

**Brainerd Housing and Redevelopment Authority  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
March 23, 2016**

The March meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) in and for the City of Brainerd, Minnesota, was held at 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 23, 2016, at the Brainerd HRA Administrative Office, 324 East River Road, in Brainerd, Minnesota.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Fargo called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.
  
2. **ROLL CALL:** Present at the meeting were Chair Rick Fargo, Commissioners Nathan Steffenson, Dale Parks, Gabe Johnson, Patrick Wussow, Marlee Larson, and Eric Charpentier. Also present were Executive Director Jennifer Bergman, Finance Director Karen Young, Housing Manager Teresa Hettver, Rental Assistance Manager Tania Eller, and Executive Assistant LeAnn Goltz; Amy Gray and Mike Angland with Brainerd Restoration.
  
3. **PRESENTATION - BRAINERD RESTORATION:** Amy Gray, Brainerd Restoration President, gave a presentation to the Board. She provided an overview of the non-profit organization and its recent initiatives. Gray and Angland shared information about current projects including new bike racks in various locations throughout Downtown Brainerd. Gray also asked the Board to spread the word that they are seeking new board members who are passionate about Downtown Brainerd.
  
4. **READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**  
  
**Commissioner Parks made a motion to approve the minutes from February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The minutes were approved.**
  
5. **STAFF INTRODUCTIONS:** The Board had previously requested to be introduced to staff so they can become familiar with the positions and each employee’s role within the organization.
  - a. Lindsay Smude, Rental Assistance Specialist: 15 years with the HRA, works in Section 8 and helps Dennis Christenson in the rehab programs.
  - b. Tania Eller, Rental Assistance Manager: 13 years with the HRA, started in FSS, took on homeownership program and IT, and has been rental assistance manager for the past eight months.
  
6. **BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**
  - a. **Financial Report:** Young reported that the auditors from CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) will be at the April board meeting to present the agency audit. Initially, they were scheduled to present at the March meeting but delayed it until the April meeting to allow time to finalize the audit. Young just received the audit draft this week.

The unaudited financial information for the Brainerd HRA is due to the Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) by April 15<sup>th</sup> and Brainerd South by March 31<sup>st</sup>.



The Brainerd South compilation was completed by CLA. There were no findings or adjustments made during the compilation.

The Crow Wing County (CWC) HRA audit was also finalized by CLA. The Independent Auditors' Report expressed a clean audit with no findings or misstatements. CLA will present the audit to the CWC HRA Board at their April meeting.

Young also reported that the HRA received a tax claim for Valley View of \$906 for sales tax paid on construction materials and supplies used on the buildings over the prior 3.5 years.

The Board raised a question regarding the increase in legal fees for Public Housing. Hettver explained that staff underestimated the cost of legal fees as filing fees had not been included in the amount budgeted. That amount needed to be increased by approximately \$2,000.

**Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve the payments as presented. Commissioner Parks seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion passed.**

- b. **HCV Report:** Eller presented the Housing Choice Voucher Report to the Board. For the month of February, there were 320 vouchers allocated.

At the last meeting, the Board had requested Eller look into the HRA's policy for opening and closing the Housing Choice Voucher waiting list. She reported that the language in the Administrative Plan does not require Board approval to open or close the waiting list. The PHA may close the waiting list when the estimated waiting period for housing assistance for applicants on the list reaches 24 months for the most current applicants. In addition, the HRA will announce the reopening of the waiting list via public notice in the Brainerd Dispatch. If the list is only being reopened for certain categories of families, this information will be contained in the notice.

Eller reported that the 18% HAP utilization was based on proposed funds, but we've since received final numbers, which lowered it to 17%.

This year's Set Aside Funding Application was recently released. Eller will be submitting the application, which is due April 15<sup>th</sup>.

Eller informed the Board that the FSS Grant Applications were just released and are due April 20<sup>th</sup>. She said the HRA would like to apply again for this full-time position and asked for Board authorization to submit the application.

**Commissioner Wussow made a motion to authorize the submission of the FSS Grant Application. Commissioner Steffenson seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor and none were opposed. The motion was approved.**

Beginning next month, Eller will include an update on the Bridges program in her memo to the Board. Currently, there are five on the program. She also reported that Carrie Burrell has been doing an amazing job in her position.

- c. Public Housing Report:** Hettver provided the Board with the vacancy report and property management report for February. She also reported that maintenance staff began the process of annual public housing property inspections. They have completed Scattered Sites and are currently working on the North Star Apartments. Valley Trail will be inspected the week of April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Hettver and Segler will be attending the MHA Working Together Conference in Brooklyn Center on April 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>.

The process of preparing the final documentation required to close on the construction loan for the North Star Apartments Elevator Modernization is nearly complete. Minnesota Housing informed us that we will be notified of the closing date in the next two weeks.

Hettver reported that she received notification that the HRA was not awarded the ROSS Grant. She also shared that the four-bedroom waiting list will be opening up, which makes all waitlisting lists currently open.

The Board had a discussion about bed bugs and if there have been any recent issues. Hettver said they have one tenant who's had repeated problems with them due to not having the financial means to properly treat his/her belongings in the dryer. She informed them we may need to revise our policy on bedbugs.

**d. Executive Director Report:**

Bergman shared the session schedule for Minnesota NAHRO's Spring Conference, which will be held at Madden's from May 25–27<sup>th</sup>. She also informed the Board that she will be giving a tour of redevelopment projects in Brainerd including the Riverfront project, Downtown Brainerd, Northern Pacific Center, and the Brainerd Industrial Center.

The HRA closed on the purchase of 728 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE on February 25<sup>th</sup>. A hazardous material inspection is required to identify asbestos prior to demolition, which will be conducted late this month or early April. We will prepare a RFP for demolition contractors and then request the Board to authorize the demolition contract at the April board meeting.

Bergman reported that Brainerd Industrial Center (BIC) Mike Higgins asked if the HRA had any programs that could assist him in the redevelopment of BIC. She had recommended he talk to staff from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), ultimately leading to a meeting with two of their staff, Mike Higgins, Sheila Haverkamp, and Bergman on March 3<sup>rd</sup>. At the meeting, Higgins outlined his plan for the BIC and the staff from DEED described two programs that may fit: Clean Up Grant and the Redevelopment Grant.

The HCP Housing Task Force met on March 18<sup>th</sup>. The group will be surveying NE Brainerd to identify houses for the Scattered Site Replacement Program as well as consider NE Brainerd for a 2017 SCDP application. The next meeting is scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>.

Bergman informed the Board that she made a guest appearance on "Community Corner," a local access television show. Amy Gray of Brainerd Restoration and Bergman discussed recent efforts of improving Downtown Brainerd including the Housing Institute, Small Cities grants, and one-on-one discussions and surveys of Downtown property/business owners. In addition, Bergman was asked to write an article on housing for the June edition of "Her Voice."



Bergman also reported that she will be visiting Washington DC in April and has meetings scheduled with staff members of Senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken, as well as Congressman Rick Nolan.

Commissioner Steffenson requested to have a sign displayed in the lobby while board meetings are in progress so that the public knows all are welcome to attend. Commissioner Wussow also notified the Board that he recently learned through the League of Minnesota Cities that public officials attending training and not conducting business are not subject to the Open Meeting Law.

**7. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:**

- a. **NAHRO Commissioners Committee:** Nothing to report.
- b. **Mississippi Riverfront Sub-Committee:** The next subcommittee meeting is March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016, 3:00–5:00 pm. There are a number of items on the agenda including identifying stakeholders to hold one-on-one meetings as well as having a discussion about project naming.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Nothing to report.

**9. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **Adoption of Resolution No. 2016-02 for Amended Retirement Plan:** The IRS requires that defined contribution retirement plan documents be updated periodically and plan documents must be restated to incorporate required amendments and language changes. The Brainerd HRA Retirement Plan Document was amended and restated for any law changes that have occurred since the last restatement and was available for review at the board meeting.

Bergman shared with the Board that she is working with a group who is researching the possibility of getting PERA for housing agencies. They are in the initial stages and have more questions than answers at this point.

**Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve and adopt Resolution No. 2016-02 for an Amended Retirement Plan. Commissioner Parks seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor and none were opposed. The motion was approved.**

- b. **Discussion of 50th Anniversary:** June 6, 2016, marks 50 years since the inception of the Brainerd HRA. One of the action items established in the 2016–2017 Strategic Plan was to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The Board had a discussion about about what might be done. Due to the current elevator modernization project, the Board decided the previously mentioned idea of having an open house at the North Star Apartments was not an option. They agreed that the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building, which will be in 2019, would be a better idea.

Commissioners Fargo and Parks serve on the Brainerd History Week Committee and wanted to know if the HRA would like to be involved in those events, which take place June 16–19, 2016. The Board felt that Downtown Day would be best and discussed the possibility of displaying a



timeline of important events in the HRA's history. They thought an openhouse at the SEH Building might be something to look into. They asked HRA staff to find out and continue with the planning. They will follow up with the committee.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:** Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 27, 2016

**Commissioner Steffenson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:12 p.m. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved and meeting was adjourned.**

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