



HOUSING AUTHORITY
Minutes – September 4, 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 9:04 AM on Wednesday, September 4, 2024.

Members present in person: Chair Supervisor Kathy Schulz and Badri Balur

Members present via ZOOM: Katie Udell and Supervisor Bill Wilson

Members excused: Billy Bob Grahm

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

Others present via ZOOM: Sue Ryan (Rock County Supervisor)

Adopt Agenda: Ms. Udell made a motion to approve. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Approval of Minutes from Meeting Held August 7, 2024: Supervisor Wilson made a motion to approve. Ms. Udell seconded the motion. ADOPTED

Citizen Participation, Communications and Announcements:

Ms. Udell discussed the Google Drive account, that Director Baker created, and the addition of the folder titled “Rent Abatement Research”. There is set to be an interactive workshop led by Diversity Action Team based on the theme of housing race and equity. There will be a meeting at Blackhawk Technical College the evening of September 4, 2024 to work on planning the workshop. More details to come.

Chair Schulz made mention of the health care center being used for low-income housing and how to raise that possibility with the City of Janesville or any developers.

Director Baker mentioned the County Board approved the usage of the ARPA funds with minimal questions. Supervisor Wilson expressed a big “Thank you” to both Director Baker and James Otterstein (Economic Development Manager) for all their work.

Follow up from Legal Action Regarding Funding Sources:

Director Baker discussed the funding sources and how they are sought out by Legal Action. This is primarily taken care of by managing attorneys. It is comprised of a combination of local grants, donations, and federal dollars. Chair Schulz would like to follow up with Kate Luster, Director of Human Services, about extending the legal services.

Update Regarding Planning Efforts:

Review Draft Analysis of Impediment to Fair Housing Choice

Director Baker discussed both documents that were submitted and each plan that are required to receive the HOME funds. They are comprised of statistical data and background information about Rock County. Ms. Udell requested seeing more long-term trends and data to see how changes have occurred up until today. She also requested to see a comparison of how Rock County fared with the state of Wisconsin or/and on a national level. There is a lot of data in the report that contain just raw numbers. The request for data to be provided from before 2008 (during the housing crisis) to see a completed trend. Supervisor Wilson mentioned how back in 2008, there was an inadequate housing stock and requested to show the correlation of the housing and population needs. Ms. Udell followed up with possibly exploring rate abatement and reviewing examples from other counties within the state. This is the first draft of the document. Each town has their own building inspectors making it somewhat difficult enforce and ordinance even if it were to be adopted. This was requested to be added to the next agenda for October 2, 2024. Director Baker would take all the comments into consideration to see if it would be prudent to have a second meeting during the month of September.

Review Draft 2025-2029 HOME Consolidated Plan

Director Baker explained how this plan was to be completed every 5 years to continue to receive the HOME funding. There are certain priorities on how the funds are used. There is additionally the other program, CDBG, which is using what can be termed as “old money” because new funds have not been added. The county has different rules and less authority than the municipalities. The interest of having statewide and nationwide comparable are favored. Ms. Udell made mention of the Healthy Rock Wisconsin Website which is comprised of a multitude of organizations across Rock County, including Human Services. There are hopes for a better collaboration between the departments when it comes to information shared. Specific concerns should be sent directly to Director Baker as this report should be completed before the end of the year. It has not yet been prepped for the public as we are still waiting for feedback on the rough draft. In other words, there will be more opportunity for input.

Suggestions for Future Meeting Topics:

Discussion of suggestions for future meeting topics were mentioned during the present meeting, including rent abatement research, feedback from Human Services and update regarding the planning process.

Adjournment:

Mr. Balur made the motion to adjourn at 10:05 AM. Supervisor Wilson seconded the motion.
ADOPTED

Next meeting: 10/02/2024 at 9:00AM

Respectfully submitted,
Ilana Eisenberg, Office Coordinator