

MINUTES OF HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: 24 August 2010
TIME: 4:00 PM
PLACE: Housing and Community Development Department
350 West 6th Street, Suite 312, Dubuque, IA 52001

Chairperson Kapler, following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law, called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

Commissioners Present:	Lynn Sutton David Kapler Judie Root	Jim Holz Dorothy Culbertson Sister Dorothy Schwendinger, OSF
Commissioners Absent:	William Helling Lisa McAllister	
Staff Present:	David Harris Janet Walker	Cpl. Mike Kane Jessica Kieffer
Public Present:	Alex Kornya, staff attorney at Iowa Legal Aid	

Review and Certification of Minutes of 27 July 2010 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Schwendinger moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Root seconded. Commissioner Holz abstained. All others present in favor. Motion passed.

Oaths of Office to Re-Appointed Commissioners: Sr. Dorothy Schwendinger, Judie Root
The City Council reappointed Commissioners Schwendinger and Root for another term. The Commissioners took their oaths of office.

Correspondence/Public Input

Commissioner Kapler shared that Commissioner Frommelt resigned from her position on the Housing Commission effective immediately.

Old Business

Vacancies

David reminded the commissioners that there are now two open seats on the Housing Commission as well as the open position on the Community Development Commission for a Housing Commission liaison.

New Business

Administrative Plan Change: Authorized moves during first year

Janet explained that staff was requesting to change the administrative plan regarding portability during the first year. The requested change would require that if neither household head nor spouse had a legal residence in the jurisdiction of the housing authority at the time of application, the family must lease a unit in the housing authority jurisdiction for one year before becoming eligible for portability. David explained that this policy change would be recommended to the City Manager and be subject to the Manager's approval. Commissioner Root motioned to approve the policy change. Commissioner Schwendinger seconded. All present in favor.

Policy Change: Moratorium on issuing housing vouchers

Janet discussed that the projections are showing as of September 1, 2010 the number of Section 8 vouchers should be below 900. Staff is uncertain if vouchers will begin to be issued again or if voucher issuance will remain frozen. Commissioner Kapler stated that going below 900 vouchers would result in loss of more administrative dollars than budgeted. Commissioner Schwendinger motioned that a letter be written to the City Manager on behalf of the Commission stating that the Commissioners are not in favor of further reduction to the number of vouchers at this time. Commissioner Culbertson seconded. All present in favor.

Alex Kornya, staff attorney from Iowa Legal Aid joined the meeting at 4:07pm.

Homeless Assistance (HPRP) Program Policy Changes

1.) Requiring Criminal Background Checks

2.) Requiring Section 8 Program Local Preference Points for Eligibility

David explained that staff is requesting that in order for applicants to be eligible for the HPRP program, a criminal background check be instituted. In addition, a policy requiring HPRP applicants to qualify for local preference points as they would to qualify for the Section 8 program would be instituted as well. Staff has conferred with HUD and has received the approval for these changes. Alex Kornya expressed his concern that implementing a criminal background check will limit some persons from receiving assistance and he questioned where else they would turn to for assistance. Alex discussed that other Community Action Agencies that are administering the HPRP program in Iowa are less restrictive and assist people who are otherwise not served by traditional programs. He feels that non-violent simple misdemeanors are holding people back from getting assistance. Janet explained that the integrity of the HPRP program and any City program must be maintained. Corporal Kane added that people must be held accountable for their behavior. After a lengthy discussion, the Commissioners requested that a memo be distributed to them outlining what actions staff would like taken and the rationale behind it before they make any recommendations for policy changes.

Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)

The Commissioners received a summary of the SEMAP report that staff submitted to HUD.

Janet explained that the SEMAP assessment is required annually within 60 days after the end of its fiscal year. The assessment concerns the performance of the PHA and provides assurance that there is no evidence of deficient performance. HUD uses the information and other data to assess PHA management capabilities and deficiencies and to assign overall performance rating to the PHA.

Information Sharing

Complaints Received

Commissioners received a summary of the complaints the Housing Department has received since the last meeting.

Commissioner orientation materials

The Commissioners received an updated packet of orientation materials including a staff directory, glossary of terms, Housing Choice Vouchers Fact Sheet, Top 10 Myths: Dubuque's Section 8 Housing Program and a list of the recently-adopted administrative changes to the Section 8 program. David explained that some of this information is also on the City of Dubuque's website. Commissioner Schwendinger suggested that the Top 10 Myths be changed to say Top 10 Misconceptions or Top 10 Misnomers.

Project Concern financial assistance programs

The Commissioners received a memo from Jenny Manders, Information and Referral Director for Project Concern, explaining their homeless assistance programs.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 4:55pm.

Minutes taken by:



Jessica Kieffer
Recording Secretary

Respectfully submitted by:



David Harris
Department Director

