

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
MAY 19, 2016 REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Vice Chairman Getty called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Following the call to order, roll call was taken.

The following Board Members were in attendance:

Present:	Vice Chairman Dina Getty Commissioner Ron Ballard Commissioner Tunaya Beaudry Commissioner Pearl Hawks Commissioner Jim Hughes
Absent:	Chairman Fred Wescott Commissioner Alanna Conard

Also present: Executive Director Alan Zais, Assistant Executive Director Felicia Davis, and James R. Pirages of the law firm of Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP. Also present as guests were Sylvia Wagner and Lucy Pirages.

Following roll call, Vice Chairman Getty led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Guests

Vice Chairman Getty introduced her mother, Sylvia Wagner, and Lucy Pirages.

Vice Chairman Getty also introduced new Commissioner, Tunaya Beaudry, and asked Tunaya to provide some background information. Tunaya introduced herself and was welcomed to the Board by the rest of the Commissioners.

Changes to Agenda

None.

Public Comments

None.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Alan Zais noted that he had provided the Commissioners with plat maps showing potential locations for the planned Cherry Valley development. He said that the owner's Trustee for the property that was originally considered had decided not to sell that property and,

as a result, different sites are being reviewed. He reminded the Board that a thirty- three (33) unit new construction site in Cherry Valley is being contemplated that will involve the "layering in" of project-based Section 8 vouchers. He noted that the preliminary application deadline for this project is October 2016.

Alan also distributed pictures of the Authority's old truck as well as the new truck (that is the subject of one of the items on the Consent Agenda).

Alan also advised the Board of the fact that he had been approached by Bob Campbell of Zion Development regarding the property owned by one of its subsidiaries at the corner of Longwood and East State Street. He noted that the Zion subsidiary is looking to do something with this property, noting that there is a problem with occupancy since it has difficulties leasing many of the efficiency apartments there. Alan also said that there is debt coming due on the project, the property needs a new roof, etc. While the subsidiary of Zion Development has looked to involve the Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) with the property, it has not heard anything back from RHA and, therefore, had contacted the WCHA. Alan, in turn, connected Bob Campbell with other potential developers, including the Burton Foundation and General Capital. It is also possible that Star Development will be considering participating in that property. He noted that Bob Campbell had asked about the WCHA's interest in being involved in the project and Alan told him that he would have to review the issue with the Board of Commissioners.

Vice Chairman Getty noted her belief that the WCHA had enough "irons in the fire" with the proposed developments in Rockton and Cherry Valley. Commissioner Hughes noted his understanding that the Longwood property has had financial trouble for over the past 18 months and suggested that there might be other developers out there who might be better suited for that project.

Alan also advised the Board of the issues with the Ken Rock Community Center. He noted that HUD is currently reviewing whether the Ken Rock Community Center can accept disbursements from the Ken Rock Apartments. He said that in the past there has been \$65,000 per year taken from the Ken Rock Apartments to subsidize the Ken Rock Community Center, but that the propriety of this arrangement is being reviewed by HUD. He noted that there has been some confusion by John Guth at Ken Rock about the status of the HUD appeal --- noting that Ken Rock may believe that the WCHA's legal counsel is representing it in the pending matter before HUD. Alan noted that this has not been the case and also noted the possible conflicts that could arise from that type of dual representation. Attorney Pirages further detailed some of the background facts surrounding this matter.

Executive Director Alan Zais also commented about the Replacement Housing Funds (RHF) that have been previously used to buy the Wescott Homes. He noted that HUD has customarily required the submission of a plan only if there is a decision to bundle the first five years into a First Increment, which the board had approved with the 2011 RHF Plan. An RHF Plan is not required for individual grants that are not placed into increments. However, HUD has recently requested a plan for the 2016 monies even though such was not required in prior years and, as a result, Alan has written up a plan rather than objecting to HUD's request. Alan noted that in the plan that he submitted (a copy of which was included in the Board packet) he has noted WCHA's plan to use future funds in the East side of the City of Rockford (as

opposed to the West side of the City of Rockford) to further the deconcentration of poverty and resident mobility opportunities. Alan sought the Board's concurrence with this plan and, by consensus, the Board concurred with Alan's statement in this regard. Alan noted that a resolution will be prepared in this regard for the June 2016 Board Meeting. Commissioner Hughes noted that the Obama Administration is emphasizing the need to spread housing opportunities to other areas and Commissioner Hawks noted that people in public housing have the right to access better housing and related opportunities for services, etc.

Alan cited to the recent shooting incident that occurred near the Washington Park Community Center and noted that, as a result, he had reached out to Rockford Police Chief O'Shea and the Winnebago County Sheriff on how the housing authority can partner and assist their agencies. He also indicated that he has spoken with Pat Morrow, the Chair of the Rockford Chamber of Commerce's Safety Committee, who had visited with him after the incident and had encouraged Alan to follow up with the City of Rockford Police Administration and the Winnebago County Sheriff.

Alan also noted that the WCHA has received "high performer" designation as a result of the Public Housing Assessment Report (PHAS). This designation will assist the WCHA in contending for participation in the Moving To Work (MTW) program. Alan noted that an expansion of MTW to an additional 100 housing authorities has passed through the Appropriations Committee and he believes that the High Performer designation is necessary to meet the threshold for the WCHA to apply for the MTW designation. He also noted that Majority Leader McCarthy has introduced a resolution to make MTW an ongoing program.

Vice Chairman Getty asked Alan whether the WCHA would have to submit another application and/or secure the services of a consultant to put together the WCHA's application for the MTW program. Alan said that such an application would have to be prepared and also noted his belief that it would be a good idea for the WCHA to retain the services of a consultant and named a couple of potential consultants who provide this service.

For the benefit of the new Commissioner, Alan described the MTW program – emphasizing that it relieves participating housing authorities of a lot of the regulatory requirements that are otherwise imposed by HUD. He noted that participation in MTW is very competitive and that a housing authority has to be a "high performer" to be considered for participation in the MTW program.

Alan said that the WCHA had received an award from the North Central Regional Council of NAHRO for the Veterans' Drop In Center. Alan noted that Felicia Davis and Vickie Huwe had accepted this award on the WCHA's behalf at the recent meeting. Vice Chairman Getty noted that the "Vino For Vets" event --- a fundraiser for the Veterans' Drop In Center - - will be held on May 25, 2016 at the Prairie Street Brewhouse.

Consent Agenda

A motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda was made by Commissioner Hughes. That motion was seconded by Commissioner Ballard. The items on the Consent Agenda were

approved by unanimous vote of the five (5) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent.

Financial Report

In the absence of Finance Director Vickie Huwe, Alan Zais reported on a recent issue involving a resident in one of the Wescott Homes. He noted that the resident had previously been the recipient of a Section 8 voucher through the Rockford Housing Authority (RHA) and the resident had been advised that the resident would have to either move or give up the RHA voucher and accept public housing assistance to stay in the Wescott Home. This has resulted in a legal matter ~~controversy~~ involving Prairie State Legal Services as to the terms and conditions involving the resident's relocation from the involved home. The resident's lease ends on August 30. In the interim, in order to comply with HUD requirements, monies are being paid to Winnebago Homes Association with regard to the involved property, which, in turn, will be paid to the WCHA and will be reflected as such on upcoming financial statements.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Vice Chairman Getty said that there were two issues that she wanted to note. She said that when she and Executive Director Zais were in Washington, D.C. for recent meetings, the topic of "little libraries" had been discussed. "Little libraries" are built in neighborhoods and are like little treehouses that house donated books that are available for residents. She noted that these "little libraries" have been successful in other communities, and that she had discussed with Chairman Wescott having "little libraries" in connection with the WCHA's locations. She suggested that the little libraries could be built and decorated by students who are involved in woodworking and/or in art programs and noted her understanding that there are already a couple "little libraries" within the City of Rockford. Commissioner Hughes suggested that the WCHA contact the Youth Build Program to assist in the building of these structures. There was also a discussion about the possibility of corporate sponsors for the construction of "little libraries". It was noted that the WCHA will have to check with County Ordinances and Zoning Requirements to assure that modifications are not required to construct such structures.

Vice Chairman Getty also noted the idea of sponsoring a "workshop" for Commissioners. This workshop would benefit all of the Commissioners and would also serve as an orientation for the new Commissioner. She noted that Executive Director Alan Zais has already ordered a "Commissioner's Handbook" that is available through NAHRO, and that she had spoken with Chairman Wescott about holding a workshop (for 20-30 minutes) in conjunction with the August 2016 Board Meeting. The Commissioners in attendance concurred with the idea of holding such a workshop at the August 2016 meeting.

Commissioner Comments

None.

Executive Session

None.

Action Taken From Executive Session

None.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Hughes and that motion was seconded by Commissioner Hawks. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote of all five (5) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. The meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Alanna Conard, Recording Secretary