



**HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes – December 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 9:03 AM on Wednesday, December 6, 2023.

Members present in person: Chair Supervisor Kathy Schulz, Billy Bob Grahm, and Supervisor Bill Wilson

Members present via ZOOM: Katie Udell

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

Others Present: Badri Belur

Others Present via ZOOM: Todd Mandel (WPHD)

Adopt Agenda: Mr. Grahm made a motion to approve. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Approval of Minutes from Meeting Held November 1, 2023: Supervisor Wilson made a motion to approve. Mr. Grahm seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements:

Badri Belur decided to return to the Housing Authority Committee meeting. He has put in an application to apply for the Housing Authority Committee vacancy.

Action Item:

Review and Consider a Request to Exceed Maximum Loan Amount for Community Development Program Application – Hwy 11 Project

There were two requests that were brought before the Planning and Development Committee, but only one of the two projects needs authorization from the Housing Authority. This is a rehabilitation project

located near Brodhead that will use CDBG and HOME funds. The homeowners are an elderly couple and qualify for the 55 Plus HOME program. They are below the 35% median income level. The property is a big farmhouse located in the township of Spring Valley. Due to the lead abatement, part of the amount requested can be covered by the CDBG grant for lead, and the remainder would be funded by the HOME program. The HOME funds would be split between a grant and a 0% interest loan to be paid when the property is sold. The waiver of the maximum loan amount has already been approved by the county and state, just awaiting the response from the Housing Authority to move ahead.

Mr. Grahn made a motion to approve the recommendation. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion. CARRIED.

Further discussion with Todd ensued about another program offered by the state that allow either renters or homeowners to qualify for a grant the is 100% covered should there be lead abatement and a child in the home on the BadgerCare health system. Recently, the federal rules have changed regarding lead pipes that are located from the sidewalk to the interior of the home. Anything before the sidewalk to the street, would need to be contained by the municipality. Both CDBG and HOME funds could be used in this case. Medicaid cannot address lateral work because it is outside the house. There is a greater challenge, which is not just the lateral but considering the lead service lines in the street. To resolve all these issues, there would need to be more money used. The water source (groundwater or surface water supply) could be a factor of concern; as was seen in Flint, Michigan.

Chair Schulz mentioned the housing vouchers available outside Janesville, Beloit and Evansville. Director Baker sent out the information via email and added it to the Rock County webpage for public availability. There is an online application process and contact information on the website for assistance. The program is sourced from La Crest, Minnesota and is contracted with WHEDA. .

Discussion and Recommendations for County Board Consideration Regarding 2024 Budget Housing Funds:

Joshua Smith (County Administrator) incorporated \$4.5 million in ARPA funds to assist with development of affordable housing Rock County into the proposed budget for 2024. The recommendation was approved by the County Board. Now there are questions on how the funds should be allocated. There are multiple ideas of how the funds could be used; consultation fees, creating a maximum number of units, vouchers to help those in need of housing, etc. Many of the ideas did not offer long term solutions. As approved, the County Board will identify projects with the assistance and guidance of the Housing Authority. Based on statutory authority, the funds will be routed through the Housing Authority. The goal is to identify projects that are near shovel ready due to the timeframe for the funds to be spent.

Handout of the GAP report summary and how it affects those specifically in Rock County was discussed. There are fliers with information on the programs are available on the Rock County website to print. It was discussed that the Housing Authority primary role is administration of the HOME program funds. Therefore it is likely a separate agreement with how the funds are to be spent within the ARPA rules, committed monies in 2024 and spent before the end of 2026, will be executed between the Housing Authority and the County Board for approval. It was suggested to have a forum with municipalities in January or February 2024. Creating the projects to be more inclusive by inviting

developers and housing forums alike to discuss challenges and decipher a framework for the project.

The main goal is to create a maximum number of new units, throughout the entirety of Rock County, and present this package to the County Board in September 2024. P&D staff will start this process by reaching out to all municipalities to get an idea of projects that are already in planning phases and need additional funds to come to fruition.

Suggestions for Future Meeting Topics:

The Housing Authority Committee was interested in obtaining more information about the current status or availability of affordable housing and market rate units. Discussion of the parameters for what the Housing Authority is trying to achieve should become defined. Maybe an RFP is necessary. Providing examples of successful housing projects throughout the state to see what worked and why, as research for the Rock County Housing Authority forum proposal by January/February 2024.

Adjournment:

Mr. Grahn made the motion to adjourn at 10:13 AM. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion.
ADOPTED

Next meeting: 01/03/2024 at 9:00AM

Respectfully submitted,
Ilana Eisenberg, Office Coordinator