

Minutes  
January 18, 2022  
Clay County HRA

**HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLAY COUNTY**  
**Regular Meeting of January 18, 2022**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Anthony Dillard and Cecil Johnson in person, Les Bakke, Tia Braseth and Mike Martin via Zoom.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Kim Schlotfeldt

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Dara Lee and Sheila Laney.

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

**AGENDA:**

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

**MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 21, 2021 REGULAR MEETING:**

*A motion was made by Commissioner Dillard to approve the December 21, 2021 regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Bakke seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.*

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

None

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

A complete set of the October financials (except HS1 and HS2) was included for review. There are no significant changes from the prior months. The November and December financials should be available for the February meeting.

*Commissioner Dillard made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bakke and carried unanimously.*

**PROJECT UPDATES:**

Director Lee provided project updates.

**Houge Estates**

Houge Estates is a 60-unit apartment building located in Dilworth. All units are one-bedrooms (about 650 sq. ft.), and residents must have a disabling condition or be age 62 or older to reside there. Residents pay 30% of their income towards their rent and utilities. The remainder of the rent is subsidized by HUD through a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with HUD.

It was built in 1981 and is owned by the Elderly Housing Corporation of Clay County (EHC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit. The non-profit was created by the HRA to develop this project. The HRA has managed the EHC and Houge Estates since their inceptions.

The HRA offices were located at Houge Estates from 1981 until the early 1990s. From 2002 until 2015 assisted living services were available in the building through a third-party provider. The provider continuously lost money providing services in the building and had to withdraw. We could not find any other providers willing to replace them.

The building received a minor renovation in 2013 (primarily windows and kitchens) which was funded with a deferred loan from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency through the Rental Rehabilitation Deferred Loan program.

Over the years, the composition of the building has shifted from primarily elderly to primarily younger disabled individuals.

As of January 1, there were 10 vacant units. Eight full applications are being processed, and additional people are being contacted and informed they are at the top of the waiting list. There are fifty-six households on the waiting list. The waiting list is currently open. HUD is currently monitoring our vacancies.

The Houge Estates Service Coordinator is housed at this location.

#### **Agassiz Apartments**

Agassiz Apartments is a 12-unit apartment building located in Ulen. Eleven of the units are one-bedrooms (about 650 sq. ft.) and one is a 2-bedroom, and residents must have a disabling condition or be age 62 or older to reside there. Residents pay 30% of their income towards their rent and utilities. The remainder of the rent is subsidized by HUD through a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with HUD.

It was built in 1978 with a loan subsidized through USDA Rural Development. It is owned and operated by the HRA. The building received a minor renovation in 2013 (primarily windows and kitchens) which was funded with a deferred loan from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency through the Rental Rehabilitation Deferred Loan program.

Over the years, the composition of the building has shifted from primarily elderly to about half elderly and half disabled. The building was inspected by HUD REAC on November 9 and received a score of 64. 60 is the minimum score to pass the inspection.

As of January 1, there are no vacant units. There are forty-six applicants on the waiting list. In the past, we have closed a waiting list where people will wait two years or more to come to the top. This waiting list is currently at that point. Closing the waiting list was discussed.

*Commissioner Braseth made a motion to close the Agassiz Apartments wait list as soon as possible. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bakke and carried unanimously.*

**Clay County Affordable Housing LLC/Boyer Apartments**

The Clay County Affordable Housing units are in Dilworth, Ulen, and Hawley; and Boyer are in Moorhead. The CCAH units are composed of twelve duplexes located in neighborhood settings. The Dilworth and Ulen units were constructed in 1979 as Public Housing. The Hawley units were constructed in 1981 as Public Housing. Twenty-one units are 3-bedrooms and three are four-bedrooms.

CCAHA units were operated by the HRA as Public Housing units until January 1, 2019, when the HRA “disposed” of its Public Housing units by “selling” them to the CCAH LLC, which is a non-profit LLC with the HRA as its sole member. The HRA opted to reposition its public housing and receive replacement Housing Choice Vouchers for the units. Maintaining the units as public housing was not financially viable. The HRA then transferred its public housing PROGRAM to the Moorhead Public Housing Agency on July 1, 2020. This was essentially the transfer of future funding streams from HUD since there was no property remaining. The HRA is in the process of closing out its public housing program with HUD now that all activities have been audited.

The Boyer Apartments are two 4-unit buildings that are adjacent to each other and contain a total of seven 2-bedroom units and one 1-bedroom unit. They were built in 1975 and 1976. The HRA purchased Boyer Apartments in 2006. The HRA received over \$100,000 in funding from the local adult mental health initiative to assist with the initial purchase and operations. The buildings were rehabilitated in 2008 with HOME funding.

The HRA and CCAH Boards have approved the sale of the Boyer Apartments to the CCAH as soon as the Fieldcrest Townhomes loan closes and the Boyer Apartments are released as collateral on the existing Fieldcrest Townhomes mortgage. As of January 1, 2022, the HRA has combined all operations of the two projects.

There are no outstanding debts on these buildings.

As of January 1, there are two vacant units in Hawley. There is no specific subsidy tied to these units. The openings are being advertised. Residents of these units receive a preference for a Housing Choice Voucher if their family size fits the available unit.

**Fieldcrest Townhomes**

In January 2017, the HRA purchased Fieldcrest Townhomes when it exercised a Right of First Refusal when the prior owner decided to sell the development. It was in poor condition. The HRA paid \$2 million for the 40-unit townhome development in south Moorhead. There are 20 2-bedroom and 20 3-bedroom units. There are twenty detached garages as well.

Residents pay 30% of their income towards their rent and utilities. The remainder of the rent is subsidized by HUD through a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with HUD. This contract dated back to 1980 when the building was initially constructed. The rents were suppressed, and there was significant deferred maintenance on the property. The contract expired in December 2020, and rents were raised to market levels.

Fieldcrest has been approved for \$1M in funding through the FHLB of Des Moines and over \$7M from Minnesota Housing. We anticipate a January closing. At the time of closing, the HRA will “sell” the development to the Fieldcrest Townhomes LLC. The LLC is a non-profit LLC with the HRA as its sole member. The sales price will pay off the existing mortgage and specials. The HRA also will receive 50% of its developer fee at that time.

The bid opening occurred on July 29 and three competitive bids were received. Kue Contracting has been selected as the low bidder. There is sufficient available funding to proceed without adding garages or replacing all water heaters. If contingency funds remain at the end of construction, we may be able to add back some of the garages.

The City of Moorhead previously recommended \$110,000 in funding for sidewalk repairs and Wi-Fi installation at the development using CDBG funding. They have reduced the amount to \$71,500 due to insufficient repayment of funds. The sidewalk repairs were included in the bids received. We are proposing to shift the funds to the wi-fi only.

We hope that closing and the construction start will be in January or February 2022. A closer has been assigned to the project. We are waiting to receive the Firm Approval letter from HUD on the HUD-insured mortgage. The closing should take place within 30-60 days. As officers of the Fieldcrest Townhomes, LLC, Commissioner Martin and Commissioner Braseth will have documents to sign for the closing.

As of January 1, there are eight vacant units (four 2-bedrooms and four 3-bedrooms) which will be kept vacant during construction. There are sixty-eight households on the waiting list which is now closed.

### **Gateway Gardens**

Gateway Gardens is a 24-unit permanent supportive housing apartment building in Moorhead. The HRA constructed the building in 2010 using Minnesota Housing financing. The funding is in the form of deferred loans that will be forgiven in part after 20 years and completely after 30 years of operations. The front desk is staffed 24/7.

Rent and services are subsidized primarily through the Housing Supports program. There also are five project-based Housing Choice Vouchers attached to units. We are a subgrantee of CAPLP for a DHS HSASMI (Housing Supports for Adults with Serious Mental Illness) grant that helps fund the front desk costs.



CCRI and GSSC, a private security company, each provide 12 hours of staffing per day. In December, the HRA was provided notice of a 33% increase from GSSC; and an 8% increase from CCRI for 2022. This reflects an almost \$40,000 increase in cost. CCRI case management staff also provides Housing Stabilization Services through Medical Assistance.

As of January 1, there are two vacancies. Each unit needs extensive repairs. There is one move-out notice for the end of January and an eviction notice for the end of February. The vacancies will be filled through the coordinated entry system.

### **Housing Choice Vouchers**

The HRA has administered a form of the current Housing Choice Voucher program since 1976. It is also known as Section 8. Tenants rent in the private market and pay at least 30% of their income towards rent and utilities. The HRA determines Payment Standards (rent limits) and utility allowances each year. HUD provides a fixed amount of funding based upon the federal budget approved by Congress each year. The HRA may lease up to its baseline number of units but not more than that number each year. The HRA has received insufficient funding to lease all its vouchers since 2012.

This program has more than doubled in size since 2017. In June 2017, the HRA had 360 vouchers and on July 1, 2021, it has 742 vouchers. The reason for the increase is as follows: 1) In July 2017, the Moorhead Public Housing Agency transferred its 95-unit program to the HRA; 2) from 2018-2021 the HRA was awarded 177 Mainstream vouchers; 3) in 2019 the HRA received 24 vouchers due to the repositioning of its Public Housing; 4) in 2018 the HRA received 15 VASH vouchers and in 2021 25 VASH vouchers; 5) in 2020 the HRA received 3 (all have now been rescinded) and in 2021 1 Foster Youth to Independence vouchers; and 6) on July 1, 2021, the HRA received 15 Emergency Housing Vouchers and 30 vouchers due to Moorhead PHAs repositioning of 30 of its Public Housing units.

The EHV program was funded through the American Rescue Plan Act. The EHV's come with higher administrative fees and service funding. They are targeted at those fleeing domestic violence, homeless, at risk of homeless, and recently homeless households.

As of January 1, 2022, there are a total of 671 households of a possible 742 leased from the HRA Housing Choice Voucher program. We are working with ten additional households from other housing authorities. We have 550 vouchers under our main HCV HUD contract; 177 under our Mainstream HCV contract; and fifteen under our HCV Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) contract.

Of the 550 vouchers under our main contract, 496 vouchers are leased: 430 of 455 regular vouchers; forty-five out of 45 Tenant Protection Vouchers; 0 of 1 FYI vouchers; and 26 of 40 VASH vouchers. We have issued two regular vouchers and 4 VASH vouchers. We are working with three additional households to issue a regular voucher.

160 out of 177 Mainstream vouchers are under lease. We have issued 14 Mainstream vouchers and are working with 9 additional households.

15 of 15 EHV vouchers are under lease.

We have thirty-five individuals enrolled in our Family Self-Sufficiency program. We have had 45 FSS participants in the past 12 months. Staff is working with 4 additional households to enroll them in the program. We can serve up to fifty households on the FSS program under our current Action Plan. Our FSS Coordinator grant has been renewed for 2022.

We have contacted all households on our waiting list to issue a voucher. The waiting list was opened to households who reside in Clay County and contain a member age 50 or older on January 4, 2022. Only 5 applications were received the first week. It will open to those who have a disabled household member under age 50 on February 1, 2022.

**Prairie Horizons Townhomes**

Prairie Horizons Townhomes had one unit damaged by a tenant-caused fire at the end of July. We were notified by the contractor that due to supply chain issues; it may be up to 6 months before the unit is finished.

Prairie Horizons Townhomes are eight townhome permanent supportive housing units for families located in south Moorhead, across from Fieldcrest Townhomes. The HRA constructed the development in 2012 using Minnesota Housing financing. The funding is in the form of deferred loans that will be forgiven in part after 20 years. There is a small portion (\$337,076) that is deferred for 30 years at 0% interest that must be repaid. The HRA owns and manages these eight units (5 2-bedrooms, 2 3-bedrooms, and 1 4-bedroom). The rents in these units are subsidized with project-based Housing Choice Vouchers. Services are provided through the HRA Cares grant. They are sometimes referred to as East Prairie Horizons Townhomes or EPHT.

These units are adjacent to another 8-unit town home permanent supportive housing development, which are confusingly also called Prairie Horizons Townhomes or Easten Townhomes – south units. There are four one-bedroom and four two-bedroom units. The HRA owns 0.01% as a Special Limited Partner in the Easten Townhomes LLC. The HRA provided a \$330,000 deferred loan when the project was constructed in 2006. It bears 5% interest and is due in 2036. The partnership is in the process of buying the equity partner out. The partnership is requesting we subordinate our existing loan and extend it an additional 15 years. Staff has indicated to the General Partner that the current management situation is not working well in meeting the goals of the project.

There are an additional thirty units in this development located in north Moorhead. The HRA has project-based 8 Housing Choice Vouchers in the 8 south units and an additional eight in the 30 north units. Support services are funded through the HRA Cares program.

An HRA staff person is officed at the site. She and a full-time CCRI employee provide supports to both Prairie Horizons Townhomes developments and other HRA Cares scattered-site participants. Both support services providers also have been providing DHS Housing Stabilization Services to the participants.

### **HRA Cares**

HRA Cares is a HUD-funded Continuum of Care program. It is for individuals and families who are literally homeless and have a family member with a disabling condition. There are no time limits on the rental assistance or supportive services. We provide supports at the two Prairie Horizons Townhomes developments and in forty-eight scattered-site units. HRA Cares also provides rental assistance in the forty-eight scattered-site units. We are authorized to serve sixty-four households with these funds. The HRA administers the rental assistance and administers the program. We contract with CCRI for one additional full-time case manager. HRA staff also supervise and provide support services.

We are currently serving fifty-two households. Of the 52, 13 are at Prairie Horizons Townhomes; one is at Bright Sky Apartments; and 38 are in scattered-site units in Clay, Otter Tail, and Douglas Counties, MN, and in Fargo, ND. There are thirty singles and twenty-two families being served. Five households are searching for units.

Due to lower leasing levels occurring in 2021 due to corona, the HRA shifted some of the grant funding from rental assistance to supportive services. The funds were used to pay for work clothes, car repairs, and educational expenses of participants as well as the purchase of a vehicle to be used to assist participants in unit search and to perform HQS inspections.

We only are accepting applications through the Coordinated Access, Referral, Entry and Stabilization System (CARES). Those with the highest priority who meet the eligibility criteria will be accepted.

### **Homeless to Housed Rental Assistance**

Homeless to Housed is a Minnesota-funded rental assistance program for high priority homeless families, youth, and singles across the counties of Clay, Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin. It is a time-limited program for households experiencing homelessness who are unable to immediately receive a Housing Choice Voucher. It operates similarly to the HCV program.

The grant was initially funded in 2008 to serve forty-five households. It has been renewed every 2 years since that time. Our current grant is to serve sixty-two households through September 30, 2023.

We are serving 60 of our authorized 62 households. Seven more households are searching for a unit. There are nineteen singles and forty-one families being served. The grant targets families and youth-headed households. Leased households are from Clay, Traverse, Grant, and Douglas Counties.

The coordinated entry system shifted its priority during the Covid-19 emergency to households residing outside or in shelters.

### **Homework Starts with Home**

Homework Starts with Home is a relatively new program offered by Minnesota Housing. In 2014, the HRA was one of three initial pilot locations for a rental assistance program that focused on families with school age children. We participated in the pilot until it ended in 2018. At the end of the pilot, Minnesota developed Homework Starts with Home. The HSWH program was based primarily upon the pilot operated by the HRA.

The HRA was funded in each of the two rounds of competitive funding. Throughout this time, the HRA has been the lead agency in a partnership all working towards ending child homelessness. The initial pilot partners were Churches United for the Homeless, Moorhead Public Schools, and Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP). We now have forty-five partner agencies including fourteen school districts across seven counties.

Due to the considerable progress the HRA and its partner agencies have made in ending family and youth homelessness in the region, the partnership decided not to apply for Round 3 funding. There has been a slight increase in the number of households identified since the school year began. At least half of these students have moved from locations other than Minnesota or Fargo.

The current grant term runs from 8/1/2020-9/30/2023. We are anticipated to serve a total of seventy-two households during that time. We have served a total of sixty-five households thus far. Seventeen of these also were served under the first grant as well.

As of January 1, 42 households are leased; and twelve households are searching for units. Households are from Clay, Douglas, and Wadena Counties.

### **Housing Supports (formerly GRH) in Scattered-Site Units**

Housing Supports is a Minnesota-funded program operated through the Department of Human Services. It provides room and board payments (which we refer to as Rate 1) and supplemental services payments (which we refer to as Rate 2). Rate 1 pays for rent, utilities, telephones, transportation, and all basic needs items. Rate 2 pays for supportive services. We have a contract with Clay County Social Services to provide this program. We began providing it when we opened Gateway Gardens in 2010. Nineteen of the twenty-four units in the building use this funding source.

In 2016, we added a community option and started subcontracting for service provision with several area non-profit partners. The HRA does all program administration, administers all Rate 1 services, and provides some of the Rate 2 services. It is an extremely complex program to administer.



As of January 1, a total of 129 households are being served by the Housing Supports program in Clay County. There are 112 households leased in the scattered-site Housing Supports program – 10 with the HRA; 23 with CAPLP; 7 with the Presentation Partners in Housing; 10 with LMHC; 9 with Churches United; 8 with Metro Behavioral Health; 6 with the Lotus Center; and 35 with Summit Guidance. In addition, CCRI serves 17 Housing Supports clients at Gateway Gardens and 4 in scattered-site locations. 24 additional households are searching for units. There have been numerous damage claims and non-renewal of leases now that the eviction moratorium has ended.

### **Minnesota DHS Community Infrastructure Grant**

The Community Living Infrastructure Grant was a new grant program that began in 2018. Clay County is the grant recipient and the HRA is the project manager and provides the Housing Resource Specialist. The funds were allocated to help communities build up the necessary infrastructure so that individuals with disabilities can live fully integrated into the communities of their choice. The grant funds outreach workers, housing resource specialists, and administration. The original grant covered all ten counties in West Central Minnesota and the three Community Action Programs serving the counties who each performed outreach. Mahube-Otwa has chosen to remain a partner but not be a sub-recipient for the grant that began 7/1/2021.

The HRA now has a 1.0 FTE Housing Resource Specialist and a 0.05 project manager. There are 2 FTE outreach workers funded to be employed by the CAP agencies, CAPLP (1.15 FTE) and WCMCA (.85 FTE). Both have struggled to keep staff in these positions. The new grant also includes a full-time eligibility worker for Clay County Social Services. Staff has been working diligently on property owner engagement strategies.

### **Minnesota DHS Housing Stabilization Services**

Housing Stabilization Services are a new Medicaid benefit available in Minnesota. It became available July 1, 2020. The HRA was the second agency in West Central Minnesota to become an approved provider. The HRA was approved to provide Housing Stabilization Services – both Housing Consultation and Transition & Sustaining Services effective July 2020. Four staff are currently trained on one or more Housing Stabilization Services roles.

Staff began Housing Consultations in 2020. Staff has been performing annual renewal consultations. We have begun billing for transition and sustaining services. We are now only billing for 3 clients for these services.

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. Six consultations were completed in December.

Through the GROWTH program, staff is leading a region-wide group aimed at getting this program to work for those who need it throughout our region.

### **Owner-Occupied Rehab Program**

The HRA has operated and operates several distinct programs under the Owner-Occupied Rehab umbrella. The largest program is the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Small Cities Development Program (SCDP). Funds used for this program are federal HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) that are allocated to the state for Greater Minnesota. DEED then holds annual competitive application rounds to award these funds to non-entitlement communities.

The HRA first started administering CDBG funds in 1974 or 1975. The agency stopped the program in the early 1990's due to local political challenges. The HRA once again started administering the program through DEED SCDP in 2008. Only cities and counties may apply for the funding. The HRA serves as the administrator. Clay County was the applicant for the 2008, 2010, and 2012 funding rounds. The City of Barnesville was the applicant in 2014, the City of Sabin in 2016, and the City of Dilworth in 2021. The HRA has utilized HRA Tax Levy funds in 2010, 2014, 2019, and 2020 to leverage these rehabilitation resources. Clay County allocated \$80,000 in ARPA funds for this purpose.

All these loans have been deferred. Some have been forgiven after 10-15 years while others remain repayable. Each application has different terms.

#### Sabin

This grant was completed and closed out at the end December.

#### 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 received letters of interest from sixty-seven homeowners and nine commercial properties. We applied for \$922,000 on behalf of Dilworth to rehabilitate twenty-one owner-occupied homes and seven businesses and were awarded the full amount requested in August. The environmental review process is complete, and staff has sent out applications to those home and business owners who expressed interest. Applications were due December 13. We received 23 homeowner and 7 commercial property owner applications by the deadline. One appears to be over income but will be evaluated. We received two additional homeowner applications after the deadline.

#### RLP (Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program)

The Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is funded by the state. Funds are appropriated during each budget cycle. Local administrators work with homeowners to receive funding to rehabilitate their homes. Homeowners must be extremely or very low income to qualify for these funds. These funds can be used in conjunction with DEED SCDP and USDA HPG funds. The loan limit is \$37,500 per project. The funding is in the form of deferred loans that are forgiven after 15 years if the household continues to reside in the home.

The HRA administered the RLP program in the 1980's and early 1990's. It applied to be an administrator and started administering the funds again in 2012.

There are 7 applications for this program currently. Two of the seven may be over income. We are awaiting income documentation. Three of the remaining five own manufactured homes. Minnesota Housing just approved a new use of these funds to purchase and replace rather than repair manufactured homes. The training is at the end of January so manufactured homeowners will be given their options at that time. Eligibility documentation was requested from the other two applicants approximately 3 months ago, and they have not returned this information.

### **EXTENSION OF MORTGAGE WITH BELL BANK:**

The current Fieldcrest mortgage is with Bell Bank. The balloon payment is due January 24, 2022. Staff had hoped the new loan with Minnesota Housing would be closed on or before that date. This will not happen. As a result, we need to extend this note for an extra 3 months.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Martin to approve a loan extension with Bell Bank. Commissioner Bakke seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.*

### **EIV- ENTERPRISE INCOME VERIFICATION SYSTEM SECURITY & USE POLICY:**

A revised EIV System Security & Use Policy was reviewed. The EIV system allows us access to federal employment and social security data bases. Due to the highly confidential nature of this information, we are required to have clear policies on the use of these systems and the information.

*Commissioner Dillard made a motion to approve changes to the EIV policy. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Braseth and carried unanimously.*

### **PROJECT SELECTIONS FOR DILWORTH SMALL CITIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM GRANT:**

The HRA Board of Commissioners is the approved Property Selection Committee in the Dilworth SCDP Policy guides. The HRA has served in this role to help protect cities from any appearance of favoritism. Below are the relevant portions of the guides:

1. **PROPERTY SELECTION COMMITTEE:** A committee whose duties are to review and approve applications as presented and recommended by administrative staff pursuant to the policies contained in this Guide. The committee shall be composed of the following: the Board of Directors of the HRA of Clay County. No member appointed shall have a conflict of interest and shall perform their duties in a neutral and objective manner.
2. **Application Intake**  
Applications will be processed based on the preferences listed below and will be selected for participation in the program based upon applicability to the program eligibility requirements and guidelines.

Applications received within four weeks of the application opening date will receive funding priority. Applications received after that time will be placed on a waiting list.

The Administrative staff shall make the initial eligibility determination for DPL and other funds based upon a preliminary review of the application. If the applicants appear to be eligible for a DPL or other funding, administrative staff will begin to process the application and verify income eligibility using the current years applicable HUD Section 8 Income Guidelines (see Attachment A for 2021 guidelines).

Preferences- Applications will be selected based on the following preferences:

1. Applicant a) resides in target area; and b) is extremely low income.
2. Applicant a) resides in target area; and b) is very-low income.
3. Applicant a) resides in target area; and b) is low income.

#### **A. Project Selection**

The applications received in the four-week period which appear to be eligible will be reviewed by a Property Selection Committee and ranked based upon the Preferences. The eligible applicants whose applications were received within the 4-week priority time period will be ranked based upon their verified income in the following order: lowest to highest income.

As indicated in the Project Updates, 23 applications were submitted within the 4-week period. All applicants are from the target area. Twenty-two appear to be income eligible: 8 extremely low-income; 5 very low-income; and 9 low-income.

**Staff recommends that all applicants be selected at this time contingent upon income eligibility. The HRA has received ARPA funding through Clay County if additional funds are needed for the extra one or two households. The remaining two applicants will be placed on the waiting list.**

For the commercial property, the following policies apply:

##### Project Selection

The Property Selection Committee will review and approve applications as presented and recommended by administrative staff pursuant to the policies contained in this Guide. The committee shall be composed of the following: board of directors of Clay County HRA.

The applications received in the four-week period which appear to be eligible and financially feasible will be presented to the Property Selection Committee and rated based on the following criteria: age of the building; need for improvements to maintain structural integrity of the building; need to remedy clear imminent health or safety hazards; improvements to restore facade of the building; need for accessibility improvements and need for energy efficiency improvements.



The City received funds to do 7 commercial buildings. All eligible applications received in the initial 4-week time period will be rated and receive a score by the Property Selection Committee. The 7 applications receiving the highest scores will be selected for rehab. The applications not selected in the first round will be placed on a waiting list by application score. Additional applications received after the initial 4 week application period will be accepted and ranked. Top scoring applications will be selected if additional funds are available under the current grant and/or for a future SCDP application to be submitted by the City.

**Only seven applications for commercial buildings were received. All appear to be eligible so staff recommends that all applicants be selected at this time.**

*A motion was made by Commissioner Martin to approve all residential and commercial applications received by the application due date for selection. Commissioner Dillard seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.*

### **2022 BOARD DISCUSSION:**

The January meeting will be the FINAL meeting for Commissioner Mike Martin. Mike was first appointed to the HRA Board of Commissioners on June 13, 2006. He has served as the first and only Treasurer for the HRA. We are so grateful for the 15 ½ years that Mike has dedicated to the agency, those it serves, and its staff. Due to the on-going pandemic, we are unable to give him the recognition and farewell gathering that he deserves. We hope he along with Dale and Ione will return for a “real” farewell once it is safe for large numbers of people to gather!

The HRA is authorized to have 5-7 board members. With the end of Commissioner Martin’s third term, the board will be comprised of 5 members. The board needs to determine if it wishes to remain at 5 people or if it would like to expand to 7. The board indicated it wishes to remain at 5 members.

The HRA also has 4 officers – chair, vice chair, treasurer, and secretary. HRA Board members have traditionally rotated all positions except treasurer every two years. This board will need to decide if it wishes to continue this tradition or not. The treasurer position being vacated has additional responsibilities that are mainly another layer of fraud protection. Director Lee will reach out to Commissioner Schlotfeldt to determine her interest in the treasurer opening. Commissioner Bakke was agreeable to moving into the Chair position; Commissioner Braseth was agreeable to moving into the Vice Chair position; and Commissioner Dillard was agreeable to filling the secretary position.

The most recent version of the HRA By-Laws was available. Any changes are typically made at our annual meeting in February. If changes are desired, they should be communicated to Director Lee 10 days prior to our next meeting on February 15, 2022.

**OTHER:**

**Staffing**

The HRA is hiring for a finance position due to the upcoming retirement of the Accounting Assistant on March 31, 2022, and the retirement of the Director of Administration in 2023. The advertisement is currently running in various locations.

A Rental Assistance Specialist is no longer with the agency, and a Maintenance Technician has submitted his resignation.

Agency policy has been to advertise for openings as they arise. However, Director Lee asked for an exception to this policy due to the pandemic. A former Maintenance Technician has been contacted and would be interested in returning. There would be no one more familiar with the job than someone who has previously done it. There is an applicant for the finance position that has previously been interviewed for a position with the HRA and would be a good fit for our current Rental Assistance Specialist opening.

The board thoroughly discussed making an exception to current policy due to the challenging hiring conditions.

***Commissioner Bakke made a motion to make an exception to advertising for the 2 positions and if able, hire the individuals outlined above on an emergency basis. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Braseth and carried unanimously.***

**COVID-19 & OFFICE HOURS**

Covid-19 is once again directly impacting the office. Staff members and their families have once again been infected with Covid. We have gone back to a hybrid work environment and are limiting people entering the offices. Office hours remain the same. The Family Service Center hours are Monday-Friday 8-4:30 by appointment and walk-ins Tuesdays from noon-5 p.m.; Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; and Thursdays from 7 a.m.-1 p.m. Due to the configuration, staff can maintain separation from walk-ins.

The main office has gone back to being open by appointment only. In addition, staff are using N-95 masks when entering units.

**10:40 A.M. MEETING ADJOURNED:**

***A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 a.m. by Commissioner Martin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dillard and carried unanimously.***



2/15/2022

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Tia Braseth, Secretary

Date