

# WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY MINUTES

Tuesday, April 29, 2014

Marian Manor

3:00 P.M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mike Norton, Chairman  
Rebecca Hackett, Vice Chairman  
Scott Waterworth  
Tina Beahm  
Frank Frassetto

STAFF PRESENT: Susan van Houwelingen, Executive Director  
Lee Franzen, Operations Manager  
Kim Lynch, Executive Assistant  
LuAnn DeBruin-Ziebell, Accountant  
Anne Ruby, Public Housing Compliance Manager  
Diana Madison, Multi-Family Compliance Manager

OTHERS PRESENT: None

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- 1.) Chairman Norton called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.
  - 2.) Chairman Norton directed the Commissioners to review the minutes of the regularly scheduled Board Meeting held on March 25, 2014. There being no questions or comments, Mr. Frassetto moved, seconded by Mr. Waterworth, to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2014 meeting as presented. Motion carried 5-0.
  - 3.) **Finance –**
    - a.) **Accounts Payable Report**

Chairman Norton inquired if there were any questions pertaining to the March accounts payable report. Ms. van Houwelingen noted that the personal identifying information such as tenant names was removed from the report to protect confidentiality. Questions regarding the payments were addressed. Winnebago County Landfill charges are paid to the Winnebago County Treasurer. The Authority has an account at the landfill and is billed monthly for any charges incurred. The payment in the amount of \$110,254.69 to the Winnebago County Treasurer is the annual payment on the River Cities Redevelopment loan from Winnebago County.
    - b.) **Check Signing Public Housing**

Ms. van Houwelingen stated that all of the LLC's have their own separate checking accounts and only one signature is required on those checks. HUD rules state that public housing accounts require a minimum of two signatures on checks. Though they are not illegal, the Auditors prefer that the Authority not use a check signing machine any more due to the increased opportunities for fraud. Check processing options are being explored and new public housing checks with two signature lines are being ordered for the public housing accounts. Elections of Board Officers are scheduled for the May Board meeting. The two commissioners elected as Chairmen of each the Oshkosh and the Winnebago

County Housing Authority Boards will likely be added as additional signatories on the accounts at that time.

4.) **Report of the Executive Director**

**a.) Quarterly Occupancy Report**

Mr. Franzen reviewed the Quarterly Occupancy Report and responded to questions. This report covers the first quarter of 2014, January through March. The last column, Occupancy Rate Based on Days, is the one used most. Franzen and van Houwelingen explained the difference in the occupancy rate for days verses months. At Mainview there were four vacant units ready for occupancy and applications are being reviewed. Twenty-four units were offline for modernization. The Menasha 40 units have some vacancies due to rehab. This report contains more detailed information than in the past.

**b.) Public Housing Flat Rent Change**

Ms. van Houwelingen stated there will be a resolution later in the meeting regarding the flat rent changes. New HUD guidelines came out stating that flat rent cannot be less than 80% of Fair Market Rent (FMR). Upon review of the Authority's Flat Rent Schedule, no change is needed to the flat rent amounts for the efficiencies, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units. However, increases need to be made for the 3 – 5 bedroom units to comply with HUD's guidelines. The rent increases will become effective for a tenant at their next annual re-exam. Flat rent increases are capped at no more than a 35% increase. So, the rent increases will be implemented over a two year period. The number of tenants currently on flat rent is minimal. Tenants will have the option to go off flat rent if 30% of their income calculates a rent to be lower than the new flat rent amount. Franzen & van Houwelingen responded to questions regarding the flat rent process.

**c.) Scattered Sites**

• **Rehab Update**

Ms. van Houwelingen reported that the Authority was not awarded any tax credits for the Cumberland Court application that was submitted. Remaining options are being discussed. The FAST crew was scheduled to work on the Cumberland Court renovations, but because the tax credits were not awarded and the renovations there are on hold, the FAST crew will be working more on the Menasha 40 renovations.

• **REAC Inspection Update**

Ms. van Houwelingen stated there was one exigent health and safety finding involving a window at one of the family units. There was a window that wouldn't stay up when opened. The problem was promptly mitigated. The REAC score for the Winnebago County Family Units has not been posted yet. There were also some point deductions for sidewalks issues.

**d.) Housing Choice Voucher Program Update**

• **No Funding for April**

Ms. van Houwelingen reported that because HUD wants the Authority to spend down any reserve money, no HAP funding was received for April. The Authority had about \$145,000 in the reserve account of which \$110,000 was used to pay April HAP payments to landlords. Ms. van Houwelingen reviewed how funding is calculated and responded to questions regarding the Section 8 Program. The Authority's current software has a module available for an annual fee of \$250 per year that would allow

landlords to go online to check detail for their monthly payments. Landlords would not be logging into our system. Payment information would be uploaded to a different location which landlords would log into using a user specific ID and password. This would eliminate the need for substantial staff time used to field question from landlords regarding their payment detail.

**e.) Assisted Housing**

- **Foxview Manor Garage Update – Financing Options**

Ms. van Houwelingen is looking at financing the Fox View garages. More funds will likely be needed than the \$124,000 set aside. Ms. van Houwelingen will work with the City of Omro and the owner of the house adjacent to the property to get the garage project moving.

**f.) Home Buyer Program Update**

Ms. van Houwelingen stated that program income of \$8,000 came in last month due to the sale of a home purchased with Home Buyer money. The funds will go back into the program to help other new home buyers. Another payoff verification request has been received which will probably net \$4,000 in program funds.

**g.) Agency Matters**

- **Compliance Dept. – Employee Presentation, Diana Madison & Anne Ruby**  
Ms. van Houwelingen introduced Anne Ruby and Diana Madison. Diana is the Compliance Supervisor for the Multi-Family Housing Programs and Anne is the Compliance Supervisor for the Public Housing Programs.

Diana explained that she inputs all of the applications into the computer and reviews the criminal history and debts owed to other Housing Authorities information for all applicants. Diana sends out initial rejection letters when an applicant has a criminal history issue or owes money to another Housing Authority. Diana sends out verifications for annual re-certifications and new applicant for multi-housing clients. Diana also processes files and the monthly HAP funding request for Willow Housing. Submission via the TRACS System for the monthly HAP (Housing Assistance Payment) requests for Marian Manor, Foxview, Riverside and Cumberland Court and keeping the income limit chart current are other tasks Diana performs. Since Masterson's retirement, Diana has also become one of the Authority's two Hearing Officers. Diana is also responsible for monthly report to HUD, HOME, and WHEDA.

Since being hired in July 2000, Diana estimates she has input in excess of 10,000 applications. Diana estimates that putting new applications in the computer comprises about 30% of her work. She has also been a Property Manager at Marian Manor and Cumberland Court as well as a Manager for the Section 8 Program. Some of Diana's frustrations stem from trying to decipher some of the handwriting on the applications, software inadequacies, and not being able to give applicants more of the help they need when they need it.

Anne distributed a copy of two checklists that are used to help track all of the different verifications that need to be done. One checklist is used for processing new applicants for admission to a program. The other is used for the annual recertification of current participants. These checklists give the commissioners an idea of the amount of work necessary to process new applicants and ongoing participants. Anne has been with

the Housing Authority for about 7 years. Prior to working for the Authority, Anne worked at the Fox Cities Magazine. Before that she was a student at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh where she earned the Chancellor's Award of Excellence. Anne estimates that her department processes about 27 annual re-certifications and 25 new applicant files a month. It can take anywhere from 5 – 15 hours of processing time per file depending on what issues come up during processing. Anne also assists the Property Managers with filling their vacancies, reviewing applicant files and makes recommendations, runs EIV reports and inputs verified information into the computer. Anne has been a property manager at the Authority and also served as the relocation specialist during the Court Tower renovation process.

One frustration is the fact that only 15% of Section 8 applicants and 30% of public housing applicants end up being housed. Applicants do not end up housed for many different reasons such as no longer being interested in the program, not being income eligible or not following through with the process. Other frustrations include clients not reporting income on a timely basis and periodic issues with the computer software program. Calculating retroactive rent due to unreported income is a very time consuming task. Ms. van Houwelingen, Anne and Diana responded to questions from the commissioners.

Ms. van Houwelingen noted that both Anne and Diana are employees who have always stepped up when needed and whose input and opinions are highly valued.

- Present Matrix Example for Executive Director Evaluation

Ms. van Houwelingen thanked commissioner Frassetto for his time and effort putting the evaluation matrix information together. Now the two board chairmen need to decide on a day and time that they and another member from each board can get together with van Houwelingen to work on the evaluation criteria and a schedule for possible step increases for the Executive Director position. Ms. van Houwelingen stated that she learned from John Finger, HUD Milwaukee, there are also some other performance evaluation forms specifically for Executive Directors of public housing that could be used. Ms. van Houwelingen will locate those to review as well.

- Computer Updates

Ms. van Houwelingen stated that the computer upgrades are ongoing. The new servers have been installed and the licenses updated. Old computers are being replaced one by one starting with the oldest and most problematic work stations. Where possible the older work stations are being refurbished for use as extra work stations for interns and for the application kiosk in the front reception area. The total cost for the upgrades and new licenses will be about \$20,000.

- Planning for Five Year Plan

Ms. van Houwelingen stated that she and Mr. Franzen are starting to work on the five year plan and intend to have it ready for board review in July. The five year plan will require a 45 day comment period and public hearing. The Plan must be submitted to HUD by October 15, 2014. There has been talk that HUD will require a Green Physical Needs Assessment (GPNA) as part of the five year plan. This assessment is quite lengthy and complicated. It is also quite expensive to hire an outside firm to conduct the assessment. HUD states that an Authority can use its capital fund money to pay for the assessment, but that would use a large chunk of funds which have been slated for other items.

- **Employee Termination**

Ms. van Houwelingen stated a General Laborer was terminated because she did not show up for work and did not notify her supervisor as required. This employee has had other issues in the past for which a 3-day and a 5-day suspension were given. Ms. van Houwelingen explained that the Authority is a "pay as you go" agency for the purposes of unemployment and responded to questions. The Authority is currently advertising on Job Center of Wisconsin (JobNet) to fill the position as well as soliciting for Section 3 applicants.

5.) **Resolution 636-14: Adopt Revised Flat Rent Schedule Effective June 1, 2014**

Ms. van Houwelingen summarized the resolution stating this resolution approves changes to the flat rent schedule to maintain compliance with new HUD guidelines and was discussed earlier in the meeting. Franzen stated that of the 86 family units that fall under the flat rent schedule, 13 are on flat rent. A tenant is only allowed to switch on or off of flat rent one timer per year. After additional questions were addressed, Ms. Hackett moved, seconded by Mr. Frassetto to approve Resolution 636-14. Motion was carried 5-0.

6.) **Discussion**

Chairman Norton shared that van Houwelingen received a compliment from Lu Scheer of Advocap in Fond du lac. The topic of landlords who participate in the Section 8 Program and owe back taxes was again discussed. Ms. van Houwelingen said she is willing to consider options, but stressed again that she is hesitant to do anything that will have negative consequences for Section 8 clients themselves. Various questions from the commissioners were addressed. There are no commissioner terms due to expire this year. Annual elections for Chairman and Vice Chairman will be at the next meeting on May 20, 2014.

7.) **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, Chairman Norton called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Frassetto moved, seconded by Mr. Waterworth to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan van Houwelingen  
Executive Director  
Winnebago County Housing Authority

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APPROVED