

HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLAY COUNTY
Regular Meeting of May 16, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tia Braseth, Anthony Dillard, Cecil Johnson and Kim Schlotfeldt

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Les Bakke

STAFF PRESENT:

Dara Lee and Dawn Bacon

OTHERS PRESENT:

None

9:30 A.M. REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

AGENDA:

A motion was made by Commissioner Schlotfeldt to approve the agenda. Commissioner Dillard seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

MINUTES FROM April 25, 2023, REGULAR MEETING:

A motion was made by Commissioner Schlotfeldt to approve the April 25, 2023, regular minutes. Commissioner Dillard seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

None

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Director Lee provided a description on what expenses are covered under contracting in the budget reports. A correction was noted under the HE Service Coordinator Budget. The advertising line should read 0 for the 2023 budget. The 963 dollar amount should instead be recorded under the insurance budget.

Commissioner Dillard made the motion to accept and file the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson and carried unanimously.

PROJECT UPDATES

Director Lee provided project updates and responded to commissioner questions on a number of topics. This included the length of time to approve applicants, the criteria used for closing the

waiting list, adjusted timeline for Field Crest Townhomes (community space completed by June and units in July), and why people decline from the owner-occupied rehab program.

Houge Estates

As of May 1, there are 12 vacant units and one eviction pending. One household has been offered a unit and will move in June 1. Ten applicants are being processed for eligibility. There are 51 households on the waiting list. The waiting list is currently open.

The agency has contracted with a temporary labor company to assist in making the units ready for rehab. We also hired a temporary worker for additional lawn care to free up the existing maintenance staff to do more work on the unit turnovers.

The Houge Estates Service Coordinator is housed at this location.

Agassiz Apartments

As of May 1, there are no vacancies. There are 10 applicants on the waiting list which closed 2/1/22. Agassiz needs a new roof. Funding sources are being explored.

Clay County Affordable Housing LLC/Boyer Apartments

As of May 1, there are 8 vacant units and one pending lease termination. One unit has been rented for June 1. Almost all the openings are due to evictions and lease terminations for non-payment of rent. Two households have submitted a move-out notices -one for the end of May and one for June 30. It is unclear if they will actually move-out.

Staff are determining eligibility for 2 applicants. Forty-five others are considering the openings and are in communication with staff. There are still 4 households on the waiting list for the one-bedroom unit at Boyer. All open units are 2-, 3-, and 4-bedroom units.

There is no specific subsidy tied to these units. Residents of these units receive a preference for a Housing Choice Voucher if their family size fits the available unit.

Fieldcrest Townhomes

As of May 1, there are 12 vacant units (six 2-bedrooms and six 3-bedrooms). The units will be kept vacant during construction. There are 16 households on the waiting list which is now closed. We will reopen the waiting list and start filling the openings when the rehab is complete.

18 of the 40 units are complete. All windows are installed; the sewer has been moved; new sidewalks are poured; the southeast parking lot is completed; the siding is complete (almost); the new addition is roofed, framed, and has electrical and plumbing rough-ins. The estimated date of completion is now early September in order to finish the remaining grading, sidewalks, and parking lot. The units and community space should be complete by the end of June.

Seventeen tenants have moved into completed units and are pleased with the work that has been

down and the addition of washers, dryers, and dishwashers.

Gateway Gardens

As of May 1, there are 2 openings. One unit is almost ready for occupancy. Tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list.

The Housing Supports supplies are located at Gateway Gardens. Two HRA staff have offices at this location. An HRA Assistant Property Manager will move his primary office to this location in May. The CCRI case manager continues to have an office at the location. The HRA continues to staff the front desk from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day.

Prairie Horizons Townhomes

As of May 1, there is one unit open due to an eviction. There also is one eviction in process and one lease termination for the end of May. Tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list.

A supportive services office is available on-site. CCRI continues to have a full-time employee providing support to both Prairie Horizons Townhomes developments and other HRA Cares scattered-site participants. She is officed at that location. CCRI has been providing DHS Housing Stabilization Services to the participants. An HRA employee also provides support to tenants participating in this program.

Housing Choice Vouchers

As of May 1, 2023, there were a total of 677 households of a possible 757 leased from the HRA Housing Choice Voucher program. We are working with 4 additional households from other housing authorities. We have 555 vouchers under our main HCV HUD contract; 187 under our Mainstream HCV contract; and 15 under our HCV Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) contract. We have requested that HUD reallocate 10 of our 40 VASH units to the Bemidji HRA as of July 1. Both the Bemidji and Clay HRA boards have approved this transfer.

Of the 555 vouchers under our main contract, 495 vouchers are leased: 433 of 479 regular vouchers; 35 out of 35 Tenant Protection Vouchers; 1 of 1 FYI vouchers; and 26 of 40 VASH vouchers. We have 5 existing regular HCV participants who are between units; we have issued 14 regular vouchers to new participants; and we are working with 31 additional households to issue a regular voucher.

175 out of 187 Mainstream vouchers are under lease. We have 3 existing Mainstream participants who are between units; we have issued 18 Mainstream vouchers to new participants; and we are working with 21 additional households to issue a Mainstream voucher. Seven of 15 EHV vouchers are under lease; one household is moving into a unit June 1; two current EHV household is between units; and one voucher has been issued to a new participant who is searching for a unit. The staff is working with an additional 2 households and has sent out 8 more letters.

We have 42 individuals enrolled in our Family Self-Sufficiency program. We have had 50 FSS participants in the past 12 months.

There are 160 households who remain on the waiting list.

Becker-Clay-Otter Tail-Wilkin (BCOW)

Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI) Rental Assistance'

On April 1, 2023, the HRA began administration of the BCOW AMHI Rental Assistance program. The contact was transferred from the MPHA to the HRA.

The contract provides funding for rental assistance and administrative fees to assist households who contain a member who has a serious mental illness and is leaving an institution or is currently homeless.

There are currently 22 participants; 2 households with vouchers who are in-between units; and a new participant who is searching for a unit.

HRA Cares

We are authorized to serve 64 households and on May 1 were serving 64 households. Of the 64, 15 are at Prairie Horizons Townhomes; 5 are at Bright Sky Apartments; and 43 are in scattered-site units in Clay (31), Douglas (5), and Otter Tail (3) Counties, MN, and in Fargo, ND (4). Seven households are searching for units.

Homeless to Housed Rental Assistance

Our current grant is to serve sixty-two households through September 30, 2023. We are serving 63 of our authorized 62 households. Two households are currently searching for units. There are 18 singles and 45 families being served. The grant targets families and youth-headed households. Leased households are from Clay (52), Douglas (9), Grant (1), and Traverse (1) Counties.

Openings are filled through the coordinated entry process. The renewal grant application was due May 17.

Homework Starts with Home

The current grant term runs from 8/1/2020-9/30/2023. The renewal application has been submitted. As of May 1, 23 households are leased. Households are from Clay (19), Douglas (3), and Otter Tail (1) Counties. Two households were transferred to a Housing Choice Voucher in the past month.

We have transitioned 54 households off the current grant: 36 moved/are moving to a Housing Choice voucher; 1 moved to Homeless to Housed; 2 moved to Bridges; 1 transitioned to a more intensive youth program; 1 purchased a home; 3 went off due to increased income; 7 moved to unsubsidized units; 1 was terminated due to no contact; and 1 was evicted and disappeared. Most of the current 23 households are working with the HCV program to obtain a voucher.

Housing Supports (formerly GRH) in Scattered-Site Units

As of May 1, a total of 120 households were being served by the Housing Supports program in Clay County. There are 102 households leased in the scattered-site Housing Supports program – 10 with the HRA; 19 with CAPLP; 10 with the Presentation Partners in Housing; 9 with LMHC; 7 with Metro Behavioral Health; 11 with the Lotus Center; and 34 with Greater Minnesota Community Services. In addition, CCRI serves 2 in scattered-sites and 18 Housing Supports clients at Gateway Gardens.

Nine additional households are searching for units. We will start accepting new clients once we hear from Clay County Social Services that they have the capacity to handle more.

Minnesota DHS Community Living Infrastructure Grant

The HRA has a 1.0 FTE Housing Resource Specialist and a 0.05 project manager. There are 2 FTE outreach workers funded who are employed by the CAP agencies, CAPLP (1.15 FTE) and WCMCA (.85 FTE). The grant also includes a full-time eligibility worker for Clay County Social Services. Staff have been working diligently on property owner engagement strategies and matching participants with available assistance.

The on-site DHS grant monitoring appears to have gone well. A new RFP will not be released. Funding of the current grant extended until 6/30/25, but at approximately 70% of the initial funding for the next 2-year cycle. The HRA will be able to absorb this reduction without reducing staffing.

Minnesota DHS Housing Stabilization Services

Staff began Housing Consultations in 2020. Staff have been performing annual renewal consultations. Due to staff transitions and an inability to recoup our costs, we are only doing on-going consultations and will not accept any additional HSS Transition & Sustaining Services participants at this time. The capacity grant has ended and more referrals for Housing Consultations may be on the horizon with the end of the conflict-of-interest waivers that are eliminated with the end of the pandemic.

Minnesota Housing - Housing Stability Grant

The HRA is a sub-grantee of the West Central Minnesota Communities Action Agency (WCMCA) to provide Housing Navigation services from June 15, 2022, through June 30, 2023. WCMCA is the grantee with CAPLP, Presentation Partners in Housing, and the HRA as sub-grantees.

The HRA transferred 37% of its sub-grantee funding to CAPLP, which reduced our FTEs to 1.26. This grant ends on June 30, 2023, and it did not appear prudent to add additional staff. We may not reach our target numbers. This grant may be extended, but the HRA will not continue to participate due to staffing capacity. It is very administratively burdensome.

Owner-Occupied Rehab Program

Dilworth

The HRA staff applied for funding on behalf of the City of Dilworth for 2021 CDBG funding to DEED through the Small Cities Development Program. We applied for and received \$922,000 on behalf of Dilworth to rehabilitate twenty-one owner-occupied homes and seven businesses. Twenty-four homeowner and 8 commercial property owner applications were received. Three homeowners and one commercial applicant have withdrawn their applications so there are no waiting lists. The loan limit for homeowners is \$24,999 and for commercial owners is \$40,000. Contractors say they are extremely busy and will have long turnaround times.

For the owner-occupied home rehabilitations, 7 projects are under construction; 4 projects are finalizing bids and preparing to close; and 2 households are in the eligibility process. One household has asked to be moved to the end of the waiting list. All seven other applicants have been contacted and will be processed in the order they respond.

Physical property inspections have been completed on all commercial buildings. Two projects are complete; 2 projects are under construction; 2 projects are finalizing contracts; and one project has not started bidding.

RLP (Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program)

The Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is funded by the state. One project is under construction; and nine applicants are being processed. Walk-throughs are complete on two of these.

River View Heights (Moorhead Public Housing Agency)

River View Heights is part of HUD's low rent public housing program. It is a 14-story apartment building built in 1968 with 104 units.

As of May 1, there were six vacancies at River View Heights. One was re-rented and occupied on May 5. An additional unit will be occupied as soon as the painting and cleaning are complete. Two of the vacancies are approved as offline with HUD due to modernization work related to the water riser replacement project which is now complete.

There are currently 253 people on the public housing waiting list. Staff have contacted 3 applicants to begin processing.

Sharp View (MPHA)

Sharp View is a part of HUD's low rent public housing program. It is a two story, 47-unit apartment building designated for seniors aged 62 and over. The building was originally built as an elementary school in 1950 and rehabbed as an apartment in the 1980s.

As of May 1, Sharp View had no vacancies.

Moorhead Affordable Housing LLC (MPHA)

The Moorhead Affordable Housing LLC consists of 30 units ranging from single family homes, duplexes, and townhomes. They were originally under HUD's public housing program but approved under the Section 18 Disposition in 2021 and sold to the LLC. Most of the units are three bedrooms and primarily house families with children.

As of May 1, this program had one vacancy. The property became vacant due to a lease termination. Staff are reviewing one application in the intake process for a Section 8 voucher and accepting additional applications to review. An eviction hearing was May 15 for another tenant due to non-payment of rent.

Maple Court Town Homes (MPHA and City of Moorhead)

Maple Court Townhomes consists of 34 units of two, three, and four-bedroom townhomes. One parcel is owned by the City of Moorhead and the other parcel is owned by Moorhead Public Housing Agency. MPHA/ Clay HRA manage all the units. This property utilizes on-site caretakers.

As of May 1, there was one vacancy at Maple Court. One application is being processed.

BRIDGES GRANT AWARD FROM MINNESOTA HOUSING

As discussed above, the Clay County HRA is working at its maximum capacity. The Moorhead PHA was recently awarded renewal funding for the Bridges Program which is a state program. The award was to serve 26 households for less than \$200,000 per year.

The maximum administrative funding would be between \$21,000 and \$23,000 per year. These funds would need to cover staff, office space, accounting, payroll, phones, computers, insurance, supplies, postage, etc.

As discussed above, the HRA currently has 80 open Housing Choice Vouchers. The Bridges Program is so named because it is a "bridge" to an HCV unit. There are currently 22 households being served through this program. When the existing grant ends on 6/30/23, households would be able to transfer to the HCV or BCOW rental assistance programs. The HRA would earn an additional \$24,000-\$25,000 to lease the additional 26 units. In addition, leasing the units under the HCV program would increase HCV funding in the following year.

Staff recommends declining the Bridges award due to insufficient resources to administer a separate program.

Commissioner Schlotfeldt made the motion to decline the Bridges grant award from MN Housing Finance Agency. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dillard and carried unanimously.

REPLACEMENT OF RESIGNING COMMISSIONER:

Commissioner Bakke has announced his resignation from the board effective the end of June. Commissioners directed staff to advertise the vacant board position broadly and include members of the current Moorhead Public Housing Board. A formal motion was not needed for this item.

HRA/MPHA UPDATE:

The Moorhead Public Housing Agency staff all became HRA employees as of March 1. The Moorhead Public Housing Agency Executive Director is a shared employee of the agencies also working for the HRA in the capacity of Deputy Director.

The HRA has assumed general operational responsibilities of the MPHA. Deputy Director Bacon coordinated the April 1 transfer of the BCOW AMHI rental assistance program from MPHA to the HRA.

The merging of functions is slowly progressing as staff figure out the most effective manner of doing so.

Integrating our telephone and computer systems as well as physically moving staff, equipment, and files between locations is in process. Financial integration has slowly begun as well. Only payroll and shared expenses are currently paid by the HRA with the staff and fee accountant still paying the direct expenses of the MPHA programs.

Staff are examining software options. The two agencies both operate outdated computer systems. It is anticipated that converting the software will cost approximately \$30,000-\$40,000. The conversion would significantly increase administrative efficiency and better serve applicants, participants, and vendors.

It is anticipated that for the next 1-2 years, the agencies will exam and determine the best mechanisms to meet their missions and deliver high quality housing and services.

OTHER

Director Lee reviewed the need to hire a part time position to help with front desk coverage at Gateway. One of the employees that has been doing this work has been helping with more maintenance needs related to unit turns.

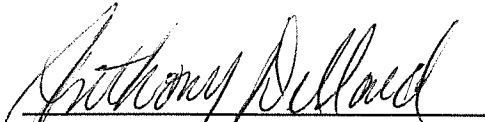
2024 HRA TAX LEVY:

Commissioners decided to hold a special meeting so that ample time is available to discuss a 2024 HRA tax levy. Notice will be posted for a special meeting on Monday June 5th at 8:30 AM at the Clay HRA office in Dilworth.

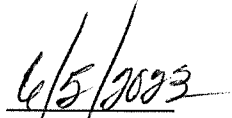
10:40 A.M. MEETING ADJOURNED:

Minutes
May 16, 2023
Clay County HRA

Commissioner Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Commissioner Schlotfeldt and carried unanimously.



Anthony Dillard, Secretary



Date