

MINUTES
GREEN BAY HOUSING AUTHORITY
Thursday, April 28, 2016, 10:30 a.m.
1424 Admiral Court, Second Floor Reading Room
Green Bay, WI 54303

MEMBERS PRESENT: William VandeCastle- Chair, Chiquitta Cotton, and Sandra Popp

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Brad Hansen

OTHERS PRESENT: Terri Refsguard, Dave Johnson, Stephanie Schmutzer, Robyn Hallet, Ka Vang, Suad Abdulahi

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of the March 17, 2016 minutes of the Green Bay Housing Authority.

A motion was made by S. Popp and seconded by C. Cotton to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2016 meeting. Motion carried.

2. Approval of the April 14, 2016 minutes from the Special Meeting of the Green Bay Housing Authority.

A motion was made by S. Popp and seconded by C. Cotton to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2016 meeting. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS:

3. Letter from HUD dated April 1, 2016, regarding the Exclusion of the Use of Arrest Records in Housing Decisions.

R. Hallet stated that Housing Authorities can no longer use arrest records as exclusive reasoning for determining admission or termination from public housing. R. Hallet explained this is a significant change for some Housing Authorities, but for others it is not as substantial. She believes the Green Bay Housing Authority will not be greatly affected by this change in procedure since we already use other forms of data in the determination of assistance. Staff will be reviewing the ACOP to determine any needed amendments. W. VandeCastle inquired of the cause for this decision. R. Hallet was unsure of the direct reasoning, but that it is a common understanding that an arrest can be based on suspicion and does not necessarily result in an actual conviction of a crime. W. VandeCastle relayed a court case in Milwaukee that was connected to termination without an arrest. W. VandeCastle is curious about the exceptions to this rule change, especially in the terms of the BCHA since clients in this program are involved in cases of similar nature. R. Hallet stated that in the conference call she inquired if an applicant has no other supportive information, must the applicant be accepted into the program. HUD answered the applicant must be admitted since the arrest record cannot be the sole reason for denial. The concern is for the instances where an applicant who is under suspicion of a crime is convicted a few months after the arrest and the Authority must evict. W. VandeCastle explained in the case of a BCHA client, police found drugs in the house which is a violation of BCHA policy. In other cases, drugs can be found off of the property such as in a car while driving, which could also be the basis of termination. C. Cotton inquired if there must be data on a conviction for reason of denial even when the arrest was for an action which is in direct violation of the Authority's policy. W. VandeCastle explained if there is evidence of violation of the Authority's policies, for instance drugs on the property, then this can be used for denial. However, if the applicant is arrested for possession of drugs at a friend's house, the Authority

has no jurisdiction to determine ineligibility. S. Schmutzer stated prior history along with an arrest record can be used to substantiate the claim of ineligibility. K. Vang explained this is difficult to determine and gave the example of a case in the past where an applicant was found smoking marijuana at a friend's home. The applicant did not disclose the incident upon application; it was in the arrest record however. There was a discussion on whether or not this was enough to determine eligibility or ineligibility. W. VandeCastle stated this adjustment to the eligibility determination process will cause a great deal of technical issues. In terms of arrest and conviction, this issue has appeared multiple times with clients in the BCHA. The commissioners inquired whether or not denial can be enforced without a conviction. There were other violations in these cases however. T. Refsguard inquired if this a more common issue with applicants or current residents. There was general agreement that this is much more common with applicants than residents. S. Popp stated there are issues with current residents since the possibility of being involved in illegal activity won't stop just because they're renting a new residence; it's hard to screen for if there is no prior record. S. Schmutzer added there is possibility of a plea down which would allow an applicant to lessen the severity of their crime and acquire eligibility.

W. VandeCastle explained there is a grey area for the term of arrest. In some situations a municipal ordinance violation is issued for possession of a small amount of narcotics. This does not have the same severity as an arrest, but it will still appear on a person's record. He explained there is a need for clarification on arrest such as the reason for issuing. R. Hallet indicated that the PIH Notices 2015-19 and 2015-10 would be valuable references.

4. Letter from HUD dated April 1, 2016, regarding fees paid into the Central Office Cost Center (COCC).

S. Schmutzer explained that the OIG has finished their audit of HUD after two years and made several recommendations. One is eliminating the asset management fee which funds the administration of the program. HUD later clarified the need for these fees to the OIG, but the recommendation to eliminate was withdrawn, but the amount that is collected may change. The letter further states that the OIG found HUD was unable to substantiate why they had certain amounts and why there was no active tracking of these funds. Once the funds go to COCC they become un-federalized funds which the OIG was discontented with, therefore in the future the funds will become re-federalize in the COCC and will only be available for certain uses. S. Schmutzer is not as concerned about this portion of the letter, but what is concerning is the changing of the amounts of the administration fees. No suggestions have been made on how to implement this since the exact percentage of change is yet to be determined.

S. Popp inquired about if there were no administration fees, then where would the funds to compensate the COCC staff come from. S. Schmutzer agreed, explaining there is language from HUD stating the purpose for the fees. Her position, R. Hallet's, and other administrative expenses are funded in this manner. K. Vang and S. Abdulahi are funded through the AMPs. Since the administrative positions oversee entire PHA, the cost for their services comes from the COCC. Without these fees compensation is very difficult. Hopefully the change will not be substantial; S. Schmutzer wanted to make the Authority aware of this. However she is unsure of how to proceed with the preparation of the budget at the moment. One option is to proceed as usual and make adjustments when possible throughout the year.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

5. Approval to issue a Request for Quotes for the Office Conversion project, not to exceed \$90,000.

R. Hallet stated the drawings of the plans for the office conversion are in the agenda packets. D. Johnson explained there were some small adjustments made to the plans since the last meeting, such as retaining the kitchenette. R. Hallet explained in regards to the apartment door, the door will stay and have a sign designating it as for staff use only and keep it locked. This will allow the staff to have an extra exit and can analyze how much the door is used and then decide in the future if it needs to be walled off. S. Popp noted the doors in the vestibule will be automatic in order to service those with special needs. There was a general discussion on the entry doors. S. Schmutzer inquired if automated doors going into the vestibule were supposed to be buzzer operated doors. D. Johnson explained the doors will be buzzer operated in order to control who comes in.

S. Popp inquired about where the receptionist will be sitting in the new office. D. Johnson explained the general layout of the office, the receptionist will be placed in a spot that can visibly confirm if there is anyone at the door. R. Hallet raised her concern about the amount of space for seating in the waiting room. D. Johnson explained the area will be tight since the previous plans did not include the new kitchenette, coupled with the portable wall which will be used to block off the kitchenette. R. Hallet expressed concerns about the allotted space for the conference area. Perhaps the area would be better used for storage or extra seating. W. VandeCastle inquired about the average number of people waiting to see the staff. K. Vang explained at most there would be three to four people waiting to be seen; usually the concerns are quickly handled by the staff. There was a general consensus for using the vestibule as space for a waiting area. D. Johnson explained in his discussions with R. Lewis, chairs could be placed in the vestibule for a waiting area.

S. Popp inquired about the size of the conference room. D. Johnson explained the conference room will be seventeen feet long by eleven feet wide. W. VandeCastle inquired about the possibility of moving the kitchenette into the conference room. S. Popp and D. Johnson stated the kitchenette is placed in the determined position due to the plumbing. Additional work and increased cost would be needed to move into the conference room. T. Refsguard inquired about if there was a resident resource room available for reference. K. Vang stated there are numerous resources for the residents placed outside of their current office and the second reading room. T. Refsguard stated in the past her work experienced renovations, the space quickly shrunk as file cabinets and other things were placed in. If the conference room was used as to meet with residents then it would be a good place to have the resource information. K. Vang stated the residents would meet in staffs' offices. R. Hallet indicated the reception area may be a good place to have the resource information if the wall between the conference room and reception was eliminated. K. Vang explained in the ADRC there is a resource room available, which could also be established in Mason Manor. S. Schmutzer explained the vestibule could be used for this purpose since it is always available to the residents and not solely during the hours of operation for the office. There was general agreement there is enough wall space for this.

R. Hallet inquired about suggestions regarding the conference room, whether to proceed with what is planned now or make revisions. C. Cotton inquired about what the conference room will be specifically used for. R. Hallet stated the proposed use was for the GBHA meetings; however the designated space may not be adequate. There was a general discussion about the size of the proposed room; D. Johnson demonstrated the size proposed. A general agreement was reached the size of the room may be adequate. K. Vang stated it would be easy to convert the space into a conference area in the future if there was a need for it. S. Schmutzer explained there is more of an immediate need for a space for files and a copier. There was a general discussion with R. Lewis on the option for eliminating the wall for the conference room. The Authority discussed the option for the having the conference area becoming increased office space, to allow for a work area around the copy machine.

A motion was made by S. Popp and seconded by C. Cotton to convert the conference space into a work area designed by the staff. Motion carried.

A motion was made by S. Popp and seconded by C. Cotton for approval of issuing a Request for Quotes for the Office Conversion project, not to exceed \$90,000. Motion carried.

A motion was made by W. VandeCastle and seconded by S. Popp to subject the changes made to have final approval by R. Hallet and then send as information to the Authority. Motion carried.

6. Discussion and possible action regarding safety procedures.

R. Hallet requested this agenda item be tabled, because due to the current workload, sufficient time has not been put into this item

7. Approval of revision to Chapter 5 of Admission and Continued Occupancy Plan.

R. Hallet explained this agenda item was brought forward with the intention of eliminating some gaps in the ACOP, specifically in regards to how many bedrooms a family qualifies for. Currently the wording indicates that persons of different genders qualify for separate bedrooms, but it's the common understanding that couples in a relationship would share a bedroom. Therefore she has made some changes in order to be in conformance with the BCHA's policy on this matter, which is that adults in a spousal relationship qualify for a shared bedroom. However recently at the WAHA conference a trainer from Nan McKay & Associates explained with the Equal Access Act, PHAs should not be using the phrase "spousal relationship" or anything similar. Inquiries were made to HUD about how PHAs should determine appropriate bedroom size, but as of yet no response has been received. Nan McKay cannot provide guidance for the PHAs, putting the GBHA in a quandary of sorts. R. Hallet drafted an amendment to the ACOP to reflect how the BCHA operates and stated more changes can be made later if Nan McKay is able to receive confirmation from HUD on this issue. S. Popp inquired if R. Hallet was seeking approval for these revisions. R. Hallet concurred. She indicated this revision includes language stating that if a family includes a pregnant woman the pregnancy will be considered in determining the family size.

A motion was made by W. VandeCastle and seconded by C. Cotton to approve the revisions to Chapter 5 of Admission and Continued Occupancy Plan. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT AND BILLS:

A motion was made by S. Popp and seconded by W. VandeCastle to take up the Financial Reports and Bills next since S. Schmutzer had to be excused. Motion carried.

S. Schmutzer explained she made a change on the summary page for Excess and Shortfall. There are excess funds for Mason Manor and Scattered Sites; however, the Authority is not yet at the end of the budget year. S. Popp inquired if most of these funds were allocated. S. Schmutzer explained a substantial portion of the funds are allocated; the portion of six month expenses is what HUD allows. As more expenses occur the number of allowable reserve increases. However since the Authority is trying to cut back on expenses it has been draining.

S Schmutzer explained the investigation fees for Mason Manor and Scattered Sites are exceeding the budgets. This is due in part to move out costs such as terminating and conducting background checks on applicants. These are necessary to the move in process. She explained that other fees for Mason Manor were Maintenance Non-Contract, which was work on the doors of the building and the purchase of ice melt. She stated in the future she will discuss with R. Lewis regarding the best time to make this purchase; either on an annual or bi-annual basis since there is confusion on whether or not to keep this in the budget. For Scattered Sites,

there was some rewiring needed due to power issues in a couple units. Regarding Computer Support and Miscellaneous fees, this is what was asked to be brought back to the Authority. S. Schmutzer stated the HUD office in Milwaukee was contacted; there was a suggestion made to have a Cost Allocation Plan established and agreed upon by the Authority and the City before billings starts. She explained a Plan will have to be created or the older plan needs to be found and used as a template. A plan cannot be forced upon the Authority but rather it has to be agreed to by both parties.

A motion was made by C. Cotton and seconded by W. VandeCastle to accept and place on file the Financial Reports for the month of March 2016. Motion carried.

Regarding the bills, S. Schmutzer explained there is nothing of note for the month of March. She clarified that the bills from the Architects Group is for the planning of the office conversion. S. Schmutzer stated there will be some increases in water expenses in the future. W. VandeCastle explained the water utility has charged 3 percent in previous years; however the Public Service Corporation has stated the water utility must increase the amount charged for the City of Green Bay. S. Schmutzer inquired if there was an amount agreed to at this point. W. VandeCastle explained in the last negotiation the amount was agreed to be brought down to six percent, but may increase to nine percent. This is all subject to rate review by the PFC which monitors other utilities in Wisconsin. S. Schmutzer added the other utilities some include sewer and electrical, but all water utilities are under the PFC. W. VandeCastle explained this increase has nothing to do with the lead piping issue, this has been budgeted for years. Over the years the lead piping has been replaced.

A motion was by C. Cotton and seconded by S. Popp to accept and place on file the bills for the month of March 2016. Motion carried.

INFORMATIONAL:

8. Review of Housing Choice Voucher section of Lead the Way training.

R. Hallet explained the Authority agreed to go over this portion of the training even though it does not directly relate to the GBHA. R. Hallet presented the Housing Choice Voucher section of the Lead the Way training to the Authority and opened up for discussion. The members took the quiz of the section together. There was general agreement toward continuing the training and discussing one segment per meeting in the future.

STAFF REPORT:

9. Langan Report for the Month of March, 2016.

R. Hallet stated there were a low number of background checks for this month.

A motion was made by W. VandeCastle and seconded by C. Cotton to accept and place on file the Langan Report for the month of March 2016. Motion carried.

10. Occupancy Presentation and Report for the month of April, 2016.

R. Hallet explained due to prioritizing there was not sufficient time to prepare the photos. K. Vang stated there is a lot of work for the staff to do. There are a few units on hold due to a pest control situation. Some are leased for the months to come; there is generally an applicant assigned for each unit already. The staff is averaging four new leases in a month. For Scattered Sites there was another case of an applicant almost leasing up and then backing out at the last minute. There were two deaths at Mason Manor, one of which is another vacancy not yet reflected on this report. S. Popp inquired about the lease up for September 23rd is due to repairs needed. K. Vang explained the family didn't clean the unit. W. VandeCastle inquired about the

situation of a tenant who broke the lease after two months, which K. Vang explained. C. Cotton inquired about 100 Pine St. since the lease was only for a two week period. K. Vang explained the tenant stated her mother was ill and left the unit. T. Refsguard inquired about the security deposit. K. Vang stated the security deposit for Mason Manor is \$200 and for a two bedroom Scattered Site is \$400, three bedrooms is \$550 and 4 bedrooms is \$700

T. Refsguard inquired if the pest control situation was due to bed bugs. K. Vang explained this is an issue that the staff has been dealing with for a while. The ozone machine being used has been effective and there is more cooperation from the residents. There are preventative measures being taken, including dogs coming in to search for infestations on a quarterly basis.

A motion was made by W. VandeCastle and Seconded by S. Popp to accept the occupancy report for the month of April 2016. Motion carried.

11. Status of Senior Property Manager.

R. Hallet explained there were 24 applicants, five moved on to an interview and one declined. Four interviewed, two of which were in close contention for the position. The first candidate had questionable results from the background check. It was determined this candidate was not in the best interests of the Authority so the decision was made to move forward with the other applicant. The background checks for this candidate were just concluded with the desired results. The next step will be for an interview with the Major and the Director of Human Resources before an offer can be made. The candidate will likely need to give their current employer a two week notice; therefore, it could be the third week of May before she is able to start. K. Vang explained the staff will be installing the extra computer this coming week to provide the Property Manager with a work station.

R. Hallet noted that the GBHA meeting for the month of May will be at the NeighborWorks headquarters in order to discuss and get a tour of the Farmory Project.

A motion for adjournment was made by W. VandeCastle, seconded by C. Cotton. Motion carried.

The GBHA meeting for April 28, 2016, adjourned at 12:07 pm.

CM: RAH: jd