

HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLAY COUNTY
Regular Meeting of January 17, 2023

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.

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 DECEMBER 20, 2022,

REGULAR MEETING:

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to approve the December 20, 2022, regular minutes. Commissioner Schlotfeldt seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Dawn Bacon, Executive Director of Moorhead Public Housing Agency, attended and was introduced to the board.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Director Lee discussed current information by programs that was available.

PROJECT UPDATES:

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

Houge Estates

As of January 1, there are 9 vacant units and one eviction in process. There is a tenant approved for January move-in. There are applicants whose applications are being processed for eligibility. There are 83 households on the waiting list. The waiting list is currently open.

The Houge Estates Service Coordinator is housed at this location. The renewal grant application has been submitted for 2023.

Agassiz Apartments

As of January 1, there are no vacancies. There are 10 applicants on the waiting list which closed 2/1/22. Agassiz needs a new roof. HUD conducted a physical inspection of the property on 1/10/23. The project received a passing score.

Clay County Affordable Housing LLC/Boyer Apartments

As of January 1, there are 7 vacant units. One in Moorhead is vacant due to a transfer.

There are two vacant 3-bedroom units in Ulen and four in Hawley. A third Ulen tenant is scheduled for an eviction hearing on January 17. A fifth Hawley tenant is scheduled for eviction on January 16. A Dilworth tenant is also scheduled for an eviction hearing on January 17. All evictions are due to non-payment of rent. We have never had this number of evictions or vacancies at these properties.

One tenant has been approved to move-in to a Hawley unit. Eligibility is being determined on a number of other households. There are still 21 households on the waiting list for the one-bedroom units 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 January 1, there are 11 vacant units (five 2-bedrooms and six 3-bedrooms) and one pending lease termination which 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.

Windows are installed; the sewer has been moved; new sidewalks are poured; the southeast parking lot is completed; the siding is complete, the new addition is roofed, and unit rehab has begun on 8 units. The first 4 units are expected to be completed on January 20 and the second four on February 3. Progress is being made!

Gateway Gardens

As of January 1, there are 3 openings. Potential tenants continue to be denied or disappear. Staff are once again searching for eligible participants.

The Housing Supports supplies remain 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 January or February. The CCRI case manager continues to have an office at the location. The HRA has hired two current CCRI employees to continue their current work at the front desk. They will

each work approximately 24 hours per week. One has been working for the HRA since August and has assisted with our requirement to cover the 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. shift each day. Other HRA staff are scheduled to cover the remaining 20 hours.

Prairie Horizons Townhomes

As of January 1, all units were occupied. There is an upcoming termination due to drug-related activity. 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 January 1, 2023, there were a total of 663 households of a possible 758 leased from the HRA Housing Choice Voucher program. We are working with 3 additional households from other housing authorities. We have 556 vouchers under our main HCV HUD contract; 187 under our Mainstream HCV contract; and fifteen under our HCV Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) contract. We plan to reallocate 10 of our 40 VASH units to the Bemidji HRA. Both the Bemidji and Clay HRA boards have approved this transfer.

Of the 556 vouchers under our main contract, 484 vouchers are leased: 415 of 475 regular vouchers; 40 out of 40 Tenant Protection Vouchers; 1 of 1 FYI vouchers; and 28 of 40 VASH vouchers. There are two additional VASH participants who are between units, and one who has been issued an initial voucher. We have issued 4 regular vouchers and are working with 21 additional households to issue a regular voucher. There are 8 participants that are in-between units and still searching for new housing.

166 out of 187 Mainstream vouchers are under lease. We have issued 2 Mainstream vouchers and are working with 35 additional households. Eight participants are in-between units and still searching for new housing. 13 of 15 EHV vouchers are under lease and two vouchers issued.

The HRA's goal is to first focus on the 21 Mainstream units. We received \$93,500 in additional administrative fees in November to assist with keeping these units filled during this challenging time. The focus will shift to our 60 open regular vouchers after the Mainstream units are filled.

We have 40 individuals enrolled in our Family Self-Sufficiency program. We have had 45 FSS participants in the past 12 months.

There are 247 households who remain on the waiting list.

HRA Cares

We are authorized to serve 64 households and are currently serving 63 households. Of the 63, 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). Six households are searching for units. HUD agreed to re-allocate a portion of our rental assistance funding for 2022 which we were able to use on supportive services and extra administrative costs.

Homeless to Housed Rental Assistance

Our current grant is to serve sixty-two households through September 30, 2023. We are serving 59 of our authorized 62 households. Two households are currently searching for units, and two are in the intake process. There are 19 singles and 40 families being served. The grant targets families and youth-headed households. Leased households are from Clay (49), Douglas (9), Grant (1), and Traverse (1) Counties.

Openings are filled through the coordinated entry.

Homework Starts with Home

The current grant term runs from 8/1/2020-9/30/2023. As of January 1, 30 households are leased. This grant is still slightly over budget so we will not be issuing any new vouchers right now. We can average serving 28-29 households for the next 8 months. Households are from Clay (26), Douglas (3), and Otter Tail (1) Counties.

We have transitioned 47 households off the current grant: 29 moving to Housing Choice vouchers; 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.

Housing Supports (formerly GRH) in Scattered-Site Units

As of January 1, a total of 128 households were being served by the Housing Supports program in Clay County. There are 110 households leased in the scattered-site Housing Supports program 9 with the HRA; 24 with CAPLP; 11 with the Presentation Partners in Housing; 9 with LMHC; 10 with Metro Behavioral Health; 12 with the Lotus Center; and 32 with Greater Minnesota Community Services. In addition, CCRI serves 18 Housing Supports clients at Gateway Gardens and 3 in a scattered-site location.

Fifteen additional households are searching for units. Half of these are individuals who have been asked to leave/evicted from their units. We will not be accepting any additional new clients until the HRA is able to catch up on the financial and support services work of the organization.

Minnesota DHS Community Living Infrastructure Grant

The HRA has 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). CAPLP is currently short-staffed. 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.

There was an on-site DHS grant monitoring on January 12, 2023, which appeared to go very well.

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 Supportive Services Manager applied for and was awarded a \$50,000 capacity building grant to get the necessary infrastructure in place to re-start this program. The grant is for a 6-month period. Due to internal staffing challenges, the Supportive Services Manager reached out to CAPLP to partner on sharing this grant and the underlying work to get a system in place for the area. This grant ends on February 28.

The HRA and CAPLP are working on getting a coordinated referral process in place, streamlined policies and procedures, training components, and effective billing practices. DHS has released an RFP for up to an additional \$150,000 per organization for funding to begin March 1, 2023, until March 2024.

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 hired three new people for two new positions between June and August. One of these hires remains in the role. Existing HRA staff also perform some of these duties.

The HRA transferred 37% of its sub-grantee funding to CAPLP, which reduced our FTEs to 1.26. CAPLP recently lost funding on a significant grant so were looking for additional resources. This grant ends on June 30, 2023, and it did not appear prudent to add additional staff.

With the addition of only one new staff member, we will be able to absorb her into current HRA operations at the end of the grant term.

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 8 commercial property owner applications were received. 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, six projects are under construction; 4 projects are finalizing bids and preparing to close; and 2 households are in the eligibility process. One

household withdrew its application, and two households have asked to be moved to the end of the waiting list. All other applicants have been contacted and will be processed in the order they respond.

Physical property inspections have been completed on all 8 commercial buildings. One project is under construction; 5 projects are finalizing contracts; and one project has not started bidding. The 8th applicant sold its building and withdrew its application.

RLP (Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program)

The Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is funded by the state. MHFA made updates to the program effective August 1, 2022. The updates were targeted at easing some of the income eligibility requirements by adding additional allowable deductions. Nine applicants are in the process of submitting income and other eligibility information. One is closing soon.

PAY EQUITY REPORT FOR 2022

The Local Government Pay Equity Act and Minnesota Rules require local government jurisdictions to submit a pay equity report every three years. The report is due by January 31, 2023, for December 31, 2022, data. The information must be approved by the Board of Commissioners prior to submission.

The board reviewed the Pay Equity Implementation Report, the system-generated Compliance Report, and the job class information.

A motion was made by Commissioner Schlotfeldt for approval and submission of 2023 Pay Equity Report of 2022. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

HRA/MOORHEAD PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY JOINT OPERATIONS

MPHA and the HRA submitted a joint application to the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund requesting \$50,000 to assist with this process. Its board meets the third week in January and will act on the request at that time.

If funding is approved, staff will reach out to Carla Pederson, the attorney discussed at the December meeting, for assistance in drafting the management agreement to be implemented on March 1, 2023. The proposed agreement will be presented to the board at the February meeting.

The majority of MPHA staff will become HRA employees on March 1. At that time, it is anticipated that the HRA will assume general operation responsibilities of the MPHA. The HRA, in coordination with the MPHA director, is currently in the hiring process for a maintenance technician opening at the MPHA.

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.

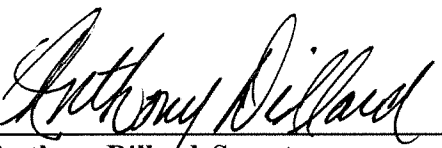
A motion was made by Commissioner Schlotfeldt to approve retaining an attorney and preparing a proposed management agreement. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

OTHER

Director Lee will be on vacation until 2/8/2023. Commissioner Schlotfeldt will work with staff to approve and sign checks while Director Lee is out of the office.

10:34 A.M. MEETING ADJOURNED:

Commissioner Braseth moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 a.m. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Commissioner Bakke and carried unanimously.



Anthony Dillard, Secretary



Date