidates are evaluated?

No attendee wished to speak on Question #3.

QUESTION #4: If you were a HACM Board member interviewing candidates, what would be the one question that you would want to ask the candidates?

Howard Snyder (HACM Board of Commissioners): Mentioned he had come to listen today and appreciated hearing today's comments. He believes that historically, HACM, and other agencies in town, have not had enough engagement with community-based agencies, community-based resident agencies, and housing organizations, that there

are dozens in Milwaukee who have an enormous amount to contribute. He also included increasing the community's understanding of what HACM is and who it can work with. The question he would ask is: "Tell me your experience working with grass-roots community-based orgs that are the truly small ones, not the big ones everyone knows." He added that churches are another potential source of partnerships and avenue to engage with people.

Marquita Tidwell (Hillside resident, RO Secretary): Suggested the following questions: "What is your vision for the organization?", "What are the first steps you would take to achieve that?", "How would you assess the programs of the organization to determine what is working and what isn't?", "Have you ever handled a situation where a department went overbudget?"

Ann Wilson (HACM's Manager of the Hillside Family Resource Center): Suggested the question "What are you going to do if you don't get offered this job?" She has asked that in interviews before and feels the answer can be very telling.

Cornelius Sawyer (Highland Gardens resident): Would encourage the Secretary-Executive Director to always be prepared to present information to potential investors about each and every property – that there should always be information, pictures, plans or wish lists at the ready for each property, to be prepared if an opportunity presents itself.

Carrie Spears (Lapham Park resident, RO President, RAB member): Stated that she would ask how would the candidate treat everyone – how would the candidate vary their style based on the unique attitude of the resident or staffer they are speaking with. She also noted her belief that the staff is the structure, the frame, that holds the organization together for the residents and the staff.

Marquita Tidwell (Hillside resident, RO Secretary): In a second comment with the balance of her two minutes, she added the question "How do you approach building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, residents, including resident leadership, and investors & donors."

James Nelson, Sr. (Arlington Court resident, HACM Board of Commissioners): Suggested the following questions: "How much experience do you have in housing management?", "What salary are you looking for?", and "What will your commitment be – how long will it be for you to be able to prove yourself?"

Dakisha Obee (HACM's Assistant Director of Property Management): Put forth the following questions: "What made them want to apply for the position?", "What drew them in to this job announcement?", "In one word, how would they describe themselves."

Cornelius Sawyer (Highland Gardens resident): In a second comment with the balance of his two minutes, added that he felt previous leadership wasn't a strong fit for the powers and responsibilities of the position.

No comments were received via email or mail by the time of the meeting.

Chair Hayslett and Mr. Quy thanked the participants for their ideas. They will be incorporated into the rating and ranking criteria, interview questions, and future

stakeholder events toward the end of the process. Chair stated that the insight shared today represents more than a search, but a commitment to progress and that the attendees' engagement demonstrates that Milwaukee's strength lies in its people, especially HACM's residents. Our partnership and persistence will shape a future where all residents can thrive. She shared her thanks for the attendees' insights, partnership and belief in the power of community and added that she looks forward to continuing this journey together, guided by transparency, accountability and shared purpose. Both look forward to bringing qualified candidates to Milwaukee as a result of this search.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Committee Member Bryant made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:31 p.m. Committee Member Newton seconded the motion. There being no objections, the motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Patricia Dee

Upon reasonable notice, efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities through sign language interpreter or auxiliary aids. For additional information or to request this service, contact the Housing Authority ADA Coordinator at 286-5824, (FAX) 286-0833, (TDD) 286-3504 or by writing to the Coordinator at PO Box 324, Milwaukee, WI 53201-0324.

Be hereby notified that four (4) members of the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee Board of Commissioners, the Travaux Inc. Board of Directors, or the Crucible, Inc. Board of Directors may be present at the meeting of the HACM Executive Search Committee, as some members serve on both boards. While quorum of the HACM Board, the Travaux Inc. Board, or Crucible, Inc. Board may be present at the HACM Executive Search Committee meeting, they will not exercise the responsibilities, authority, or duties vested in the HACM Board of Commissioners, the Travaux Board of Directors, or the Crucible, Inc. Board of Directors.

In the event that Common Council members who are not members of this committee attend this meeting, this meeting may also simultaneously constitute a meeting of the Common Council or any of the following committees: Community and Economic Development, Finance and Personnel, Judiciary and Legislation, Licenses, Public Safety and Health, Public Works, Zoning, Neighborhoods & Development, and/or Steering and Rules. Whether a simultaneous meeting is occurring depends on whether the presence of one or more of the Common Council member results in a quorum of the Common Council or any of the above committees, and, if there is a quorum of another committee, whether any agenda items listed above involve matters within that committee's realm of authority. In the event that a simultaneous meeting is occurring, no action other than information gathering will be taken at the simultaneous meeting.

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