



# North Peace Housing Foundation

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## North Peace Housing Foundation Board Meeting Synopsis – March 31, 2021

### Resident and Tenant Levels

As of February 2021, we had a total of 169 lodge residents, up 3 from the month of January. Our lodge unit occupancy at the end of February was 73% of the 224 lodge units occupied.

We had 115 occupied Senior Self-Contained units at the end of February, down 2 from the month of January. Our occupancy rate at the end of February fell to 89%.

Garden Court Seniors Apartments had 54 of the 63 units occupied at the end of February, consistent with the month of January; our occupancy rate was 86%. We continued to have 5 out of the 8 trailers in Cadotte occupied at the end of February.

The Family Housing program had 75 of the 123 units occupied, consistent with the previous month, and 20 of the 38 R&N units occupied, down 2 from the month of January, with an overall occupancy of 59%.

We had 33 Rent Supplement recipients in the month of February, down 1 from the month of January. No new applications for rent supplements are being accepted at this time while the existing programs are being reviewed for consistency of benefits and to ensure households that need assistance most are prioritized.

### Administration

COVID-19 Update

#### **Critical Workers' Benefit:**

As announced on February 10, 2021, the Alberta government committed to cost share in the federal government's program to recognize the importance of critical workers' contributions and the risks that they take during the pandemic.

The Alberta Critical Workers' Benefit program will distribute more than \$465 million, including \$118 million in provincial funds, through a one-time payment to workers in the health care and social services sectors, as well as some parts of the private sector, such as grocery and pharmacy retail, transportation and warehousing, and funeral services.

Because lodge operators and staff continue to play a key role in maintaining a safe living environment for Alberta seniors, workers who worked 300 hours for the 16-week period from October 12 – January 31 were eligible to receive the one-time payment.

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The Foundation's Critical workers include lodge:

- On-site management staff
- Building maintenance staff
- Housekeeping staff
- Food services staff
- Other front-line staff

The Foundation submitted eligible employee information to the province on February 26th and have already received the Critical Workers' Benefit; staff will be paid on the March 31 pay run.

In summary, 3,775 of 5,443 lodge and unique home staff were submitted as eligible for CWB, resulting in \$4.88M in total to be paid to those eligible workers.

The Foundation received 7.66 per cent of the total funds approved for the eligible workers as additional funding, over and above the \$1,200 per approved submitted worker, as recognition of our responsibility for applying and distributing these funds and any related administrative costs.

#### **Vaccinations:**

As you may be aware from recent public announcements, Lodge staff became eligible to receive the COVID vaccination on Monday, March 15, 2021, as part of Phase 2, Group A.

This is exciting news and will certainly bring relief to many NPHF staff, residents, and family members.

Appointment availability will depend on vaccine availability in the community and appointments will open as vaccine availability is confirmed.

#### **Rapid Tests:**

Although non-DSL types of licensed supportive living accommodations are not required to establish a COVID-19 screening program for staff, Alberta Health strongly encourages providers to do so.

To establish a screening program, the Foundation will need a health care provider to oversee the program, someone trained to do the swabbing (nasal swabs) and perform the test, PPE, a way to record and report on screening results, a process to manage individuals who screen as positive, etc.

Rapid tests have been a hot topic of conversation and there is a wide range of opinions on whether there is an added benefit. Many providers are concerned that a rapid testing program may lead to staffing shortages, as there have been reports of up to a 40% false positive rate.

We have not made a final decision on whether to proceed with the program.

#### **Nominal Sum Properties**

The Foundation continues to advertise the units for sale weekly on Facebook and as anticipated, interest has improved since spring rolled around. We have received an official offer on the Hines Creek house and hope to finalize the sale within the next month.

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#### Del-Air Project

Since the funding announcement for the project to redevelop Del-Air Lodge to accommodate continuing care spaces was held on February 6, 2020, the project team has been working on scope development, contract documents, and procuring a team consisting of the designers and contractors.

The contract was awarded in December 2020, and design work is commencing.

The approved process is to announce the contractor and consultant team at the ground-breaking event, which is scheduled once the development permit is issued and there is construction activity on the site.

The successful proponents are posted in Alberta Purchasing Connection (APC) once the scope/budget alignment is confirmed, and the unsuccessful proponents are advised.

If the scope/budget are not aligned, or development permit is not issued, the project is re-evaluated and the unsuccessful proponents may be invited to resubmit.

A ground-breaking event is being planned for spring 2021.

It is not uncommon for communities, local Council, and public to wonder what is happening on projects. Once the big project/funding announcement happens, the project team quietly performs the most critical task in any project, planning and preparation. This is a critical step that must take place to ensure that all stakeholders are in alignment.

#### Board Decisions

The Board is planning to hold its 2021 Annual Strategic Planning Sessions virtually this year on April 23rd and 24th, 2021. Nolan Crouse, of Crouse Developments Inc., will be facilitating the session.

The Board is proceeding with a review of its Corporate Policies. This is part of a continuing rotation of Policy Review.

In February 2017, the Board of Directors approved the replacement schedule for the maintenance vehicles in the Foundation's fleet, with the guideline of either the vehicle reaching 10 years of service or 200,000 kms, whichever comes first. In accordance with policy and after receiving four quotes the purchase of a 2021 Silverado, 1500 Custom 4WD truck for maintenance was approved.

After our annual Market Rent survey was completed, it was determined that there would be no change to market rates, with the exception of 1-bedroom apartments, which are increasing to \$900.00 per month from \$850.00. This is a return to the rates of two years ago. There have not been any significant changes in the private market, although property management companies are reporting higher vacancies.

