



**HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes – February 7, 2024
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, February 7, 2024.

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

Members present via ZOOM: Katie Udell and Badri Balur (portion of meeting)

Rock County Staff present: Josh Smith (County Administrator) and Andrew Baker (Planning Director)

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

Approval of Minutes from Meeting Held January 3, 2023: Supervisor Wilson made a motion to approve. Mr. Grahm seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements:

Supervisor Schulz noted the great number of evictions that have recently been filed by one landlord. There will be a community meeting next week to address community needs.

New member Badri Balur introduced himself before getting back to another virtual meeting. Mr. Balur has attended to meetings in person prior to his appointment.

HOME Program Application Action Item: Review and Consider a Request to Exceed Maximum Loan Amount for Community Development Program Application – Footville:

Andrew summarized the request based on the memo in the agenda packet. Mr. Mandel from WPHD was unable to attend.

Mr. Grahm made a motion to approve the loan exceeding the maximum allowable by ordinance. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Continued Discussion Regarding a Strategy for County Budgeted Funds for Affordable Housing:

County Administrator Josh Smith was in attendance to address the county budget for affordable housing utilizing ARPA funds. He noted just recently an ARPA interim final rule was issued, which should be final in March. This updated rule clarifies that not only to funds have to be allocated/obligated by the end of 2024, but the funds must also be contracted. That clarification significantly reduces the timeframe to identify projects in order to contract by the end of 2024. Mr. Smith also noted that the funds will be allocated through the Housing Authority because the County doesn't have as clear authority to spend money on housing. However, the County Board still has to take action to transfer the funds to Housing Authority on a project by project basis. The process has yet to be developed. There is also a possibility to contract directly with Cities for specific projects or possible applicable future projects.

Chair Schulz reiterated her goal of included all areas of the county in possible new development. Andrew noted that a survey/poll will has already been sent to municipalities to see what projects are in the works. There was additional discussion of what "affordable" means. In this case, the ARPA funds are not tied to a specific income limitation so there is flexibility to address a range of needed housing. That will be a decision to make based on the possible projects available. Workforce housing is also important, though may to meet the definition of low to moderate income housing. The County will also want to make sure the housing remains affordable, which is easier to do if other funding sources, such as WHEDA, have the reporting requirements. Monitoring and enforcement is an important aspect of distributing these funds for a certain goal.

Review Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing and Consolidated Plan RFP

Andrew summarized the RFP in the packet, noting this planning process for these two projects will allow for number of opportunities for public input.

Educational Presentation for County Board:

Supervisor Wilson reviewed the draft presentation he as been working on for educational purposes for the County Board. He would like the presentation to be on behalf of the Housing Authority, rather than from himself as an individual County Board Supervisor. He has had initial discussions with Chair Bostwick about having this on the agenda in March, likely the second meeting (28th). Supervisor Wilson will send an updated draft prior to the next meeting to be discussed at the meeting.

Suggestions for Future Meeting Topics:

Review housing survey results from municipalities. Make final touches to the educational presentation for County Board.

Adjournment:

Mr. Grahn made the motion to adjourn at 10:35 AM. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion.
ADOPTED

Next meeting: 03/06/2024 at 9:00AM

Respectfully submitted,
Andrew Baker, Director of Planning