

HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLAY COUNTY
Regular Meeting of June 21, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anthony Dillard, Cecil Johnson and Kim Schlotfeldt in person, Les Bakke and Tia Braseth via Zoom.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

STAFF PRESENT:

Dara Lee and Jill Cossette.

10:00 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 JUNE 21, 2022 REGULAR MEETING:

A motion was made by Commissioner Dillard to approve the June 21, 2022, regular minutes. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

None

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The January financials were available (except HS2 and Cash Accounts).

Director Lee reviewed the January financials in depth. She noted at Houge the cost of insurance is more than anticipated. RentHelpMN paid thousands of dollars for rent and then clients never paid rent again.

Director Lee hopes to send financials every week to 10 days.

PROJECT UPDATES:

Director Lee asked if there were any questions regarding the below updates. The Board had no questions.

Houge Estates

As of June 1, there were 4 vacant units. One of units is now occupied. The others are not yet ready for occupancy. We have received two move-out notices for the end of June. Six full applications

are being processed for the five openings. There are 95 households on the waiting list. The waiting list is currently open.

The Houge Estates Service Coordinator is housed at this location.

Agassiz Apartments

As of June 1, there is one vacancy which is not yet ready for occupancy. There are 14 applicants on the waiting list which closed 2/1/22.

Clay County Affordable Housing LLC/Boyer Apartments

As June 1, there are two vacant units and a pending move-out that was supposed to occur on March 31. One household purchased a home, and one household abandoned the unit. Staff is processing two applicants for the openings and reaching out to others. There were 36 households on the Boyer waiting list at the time of the transfer to CCAH. These applicants are being contacted for the Boyer opening. 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 June 1, there are 9 vacant units (five 2-bedrooms and four 3-bedrooms) which will be kept vacant during construction. There is an eviction for drug-related criminal activity in progress. 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.

Gateway Gardens

As of June 1, there are 5 openings. Five potential tenants have been identified for the units, and three are in the eligibility determination process. One of the 5 vacancies is ready for occupancy. The vacancies are being filled through the coordinated entry system.

Prairie Horizons Townhomes

As of June 1, there is one vacant unit that was damaged in the July 2021 fire. The contractor now indicates it should be ready by the end of June. There are two vacant Easten units which are in the process of being filled.

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.

Housing Choice Vouchers

As of June 1, 2022, there were a total of 659 households of a possible 743 leased from the HRA Housing Choice Voucher program. We are working with 13 additional households from other housing authorities. We have 551 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 551 vouchers under our main contract, 494 vouchers are leased: 423 of 468 regular vouchers; 42 out of 42 Tenant Protection Vouchers; 0 of 1 FYI vouchers; and 29 of 40 VASH vouchers. We have issued 7 regular vouchers and 1 VASH vouchers. We are working with 14 additional households to issue a regular voucher.

160 out of 177 Mainstream vouchers are under lease. We have issued 16 Mainstream vouchers and are working with 31 additional households. 15 of 15 EHV vouchers are under lease.

We have 32 individuals enrolled in our Family Self-Sufficiency program. We have had 42 FSS participants in the past 12 months. Staff is working with additional households to enroll them in the program, but they have been slow to respond. We can serve up to fifty households on the FSS program under our current Action Plan.

There are 205 households on the waiting list. We have been adding about 60 households per month. The waiting list was opened to households who reside in Clay County and contain a member age 50 or older on January 4, 2022, and to those who have a disabled household member under age 50 on February 1, 2022.

HRA Cares

We are authorized to serve 64 households and are currently serving 49 households. Of the 49, 13 are at Prairie Horizons Townhomes; 2 are at Bright Sky Apartments; and 34 are in scattered-site units in Clay, Otter Tail, Grant, and Douglas Counties, MN, and in Fargo, ND. There are 26 singles and 23 families being served. Six households are searching for units and 3 are being processed.

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

We are serving 56 of our authorized 62 households. One more household is waiting to move into a unit and 4 more are searching. There are 21 singles and 35 families being served. The grant targets families and youth-headed households. Leased households are from Clay, Traverse, Grant, and Douglas Counties.

Openings are filled through the coordinated entry.

Homework Starts with Home

The current grant term runs from 8/1/2020-9/30/2023. We are anticipated to serve a total of 72 households during that time. We have served a total of 77 households under this grant: 60 new households and an additional 17 who were served under the first grant as well. We intend to add an additional 12 households to meet our targets.

As June 1, 43 households are leased, and 5 households are searching for units. Leased and searching households are from Clay, Douglas, Otter Tail, and Wadena Counties.

We have transitioned 34 households off this grant: 23 moved to Housing Choice vouchers; 1 moved to Homeless to Housed; 1 moved to Bridges; 1 went off due to transitioned to a more intensive youth program; 1 purchasing a home; 3 going off due to increased income; 3 moved to unsubsidized units; and 1 was evicted and disappeared. Eight more are in the process of transferring to an HCV unit.

Housing Supports (formerly GRH) in Scattered-Site Units

As of June 1, a total of 123 households were being served by the Housing Supports program in Clay County. There are 108 households leased in the scattered-site Housing Supports program – 9 with the HRA; 19 with CAPLP; 6 with the Presentation Partners in Housing; 10 with LMHC; 11 with Churches United; 10 with Metro Behavioral Health; 8 with the Lotus Center; and 32 with Summit Guidance/Greater Minnesota Community Services. In addition, CCRI serves 15 Housing Supports clients at Gateway Gardens and 3 in scattered-site locations.

29 additional households are searching for units. Most of the people searching are people on the program who were asked to leave/terminated by their previous property owner. There have been numerous damage claims and non-renewal of leases now that the eviction moratorium has ended.

Minnesota DHS Community Living Infrastructure Grant

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

Minnesota DHS Housing Stabilization Services

Staff began Housing Consultations in 2020. Staff has 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 HRA hopes to re-start these services in the fall with the addition of the new Housing Navigator staff. Staff also applied for a \$50,000 capacity building grant to get the necessary infrastructure in place to re-start this program. Staff completed 4 consultations in May.

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.

Minnesota Housing - Housing Stability Grant

The HRA has been awarded \$189,544 in funding as 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 budget is included further in the minutes.

The HRA has hired for the two new positions as well as a rental assistance specialist. We received over 70 applications for these openings and the rental assistance specialist opening and are excited about the excellent candidates we were able to hire.

The hope is that once the grant ends, the new staff will allow the agency to resume the HSS Transition and Sustaining Services and to provide additional Housing Support services.

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-three homeowner and 7 commercial property owner applications have been approved. There are 2 homeowner applications and 1 commercial application on the waiting list.

Of the homeowner applications received, 8 indicated they were extremely low-income; 5 were very low-income; and 9 were low-income. Staff has begun processing 16 homeowners including all the extremely and very low-income applicants. Two projects are ready to close; 5 homeowner projects are in the bid process; 2 are finalizing the scope of work; and 7 are still providing income and program eligibility information. The loan limit for homeowners is \$24,999 and for commercial owners is \$40,000.

Physical property inspections have been completed on all 8 of commercial buildings. One project has bids finalized and should close by the end of May; and 6 owners are reviewing the scope of work and bid information for the buildings. We will not bid the 8th project unless sufficient funds are remaining after the bids come in on the other projects.

RLP (Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program)

There is currently one active RLP applicant who is having lead testing performed on their home and having a scope of work developed. Seven applicants are in the process of submitting income and other eligibility information.

APPROVAL OF 2022 MHFA HOUSING STABILITY SERVICES BUDGET

The HRA, along with CAPLP and Presentation Partners in Housing, agreed to be sub-grantees in a grant application submitted by the West Central Minnesota Communities Action Agency (WCMCA) to the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency. The grant is a one-year grant to provide Housing Stability Services. These services are prevention and housing navigation.

The HRA agreed to apply for 2 Housing Navigator positions as part of this collaborative application. The group was surprised when it was notified by MHFA at the end of April that the request was fully funded. The grant began June 15, 2022, and runs through June 30, 2023. The HRA has hired the 2 staff for this grant.

The budget for this program for the 6 ½ month period in 2022 is attached.

Commissioner Dillard made a motion to approve the 2022 MHFA Housing Stability Services Budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schlotfeldt and it carried unanimously.

OTHER

Covid: The HRA has had 5 employees out with Covid-19 in the last month.

Staffing: The HRA has hired 3 new staff and 2 returning staff.

- Helen Stevenson was hired for Housing Navigation on May 31, 2022.
- Stephanie Trouba was hired for Housing Navigation on June 6, 2022.
- Dana Berggren was hired as a Rental Assistance Specialist on June 13, 2022. She replaced Mandi Stagl who left the agency in May,
- Willie Brown was rehired as a Maintenance Temp. to do lawn care.
- Gary Myklebust should be starting back June 21, 2022, to help do unit turns.

Summer Celebration: Director Lee would like to have a Joint Board and Staff Celebration to recognize our Retiree's and Milestone Anniversaries. Mike Martin offered to host this event at his house. Director Lee will send out proposed dates and times to the Board.

Commissioner Braseth made a motion to cancel the July Board Meeting. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

10:48 A.M. MEETING ADJOURNED:

Chair Bakke moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:48 a.m. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Treasurer Schlotfeldt.

Anthony Dillard, Secretary

Date

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Commissioner Dillard made a motion to approve the 2022 MHFA Housing Stability Services Budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schlotfeldt and it carried unanimously.

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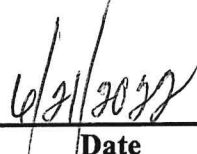
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