

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2024
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Getty called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Following the call to order, roll call was taken.

The following Commissioners were present:

Present:	Chairman Dina M. Getty Vice Chairman Alanna D. Conard Commissioner Elsie Brown Commissioner Danielle J.A. Potter
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Absent:	Commissioner Ronald E. Ballard Commissioner Frank Gambino
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Also present were the following: Executive Director Alan J. Zais; Deputy Director Deb Alfredson; Finance Director Vickie Huwe; and James R. Pirages of AGHL Law.

Chairman Getty led the Board of Commissioners in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Guests

Executive Director Alan Zais introduced Collier Garden resident, Karl Fort, who was present for the meeting.

Changes to Agenda

None.

Public Comments

Collier Gardens resident Karl Fort addressed the Board. He noted that he has been living in public housing off and on for the past fifty (50) years. He noted that he has lived at the Valerie Percy Apartments, then at Concord Commons, Fairgrounds and others. He said that he was homeless for a while and entered a program at Goodwill that was supposed to help him find housing and a job. He noted that he has been a resident at Collier Gardens for three (3) to four (4) years but stated that he feels like he is “in prison” because of the workload that the staff deals with there. Mr. Fort noted that he has spoken to Alan Zais and to the property manager about his door being left unlocked on two (2) occasions by different contractors. He complained that the building was not secure enough and that he has come home from work to find the door unlocked. He then noted that he had his own “solution” and distributed a handout to the Board noting his recommendations. He noted that he cannot afford to move but that the building needs to be more secure.

Chairman Getty noted that the WCHA will need to sit down with the property manager at Collier Gardens and go over protocols for the use of master keys by contractors. Executive Director Alan Zais noted that he was aware only of the most recent incident and was concerned that the door had been left unlocked. He said that a vendor was present due to flooding in the building and in order to assure that personal items of residents were not damaged. He said that this was detected by a review of the video camera footage. He

said that direction has been given that all contractors must leave a note and be accompanied by WCHA staff when entering resident units in the future.

Mr. Fort noted that there had been past incidents where a pest control contractor was present and did leave a card but he noted that the most recent contractor did not do so. Chairman Getty noted that the issue will be addressed and that WCHA will continue to review the applicable protocol, especially with new staff members and new contractors. She thanked Mr. Fort for letting us know of his concerns and that if something happens again, that he should let WCHA know. Mr. Fort departed the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Alan Zais noted that his report had accompanied the Board packet. Chairman Getty congratulated Deputy Director Deb Alfredson on being named to the TASC advisory committee. Deputy Director Deb Alfredson noted that matters at the WCHA are going well. She said that with regard to their involvement at the Jo Daviess County Housing Authority, Kristin Andrews has taken over the Housing Choice Voucher responsibilities there and that the WCHA's involvement is otherwise down to monitoring finances. Deb noted that she does not go there weekly as she has in the past.

She also noted that they had recruited and selected a new employee for an open maintenance position.

Executive Director Alan Zais noted that one of the Moving to Work (MTW) initiatives involves direct rental assistance. He noted that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) began offering this approximately 1½ months ago. Reflecting back, he noted that there was an emergency housing program back in the 1970s that had been tried for one (1) year in Chicago. He said that the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) gave money to recipients that they were, in turn, to pay the landlords but that sometimes tenants would take the money for other purposes and would not pay the landlords. He said that the new HUD initiative is now interested in direct rental assistance and that while there were forty (40) housing authorities looking at involvement in such a program, WCHA is one (1) of fifteen (15) that is seriously considering it. He said that if implemented, it would involve a thirty (30) person demonstration program which would involve money being placed in a "scholarship program" to be used to pay the landlords. He said that the recipient would be trained in doing the inspection and that the contract would be between WCHA and recipient and not between WCHA and the landlord. He said that if implemented, a separate wait list would be used for the demo program. He noted that the initiative would go to HUD for review and then it will come to the Board so that the Commissioners can expect to hear more about this in the near future.

Alan also noted that he had recently addressed the Rockford Apartment Association and that the membership had many compliments for the WCHA and the initiatives of its staff.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Getty noted that there was one (1) item on the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the item on the Consent Agenda. That motion was seconded by Commissioner Potter.

The item on the Consent Agenda was as follows:

- A. Resolution No. 24 R 32 *"Resolution Approving the Minutes of the August 15, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners"*

The motion to approve the item on the Consent Agenda as noted above was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent.

Financial Report

Finance Director Vickie Huwe noted that her report had been submitted with the Board packet. She reminded the Board of the shortfall in Section 8 funding, but that HUD intends to make up the amount involved.

She also discussed a present issue with the Internal Revenue Service involving past payments by the WCHA to 1099 Contractors who apparently did not, in turn, pay the IRS for income taxes. She noted that the IRS is presently saying that WCHA should be withholding those taxes and that it is seeking about \$55,000 from the WCHA as a result. Consultations are being held with the WCHA's accountants and legal counsel regarding this issue.

She also noted that the audit field work has been done by the auditors and a report is expected in the near future.

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Commissioner Comments

None.

Executive Session

A motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Section 2(c)(11) of the Open Meetings Act for purposes of discussing "[l]itigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting" and pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) for "[d]iscussion 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", was made by Commissioner Potter; that motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to the Sections noted above was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. The Executive Session convened at 5:22 p.m.

A motion to come out of Executive Session was made by Commissioner Potter; that motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown. The motion to come out of Executive Session was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. The Executive Session adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Action Taken from Executive Session

A motion to approve the minutes of the Executive Sessions from March 21, 2024; April 18, 2024; May 16, 2024; June 20, 2024; and July 18, 2024 was made by Commissioner Brown; that motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Conard. The motion to approve those minutes was approved by unanimous voice vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent.

A motion to keep closed from public review of the minutes of the Executive Session Minutes from July 21, 2011; March 14, 2018; April 19, 2018; September 19, 2018; January 8, 2024; February 15, 2024; March 21, 2024; April 18, 2024; May 16, 2024; June 20, 2024; and July 18, 2024 was made by Commissioner Potter; that motion was seconded by Vice Charman Conard. That motion to approve those minutes was approved by unanimous voice vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Vice Chairman Conard and that motion was seconded by Commissioner Potter. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle J.A. Potter, Recording Secretary