

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
NOVEMBER 16, 2017
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Wescott called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Following the call to order, roll call was taken.

The following Board Members were present:

Present:	Chairman Fred S. Wescott Vice Chairman Dina M. Getty Commissioner Alanna D. Conard Commissioner James E. Hughes
Absent:	Commissioner Ron Ballard Commissioner Pearl Hawks

Also present: Executive Director Alan Zais, Assistant Executive Director Felicia Davis, Finance Director Vickie Huwe and James R. Pirages of the law firm of Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP.

Following roll call, Chairman Wescott let those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Guests

None.

Changes to Agenda

None.

Public Comments

None.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Alan Zais reminded the Board that his written report had accompanied the Board packets that were previously provided to the Commissioners.

Alan updated the Board on developments at the Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) and at the Housing Authority of the City of Freeport (HACF).

Alan noted that he had attended a meeting between the HACF Board and representatives from HUD. Alan said that as a result of that meeting, WCHA will continue to administer the Section 8 Program in connection with the RAD 1 Program (for which the WCHA has not been previously compensated for the work that it has completed) from which the WCHA will receive \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year in administrative fees in the future. Alan also advised of his belief that there will continue to be issues at the HACF and that there may also be concerns with fair housing issues there as well as it possibly being categorized as a "troubled" agency. While noting that the new administrative staff at HACF truly cares about its operations, it was his opinion that there will continue to be struggles there. He also cited to

issues with the HACF's potential non-compliance with the Uniform Relocation Act's requirements. Alan noted that there had been Uniform Relocation Act issues at Westport before the WCHA started managing that development and that, while the WCHA could not go back in time to address past issues, the WCHA did things properly and fixed what it could at Westport. Alan said that the HACF is responsible for the Uniform Relocation Act compliance in connection with the RAD 1 Project and expressed some concerns as to whether the HACF will be able to do it properly (and whether the WCHA may be wrongfully blamed if the HACF does not properly complete this task). However, Alan noted that all the WCHA is doing for the HACF is administering the Voucher Program.

With regard to the RHA, Alan noted that he anticipates there continuing to be issues. He said that the physical inspection score at the RHA conducted by Gorman awarded RHA only 35 points out of 100. He stated his concerns that the RHA may also soon be considered to be a "troubled" agency and cited to issues with missed deadlines in its action plans and the fact that HUD is now not allowing the RHA to make payments from capital funds without HUD's permission.

With regard to the Regional Housing Initiative, Alan said that he had spoken with representatives from Econometrica while at the recent NAHRO Conference in Pittsburgh. Econometrica is heavily involved with HUD in the Regional Housing Initiative. He said the representatives of Econometrica reached out to him to ask for examples of how the WCHA has approached regionalism with its housing initiatives. Alan said that he had provided Econometrica with copies of the forms and other materials related to the WCHA's efforts at Boone County Housing Authority and otherwise.

Alan noted to the Board that staff has been evaluating health insurance for 2018. He said that the WCHA had reached out to representatives from Winnebago County's administrative staff but was told that it is too late this year to try to seek coverage under the County's health insurance program. Alan added, however, that they have met with the WCHA's broker (he and Finance Director Vickie Huwe) and that he will have more information to report next month.

With regard to ConnectHome Nation, Alan noted his excitement with this Program. He said that HUD has established this Program for approximately 40 housing authorities nationwide and that Alan wants to use the ConnectHome Nation in connection with the WCHA's potential future application for the MTW Program. He reminded the Board that the ConnectHome Nation allows affordable internet services to low income families. He said that this has turned into a fast moving initiative and that it may ultimately be a demonstration program for the nation. He said that there are two (2) waivers that are presently being processed by Assistant Deputy Secretary of HUD – one that would include internet access in the utility allowance and another that would allow savings realized to be shared by the involved housing authority and the resident. He anticipates this being a ten (10) year study. He said that drafts of the documents have been prepared but have not yet been finalized. Once that happens, he said he will bring those documents to the Board.

Alan also noted that he had e-mailed the Board about the WCHA's receipt of the Confluence Award through the Rockford Chamber of Commerce. This award is given to participants in partnerships and those who are otherwise involved in collaborative initiatives. He said that Mayor McNamara mentioned the Confluence Awards at his business address through the Chamber of Commerce on November 16. These awards will be presented at an event held on December 7, 2017.

Lastly, Alan also advised that Lynn Foster, who had formerly managed Collier Gardens, had resigned from employment with the WCHA.

Consent Agenda

Commissioner Hughes made a motion to approve the item on the Consent Agenda; that motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Getty. The motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda was approved by unanimous roll call vote of all four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent.

Financial Report

Finance Director Vickie Huwe noted that we are awaiting approval from HUD of the sale of the home from Winnebago Homes Association to WCHA. In the meantime, WCHA has obtained a property tax exemption for the house and intends to try to obtain similar exemptions for all of its other homes. Vice Chairman Getty asked about an expenditure noted in the finance report to Louie Bageanis for approximately \$30,000. Vickie indicated that he is landlord in the Rental Housing Support Program that is paid every three months.

Old Business

Alan noted the items on the Agenda involving the confirmation and public notice of actions taken at the October 19, 2017 meeting for the minutes of the Executive Sessions for the following meetings:

March 19, 2009
August 20, 2009
December 17, 2009
March 18, 2010
April 15, 2010
November 18, 2010
December 16, 2010
March 17, 2011
September 15, 2011
December 15, 2011

While noting that no further action is needed by the Board (since a vote had been taken at the October 19, 2017 meeting making those minutes available), confirmation and public notice of that prior action was set forth in the agenda for the November 16, 2017 meeting and is also to be reflected in the minutes of this meeting.

New Business

None.

Commissioner Comments

Vice Chairman Getty noted that she and Alan had attended a meeting with representatives from the New York University Marron Institute of Urban Management. The Marron Institute is working with the Illinois Department of Corrections on the Inmate Resident Program. She and Alan had met with the representatives to get a clearer picture of the program and she noted that, as a result of that meeting, she is more comfortable with the program. She said that this is an experimental program between the Department of Corrections and the Marron Institute to work with non-violent offenders and to get them into public housing. If they do not comply with the requirements of the program, they are removed from

public housing and go back to the Department of Corrections without having to go through the Circuit Court processes.

Vice Chairman Getty said that she had asked for the risk assessment tool that the Marron Institute uses for candidates for the program and that such is to be provided by the Marron Institute. Alan and Vice Chairman Getty indicated that there are going to be only five (5) spots at WCHA made available for participants in the program if this matter proceeds. He said that the Marron Institute has also been asked to ultimately make a formal presentation on this to the WCHA's Board.

Alan asked for the Board's thoughts on this initiative. Commissioner Hughes noted the possibility for public controversy and the need to move cautiously with this program. Alan said that he wants the County of Winnebago and the City of Rockford to support the WCHA's involvement in this program and that he realizes that there are two different points of view on that participation. Commissioner Conard asked if there were any other sites that are currently involved in the program. Vice Chairman Getty noted that to her knowledge nothing is currently going on at present at other sites at the level that is being proposed by the Marron Institute (working with the Illinois Department of Corrections). If this comes to fruition, this will be pilot program in which the WCHA will be involved.

Chairman Wescott asked if veterans will be denied housing if this program proceeds and noted that if such was the case he would not be in support of the program. Discussion was had about the fact that some offenders may also be veterans. Commissioner Hughes noted his belief that we need to communicate to the program our standards and the criteria for residents to be dismissed from the program. Alan said that he wanted consensus from the Board as to whether to move forward on a memorandum of understanding for the program.

Vice Chairman Getty said that she would like to see a draft memorandum of understanding and to at least take that step forward. Commissioner Hughes noted that he wanted to see examples of the types of inmates who would be involved in the program before it is implemented. Both Alan and Vice Chairman Getty said that they would have to be non-violent offenders and no one who had been convicted of sexual assault, domestic violence or similar offenses. Commissioner Conard deferred to Vice Chairman Getty's background and the fact that she had met with the Marron Institute and that she trusted Vice Chairman Getty's judgment. Vice Chairman Getty noted that she did not see how the WCHA's involvement in the program could hurt so long as this is done the right way. Chairman Wescott again stated that he did not want veterans without records being pushed aside for someone with a record. Alan said that he would look into that and by limiting it to five (5) units he did not want to see someone lose their chance for housing. He said he would check on the issue with veterans and that perhaps through this program the WCHA could accommodate both (including offenders who may also be veterans).

Executive Session

A motion was made pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) to go into closed session for "discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under this Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06." That motion was made by Vice Chairman Getty and seconded by Commissioner Conard, the motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote of all four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. The Executive Session commenced at 6:12 p.m. and concluded at 6:18 p.m.

Action Taken from Executive Session

A motion was made by Commissioner Conard that was seconded by Commissioner Hughes to make available for public inspection the minutes of the Executive Sessions from certain previous meetings, including the following meetings:

June 21, 2012
October 18, 2012
April 18, 2013
May 16, 2013
September 19, 2013

With the sole exception being to redact the name of the resident from the May 16, 2013 minutes. A motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. It was noted that a statement will be included on the Agenda for the December meeting confirming that these records are no longer confidential and are available for public inspection.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the Board meeting was made by Commissioner Conard and seconded by Vice Chairman Getty. The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved by unanimous voice vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alanna Conard, Recording Secretary