



**HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes – August 9, 2023
In person at Planning Office
and via Zoom**

Call to Order: Chair Schulz called the meeting of the Housing Authority of Rock County to order at 10:02 AM on Wednesday, August 9, 2023.

Member present in person: Chair Supervisor Kathy Schulz, Billy Bob Grahm, and Katie Udell

Members present via ZOOM: Bill Wilson

Members Excused: Michelle Ponkauskas

Rock County Staff present: Ilana Eisenberg (Office Coordinator) and Andrew Baker (Planning Director)

Others Present: Alexis Camacho-Stedman (Legal Action) and Todd Mandel (WPHD)

Others Present via ZOOM: Aaron Stroede (Legal Action)

Adopt Agenda: Mr. Grahm made a motion to approve. Ms. Udell seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Approval of Minutes from Meeting Held July 12, 2023: Mr. Grahm made a motion to approve. Ms. Udell seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: None

Update from Legal Action Staff Related to Assistance in Rock County:

Alexis Camacho-Stedman and Aaron Stroede with Legal Action were a part of the Housing Authority meeting today. The last time we had an update from Legal Action was in March 2023. They aid in tenant issues by providing representation at court hearings that pertain to evictions. There has been an uptick in the number of evictions with there being 45 new cases presently. There are approximately 30 eviction cases per week. It is up to the court commissioner to accept the legal defense that is offered to give the tenant more time by postponing the case by a week or even two. In Rock County, these

types of proceedings move quickly compared to other counties within the state of Wisconsin. Many tenants are unaware that they even have the opportunity or right to take their eviction issue to trial and lose out due to the short timeframe. Legal Action is trying to make this fact known to those tenants that can benefit from this information. There was a question about a backlog under the previous program. Mr. Stroede explained that serial eviction filing is a common occurrence. It was sent over from the prior return rate hearing. There was questioning if evictions will taper off due to the Moratorium. Mr. Stroede explained that it could stay the same or close to the present rate. Ms. Camacho-Stedman mentioned that there was an increase in the spring which was the time that the program ended. Landlords are beginning to file eviction documents with reasoning of non-payment or non-renewal as the justification. Legal Action is trying to make their presence known by conducting more presentation and discussing issues that are commonplace. Even if the eviction case is dismissed, it can remain on a person's record for 2 years. United Way might be an excellent ally to provide information to the community. Legal Action can be found at ECHO Monday through Wednesday from 9 AM to Noon. They are considering creating appointment slots to answer questions or concerns that may occur to tenants. Director Baker will be checking as to the status of the proposed rule changes sent to the court from the eviction work group that met in the last couple years. CCAP can be used to find future eviction court dates as they are uploaded every Wednesday. This would be an effective way to discover trends based on data of evictions as it is quite difficult to find results from prior dates. Jennifer Petruzzello, Neighborhood and Community Service Director for Janesville, has been starting to back up the data for evictions and become aware of the court watch data. There are no income restriction to for assistance from Legal Action.

Consideration and Possible Action Regarding a Request to Exceed Maximum Loan Value:



MEMORANDUM

08/07/2023

From: Todd Mandel, WPHD

To: RCHA Board of Directors

Subj: Rehabilitation cap waiver

A project has come up that exceeds the \$35,000 cap for rehab projects and requires a waiver from the RCHA Board to move forward. The project is a rehabilitation project located in rural Edgerton. It is a single-family home that needs extensive rehab work.

The total cost of the rehab work is projected to be \$64,195. The primary work areas include:

- Siding
- Lead Abatement
- Gutters
- Septic repair
- Water damage repair

Of the \$64,195 total, \$22,550 is projected to be lead abatement costs and would be granted. The remaining large ticket items are the siding and septic system.

The program has sufficient funding to cover this project and the project would bring the septic system into compliance and remove the home from the threat of condemnation. There is no option where we can repair only the septic system and ignore the other repairs as the home does not qualify for CDBG assistance and the cost of the septic repairs triggers the requirement to address the lead and other rehab requirements.

WPHD recommends that the Board approve the waiver.

The amount requested is based on bids that were received by contractors willing to do the work on the property. The septic system failed and other work that needs to be conducted. This property does not qualify for CDGB assistance due to the amount of work required. It will be a 0% interest loan and will need to be paid off once the property is sold. Part of the monies will be transferred to the grant program due to the lead work. Additionally, the clients are able to qualify as a 55+ loan which means it is partially forgivable after 5 years of staying in the home. As of the present time, WPHD has 11 projects like this one in the works.

Mr. Grahn made a motion to accept the requested offer with the exceeded amount as requested, motion was seconded by Ms. Udell. APPROVED.

Follow UP Discussion on Developing a County-Wide Housing Strategy:

Supervisor Wilson provided an update on developing a county-wide housing strategy. He thinks that it will be moving forward after the Budget meetings have subsided. This would be giving a new presentation date to Spring 2024. In this time, the housing market has changed substantially. Rock County is outperforming the other counties in this aspect and the housing stock available. It has grown about 12,000 units since the last time data was gathered in 2020-2022. James Otterstein (Economic Development Manager) has provided updated information and data. The Northern tier has been growing where the Southern tier has been on the decline. Currently, the housing prices range at a medium of \$180,000.00 in sales as deemed by the Wisconsin Realtors Association. This has caused an impact on social programs and issues with temporary housing throughout the county. Supervisor Wilson will be scanning the document packet sent by Mr. Otterstein for the other members of the Housing Authority to have access.

Suggestions for Future Meeting Topics:

Ms. Udell mentioned summarizing and discussing the book title "Poverty in America" at one of the Housing Authority meetings within the next 2 to 3 months. There was also a request from various committee members on an update from the consortium. Another request was for James Otterstein to be invited to the next meeting to provide any updates available.

Adjournment:

Mr. Grahn made the motion to adjourn at 11:22 AM. Chair Supervisor Schulz seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Next meeting: 09/06/2023 at 9:00AM

Respectfully submitted,
Ilana Eisenberg, Office Coordinator