

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY  
OCTOBER 19, 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 in attendance:

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, Finance Director Vickie Huwe and James R. Pirages of the law firm of Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP.

Following roll call, Chairman Wescott led 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 reported regarding developments at the Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) and at the Housing Authority of the City of Freeport (HACF). With regard to the RHA, Alan reminded the Board that Larry Williams is now the Executive Director of the RHA. He noted that the RHA recently received a substandard MASS scoring as part of its PHAS and that this will result in some sort of remediation program from HUD. He speculated that the RHA has a utilization issue resulting from its occupancy challenges. Alan noted that he had recently attended the RHA Board meeting at Larry Williams' request at which Gorman & Co. had made a report on its

efforts. As a result of that presentation, Alan said that there seems to be some misunderstanding as to who is responsible for acquiring the homes that are necessary to allow for the redevelopment of the Fairgrounds properties. He noted that the reports regarding the RHA's finances are also not good and that the RHA is running short on funds. He also said that the RHA is ending its agreement with Gorman, apparently due to dissatisfaction with Gorman's performance.

With regard to the HACF, Alan said that he had recently met with the Interim Executive Director. Alan reminded the Board that he had previously stated his belief that the Winnebago County Housing Authority (WCHA) may ultimately end up with responsibility for the HACF's RAD Program and, given recent information, that it is becoming even more likely that this may come to pass. He noted that the HACF, in addition to losing its Executive Director, has lost all of its senior staff and it is likely to have a troubled PHAS score coming up. He said that of the 250 non-RAD units at HACF, 44 are currently vacant. He has also recently learned that the RAD Program's ownership may be notifying HACF that it will no longer allow HACF to manage the RAD Program. Alan also commented that as of January 1, 2018, HACF will not be receiving certain monies for administration that will, instead, be remitted to WCHA.

Alan also reported that he had been in contact with the Veterans Hospital at Madison and had obtained its "Letter of Support" for the Veterans Assistance Supportive Housing (VASH) Program. Alan noted that the WCHA is continuing to pursue participation in the VASH Program.

Chairman Wescott asked about whether the Bradley Road House (that is owned by Winnebago Homes Association) could be used to provide housing for homeless veterans. Alan indicated that WHA has been attempting to work through RAMP to provide housing for individuals coming out of nursing homes but those efforts, which have been going on for approximately six months, have not resulted in enough interested potential residents. During that six month period, the WHA has lost approximately \$9,000.00 in income. While Alan noted that WHA will continue with its efforts to find partners to occupy the Bradley House, in the interim he noted his belief that WHA needs to find someone to rent the home in order to derive income for WHA from that property. Alan noted that if the WCHA becomes part of the Moving to Work Program (MTW) in the future, many of the bureaucratic obstacles that have been encountered to date with the Bradley House may no longer be an issue.

With regard to MTW, Alan noted that the continuation of this program has not yet been approved. The MTW initiative is undergoing a period of public comment and HUD will then assess and respond to the public comments. Alan indicated that he did not believe that the next round of MTW will be available until at least 2018.

With respect to HUD's regionalization efforts, Alan said that he had attended programs presented by Marianne Navarro of HUD and that WCHA remains uniquely positioned to apply through the regionalization program. Alan said WCHA's High Performer status was critical in meeting the application threshold through which it could potentially extend the program benefit to RHA, HACF and the Boone County Housing Authority.

Alan also advised the Board of the status of the Graduated Reintegration Program. He indicated that this Program is moving along and he has participated in meetings concerning this Program.

He said that he is presently working on a draft “Memorandum of Understanding” that he will ultimately review with legal counsel. He reminded the Board that this Program helps non-violent ex-offenders to reintegrate into society. Alan indicated that he has been moving carefully with this initiative and that set asides for it have been established by both RHA and WCHA; ultimately these units will be leased to the Department of Corrections which will, in turn, sublease to ex-offenders. Alan said that he wanted to make sure that all partners – including the City and County – are engaged in these efforts and noted that these efforts have been ongoing for approximately two years.

Vice Chairman Getty asked whether the WCHA will have any input into the selection process for participating ex-offenders. Alan noted his belief that these decisions will largely be made by the courts; Vice Chairman Getty indicated her concerns about the loss of control of the units and the lack of input into the selection criteria. Commissioner Conard also noted her concerns that if offenses are committed by participants in this Program while they are residing in WCHA units, she is unclear as to what the process will be for addressing and releasing those individuals from participation in the Program. Vice Chairman Getty noted her willingness to be involved in future dialog regarding this Program and Executive Director Alan Zais noted that he will invite her to future meetings of the group that is reviewing this Program.

### **Consent Agenda**

Commissioner Conard made a motion to approve the item on the Consent Agenda; that motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Getty. The motion to approve the item on the Consent Agenda was approved by a 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 WHA, the owner of the Bradley House, is having cash flow difficulties and presently cannot pay the WCHA’s fees. She noted that WHA currently owes WCHA about \$25,000.00 and WHA only has about \$14,000.00 in its operating account. She said that if the WCHA ultimately approved to purchase the 15<sup>th</sup> Street house from WHA (which is presently pending HUD approval), the proceeds from that sale can be used by WHA to pay off its debts. She also noted that she had recently closed the WHA’s “sweep account” at the bank.

Executive Director Alan Zais also noted that the WCHA is having difficulty in identifying an appropriately priced contractor to perform environmental assessments of its various properties. He said that the various entities that have previously performed these assessments on the WCHA’s behalf are no longer willing to do so as they lack the labor resource. He also noted that he has obtained quotes for these services from the private sector that have been overly expensive (one being \$5,000.00). He indicated that he has recently contacted another potential contractor who he is hopeful will be able to perform these services for \$1,000.00; Alan noted that he is awaiting word from this potential contractor as to its ability to perform these services for that price. Alan also reminded the Board that such contractors must be HUD-approved to serve in that capacity.

Finance Director Vickie Huwe also advised the Board that a former resident had left a WCHA managed unit that had a \$1.07 in accounts receivable remaining that she, in turn, had written off.

## **Old Business**

Attorney Pirages noted the items on the Agenda involving the confirmation and public notice of actions taken at the August 23, 2017 meeting for the minutes from the Executive Sessions for the following meetings:

June 23, 2005  
January 26, 2006  
August 17, 2006  
November 16, 2006  
September 20, 2007  
January 17, 2008  
April 17, 2008

While noting that no further action is needed by the Board (since a vote had been taken at the August 23, 2017 meeting making those minutes available), confirmation and public notice of that prior action was set forth in the agenda for the October 19, 2017 meeting and is also to be reflected in the minutes of this meeting.

## **New Business**

None.

## **Commissioner Comments**

Chairman Wescott noted an organization called “Care for Pets” that is working with Winnebago County Animal Services. He indicated this is a great organization working in both Winnebago and Boone Counties and is actively engaged in assisting with the adoption of pets. He also said that the organization is assisting with microchipping of pets and suggested to Executive Director Alan Zais that staff consider having such an event in the Washington Park area through this organization.

Vice Chairman Getty noted that she had recently taken her therapy dog, Stella, to meet the residents at Collier Gardens and that she is going to now be doing so monthly at Collier Gardens. She noted her interest in expanding Stella’s visits to other facilities, including at D’Agnolo Gardens and Johnston Garden Apartments.

Vice Chairman Getty also thanked Alan and the other staff for their efforts in making available the “little libraries”.

## **Executive Session**

A motion was made pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) to go into a 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 6:15 p.m. and concluded at 6:21 p.m.

**Action Taken from Executive Session**

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

The motion also included not making available for public inspection the minutes of the Executive Session of the July 21, 2011 meeting. The 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 November 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 Vice Chairman Getty and seconded by Commissioner Hughes. 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 6:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Alanna Conard, Recording Secretary