

August Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes

Grand Junction Housing Authority ("GJHA")

8 Foresight Circle, Grand Junction, CO 81505

August 11, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

GJHA's Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Bernie Buescher, Board Chair. Attendance was taken by roll call with the following present:

Board of Commissioners:

Bernie Buescher, Chair
Rich Krohn, Vice Chair
Ivan Geer
Laurel Lutz
Karen Massey
Julie Firl
Jennifer Landini (Virtually)

GJHA Staff:

Scott Aker, CEO
Krista Ubersox, COO
Jill Norris, General Counsel
Sheila Brubacher, Controller
Ashleigh O'Leary, HR Director
Kevin Sperle, IT Supervisor (Virtually)
Brian Rusche, Development Director
Kate Armenta, Business Operations Assistant
Lindy Hodges, Property Management Supervisor
Nancy Sawyer, Leasing Agent

Kim Bullen, Deputy City Manager from the City of Grand Junction, attended the meeting in person. Kim left the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Jeremiah Boies, Interim Attorney from the City of Grand Junction, attended the meeting in person.

Jeremiah left the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Michael Santo from Bechtel and Santo attended the meeting in person. Michael left the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

Alex Gano from New Communities Law joined the meeting, virtually at 5:09 pm. Alex left the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

2. Disclosure of Direct or Indirect Conflict of Interest

None mentioned.

3. Public Comments

No comments were made.

4. Mission, Vision, and Values

Bernie Buescher looked back on the year and reminded the Board how important it is to keep GJHA's values on the forefront. Bernie mentioned Collaboration, and its sub-values (proactive mindset, creative problem solving, and new ideas) have been tested many times in the recent months.

5. Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda consisted of the Minutes of the July 14, 2026, Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting. With a motion by Rich Krohn, a second by Karen Massey, and a unanimous vote, the Consent Agenda was approved.

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6. Employee Handbook Discussion

After many months of work and discussion, Staff is bringing the updated employee handbook to the Board. The Resolution before the Board is asking the GJHA Board to delegate the authority to GJHA's Executive Team to sign off on this Policy and to hold the Executive Team accountable to bring major Policy items to the Board for consideration in the future.

Ashleigh O'Leary sent out the Executive Summary, which covered the major policy-level changes to the handbook. She asked for any questions from Board members regarding the content. Rich Krohn asked why Staff added the idea of a sabbatical. Ashleigh mentioned that the GJHA Executive Team discussed ways to retain their Staff and received some feedback from some other organizations that stated that a sabbatical is one way they are able to retain staff. It also assists Staff from a succession and business continuity standpoint. It will allow Staff to cross train and eliminate the one point of knowledge in any department. Staff spoke to Hilltop who looks at a sabbatical as an attraction and a retention tool. Hilltop's sabbatical leave is set at two or three months, which GJHA Staff believe is too much for the organization to absorb. Scott Aker believes that time is the biggest currency GJHA has to help build and maintain a culture of positive morale. Laurel Lutz did a benefits analysis and learned that in the nonprofit world, sabbaticals are becoming more and more common. Bernie Buescher is seeing a number of law firms do this. Michael Santo reminded the Board that the sabbatical leave is very different from vacation leave. Currently, GJHA has nine people who are eligible for sabbatical leave. Staff acknowledge that certain sabbaticals will invite potential additional costs to the organization, such as hiring external legal counsel when the General Counsel is on sabbatical but are not prepared to offer specific cost estimates. There is no current evidence that GJHA has lost Staff due to not having a sabbatical program. Ivan Geer said he believes that this decision should be a Staff decision since the Board is a delegating Board and this is an operational decision. Beyond the sabbatical component, Staff recommend removing pre-employment drug testing. Such testing can be relatively easy to circumvent, and Staff want to focus more on employee performance. Drug testing based on reasonable suspicion will remain part of the policy.

Ivan Geer made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-08-02 Approvals of Amendments and Updates to Grand Junction Housing Authority Employee Handbook. Julie Firl seconded the motion and after no discussion and a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

7. Juniper Grove Salt Flats

The attorney from Butler Snow who is advising the City has offered some rebuttal comments regarding some of the components of the covenant and guidelines. This attorney believes these components are required by the State. One of the requirements essentially states that GJHA would need to act like a broker in the future sales of these units. Scott Aker stated GJHA is not set up for that, and he and Staff need more time to review these rebuttal comments before making any recommendations to the Board.

Staff have been working with Alex Gano at New Communities Law, Kim Bullen at the City, and Jeremiah Boies from the City. The City Staff stated that they are working with GJHA to figure out a covenant and guidelines that meet minimum state standards. The lottery for home sales was scheduled to begin

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yesterday, and the Salt Flats groundbreaking is scheduled for August 17, 2026. With the new developments in the planning, these dates will be postponed.

The City does not know the status of the agreement between Rural Homes and Impact Development Fund (IDF), who will do the eligibility and possibly some reporting to DOLA for the initial home sales.

The MOU between GJHA and the City for program administration has been going back and forth and has had many revisions. The City is in agreement with the most current version of the MOU, but it still must go through City Council and be adopted formally.

Rich Krohn says he has concerns with the language in the documents, and he would like an opportunity to talk with Alex Gano, Bernie Buescher, Jill Norris, and Scott Aker before taking these topics to the Real Estate Committee, if there is time. Scott Aker stated he cannot recommend that the Board vote on this agenda item at this time. Staff would like to hear Rich's concerns before any decisions are made. Scott recommended that the Board table this agenda item until further notice, and the Board agreed.

8. Ascent at Salt Flats

Ascent at the Salt Flats is Brikwell's development which is comprised of 144 affordable rental units. Brikwell has received their initial determination letter from CHFA for the award of the 4% Tax Credits. They are in the process of applying for funding from the Division of Housing to accompany these Tax Credits. They have the Private Activity Bond cap lined up and CHFA is the issuer. One item still outstanding is the initial letter of intent between GJHA and Brikwell to proceed with the contemplation of GJHA acting as a Special Limited Partner. Staff are recommending to the Board that they approve the latest version of this Letter of Intent included in the Board packet.

Ivan Geer made a motion to approve the Letter of Intent with Brikwell as presented in the Board Packet. Laurel Lutz seconded the motion and after a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

9. Development Update

The Current is at 57% completion. There is a lot of exterior work going on, but there is a lot more work being done on the inside. GJHA has used some of the funds that were set aside for winter construction to purchase four large fan coolers, one for each floor which has increased morale and productivity of Shaw's Team.

Staff will work with the Board to schedule a time to tour The Current.

10. Finance Committee Report/Finance Items

The Audit of 2025 Financial Statements has been completed, filed with HUD, and sent to all of GJHA's investors. Staff would like to discuss GJHA's auditor contracts with the Board. Since 2022, the auditor for the GJHA owned properties and Voucher Program is Hawkins Ash.

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The auditor for the Tax Credit properties is Novogradac. Justin Petersen from Hawkins Ash reached out and asked if Hawkins Ash would be doing the audit for 2026 and suggested extending the current contract. It is not a requirement for GJHA to go out to bid for this service every 5 years. But Staff wanted to bring it to the Board to discuss their thoughts and opinions. Julie Firl stated that as a former auditor, her view is that it is not usually beneficial for an organization to change auditors just to change auditors. Long-term auditors have advantages since they are already familiar with your organization. Staff and the Board agreed that Staff should negotiate another three-year contract with Hawkins Ash.

Shelia Brubacher briefly reviewed the Second Quarter financials that were presented in depth to the Finance and Audit Committee. GJHA's investment income for Second Quarter ended up being \$34,000. Acquisition and Development received grant income from the State of Colorado in the amount of \$2,565,000 and \$496,000 from the City of Grand Junction for the More Housing Now grant. Both of these grants were received for the benefit of The Current but show up in Acquisition and Development grant income as money that was received by GJHA and then loaned to The Current. The roofs at Ratekin and Nellie Bechtel were replaced. Staff made a replacement reserve draw for Ratekin of \$43,000 to cover a portion of that cost. The Nellie Bechtel roofing project was completed at a cost substantially less than the budgeted amount.

The vacancy loss continues to be high at the Tax Credit properties. Staff are looking at the vacancy issue and taking it seriously. Krista Ubersox introduced Lindy Hodges, Property Management Supervisor, and Nancy Sawyer, Leasing Agent, and let them explain the work they are doing to address the existing vacancy issue.

The Next Step TBRA contract ended on March 31, 2026. The Emergency Housing Vouchers ended on July 1, 2026, so the clients who were in the program have now rolled into GJHA's Voucher program.

The Finance and Audit committee recommended approval of the second quarter financials. Ivan Geer made a motion to approve the Second Quarter Financials as recommended by the Finance and Audit Committee. Rich Krohn seconded the motion and after a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

GJHA currently has three properties that require minor budget revisions. Ratekin, Linden Pointe, and Crystal Brook have specific areas where Staff is asking for revisions. For Ratekin, Staff are asking for \$11,524 for repairs and maintenance expenses due to increased maintenance labor as well as the increase in cost from hiring a new cleaning company. Staff are requesting a budget revision at Linden Pointe in repairs and maintenance expenses in the amount of \$15,410 for outside labor that was needed for slab leak repairs. Staff are also anticipating a parking lot assessment and some gutter repairs at Linden Pointe. Staff are requesting revisions at Linden Pointe and at Crystal Brook for capital improvements. Rich Krohn made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-08-01 Adopting Revisions to the Consolidated Budget for Fiscal Year 2026. Laurel Lutz seconded the motion and after a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

GJHA still believes that the Voucher program will not be in shortfall. HUD stated they were going to reduce GJHA's proration rate on the administrative side of the Voucher program to 77 cents on the dollar which would have negatively impacted GJHA substantially. After more communication, GJHA

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learned that this was an error, and the proration rate for August will hold at 86%. GJHA continues to watch out for changes from HUD at this time.

11. Other business, if any

The Strategic Planning Session is scheduled for August 25, 2026, at Hilltop from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

12. Adjourn

With no further business or discussion, Bernie Buescher made a motion to adjourn. With a second by Ivan Geer and unanimous roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

All Board packet documents and documents distributed
during the Board Meeting are retained at GJHA.