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NEWS RELEASE

The Housing Authority of Portland Welcomes New Commissioner

The Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) welcomes new commissioner Martha "Marty" Schwab Harris. Portland Mayor Vera Katz appointed Harris to the Commission. Harris will work actively on the commission as a representative of Multnomah County.

"We look forward to working with Marty," said Steve Rudman, HAP Executive Director. "It is a wonderful opportunity to have a commissioner with such a strong background in housing authority management. I'm sure that she will provide much needed insight into our activities."

Harris and her husband have recently returned to Portland after living 30 years on the east coast. The Portland native and Lincoln High School graduate has over 20 years experience in a broad range of highly responsible finance and general management positions in both the private and public sectors.

She spent seven years (1986-'93) as Director of the Delaware State Housing Authority where she was responsible for all aspects of Public Housing Authority management for two counties of the State. This included Public Housing and Section 8. During her tenure, more housing units were added and the physical and operating conditions of the housing dramatically improved. The Housing Authority established a first-of-its-kind, rent-to-own program using scattered-site Public Housing, and brought daycare, GED classes and a variety of other resident services to its sites.

"I am truly excited at the opportunity to be on the HAP Board. The single most rewarding position I have held in my professional life was the seven years as Director of the Delaware State Housing Authority," Harris said. "The work HAP is doing, both as a traditional Housing Authority and as a developer and manager of housing independent of direct federal subsidy, is critically important to the entire County. My experience in Delaware gives me a great appreciation for the difficulties and the satisfactions that HAP employees face in doing their jobs. I look forward to being able to help them and to making a valuable contribution to my hometown."

At the Delaware State Housing Authority, Harris was also responsible for all functions of the state's housing finance and development agency statewide. Her duties included: issuing tax-exempt bonds for first-time homeowners and multi-

family construction; administrating more than 10,000 units of Section 8 New Construction housing; and overseeing the state's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and Community Development Block Grant programs. She also helped to restructure the State's Housing Development Fund, in which program partnerships were formed with both for-profit and non-profit companies and organizations, as well as local, county and other state agencies. One successful offshoot was the Delaware Housing Partnership, which focused exclusively on homeownership, and which developed strong and mutually beneficial relationships with area banks interested in meeting and exceeding their responsibilities under the Community Reinvestment Act.

Prior to returning to Portland, Harris served as Vice President, Mortgage Banking Division for the Centura Bank in Rocky Mount, North Carolina (1994-'99). Other work experience in Delaware includes serving as Senior Financial Analyst for the E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Company and as a Planner for the United Way of Delaware.

She holds an MBA in Finance & Marketing from the University of Delaware, an MLS from the University of Rhode Island and a BA in History from Stanford University.

The Housing Authority of Portland provides affordable housing services for over 30,000 low income and very low-income people throughout Multnomah County, and its commissioners are representative of the county. The Commission includes one HAP resident commissioner, two appointments by request of the Multnomah County Chair, two appointments by request of the Mayor of Gresham and four Portland-area appointments. All commissioners are appointed by the Mayor of Portland and approved by the Portland City Council.

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