

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF WISCONSIN RAPIDS

The Housing Authority of the City of Wisconsin Rapids held its regular monthly meeting at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, in the community room of the Huntington House Apartments, 2521 10th Street South, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494. Commissioner Jorgensen, chair, called the meeting to order at 1:27 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL:

Present: Yvonne Jorgensen, Evan Smith, Jean Helmer, Cheryl Reith Kincaid, David Henke and Jo Ann Grode

Also Present: Ka Bao Vang, Carol Voss, Tom Przybelski and Marlene Przybelski

Excused: None

2. MINUTES REVIEWED:

- A. Commissioners reviewed minutes from the March 29, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Smith moved to approve the minutes of the March meeting, seconded by Commissioner Henke. All aye votes.

3. COMMUNICATIONS:

- A. Social Committee minutes of the April 5, 2017 meeting, Senior Times Newsletter and update on activities: Commissioner Helmer moved to approve minutes of the April 5, 2017 Social Committee meeting, seconded by Commissioner Smith. All aye votes. Commissioners reviewed the *Senior Times Newsletter*. Jo Ann stated that she had scheduled the Honeybees accordion players for May 24, 2017 but is trying to reschedule due to conflicts that she and Allen both have with that date now. Allen will notify tenants when a new date has been selected. No tenant activities occurred since the last Board meeting.
- B. Staff training summary: Jo Ann stated that she attended the WAHA spring 2017 conference in Rothschild last week. Nan McKay trainers were the presenters of information for both public housing and housing choice voucher programs. Jo Ann reported that one of the Nan McKay trainers stated that he has not seen so many changes in regulations since the mid- to late-1990s as is currently underway or in review. The trainer stated that it will likely take a few years to get to the point where all housing authorities have implemented all the regulations. Jo Ann stated that she will be developing Emergency Transfer Plans for VAWA for the public housing and housing choice voucher programs as those plans must be in place by June 14, 2017.
- C. 2017 Wisconsin Fair Housing Network Awards nomination information: Jo Ann stated that the nomination information packet for these awards requested that the information be presented to commissioners. No action was taken on this matter.

4. CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

- A. Approve March 2017 financial statements from fee accountant: Commissioners had no questions about the March 2017 financial statements from the fee accountant. Commissioner Smith moved to approve the March 2017 financials, seconded by Commissioner Henke. All aye votes.
- B. Approve March 2017 bills (Quickbooks register and purchasing card transaction detail): Commissioners had no inquiries about the March 2017 bills. Commissioner Helmer moved to approve purchasing card program purchases and the checks paid based on invoices/bills for March of 2017, seconded by Commissioner Smith. All aye votes.

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Occupancy: Jo Ann reported that there are two vacancies at Parkview: one as the tenant moved in with family out of the area and the other where the tenant family wanted to move to Huntington House and decided to live with family in the interim. Allen has filled these vacancies with move-ins scheduled for April 28, 2017 and May 19, 2017. There is one vacancy at Huntington House due to a death over the weekend. Allen will fill this vacancy from the waiting list. There is one vacancy at 10th Avenue due to a move to an assisted facility. Allen has filled this vacancy with a move-in scheduled for April 28, 2017. There are no vacancies at the scattered site houses. Jo Ann commended the efforts of Allen and maintenance staff in successfully filling a vast number of vacancies over the past few years.
- B. Section 8 program status: Jo Ann reported that as of April 21, 2017, there are 201 families under contract with private landlords with the current waiting list being approximately 10 months. The waiting list currently has 278 families on it. Jo Ann stated that the waiting list will be much longer than 10 months from this point forward due to the shortfall situation the Housing Authority is in regarding HAP payments. As a result, the Housing Authority should close the waiting list effective May 31, 2017. The shortfall is estimated to be approximately \$33,000. Jo Ann, Mary and Jolina have begun monthly conference calls with the HUD shortfall staff in an effort to be proactive about finding ways to reduce the projected shortfall. HUD is recommending that no vouchers be issued for the remainder of 2017, and this could extend through all or part of 2018 as well. Attrition is one way to reduce the shortfall. Additionally, HUD advised Mary to send out warning letters to voucher tenants about the failure to report income and the consequences of that. Mary recently sent such a letter and has since been inundated with calls and visits to the office about it. Many people were concerned that they would be accused of failure to report income although they indicated that they are reporting all income. These voucher holders were assured that they were fine as long as they are truthfully reporting income. The letter did generate some voucher holders coming in to the office to report additional income. This could result in the reduction of some of the HAP payments. Further, Mary has started to enter former tenants from the voucher program into SDC

and made a recovery from one this month. Jo Ann is hopeful that these proactive measures will help to reduce the shortfall.

- C. State Debt Collection (SDC) program status: Jo Ann stated that there were two debt recoveries in the past month or so. One recovery was from a former public housing tenant in the amount of \$376.73, and the other was from a former voucher tenant in the amount of \$649.31. Both of these former program participants remain in SDC as their debt obligations have yet to be satisfied.

- D. Capital Funds Program grant statuses: Jo Ann stated that in the 2015 capital funds grant there is \$82.58 in site improvement which can be added to other grants and \$4,799.27 for appliances. In the 2016 capital funds grant there is \$118,943.59 in operations for insurance in 2017, \$29.00 in site improvement that can be added to a future grant, \$2,467.58 in dwelling structures for miscellaneous needs, \$12,000 for appliances and \$15,488.85 for a new maintenance truck. Jo Ann stated that she just received insurances quotes for 2017-2018 and will share those with the Board at the May 2017 meeting. There was a fairly significant increase due to the large loss runs the Housing Authority has processed in the past few years because of hail storm damage. Jo Ann stated that there is no timeline yet for release of 2017 capital funds. At the spring conference there was disagreement between HUD staff and Nan McKay regarding the process for obtaining these funds. Jo Ann will be contacting the Milwaukee field office soon for better clarification of the changes to this process for 2017.

6. RESOLUTION

- A. Resolution #2017-4 Closure of the Section 8 Waiting List: Jo Ann advised commissioners that the Section 8 waiting list should be closed on May 31, 2017 so that wait times don't extend years into the future. Commissioner Smith moved to approve Resolution #2017-4 Closure of the Section 8 Waiting List, seconded by Commissioner Helmer. All aye votes.

7. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Huntington House smoke-free policy revision discussion with public input: There were no Huntington House tenants present to discuss policy revisions. Jo Ann stated that the Huntington House smoke-free policy is currently compliant with the new smoke-free regulations. However, there is no reference in the current policy to the designated smoking areas being at least 25 feet from any building, so the policy will need to be amended to include that information. Jo Ann also stated that she had given smoking tenants permission to smoke near the bench by the gazebo last summer when the parking lot was being sealed. Some tenants continued to smoke in that area after the lot was passable, and there have been no issues or complaints from other tenants or staff about that practice. The smokers there have picked up all cigarette butts. Jo Ann recommended to commissioners that the policy be amended to allow smoking on or near that bench as it is over 25 feet from the gazebo. She also stated that the policy revision should contain language indicating that

tenants are responsible for both themselves and their guests in terms of keeping all areas free of cigarette butts and ensuring those areas are properly maintained. Commissioners agreed. Commissioner Helmer inquired about a need for an umbrella by the gazebo bench. Jo Ann stated that there are no plans for that as a secondary smoking area. Commissioner Smith inquired about allowing e-cigarettes in the policy. Jo Ann stated that Clear Gains has recommended against this as nicotine poses a health hazard to tenants, e-cigarettes can pose a potential fire hazard and the residual effects of e-cigarettes are not yet known as they are a relatively new phenomenon. She stated that the Housing Authority could consider allowing e-cigarettes as a reasonable accommodation for disabled smokers, but that would likely cause friction between tenants able to use them and those not able to use them. As reasonable accommodations for disability are confidential matters, such a practice would likely cause many more problems than it would resolve. Jo Ann stated that the Housing Authority must provide access to designated smoking areas as a reasonable accommodation, so that must be considered as these policies are developed and amended. Jo Ann stated that policies associated with the new smoking regulations must be referenced as a significant amendment to the 5-year plan. Jo Ann stated that she has completed this, and it was approved by the Resident Advisory Board in February 2017. She will bring that to the Board for approval soon.

8. **PUBLIC INPUT:** Parkview tenant Tom Przybelski stated that the only dog owner there who takes her dog a reasonable distance from the building to excrete is disabled, while more mobile tenants allow their dogs to excrete near building entrances. Jo Ann advised that this has been an ongoing problem that is difficult to address. There was no further input from the tenants present.
9. **CLOSED SESSION:** A motion was made by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Henke, to adjourn into closed session pursuant to Section 19.85 (1) (c), Wisconsin Statutes, for the purpose of considering “employment, promotion, compensation or evaluation of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility.” A roll call vote was taken. All aye votes.

Commissioner Jorgensen called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. In closed session, commissioners discussed a request for a permanent, part-time caretaker position for Parkview Apartments as the current caretaker submitted her retirement notice effective May 30, 2017.

The executive director also advised commissioners of her intention to retire no later than December 31, 2017, with official notification to follow.

10. **RETURN TO OPEN SESSION:** A motion was made by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Henke, to adjourn the closed session and move into open session. All aye votes. Commissioner Jorgensen called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m.

RE Agenda Item 9: A motion was made by Commissioner Helmer, seconded by Commissioner Henke, to approve the approve the posting of an employment opportunity for a permanent, part-time Parkview caretaker position with a salary range between \$7,000 and \$13,000 annually based on qualifications of the selected applicant and as determined by the executive director and to remain open as long as is necessary to fill the position but with a target date of employment of June 1, 2017. All aye votes.

11. NEXT MEETING

A. The next monthly meeting is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 31, 2017, in the community room of the Parkview Apartments.

12. ADJOURNMENT: Commissioner Henke moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:44 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Smith. All aye votes.

Submitted for approval by:

Approved by:

Jo Ann Grode
Executive Director

Yvonne Jorgensen
Chair

Date: _____

Date: _____