

**ST. CLOUD HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
ANNUAL MEETING**

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

The Annual Meeting of the St. Cloud HRA was held on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, via ZOOM. Chair Nancy Gohman called the meeting to order at 6:26 p.m. after a Study Session had adjourned. She presided over the meeting from the St. Cloud HRA Boardroom, 1225 W. St. Germain Street. The regular meeting followed immediately.

1. Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioners present: All - Mike Conway, Abdi Daisane, Seal Dwyer, Jeff Goerger, Nancy Gohman, George Hontos and Hani Jacobson. Pledge of Allegiance was spoken.

Chair Gohman introduced board member, Hani Jacobson, who was appointed to the Board on December 21st.

2. Approval of Agenda – Agenda approved as presented.

3. Election of Board Officers for 2021: Commissioner Goerger moved for Commissioner Gohman to remain as Chair; Commissioner Conway seconded the motion. All Commissioners (with exception of Chair Gohman) voted in favor. The motion carried.

Commissioner Conway moved for Commissioner Goerger to remain as Vice Chair; Commissioner Hontos seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor (with exception of Commissioner Goerger). The motion carried.

Commissioner Conway moved for Commissioner Hontos to remain as Secretary; Commissioner Daisane seconded the motion. All Commissioners (with exception of Commissioner Hontos) voted in favor. The motion carried.

4. Review and Approval of Professional Responsibilities and the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for Commissioners: Commissioner Dwyer moved for approval; Commissioner Goerger seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

5. Designation of committees:

Committee of the Whole: Commissioner Conway moved for approval: Commissioner Daisane seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

Audit Committee: Commissioners Conway, Dwyer and Gohman serve on this committee. Commissioners Conway, Dwyer and Gohman stated they would stay; Commissioner Goerger made a motion for Conway, Dwyer, Gohman; Commissioner Daisane seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

Personnel Committee: Commissioners Dwyer, Goerger and Hontos serve on this committee. Commissioners Dwyer, Goerger and Hontos stated they would stay; Commissioner Daisane stated he would like to serve; Commissioner Hontos said he would exit. Commissioner Conway made a motion for Daisane, Dwyer and Goerger; Commissioner Gohman seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

6. Designation of Official Newspaper – Commissioner Goerger moved to continue with the *St. Cloud Times*

as the HRA's official newspaper; Commissioner Dwyer seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

7. Designation of Official Depository - Commissioner Conway moved to continue using Liberty Bank Minnesota as the HRA's official depository; Commissioner Goerger seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried. Finance Director Karen Rizer, in response to a question of Commissioner Conway, she said she has been waiting for the debt refinancings to be completed and all tax credit properties to be 100% owned by the HRA before going out for proposals of depositories.

8. Designation of Legal Representation – Louise Reis, Executive Director, stated in November 2020 a Request for Proposal was issued. Rinke Noonan Law Firm, St. Cloud, was the only response. They were selected as HRA general counsel. Commissioner Goerger moved for approval; Commissioner Dwyer seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

9. Designation of Auditors – Karen Rizer, Finance Director, stated the Board already approved Redpath and Company, LTD as the HRA auditor and Schlenner Wenner & Company as Riverside's auditors; however, it must also be designated each year at the annual meeting. Commissioner Dwyer moved for approval; Commissioner Goerger seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

10. Set Commissioner Compensation for 2021 – Ms. Rizer stated to the Board that MN Statute 469.011, subdivision 4 was included in the Board packet for their review and vote. Further, for new commissioners, she gave the background of this decision over the past couple of years. Commissioner Hontos moved for the compensation to remain at the rate of \$75.00 per meeting as allowed by statute and a maximum of \$75 per day; Commissioner Dwyer seconded the motion for discussion. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

11. Meeting Dates and Times – Chair Gohman asked if anyone had any changes or objections to the proposed schedule; there being none, Commissioner Hontos moved for approval; Commissioner Daisane seconded the motion. All Commissioners were in favor of dates and times proposed for the 4th Wednesday of each month with the following exceptions: November up one week to November 17, 2021; December up one week to December 15, 2021. All Commissioners voted in favor. The motion carried.

12. Annual Reports for 2020 – Ms. Reis referred the Board to their packet showing a *Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for the Board of Commissioners*. She stated annually the Commissioners are asked to read and sign off on the form stating they understand and agreed to its terms. Chair Gohman requested all Commissioners return a copy of the signed form to Administrative Services Manager, Sandy Hunter.

Ms. Reis moved onto page 7 of the packet with a chart showing that the St. Cloud HRA has been a high performer since 2002 in both Section 8 and Public Housing. She said for 2020 the scores of 100 in SEMAP and 95 in PHAS would remain due to COVID giving the agency a high performer rating from 2002-2020. Chair Gohman thanked staff for this achievement.

Lori Lygre, Voucher Programs Manager moved on reporting for the Housing Choice Voucher Program and Special Programs. Ms. Lygre gave the high points of her report beginning with a chart showing the numbers of vouchers used, cost, number of individuals affected, and demographics.

Ms. Lygre said COVID-19 had a big impact on tenants, landlords and staff; especially with services and the changes in correspondence all being through the mail and phone rather than in person. She said there were some delays in services and significant delays with the mail that created issues. Ms. Lygre said with fewer participants with earned income it caused the average housing assistance payment to go up.

Ms. Lygre stated 82 applicants were contacted for eligibility for the Mainstream Vouchers and of these 64 responded. Commissioner Hontos asked for the total number of vouchers included in all programs. Ms. Lygre responded there is a total of 1,127 vouchers, not including vouchers ported-in to our jurisdiction.

Commissioner Hontos also stated he saw an increase in the request for larger family units and if there was a reason this was going up. Chair Gohman responded there is less availability and lack of affordable large units in the area. Ms. Lygre added that there has been some movement around St. Cloud State University where landlords have turned their college rentals into single family homes that has helped.

Executive Director Louise Reis reported for the Public Housing, Section 8 New Construction, Affordable and Tax Credit programs. She stated Property Manager Matt Swanson created the report but was unavailable to present. Ms. Reis went through some of the highpoints for the 781 units that fall under these programs. She said Riverside Apartments probably saw the biggest impact in turnover due to COVID-19. Ms. Reis stated when the virus began some residents moved into assisted living or back in with family. She said staff found it was a little harder to fill the vacancies than it has been in the past that most likely resulted from the pandemic and people not wanting to move during it.

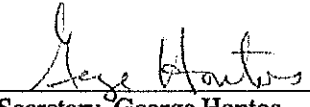
Chair Gohman noted the current length of stay for Swisshelm Village and Westwood Village were shorter than most and if there appears to be a reason. Ms. Reis responded it is not always known why tenants move, but last year she was aware that five renters bought homes and some moved because they were able to find a larger unit; Swisshelm and Westwood's largest units are three bedrooms.

Paul Soenneker, Project Manager, introduced himself and began with the capital improvement projects for the year. He first announced over the span of years the HRA has issued 586 CDBG loans totaling \$6.1 million. Commissioner Conway commented that 7 loans were repaid under the CDBG single family program and was curious as to the number. Mr. Soenneker replied his guess would be because the interest rates are currently low and they were able to refinance. Commissioner Conway asked how many applicants were denied when they applied. Mr. Soenneker said he would need to find out and would send the response to all by email.

Mr. Soenneker continued to go over projects completed and in progress given in his report. He said for 2020 there were 19 projects completed under the CDBG program with 3 in progress and a total of \$371,000 used.

Chair Gohman thanked staff members for the reports and the work done by the agency. There being no further questions, Chair Gohman adjourned the annual meeting at 7:23 p.m. The meeting moved immediately into the regular meeting.

ATTEST:



Secretary, George Hontos



Chair, Nancy Gohman