



**Brainerd Housing & Redevelopment Authority
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, July 22, 2020**

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 via Webex video/teleconference at 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, July 22nd, 2020.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Marlee Larson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.
- 2. ROLL CALL:** Board members present via remote video conference include Commissioners Marlee Larson, Patrick Wussow, Bekah Kent, and Gabe Johnson. Interim Executive Director/Finance Director Karen Young, Executive Assistant LeAnn Goltz, Rental Assistance Manager Tania Eller, Housing Manager Shannon Fortune, Rehab Coordinator John Schommer, and Eric Charpentier were also present. Absent: Ashley Storm.
- 3. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Johnson moved to approve the minutes from the meeting on June 24th, 2020. Commissioner Wussow seconded the motion. Through roll call vote, all commissioners were in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved.
- 4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**
 - a. Approval of Implementation of Waivers Authorized by HUD Notice 2020, Rev. 1:** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, HUD provided a number of potential waivers that PHAs could utilize to help reduce some administrative burden and/or creatively continue on with essential activities such as move-ins, recertifications, inspections, and other tasks critical to the daily functioning of the agency. The requirement was that PHAs would seek formal board approval of the waivers they specifically chose to implement no later than July 31st. Since the April meeting, additional guidance was released (Notice PIH 2020-13, Rev-1) that clarified or expanded some waivers while adding some additional options.

A table of the recommended waivers for implementation was provided and reviewed with the Board.

Commissioner Wussow moved to approve the waivers specified in the document provided to the Board. Commissioner Kent seconded the motion. Via roll call vote, all commissioners were in favor and none were opposed. The motion was approved.

The Board asked about the status of resident elections. Fortune reported that they are on hold for the time being as they need to determine how to conduct the election safely. Staff is looking at the possible options and hope to have a plan in place soon.

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

6. **BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

a. **Financial Report:**

General Fund Tax Levy

Reflected in the June General Fund Financial Statements is the deposit of \$43,486.27 in Property Tax Revenue (levy). The second deposit of \$27,648.71 was deposited in July for total deposits of \$71,134.98. The total levy amount for 2020 is \$130,430. The second half property tax settlement will be in December. Collections for the first half settlement seem to be on track for what has been seen historically and do not appear to be significantly affected by the County's tax penalty waiver or COVID-19 related issues.

Preliminary General Fund Budget

For the August meeting next month, staff will have prepared the preliminary General Fund budget to be approved by the Board and then submitted to the City.

CWC HRA Budget

The 2021 budget for CWC HRA will be presented to the CWC HRA Board at their August 11th meeting. Staff is then on the agenda for the CWC Budget Committee meeting on August 13th to present the approved budget to the CWC Commissioners. The CWC HRA Board has directed staff to request \$729,500, the same levy amount as 2020.

Crosby HRA Audit

The Crosby HRA audit fieldwork was completed during the weeks of June 15th and 22nd. The audit was clean with no findings.

Moved by Commissioner Wussow and seconded by Commissioner Johnson for approval of payments as presented. Through roll call vote, all commissioners were in favor and none were opposed. The motion passed.

b. **HCV/Section 8:** The Unit Months Leased (UML) through June was 98% and HAP utilization was 49%.

Bridges Program Report

There are eight families on the program with a monthly HAP payment of \$2,733. Staff has received four referrals and are working on leasing them up.

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program Report

There are currently 29 families on the program. Ten families are currently escrowing in the amount of \$1,714 per month.

Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Program Report

There are two families leased up with a total HAP payment of \$790 per month. Another family will be leased up for July 1st.

- c. Public Housing Report:** Fortune reviewed the Vacancy Report and Property Performance Report for June 2020.

Ongoing COVID-19 Response

A video interface has been installed on the office door to assist with social distancing once the office is able to be reopened to the public, even on a limited basis. All staff wear masks when they are in common spaces or when they are around other staff or tenants. They continue to ask about symptoms and exposure prior to entering units for work orders and proceed wearing personal protective equipment and rescheduling if necessary. Additional cleaning and sanitizing tasks continue, common areas are still closed, and tenant activities have not yet resumed. Move-ins and recertifications have continued without interruption. Staff hopes to begin annual inspections by early fall.

Public Housing Physical Updates

- North Star Second Floor Patio/Walkway Area: the second floor covered patio and the adjoining walkway were given a new seal coat and anti-slip coating.
- North Star Retaining Wall: updates to the east retaining wall, including redoing the sidewalk area, is the next project to kick off at the North Star.

Brainerd South

With the rains that have occurred over the past several weeks, there have been water issues in a few of the units in both buildings. Because this has been an on-going issue over the years when heavy rains have occurred, an excavator was hired to remove the ground around the buildings to investigate the cause of the problem. Staff is working with the excavator to remedy the problem and during this process, tenants have been displaced.

ROSS Program Updates

- Erik currently has 12 active participants in the ROSS program and has had contact with six new non-enrolled participants for more limited resource/referral work.
- There are still no educational/enrichment events on the calendar at this time and none in the planning stages. Similarly, new outreach has been difficult as many community resources and service providers have limited or irregular availability.
- Erik spent time this past month participating in training on civil rights specific to provision of the NAPS program. He has also been in contact with the Tenant Activities Coordinator to assist her in launching the NAPS program at the Crosby HRA.
- The Senior Nutrition Assistance program had 29 residents participating this past month. Still no nutrition seminars and deliveries continue to be made directly to the apartments to prevent tenants from congregating.
- Facebook Stats: Erik made eight new posts on the ROSS Facebook page this past month, which focused on food resources, simple quarantine-friendly exercises, Wide Open School (free education materials for kids), scams targeting new unemployment recipients, and information shared from the Brainerd Lakes Area Drug Education group. These posts reached a total of 25 people.
 - » He will be creating a series of physical flyer postings (bulletin boards, apartment doors, mailers, etc.) to try to drive up traffic on the ROSS Facebook page.

d. Executive Director Report:Executive Director Search

On July 7th, a denial was received for the waiver request to HUD regarding the conflict of interest in the consideration of former board member, Eric Charpentier, as the next Executive Director. With the assistance of Attorney Rod Solomon in Washington DC, an appeal with a request for a conference call was submitted by Board Chair Larson on July 15th to HUD. Staff received word today that HUD staff has indicated a conference call would not be necessary and that they would get back to us within the next week or two. Solomon suggested requesting assistance from our congressman. The Board concurred and advised staff to reach out to Rep. Stauber and Senators Klobuchar and Smith.

CWC HRA Board

Commissioner Koering appointed Richard (George) Burton to fill the vacancy on the CWC HRA Board.

Request for Technical Assistance (RFTA)

Staff submitted a RFTA to Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP) on behalf of CWC HRA in mid-April. The application focused on current CWC HRA initiatives as related to the Work Force Housing Study, creation of a Housing Trust Fund and the affordable housing shortage in CWC. Staff had a follow-up call this morning and were informed of their selection for the grant. MHP will develop a MOU, work plan, and budget that will be brought before the CWC Board for their approval.

COVID Assistance Housing Program (CHAP)

HRA staff participated in a webinar to learn about the new program. After finding out that LSS was not going to submit an application as originally planned, staff was prepared to apply instead. However, after further review with LSS and learning that a similar program offered in the county is underutilized with available funds, staff decided to forgo the application at this time.

e. Rehab Update: An update on the current rehab projects was provided to the Board.SCDP Preliminary Proposal

Staff will be working with the City of Garrison to submit a SCDP preliminary proposal this fall. It will be for single-family owner-occupied and commercial rehab.

FHLB

An application was submitted in May. Funding awards to be announced in December.

Workforce Housing Study and Housing Trust Fund

Schommer was invited to present on the Workforce Housing Study and Housing Trust Fund at BLAEDC's quarterly meeting that was held on Tuesday, July 14th. There were approximately 35 people that attended the Zoom meeting including many community leaders and business professionals. Several requests for copies of the slideshow were requested. Schommer also presented to the Crosslake/Pequot Lakes EDC on Tuesday, July 21st and was invited to present to a group of loan officers at Riverwood Bank.

7. **Commissioner Comments:** Commissioner Wussow thanked staff for their hard work. Commissioner Johnson reported that the City of Brainerd received a clean 2019 audit with no findings. Chair Larson discussed the need to fill the vacant seats on the board. She also expressed her support for returning to in-person board meetings as soon as able. The Board had a discussion regarding future meetings and was split on preference so they decided to continue with Webex meetings at this time.

Chair Larson made a motion to provide additional compensation of \$25 per hour for Interim Executive Director Karen Young, seconded by Commissioner Wussow. Through a roll call vote, all commissioners were in favor and none were opposed. The motion was approved.

8. **Adjournment:**

Moved by Commissioner Johnson and seconded by Commissioner Kent to adjourn the meeting at 1:53 p.m. All commissioners voted in favor of the motion and none were opposed. The motion was approved.

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