

MINUTES FOR HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, March 23, 2021
TIME: 4:00 p.m.
PLACE: Housing and Community Development Department
350 West 6th Street, Suite 312; Dubuque, IA 52001

Chairperson Rick Baumhover called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law.

Commissioners Present: Rick Baumhover
Michelle Becwar
Janice Craddieth
Hilary Dalton
Amy Eudaley
Gail Weitz
Sam Wooden

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: Alexis Steger (left at 4:40)
Gina Hodgson
Cate Richter

Public Present:

Certification of Minutes – February 23, 2021 Housing Commission Meeting

Commissioner Dalton moved to approve the Minutes for the February 23, 2021 Housing Commission Meeting. Commissioner Craddieth seconded. Roll call. All present (7) in favor. Motion passed.

Correspondence/Public Input

Commissioner Wooden forwarded an email from Michaela Freiburger to all commissioner and Commissioner Dalton read the email regarding Renter Energy Conversations to take place in March and April.

New Business

a) Resignation of David Wall

Alexis Steger, Housing & Community Development Director, stated that we accepted resignation and position has been listed as available for application. Gina Hodgson, Assisted Housing Supervisor, stated that a letter of appreciation will be mailed tomorrow.

b) Resignation of Suzanne Stroud

Alexis Steger, Housing & Community Development Director, stated that we accepted resignation and position has been listed as available for application. Gina Hodgson, Assisted Housing Supervisor, stated that a letter of appreciation will be mailed tomorrow.

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- c) Set Public Hearing for PHA Annual Plan for May 11, 2021 (will need to approve a move of the regularly scheduled May meeting up to the 11th to meet the guidelines for HUD submittal)

Commissioner Eudaly motioned to approve the public hearing and regular May meeting be scheduled for May 11, 2021. Commissioner Dalton seconded. Roll call. All present (7) in favor. Motion passed.

- d) CARES Act Funding – Landlord Incentive Programs Overview

Steger explained we are offering two landlord incentives effective April 1, 2021. One is a \$1,000.00 new landlord bonus for landlords who sign contract with Housing Choice Voucher participant in units in certain census tracts that have low availability of Assisted Housing units and that have not rented to a Housing Choice Voucher participant in that unit since 1/1/2012. The other is again for unit in those same census tracts where the landlord is holding the unit to lease up a Housing Choice Voucher participant. They must notify us at least 30 days in advance of when it will be vacant so we can list in our our courtesy listing and any private advertising must include “we will accept Housing Choice Vouchers.” This will cover up to one month’s rent if they do lease up a Housing Choice Voucher participant. The only exception to the census tract restriction is for units that have three or more bedrooms – both programs will apply to these units no matter where in the city they are located.

A third program is for damage protection fund any where within Dubuque County for up to \$2,500.00. This is for excess damages above and beyond the security deposit for Assisted Housing tenants. There are requirements to qualify for this including move in documentation, a landlord doing a check-in inspection within three months and move out inspection so it’s fully documented.

Another program is the Energy Savers Program using CDBG funding for landlords who are willing to accept Housing Choice Vouchers for two years, rent at fair market rate and serve a low- to moderate-income person. They can get their water heater (up to \$1,500.00) or heating system (up to \$3,500.00) replaced. The intent is to lower the utility costs for tenant so the utilities must be in the tenant’s name. A secondary purpose is to lower our carbon footprint so it must be at least ten years old and must go from a low efficiency to a high efficiency appliance.

The State of Iowa is also accepting applications to assist with up to 12 months of rental and utility assistance due to COVID-19 related situations.

A flyer will be sent out to all landlords, the information will be put into the City Newsletter, the flyers will be available at our office and will be shared with community partners.

- e) Admin Plan Revision: Briefings response timeline change

Hodgson reviewed a change to our Administrative Plan. Since the online briefing is now available and can be done at an applicant’s convenience, we shortened the time frame to complete the briefing and questionnaire and return required paperwork. Briefings are still available via phone or in person if an appointment is scheduled if needed but applicants a no longer required to come here to complete that. Commissioner Weitz motioned to approve the revision. Commissioner Craddieth seconded. Roll call. Motion passed with 6 in favor and Commissioner Eudaley abstaining.

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- f) Proposal by Rick Baumhover to hold Housing Commission meeting 1 time per quarter at a rotating location (TBD) throughout the community spark interest and participation once COVID restrictions are lifted.

After discussion, it was agreed for continuity sake, the meeting should be held at the same place but there are plenty of opportunities to get more involved with the public. Hodgson will check with the City Manager's Office to possibly obtain the meeting schedules that Gerolyn O'Conner used to hand out.

Reports

- a) CDBG Advisory Commission Report

No report provided.

- b) Assisted Housing Waiting List Statistical Summary

Cate Richter, Assisted Housing Coordinator, stated that there are currently 25 people on the waiting list from February. They would not be pulled and we will not open the waiting list for a few months due to funding issues.

- c) Housing Choice Voucher Participant Statistical Summary

Richter stated that we had an increase of about 20 in participants to 873.

- d) Denial/Termination Meeting Results

Richter stated that there was just one proposal for termination which was for drugs in the unit and we opted to proceed with termination.

Information Sharing

- a) Hodgson stated that Mike Belmont started as the Assistant Director last week. He comes with years of experience in the architecture field so is very familiar with building codes.
- b) Hodgson stated that the Source of Income ban passed the House and Senate and is awaiting the Governor's signature.
- c) Hodgson stated that of the four applications that we know for the two vacant seats, one is a voucher participant and one is a landlord.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Eudaley moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Dalton seconded. Motion passed by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

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Minutes taken by:



Cate Richter

Assisted Housing Coordinator

Respectfully Submitted:



Alexis Steger, Department Director