



**HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes – September 6, 2023
Planning Department Conference Room
2nd Floor Rock County Courthouse
51 S Main St, Janesville, WI 53545
And Via ZOOM**

Call to Order: Chair Schulz called the meeting of the Housing Authority of Rock County to order at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, September 6, 2023.

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

Members present via ZOOM: Bill Wilson

Members Excused: Michelle Ponkauskas

Rock County Staff present: Ilana Eisenberg (Office Coordinator), Andrew Baker (Planning Director), and James Otterstein (Economic Development Manager)

Others Present via ZOOM: Claire Gray (Forward Janesville) and Todd Mandel (WPHD)

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

Approval of Minutes from Meeting Held August 9, 2023: Ms. Udell made a motion to approve. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion. A minor adjustment in the book title to reflect “Poverty By America”. ADOPTED

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements: None

Consideration and Possible Action Regarding a Request to Increase Loan Amount – Edgerton Senior Apartments:

Todd Mendel (WPHD) referenced his memo and explained that the Edgerton Senior Apartments are towards the end of the planning process. The reason for the request of increasing the amount of the loan is due to the increase in interest rate and/or construction costs. This is of benefit to the County due the match that will be generating from the other funding sources. The current project will provide 36

units, with 11 of those units being HOME. The Affordable Housing Program (AHP) funds will be more restrictive in regulations, as will the Rural Development funds. These are both Federal funded programming and will ensure that the HOME funds be matched in order to proceed. Because of the additional subsidies being involved, they will not be able to ignore the rules unless paying off all the monies borrowed from the other agencies. The life of the loan would be for 20 years and one of the three options could occur at the end of the life of the loan: the apartments could be sold and thus paying back the loaned amount, it could roll over into an alternate affordable program causing the loan to be reissued, or the monies could be deferred into a rehabilitation type loan helping to pay back on the original loan.

Mr. Udell made a motion to accept the increase in the amount requested for the loan to \$387,000, motion was seconded by Supervisor Wilson. APPROVED.

Discussion with James Otterstein, Economic Development Manager, Related to the Correlation Between Housing and Employment/Economic Growth:

James Otterstein (Economic Development Manager) recapped the presentation that was originally given to the Housing Authority this past spring. Overall, there's a broad correlation between housing and the economy; the housing shortage is happening nationally, regionally and locally; and addressing this shortage is becoming increasingly challenging due to rising interest rates and construction costs, and strong NIMBY activities, particularly as it concerns multi-family projects. Local zoning codes and conditions of approval (for developers) are adding to these housing pain points, as well. While there isn't a "one-size fits all" solution, solid public/private partnerships are important to addressing a community's housing issues. Specifically, there are different types of public participation – whether in the form of direct/indirect subsidies – that developers and communities are leveraging to facilitate new single and multi-family housing projects. There was an extended discussion about the "missing middle" housing stock, where prospective homeowners make just enough income to disqualify themselves from low-income housing subsidies – yet they lack enough income to support buying a house. Additional topics such as population growth (in/out migration), employment centers and commuting patterns were also discussed. Trends were identified and Housing Authority members shared ideas about what could/should be done – particularly within the scope of the Housing Authority. One emerging idea was aligned with potentially creating an online housing information / education repository, which citizens and policy makers could use as they identify and/or deliberate the merits of housing related investments in their communities, etc. Since this was an informational item, there was no Housing Authority action taken.

Follow Up Correspondence from Legal Action Staff Report:

Alexis Camacho-Stedman (Legal Action) emailed Andrew Baker with the information to follow up last month's meeting. She was able to provide a tracking spreadsheet with the eviction court room tracking. There are many cases when the defendants have not shown up to the court proceedings which is primarily due to lack of time or ability to request time with such short notice. Members of the committee questioned which evictions lead to removal. There was a request for better or more accurate tracking to be able to decipher a trend. There may need to be follow up with Human Services to see ensure that Legal Action can quantify the numbers and data requested. They are contracted through the end of 2024 with Rock County.

Suggestions for Future Meeting Topics:

Due to the meeting time limited today, the Committee decided to go over the HOME Program Report, 2023 year to date and the 2024 annual action plan at the next meeting. Also following up the discussion on developing a county-wide housing strategy.

Adjournment:

Mr. Grahn made the motion to adjourn at 10:33 AM. Ms. Udell seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Next meeting: 10/04/2023 at 10:00AM

Respectfully submitted,
Ilana Eisenberg, Office Coordinator