

HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLAY COUNTY
Regular Meeting of February 20, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tia Braseth, Anthony Dillard, Cecil Johnson, and Greg Lemke

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Bethany Peterson and Paul Krabbenhoft

STAFF PRESENT:

Dara Lee and Jill Cossette.

9:38 A.M. REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

AGENDA:

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

MINUTES FROM January 16, 2024 REGULAR MEETING:

A motion was made by Commissioner Dillard to approve the January 16, 2024, regular minutes. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

None

TREASURER REPORT:

Staff is busy closing the books for 2024. The financials were sent to our fee account for review and year-end entries. They will then be sent to our auditors. The unaudited submission is due no later than March 15. There are no penalties imposed until May 1 for the regular audit.

The audit for Houge Estates, the Houge Estates Service Coordinator, and Fieldcrest Townhomes takes place during the last week in February with submissions due to HUD on March 31. Submissions are due to USDA Rural Development for Agassiz Apartments on March 31, but these financials are not required to be audited prior to submission.

The main HRA audit takes place the first week in May. The audit must be submitted to HUD by September 30.

PROJECT UPDATES

Director Lee provided project updates.

Houge Estates

As of February 1, there are 6 vacant units and two additional pending evictions. There is one additional move-out notice for January. Staff are working with 3 households to determine final eligibility. There are 69 households on the waiting list.

Clay County SAHA funds were awarded to update the security cameras at the property. Staff is in the process of getting bids. The Houge Estates Service Coordinator is housed at this location.

Agassiz Apartments

As of February 1, there are no vacancies and 10 applicants on the waiting list.

Agassiz needs a new roof. Funding for the replacement was approved in the award of the SAHA funding, and staff are getting bids. We also received SAHA funding to install security cameras and secured access in the building.

Clay County Affordable Housing LLC/Boyer Apartments

As of February 1, there are 6 vacant units. Openings are in Ulen (2), Hawley (2), and Moorhead (2). Staff are finalizing eligibility for 3 applicants and working with an additional 14 households for the remaining 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 February 1, there are 8 vacant units (two 2-bedrooms and six 3-bedrooms). There is one eviction pending. The units were kept vacant during construction and are now being filled. Seven applications are being processed for the openings. All supportive housing units have been filled. There are 53 households on the waiting list.

Three staff (Supportive Services Manager, Supportive Services Specialist, and a Supportive Services Assistant) all moved into the offices at Fieldcrest on February 14. There is another office at the location used by CAPLP for supportive services. Two of the staff re-located from the main office and one from Gateway Gardens.

Gateway Gardens

As of February 1, there are 6 openings and one pending termination. One household has moved into a vacant unit, and another has requested to move due to Boyer. Tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list. Staff are contacting potential residents to fill the remaining units.

The Housing Supports supplies are located at Gateway Gardens. A supportive services staff and an assistant property manager are officed at this location. The CCRI case manager continues to have an office at the location. The HRA also staffs the front desk from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day. There are primarily 3 of our employees filling this role (one full-time and two part-time). From 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. A security company staffs the office. The security company monitors the cameras for the High

Rise as well as for Gateway Gardens. Funds were received to update the Gateway Gardens security system. Staff are obtaining bids.

Prairie Horizons Townhomes

As of February 1, there are 3 open units. One applicant has been approved and will move in soon. Tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list.

A supportive services office is available on-site. CCRI continues to have a part-time employee providing support to both Prairie Horizons Townhomes developments. The HRA also staffs the office 8 hours per week.

Housing Choice Vouchers

As of February 1, 2024, there were a total of 779 out of 762 units leased in the HRA Housing Choice Voucher program. This is the first time in over a decade that all units have been fully leased.

We are working with 5 additional households from other housing authority. We have 560 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. We were notified that HUD is still working on the transfer which was supposed to occur on January 1, 2024.

Of the 560 vouchers under our main contract, 567 vouchers are leased: 506 of 481 regular vouchers; 32 out of 32 Tenant Protection Vouchers; 1 of 1 FYI vouchers; 4 out of 5 Housing Stability Vouchers and 24 of 40 VASH vouchers. We have 5 existing regular HCV participants who are between units; we have issued 9 regular vouchers and 2 VASH vouchers to new participants; and we are working with 13 additional households to issue a regular voucher. We will need to apply for 2 additional FYI vouchers to serve youth who have been referred to us. There are 8 households on the waiting list.

192 out of 187 Mainstream vouchers are under lease. We have 8 existing Mainstream participants who are between units; we have issued 8 Mainstream vouchers to new participants. At least 2 will be leased by March 1.

16 of 15 EHV vouchers are under lease. The program is ending, and no additional vouchers will ever be issued. All current participants can remain on the program for as long as needed.

We have 51 individuals enrolled in our Family Self-Sufficiency program. We have had 60 FSS participants in the past 12 months.

Becker-Clay-Otter Tail-Wilkin (BCOW)

Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI) Rental Assistance

The contract with the BCOW AMHI 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.

The 2024 grant has been changed to allow for housing navigation and case management services to be provided through the grant as well as rental assistance and administrative fees. A staff person will work approximately 16 hours per week on this activity.

As of February 1, there are 23 participants; and 7 participants who are searching for units. We are not accepting any additional referrals at this time.

HRA Cares

The grant, which begins January 1, 2024, was cut significantly during the past funding around. HUD agreed to amend the grant to transfer all funds into the supportive services and administrative categories.

The grant is intended to serve 64 households. There are currently 54 households being served. Under the new grant model, we are contracting with a variety of interested entities to provide supportive services. We have executed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with CCRI, West Central Minnesota Communities Action, and Presentation Partners in Housing.

Households are from Clay, Douglas, and Otter Tail Counties.

Homeless to Housed Rental Assistance

Our grant was increased to 85 households for October 1. We are serving 52 households now. Seven households are searching for units. There are 13 singles and 39 families being served. The grant targets families and youth-headed households. Leased households are from Clay (44) and Douglas (8) Counties.

Openings are filled through the coordinated entry process.

Homework Starts with Home

The grant was renewed for October 1 through September 30, 2024. We are funded to serve 32 households.

As of February 1, 14 households are leased. Households are from Clay (8), Douglas (2), Pope (1), Otter Tail (2), and Wilkin Counties. Seven households are searching for a unit. Two of the approved households have moved into Fieldcrest and will be receiving Homework Starts with Home services through CAPLP. CAPLP will have an on-site office at Fieldcrest starting in February.

Housing Supports (formerly GRH) in Scattered-Site Units

As of February 1, a total of 101 households were being served by the Housing Supports program in Clay County. There are 87 households leased in the scattered-site Housing Supports program – 8 with the HRA; 17 with CAPLP; 7 with the Presentation Partners in Housing; 6 with LMHC; 8 with Metro Behavioral Health; 9 with the Lotus Center; and 30 with Greater Minnesota Community Services. In addition, CCRI serves 2 in scattered sites and 14 Housing Supports clients at Gateway Gardens.

Four households are searching for units. Clay County Social Services has indicated that we are able to add additional households. There was a partner meeting in January that was very positive.

Minnesota DHS Community Living Infrastructure Grant

Funding of the current grant was extended until 6/30/25. The funding for the HRA supports 0.82 FTE.

We submitted the annual report to Clay County who will submit it to DHS. We continue to meet or exceed all goals. No changes in the past month.

Minnesota DHS Housing Stabilization Services

No changes in the past month. This continues to be an inactive program.

Owner-Occupied Rehab Program

Dilworth

The HRA staff is administering a \$922,000 DEED grant for the City of Dilworth. It received funding to rehabilitate 21 homes. There are only 19 active applicants at this time. Seven projects are complete; 1 project is under construction; 1 project is finalizing the scope of work; 3 projects are finalizing bids and preparing to close; and 2 are interested in proceeding but have not provided information. Five other applicants have not responded to contact attempts. The seven other original applicants are ineligible or have withdrawn. Another letter is being mailed to households in the target area to determine if there is additional interest.

The grant funded the rehabilitation of 7 commercial properties. Physical property inspections have been completed on all commercial buildings. Two projects were completed in 2023; 2 projects are under construction; 1 project is finalizing contracts; and 1 project has not started bidding. Two projects that originally applied have withdrawn. One new inquiry has been received, and we believe they will apply.

Now that the Fieldcrest rehabilitation is wrapping up, staff plan to have more time available to complete these projects. The work is to be complete by September 30, but the timeline may be extended.

RLP (Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program)

The Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is funded by the state. One project is under construction. A second project was closed and completed in January. Four projects are either in the eligibility process or bidding stage. Nine applicants have been unresponsive.

River View Heights (Moorhead Public Housing Agency)

As of February 1, there are 16 vacancies but 7 of these are not being filled due to upcoming rehabilitation work. Two applicants have been approved and four are being processed. Two additional households have responded that they are interested in leasing. Six more applicants are being contacted.

There are currently 126 people on the public housing waiting list.

Sharp View (MPHA)

As of February 1, Sharp View has one vacancy due to eviction which is re-rented effective February 23. The waiting list is shared with the River View Heights waiting list.

Moorhead Affordable Housing LLC (MPHA)

As of February, there is one vacancy, and an applicant has been offered the unit. While there is no specific subsidy tied to these units, accepted applicants do have a preference for an HCV voucher.

Maple Court Town Homes (MPHA and City of Moorhead)

Maple Court Townhomes is owned by the City of Moorhead and the MPHA. MPHA/ Clay HRA manage all the units. This property utilizes on-site caretakers. As of February 1, there are two vacancies. Applications for the openings are being processed.

OUT OF STATE TRAVEL FOR DEPUTY & EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

The HRA personnel policy requires Board permission prior to departure for any out-of-state travel. Director Lee is the Vice-President of Member Services for the NAHRO North Central Regional Conference and is to present awards at the annual meeting in Cincinnati at the beginning of May. She is also the co-chair of the Minnesota NAHRO legislative committee. The National NAHRO Washington DC conference is in April. She was able to secure plane tickets for \$400 and \$340.

Deputy Director Bacon also plans to attend the DC conference. At the conference, staff hear directly from HUD Headquarters officials regarding any anticipated changes and clarification on existing policies and procedures. There will be national HUD officials present focused on public housing, repositioning, and other items. Staff requests approval for each staff member to attend each conference.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to approve out of state travel for Director Lee and Deputy Director Bacon. The motions was seconded by Commissioner Lemke.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to adjourn the Regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dillard and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Braseth called the Annual meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

BY-LAWS

The HRA by-laws indicates that any changes to the by-laws may be made only after at least 10 days' written notice is given to the commissioners stating the proposed amendments. The by-laws were presented at the January board meeting.

There were no proposed amendments.

BOARD OFFICERS FOR 2024

The HRA by-laws require that no person serve in the role of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or Secretary for more than two consecutive years.

Based upon HRA custom, the proposed slate of officers would be:

1. Chair – Tia Braseth;
2. Vice Chair – Anthony Dillard;
3. Secretary – Cecil Johnson
4. Treasurer – Greg Lemke; and

There are 2-year term limits for all officer positions except the Treasurer. Chair Braseth is completing the term of former Chair Bakke and Treasurer Lemke is completing the term of former Treasurer Schlofeldt. This will be the initial year of service for all officers.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to approve the slate of officers outlined above. Commissioner Dillard seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

UPCOMING MEETING DATES & TIMES

Board meetings for the coming year are scheduled to be held on the following dates:

February 20, 2024
March 19, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. due to joint meeting with the Clay County Commission
April 18, 2024 (*this is the start of proposed change to the 3rd Thursday*)
May 16, 2024
June 20, 2024
July 18, 2024
August 15, 2024
September 19, 2024
October 17, 2024
November 21, 2024 (*this is the week of Thanksgiving, for your consideration.*)
December 19, 2024
January 16, 2025

Meetings will be held at 9:30 a.m. on the third Thursday of each month beginning in April. Meetings may be cancelled if deemed unnecessary. The annual meeting remained as scheduled for the 3rd Tuesday in February at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Lemke made a motion to approve the meeting dates listed above. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson and it carried unanimously.

LOCATION OF AGENCY BANK ACCOUNTS

The HRA currently has checking accounts, savings accounts, and loans (office building, Fieldcrest Townhomes) located at Bell State Bank & Trust and Northwestern State Bank. The BCOW Rental Assistance account is located at Bremer Bank as are the other MPHA accounts.

The location of Certificates of Deposit is based upon the best available rate at a financial institution located in Clay County at the time of the deposit. A minimum of 3 -5 bank rates are compared prior to making the deposit.

The checking and savings accounts are located at banks which have branches in Dilworth and nearby in Moorhead. The locations are convenient and accessible to the HRA offices. The HRA has positive working relationships with the institutions.

Staff recommends that only one change be made to the location of the bank accounts at this time, but that it be re-evaluated if terms, service, or other conditions change significantly.

The one change requested is to move the BCOW account to Bell Bank to facilitate transfers among accounts.

Commissioner Dillard made a motion to continue using the current locations for agency bank accounts with the exception of the BCOW account. Commissioner Lemke seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO DEPUTY & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ARTICLE IV. SECTION 1 of the HRA by-laws allows the Chairperson with the consent of the Commissioners to delegate authority to the Executive Director and Deputy Director to execute all documents, contracts, and instruments on behalf of the Authority.

ARTICLE IV. SECTION 2 of the HRA by-laws allows the Secretary to delegate authority to the Executive Director to maintain and keep records and the Seal of the Authority.

ARTICLE VI. SECTION 3 of the HRA by-laws allows the Chairperson to designate a petty cash fund, not to exceed \$100 to be maintained by the Executive Director and disbursed by the Executive Director without prior approval of the Commissioners.

The Board of Commissioners recommended that this be done each year at the Annual Meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson to approve delegation of authority to the Executive Director and Deputy Director. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dillard and carried unanimously.

**ANNUAL REVIEW OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN ACCORDANCE
WITH CORE VALUES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS & CONFLICT
DISCLOSURE**

HUD requires that every grant recipient have a plan in place to make sure that all Board members and staff are aware of our code of conduct. The Board has adopted the “Conducting Business in Accordance with Core Values and Ethical Standards” as its code of conduct. Staff has informed HUD that the Board will review the code of conduct at each annual meeting.

The Code of Conduct was distributed and reviewed. The annual disclosure forms were reviewed and completed. The board signed the forms and returned to staff.

Commissioner Lemke made a motion to adjourn the Annual meeting and re-open the Regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnson and carried unanimously.

OTHER:

No additional items.

10:38 A.M. MEETING ADJOURNED:

Commissioner Johnson moved to adjourn the Regular meeting at 10:38 a.m. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Commissioner Lemke and carried unanimously.


Cecil Johnson, Secretary

4-18-24
Date