

MINUTES OF HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: 28 July 2009
TIME: 4:00 PM
PLACE: Housing and Community Development Department
350 West 6th Street, Suite 312, Dubuque, IA 52001

Commissioner Schwendinger, following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law, called the meeting to order at 4:03 pm.

Janet explained to the Commissioners that the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson were unable to attend the meeting. Per the regulations the attending Commissioners must vote on a Commissioner to preside over the meeting. Commissioner Culbertson nominated Commissioner Schwendinger. Commissioner Root Seconded. All present in favor.

Commissioners Present:	Lynn Sutton Linda Frommelt Sister Dorothy Schwendinger, OSF	Judie Root Dorothy Culbertson
Commissioners Absent:	Char Eddy Bill Helling	Jim Holz David Kapler
Staff Present:	Janet Walker Jessica Kieffer	Cpl. Mike Kane
Public Present:	None	

Review and Certification of Minutes of 23 June 2009 Commission Meeting

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

Correspondence/Public Input

None

Old Business

Section 8 Homeownership Brochure

Janet shared the Section 8 Homeownership brochure with the Commissioners per Commissioner Root's prior request and explained the income requirements to qualify for the Homeownership Program. Commissioner Root had some questions about the rehabilitation of homes and the costs to the City. Janet suggested that this be added to the agenda for the next meeting when staff from the rehab department would be available to answer the questions.

New Business

Review of the Section 8 Assisted Housing Application

Janet explained that there was concern that sometimes applicants may not understand some of the questions on the Section 8 Housing Application so Legal Aid was approached and asked to review and provide feedback on our application. Janet explained she is also interested in input from the Commissioners. Commissioner Schwendinger agreed with Legal Aid's suggestion to add the definitions of criminal activities on page 4 with the appropriate question. Currently the definitions are listed on the final page of the application. Legal Aid also suggested we eliminate the question asking "Does anyone else live in your current unit that will not be in your unit once you receive rental assistance"? Commissioner Sutton and Commissioner Root feel that this question should not be eliminated. Janet suggested that the question be simplified to "Who are you currently residing with? Commissioner Schwendinger wondered why we need to know who's living in the unit now; she feels it could be a privacy issue. Cpl. Kane explained that it creates a trail of "who's who." Often these names will come up when he's performing an investigation and it can be helpful to prove that someone is committing fraud on the Section 8 Program. Commissioner Culbertson feels that this information is vital. Janet thanked the Commissioners for their input and explained she will be making some changes to the application.

Administrative Plan Change – Section II – Eligibility Criteria (1) (a) (v)

Janet explained that this change allows for single youths exiting the Dubuque Foster Care Program to be provided assistance according to the ranking system along with all other single member households that consist of elderly disabled or single displaced persons. The reason for this change is to include Dubuque County Foster Care youths in the single displaced persons category.

Administrative Plan Change – Section II – Eligibility Criteria (1) (b) (v)

Janet explained that this second change to Section II is to define two persons sharing residency as a couple in the definition of family. The purpose of this definition of family is to address the concern of having single persons who may not immediately qualify as a single member household from adding more single persons to the household in order to obtain assistance as a family under the "Two-or-More" Member Household category. This change has been reviewed and approved by the director of the Human Rights Department.

Commissioner Root motioned to approve both amendments to the Administrative Plan. Commissioner Culbertson seconded. All present in favor.

Section 8 Management Assessment Plan (SEMAP) Report for FY2009

Janet explained that each year she must perform a quality control of case files, waiting list and inspections to ensure that we're consistent and meeting administrative policies and HUD Regulations, to comply with the SEMAP Assessment. The Commission must approve the submission of the report to HUD. Janet also explained that HUD utilizes this tool to measure the Housing Authority's performance. Judie motioned to approve the submission of the report. Commissioner Sutton seconded. All present in favor.

Information Sharing

Commissioner Culbertson discussed that she is uncertain if she will be renewing her term as a Housing Commissioner. She feels the Commission has made great progress with a lot of things but she doesn't feel she is contributing any longer. Since Cpl. Kane and previously Lt. Ramirez were put on staff to assist with investigations, the clients that were requesting hearings no longer have anything to challenge because the investigators and staff have done such a fantastic job.

Cpl. Kane shared that so far in 2009, approximately 220 investigations have been started. Of that number, 99 of the investigations are for criminal or drug related activity, misrepresentation or for clients not living in the unit where they're receiving benefits. Of the 99 investigations, 44 terminations have been filed and roughly 34 cases are still open and being investigated. The remaining are investigations on backgrounds that the caseworkers have requested.

The Commissioners requested Commissioner Culbertson to stay on as a Commissioner. Her feedback is valued and appreciated; she also offers guidance for the other commission members.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Root moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:43PM. All present in favor.

Minutes taken by:



Jessica Kieffer
Recording Secretary

Respectfully submitted by:



David Harris
Department Director