

HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLAY COUNTY
Regular Meeting of May 15, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tia Braseth, Anthony Dillard, Bethany Peterson, Cecil Johnson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Greg Lemke, Commission Liaison, Paul Krabbenhoft

STAFF PRESENT:

Dara Lee, Dawn Bacon, Jill Cossette

9:35 A.M. REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

AGENDA:

Commissioner Dillard made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Peterson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 24, 2025, MEETINGS:

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve April 24, 2025, regular and annual meeting minutes. Commissioner Dillard seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

None

TREASURER REPORT:

Director Lee reviewed the budgets through April.

Commissioner Dillard made a motion to accept and file the Treasurer's report. Commissioner Peterson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

PROJECT UPDATES:

Director Lee provided project updates.

Houge Estates

Houge Estates is a 60-unit building for people who are elderly or disabled. There is approximately \$730,000 mortgage on the property. The HUD subsidy contract is scheduled for renewal in 2026. Staff are exploring options regarding re-financing the loan and terminating the HUD contract with assistance replaced with Housing Choice Vouchers. The Houge Estates Service Coordinator grant will need to be considered as well.

As of May 1, there were 4 vacant units, one upcoming move-in, and one upcoming vacancy. Staff are processing three applications for the remaining openings. The waiting list re-opened on October 1, 2024, and closed February 14, 2025. There are 59 applicants on the waiting list.

A service coordinator is present at the property full-time.

Agassiz Apartments

Agassiz Apartments is a 12-unit apartment building for people who are elderly or disabled. The HUD subsidy contract on this property is scheduled for renewal on October 1, 2025. To keep all options open, staff held a meeting and gave tenants a one-year notice of subsidy cancellation. A second cancellation notification will be given to tenants on May 13. The rental assistance team will accompany property management to a tenant meeting that day to discuss the Housing Choice Voucher program. This cancellation can be revoked at ANY time prior to September 30 of next year.

As of May 1, there are two vacancies, one due to an eviction and one due to a resident moving to a nursing home. There are two applications being processed, and two more are being contacted. The waiting list is re-opened February 20, 2025, and there are nine households on the one-bedroom waiting list.

Clay County Affordable Housing LLC/Boyer Apartments

The Clay County Affordable Housing units are in Dilworth, Ulen, and Hawley; and the Boyer Apartments in Moorhead. The CCAH units are composed of twelve duplexes located in neighborhood settings. The Boyer Apartments are two 4-unit buildings that are next to each other and have a total of six 2-bedroom units and two 1-bedroom units.

As of May 1, there are no vacant units. There are two pending lease terminations for May 31 and one upcoming transfer to a Moorhead Affordable Housing unit. There are 10 people on the waiting list. The waiting list only opens when there are vacancies.

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

Fieldcrest Townhomes consists of forty 2 and 3-bedroom units. All units are subsidized. The development was rehabilitated in 2023.

As of May 1, there is one vacant unit. The unit is ready for occupancy and an application is being processed. Six additional households were contacted for the opening but were non-responsive.

There are 182 households on the waiting list, which was open from October 1, 2024, to January 2, 2025.

Gateway Gardens

Gateway Gardens is a 24-unit permanent supportive housing apartment building. It also has a front desk that is always staffed. The HRA has staff at the front desk from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day. From 8 p.m. to 8 a.m., security company staff are at the front desk. The security company monitors the cameras for Gateway Gardens, River View Heights, Houge Estates, Agassiz Apartments, and Fieldcrest Townhomes. Effective May 5, HRA staff are providing the on-site supportive services to the tenants.

SAHA funds were received from Moorhead to update the Gateway Gardens security system which is complete. The 2025 budget included \$75,000 in repurposed SAHA funds and tax levy funds to support building operations.

As of May 1, there are 5 vacancies, and one move-out for the end of May. Potential tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list. Interested people are at various stages in the application process.

Prairie Horizons Townhomes

Prairie Horizons Townhomes are eight townhome permanent supportive housing units for families located in south Moorhead, across from Fieldcrest Townhomes. Supportive services are provided and funded through the HRA Cares program.

As of May 1, there are two vacancies. Tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list, so a waiting list is not kept.

River View Heights (Moorhead Public Housing Agency)

River View Heights is a 14-story apartment building with 104 units.

There are currently 11 vacancies and 4 upcoming vacancies due to evictions and lease terminations. HUD has approved all vacant units to remain vacant to use for temporary relocation of residents to make repairs following a kitchen fire on the 13th floor that activated a sprinkler head and caused significant damage.

There are currently 187 people on the public housing waiting list which is shared with Sharp View. It closed on October 30, 2024.

Sharp View (MPHA)

Sharp View Apartments is a two-story, 47-unit apartment building designated for seniors aged 62 and over.

As of May 1, Sharp View has 7 vacancies which will remain vacant due to the upcoming rehabilitation. The waiting list is shared with the River View Heights waiting list.

The development received \$1.4 million in bond funding to complete significant updates to the building's plumbing system as well as kitchen and bathroom cabinetry. Staff are working with the architect to get all the information needed for the loan closing.

Moorhead Affordable Housing LLC (MPHA)

The Moorhead Affordable Housing LLC consists of 30 units ranging from single family homes, duplexes, and town homes. Most of the units are three bedrooms and primarily house families with children.

As of May 1, there is one vacant unit which is uninhabitable due to destruction from a motor vehicle accident. The tenant from that unit is temporarily staying in another MAH unit.

Maple Court Town Homes (MPHA and City of Moorhead)

Maple Court Townhomes consists of 34 units of two, three, and four-bedroom townhomes. One 17-unit parcel is owned by Moorhead Public Housing Agency and one 17-unit parcel is owned by the City of Moorhead. MPHA/Clay HRA manages all the units. This property uses on-site caretakers.

As of May 1, there is one vacant unit. Five applicants have been contacted for the remaining opening. The waiting list is closed due to over a year's wait.

Housing Choice Vouchers

The Housing Choice Voucher Program consists of 514 "regular" units, 30 VASH units, 3 Foster Youth to Independence units, 5 Housing Stability units, 187 Mainstream units, and 14 Emergency Housing Voucher units.

As of May 1, 2025, there were a total of 700 out of 753 units leased in the Housing Choice Voucher program.

We have the following HCV vouchers available: 18 regular vouchers (11 vouchers have been issued to families who are searching and staff are working with), 7 VASH vouchers (five vouchers have been issued); 1 Stability; and 27 Mainstream vouchers (12 vouchers have been issued and staff are working with 11 households) available to lease. We are working with one other household from another housing authority.

As of May 1, there are no people on our waiting list. In March we contacted all these households to begin processing them for assistance.

We have 63 individuals enrolled in our Family Self-Sufficiency program and have had 79 FSS participants in the past 12 months. We can serve up to 75 households.

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 help households who have a member who has a serious mental illness and is leaving an institution or is currently homeless.

The grant was renewed for 2025 with a significant increase in funding. We plan to serve 35 households per month in 2025. As of May 1, we are serving 21 participants. Eleven vouchers have been issued, and we are working with 22 more people.

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 supportive services. We provide supportive services at the two Prairie Horizons Townhomes developments and in forty-eight scattered-site units. We are authorized to serve sixty-four households with these funds.

The current grant is funded through December 31, 2025. The grant was approved for renewal from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026. We are still waiting for our grant agreement to arrive.

We are currently serving 68 households. Six of these households are still searching for units. Of the 68 households, 56 are in Clay, 3 are in Otter Tail, and 3 are in Douglas Counties, MN; and there are 6 in Fargo, ND. There are 37 singles and 31 families being served. Six of these households currently live at Bright Sky Apartments.

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.

Our current grant is to serve 85 households through September 30, 2025. The 2025-2027 application was submitted December 17.

We are serving 89 households. One additional family has been approved and is waiting to move into their unit. Eight households are searching for units. There are 18 singles and 71 families being served. The grant targets families and youth-headed households. Leased households are from Clay (75) and Douglas (15) Counties. We can serve approximately 100 households per month through the end of the grant term due to lower-than-expected spending at the beginning. Since the grant is ending in September, we will not be processing any new participants until we are informed of funding renewal.

Openings are filled through the coordinated entry process.

Homework Starts with Home

Homework Starts with Home is a 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 took part 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 run by the HRA.

The HRA was funded in each of three rounds of competitive funding. Throughout this time, the

HRA has been the lead agency in a partnership that is working towards ending child homelessness. The first 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.

The current grant term runs from 10/1/2023-9/30/2025. We predicted serving a total of thirty-two households during that time. The renewal application was submitted in January.

As of May 1, we are serving 41 households. Three households are searching for a unit. The program can serve approximately 45 households for the rest of the grant.

Households are from Becker (3), Clay (18), Douglas (4), Pope (1), Otter Tail (13), and Wadena (2) Counties. Homework Starts with Home families also live at Fieldcrest and receive services through CAPLP. They are not included in these totals.

Housing Supports (formerly GRH) in Scattered-Site Units

Housing Supports is a Minnesota-funded program run 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. Twenty-one 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, and provides some of the Rate 2 services. It is an extremely complex program to administer.

As of May 1, a total of 138 households were being served by the Housing Supports program in Clay County. Eighteen of the households reside at Gateway Gardens, 18 at Bright Sky, and 102 in other units throughout the county. Services are provided by the following: 49 by the HRA (18 at Bright Sky Apartments, 18 at Gateway Gardens, and 13 in scattered sites); 13 by CAPLP; 5 by the Presentation Partners in Housing; 3 by LMHC; 4 by Metro Behavioral Health; 10 by the Lotus Center; 42 with Greater Minnesota Community Services; and 11 by CCRI. Fifteen households are searching for units.

Silver Linings is expected to open July 1. The Clay County HRA will provide services to approximately 20 additional households at this location.

The HRA began providing Housing Supports supportive services at Gateway Gardens this month. Two staff members have been added to assist with Gateway and Silver Linings. They begin in mid-May.

Minnesota DHS Community Living Infrastructure Grant

The Community Living Infrastructure Grant 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 distributed to help communities build 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 still be a partner but not be a sub-recipient for the grant. They are interested in participating in the grant renewal.

Funding for the current grant was extended until 6/30/25. The funding for the HRA supports 0.82 FTE. The grant provides funding for administration of the Housing Supports program for Clay County Social Services. DHS monitored the grant on May 6. The on-line visit went well with no issues noted. The results have been impressive with over 600 new units of housing created along with over 600 participants housed through the program since it began.

The Clay County Social Services Director submitted the new grant application on May 8.

Minnesota DHS Housing Stabilization Services

Housing Stabilization Services are a 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. This program is on hold.

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 distributed to the state for Greater Minnesota. DEED then holds annual competitive application rounds to award these funds to non-entitlement communities.

Barnesville

Barnesville requested our services to apply for \$1.2 million from DEED to rehabilitate 21 homes and 13 businesses. Submitted the application in April. Forty-three letters of interest were submitted by homeowners and 25 from local businesses.

Dilworth

The HRA staff is administering a \$922,000 DEED grant for the City of Dilworth. It received funding to rehabilitate 21 homes and 7 businesses. DEED has approved an extension of the grant from September 30, 2024, until September 30, 2025.

To date, 21 homeowner projects are complete; and 2 projects are under construction. There is \$11,274 remaining in this budget line. There are 10 applicants on the waiting list who will not

receive assistance.

The grant funded the rehabilitation of 7 commercial properties. Nine applications were received. Only 5 of the applicants decided to follow-through. Four projects are complete, and one is under construction. Three additional business owners are in discussions and/or have submitted applications for funding. There are sufficient funds to fully fund all three projects.

RLP (Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program)

The Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is funded by the state. The program has received a number of applications, but little follow through. One home is under construction; three are bidding; and three are in the eligibility stage.

UPDATES TO HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER ADMINISTRATIVE PLAN

HUD has been in the process of implementing changes due to the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) since the Obama administration. Some of the provisions are going into place on July 1.

As a result, the HRA must make updates to its Administrative Plan effective for July 1. Those changes include mandatory changes of Definitions and Income Exclusions.

Staff recommended a slight modification to one preference and adding a new Housing Choice Voucher preference.

The modification to the existing preference for people receiving time-limited or permanent supportive housing rental assistance is to change agencies on the website to Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP). CAPLP is currently the only other agency that can make these referrals and the change provides clarity.

The additional preference primarily will apply to households who will participate in the new Bring It Home rental assistance program. The HRA may use a shared waiting list with the HCV program. The preference also could be used for openings in the HCV program.

It is called a “lease-in-place” preference that has been used by other housing authorities to quickly utilize vouchers in their service areas. Households who can remain in their existing units are eligible for this preference.

Changing the 10-point preference to be:

The PHA will offer a ten (10) point preference to families who participate in a program of Clay County HRA or CAPLP who are currently receiving time limited rental assistance, but will be terminated from said assistance within 6 months due to reaching the program’s time limit or, to families who are currently participating in a permanent supportive housing program who, based upon a standardized assessment, are determined to no longer require permanent supportive housing.

The PHA will offer a two (2) point preference to families with children 18 years old or younger who are currently leasing a rental unit in Clay County that meets HCV requirements and who agrees to lease in place.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dillard to approve the changes to the preferences for the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

APPOINTMENT OF APPROVING OFFICIAL FOR HUD eLOCCS


Previously Commissioner Bakke held this position.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dillard to approve Commissioner Braseth as the Approving Official for Executive Director, Dara A. Lee for HUD eLOCCS System. Commissioner Peterson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

UPDATES AND OTHER

- a. **Commissioner Opening-** We have received one application. Board direction to continue efforts to recruit for the position, with a focus on Glyndon/Dilworth representation.
- b. **Need for 2026 HRA Levy-** We will not be requesting an increase.
- c. **Updates on federal and state budget impacts-**
- d. **Lease termination at Family Service Center-** We are working on relocating the Rental Assistance Team to the Dilworth office along with some additional moves. The office may need to be closed at times for a week or two.
- e. **Updates on Bright Sky and Silver Linings-**
- f. **Staffing Updates-** Rhianna Eystad has been hired as a Rental Assistance Specialist. Her start date will be in June.
- g. **Executive Director Sabbatical-**The Executive Director, Dara A. Lee will be on sabbatical leave from May 19, 2025, through August 8, 2025.
- h. **Other-NA**

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:35 A.M.



Cecil Johnson, Commissioner on behalf of
Bethany Peterson, Secretary

7-17-25
Date