

Brainerd Housing and Redevelopment Authority
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, July 24, 2019

A regular 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, July 24th, 2019, at the Brainerd HRA Administrative Office, 324 East River Road, in Brainerd, Minnesota.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Marlee Larson called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL:

Board members present: Chair Marlee Larson and Commissioners Eric Charpentier, Patrick Wussow, Bekah Kent, Ashley Storm, and Gabe Johnson. **Others present:** Executive Director Jennifer Bergman, Finance Director Karen Young, and Executive Assistant LeAnn Goltz. **Absent:** Krista Brodal.

3. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Charpentier moved to approve the minutes from May 29th and June 26th. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. Adopt Resolution 2019-05, Contract for Services between the Brainerd Lakes Chamber and the Brainerd HRA: As a public agency, HRAs are not allowed to pay dues to the Chamber of Commerce. However, municipalities have been able to enter into a Contract for Services for services rendered through their local Chambers.

The Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce has spent a considerable amount on revitalization efforts in downtown Brainerd including Destination Downtown and the Small Business Revolution. Since one of the Brainerd HRA's goals is to revitalize downtown Brainerd, Bergman recommended entering into a Contract for Services with the Brainerd Lakes Chamber to support their efforts.

Commissioner Johnson moved to adopt Resolution No. 2019-05 authorizing the Contract for Services between the Brainerd Lakes Chamber of Commerce. Commissioner Kent seconded the motion. Via roll call vote, Commissioners Larson, Charpentier, Kent, Storm, and Johnson voted in favor and Commissioner Wussow opposed of the motion. The motion was approved on a 5:1 vote.

b. Consider Amendment to the Brainerd HRA Bylaws: The Board requested that staff include language in the bylaws regarding attendance requirements. Amended bylaws with the attendance language in Section 3.9 was provided to the Board.

Commissioner Charpentier made a motion to adopt the amended Brainerd HRA Bylaws. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:** Nothing to report.

6. **BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

a. **Financial Report:** Young provided financial information for May and June. The 2019 budgeted levy amount is \$126,895. The HRA received a deposit of \$47,409.55 from Crow Wing County in June. This represented a 70% advance on estimated property tax collections for the first half of 2019. The remaining 30% of \$21,483.50 was received in July for total levy deposits of \$68,893.05.

Commissioner Wussow moved to approve May and June payments as presented. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. All commissioners were in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved.

b. **HCV/Section 8:** HAP utilization through June was 99% and Unit Months Leased was 53%. Eller reported that very year the HRA is required to review its Utility Allowance Schedule. If there is more than a 10 percent change (up or down) from the previous year, the utility schedule must be updated. The results of the 2019 study show electric and propane costs have decreased, while water and sewer costs have increased. The new rates go into effect September 1st.

The waiting list was closed on July 15th.

c. **Public Housing Report:** NAHRO is offering a technical assistance grant for up to \$8,000 for PHAs with nine or fewer staff to assist with evaluating repositioning options. To maximize dollars, the executive directors for Pequot Lakes HRA and Aitkin HRA agreed to collaborate with Crosby HRA in this opportunity. Each agency has completed its own application but has clearly indicated the intent to collaborate. If awarded the technical assistance grants, the three agencies will issue a joint RFP to secure a consultant that will provide agency-specific reports of the potential impacts of each of the three repositioning options. The grant application is due to NAHRO by July 31st

ROSS Program Update

Erik enrolled two new participants in June. One participant secured employment and will be moving out of public housing and into a private rental this month. In June, there were six contacts with individuals that were seeking limited assistance and did not need to fully enroll in the ROSS program. These “on-off” contacts may result in future enrollment, however at the time of contact their needs were brief and did not warrant full program enrollment. New outreach contacts this month include Mid-Minnesota Federal Credit Union, Second Harvest Heartland, and the NAPS (Nutrition Assistance for Seniors) program. If Erik can get enough people signed up for the NAPS program, Second Harvest would be willing to make the North Star Apartments a distribution site for the program.

Public Housing Management Training

Shannon is in Augusta, GA, this week to complete a week-long public housing management training hosted by NAHRO. The training includes the certification test.

d. Executive Director Report:

Destination Downtown

The Launch Party for the third and final Destination Downtown competition was held on Thursday, June 20th at The Lofts (formerly the Downtown Mall). The deadline for submission for Phase I was July 22nd. There were 72 applications received. The judges are meeting on August 1st to will select the top 10 applications.

Construction is in progress at the Knotty Pine Bakery. Their lease starts on Sept. 1st. Staff will have a rent subsidy agreement for the Board's consideration at the August meeting.

Developer and Bergman met with Bremer Bank about possible redevelopment in DT Brainerd. Suggested we find another site for them to relocate their employees while any work or development is done on their building. Developer will do some research. HRA will continue to work with them.

Workforce Housing Study

Redevelopment Resources had their first on-site visit on June 13th and 14th. A kick-off meeting was held with them as well as the first Workforce Housing Task Force meeting. On Friday, June 14th, Bergman and the consultant toured Crow Wing County, which started in downtown Brainerd to Brainerd Oaks, Crosby, Ironton, Crosslake, Breezy Point, Pequot Lakes, Nisswa and Baxter. The consultant is starting to collect data for the study and we anticipate having bi-monthly calls with them and monthly Workforce Housing Task Force meetings. On July 16th, Kristen Fish-Peterson (Redevelopment Resources) met with the Pequot Lakes Economic Development Commission. In addition, the second Workforce Housing Task Force meeting was held on July 18th to review data and discuss the upcoming survey.

Performance Evaluation

Bergman met with Chair Larson to discuss her upcoming performance evaluation. Provided a copy of the performance review form that the Board will use to do the review. Asked the Board to complete the forms and return to Marlee. Bergman suggested the possibility of having a 360 degree evaluation that goes to all staff, but the Board felt it was not necessary.

CWC HRA Funding Discussion

At the July CWC HRA board meeting and at the suggestion of Commissioner Brekken and County Administrator Tim Houle, the Board discussed a potential levy increase to address the workforce housing shortage. The CWC HRA will be holding a special meeting on August 6th to discuss this in more detail and make a recommendation on whether or not to ask for an increase in the HRA's levy, how much, and what the funds will be used for, such as the creation of a Housing Trust Fund.

Bergman shared with the Brainerd HRA Board that if the CWC HRA does agree to requesting a levy increase and creates a housing trust fund, she is concerned about staff's work capacity. They are currently at or above capacity making it necessary to add another full-time employee. The Brainerd HRA Board had a discussion about this. Bergman encouraged them to attend the August 6th meeting and informed them that the CWC HRA regular board meeting was moved from August 13th to August 20th.

e. Rehab Update: An update on the rehab programs was included in the board packet.

7. **Commissioner Comments:** Chair Larson invited the Board to come to the School of Rock Concert. Commissioner Johnson invited the Board to attend the Jaycee's Street Fest this weekend. He also reported that the City of Brainerd has a budget workshop coming up. In addition, Sue Hilgaard has taken a new position out of state and will be relocating, so there's an open council position available.

8. **Adjournment:**

Moved by Commissioner Kent and seconded by Commissioner Charpentier, the meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.