

MINUTES OF HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING

DATE: 27 October 2009
TIME: 4:00 PM
PLACE: Housing and Community Development Department
350 West 6th Street, Suite 312, Dubuque, IA 52001

Vice Chairperson Eddy, following staff assurance of compliance with Iowa Open Meeting Law, called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Commissioners Present: William Helling Lynn Sutton Judie Root
David Kapler Linda Frommelt Dorothy Culbertson
Char Eddy Jim Holz
Sister Dorothy Schwendinger, OSF

Commissioners Absent: All Present

Staff Present: David Harris Janet Walker Jessica Kieffer
Joleen Patterson Cpl. Mike Kane

Public Present: Barb Fischer

Review and Certification of Minutes of 25 August 2009 Commission Meeting

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

Correspondence/Public Input

None

Commissioner Kapler joined the meeting at 4:11 pm.

Old Business

Liaison with Community Development Commission

David explained that there is an open position on the Community Development Commission and shared a list of duties and responsibilities for the open position. Commissioner Eddy stated that she would be interested in participating. Commissioner Holz motioned to nominate Commissioner Eddy to the Community Development Commission. Commissioner Root seconded. All present in favor. Motion passed.

New Business

Rehab Program Delinquency Report

In response to a previous inquiry from a Housing Commission member, Joleen explained that the Rehab Department has 575 loans in the city system worth \$8.5 million and only 3% are delinquent.

Arrest Activity Analysis in Section 8 Housing

David explained that Alta Vista Research has been contracted to conduct a study to compare arrest frequency in both Section 8 and non-Section 8 rental units in the City of Dubuque. The report should be available by the November meeting.

Section 8 Annual Settlement Report FY 2009

David distributed a reprint from the National NAHRO Monitor to inform the Commissioners what's happening with programs around the country regarding the insufficient administrative fees. He explained that the current HUD Administration is performing a nationwide survey on PHAs to find out what the short falls are and what is needed from the PHAs.

For fiscal year 2009, the Section 8 Program experienced a loss of \$166,000. Janet explained that one thing that largely affects the program is that HUD prorated the Administrative fees and only paid 90.715% of what was actually earned, resulting in a reduction of \$39,600. Other contributing factors were that investments did not earn as much money as previous years. Last year there was a higher turnover rate of clients and as a result the leasing and occupancy rate decreased which came to an approximate loss of \$38,700. Janet explained that to reestablish full utilization, four briefings per week were held (approximately 80-100 people per week) to get more applicants. There was also an increased expense for the Section 8 Investigator of \$82,600 and now a part-time receptionist. Some of the ideas for addressing the funding short-falls include applying for a grant to cover the FSS coordinator salary, proposing that the Police Department pay the investigator salary and remaining 100% occupied and leased.

Discussion of Illegal or Objectionable Landlord Practices; Complaint from Barb Fischer on Behalf of Participants

David explained that Barb had previously met with him and discussed the treatment of a tenant she knows by a certain landlord. Barb is concerned that landlords are able to continue renting units in Dubuque when they are using objectionable practices. In the instance she knows of, the landlord accepted a security deposit from a prospective tenant, moved this person into a unit and within 10 days of the tenant moving in, sent an eviction notice even though the tenant's rent was not due for another 10 days. Barb is asking staff if there is something that the Housing Commission can do to assist with Landlord behaviors.

Janet explained that the Section 8 program has a strict code of conduct for both tenants and Landlords. If a landlord violates the rules that have been set forth, their contract could be terminated.

Commissioner Holz asked staff if the landlords have to be licensed. David explained that the rental units are licensed however it's based on the Housing Code Standards, not the landlords behavior. Commissioner Holz stated that for landlord behavior problems that are not Section 8 units, it would be a legal issue not a Housing Department issue.

Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Evaluation – FY 2009
Commissioner Holz congratulated Janet and her staff on their performance and 100% score.

Amendment to Administrative Plan: To Address Student Homelessness

Janet explained that she and David met with Shirley Horstmann from the Dubuque Community School District regarding homeless students in grades K – 12. Staff is proposing to allow preference points for residency if the family can provide proof that the children are enrolled in school. The children could be provided more stability in their lives however there may be applicants that enroll their children in school just to get the preference points to move to the top of the waiting list. It was discussed that some applicants may receive their voucher after getting the residency points for enrolling their children in Dubuque schools and then port to another city with their voucher at the soonest possible date. It was suggested that the rule allowing residents to port to another city in less than a year be changed, requiring that all voucher holders not port until they've been in Dubuque for at least a year. Commissioner Root recommended the discussion be tabled until staff can find out if the porting rule can be changed. All present in favor.

Information Sharing

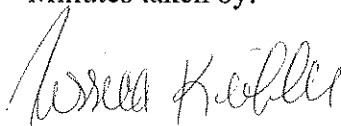
Safe Community Task Force

Commissioner Sutton explained that the Safe Community Task Force is meeting tonight (October 27) to discuss what they hope to accomplish and to create four subcommittees: 1) neighborhood engagement/social capital, 2) enforcement, 3) management of physical environment, and 4) research and facts. Four to five task force members will serve on each subcommittee and additional volunteers are being sought.

Adjournment

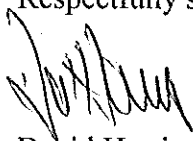
There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Holz moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:20PM. Commissioner Helling seconded. All present in favor.

Minutes taken by:



Jessica Kieffer
Recording Secretary

Respectfully submitted by:



David Harris
Department Director