

**ST. CLOUD HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
STUDY SESSION**

**Wednesday, March 27, 2024**

A Study Session for the St. Cloud HRA Board of Commissioners was held on Wednesday, March 27, 2024. Chair Nancy Gohman called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Commissioners present: Mike Conway, John Dvorak, Seal Dwyer, Nancy Gohman, George Hontos, Hani Jacobson, and Carol Lewis.

Executive Director, Louise Reis, said the current Personnel Manual for the employees of the St. Cloud HRA was developed and approved in 1999, and while there have been updates to current policies and new policies added, this is the first time that a complete review of all policies has been completed. Ms. Reis said the majority of changes included updating verbiage and revising policies set by the State of Minnesota for 2024. The Personnel Committee reviewed the manual and recommended sending to the full board for approval.

Commissioner Hontos asked how involved the legal team was. Ms. Reis said the HRA staff had gone through the manual and made updates and notes for policies that required revision, and legal counsel reviewed and provided changes and suggestions. Mr. Conway asked from a legal perspective if the manual was approved and Ms. Reis confirmed yes, the HRA's legal counsel says the agency is covered as an employer with the updated manual.

Commissioner Lewis asked about skilled versus unskilled employees in policy 02.12. Finance Director Karen Rizer said most HRA jobs are classified as skilled. Commissioner Lewis said it seems that skilled jobs require a longer training period than the six-month probationary period mentioned in the manual. Commissioner Conway said he believes the policy is less about skilled versus unskilled, but are they a quality employee for the agency and that is to be determined in the probationary period. Commissioner Dwyer asked how the probationary period was determined. Ms. Reis responded it has been a part of the manual since the inception. Commissioner Gohman asked if the agency has to wait six months before terminating an employee and Ms. Reis responded no, there are several opportunities for coaching and reviews or written warnings prior to the end of the six-month probationary period.

Ms. Reis said several of the benefits policies were condensed into one policy, versus having one for dental, health, short-term disability, and long-term disability. Commissioner Lewis asked about policy 05.01 and the requirement to work 30 or more hours per week to be eligible for benefits and whether or not it would be optimal to update that to 20 hours per week. Ms. Rizer responded that if updated to 20 hours per week, it could get complex with caretaker hours because during winter months they can have upwards of 20 hours a week. Commissioner Lewis asked if providing insurance to the caretakers has been considered. Ms. Rizer said there is significant turnover with the caretaker position and providing additional benefits, on top of reimbursing rent, could create a burden for the agency.


On page 90, Ms. Reis addressed the addition of the Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) Policy. Part-time employees (including caretakers) are eligible to accrue ESST at the rate of two minutes for every one hour they worked and can be used in 15-minute increments. Ms. Reis also noted highlights shared with the Personnel Committee included updating pronouns; paid-time off taken in 15-minute increments versus 30-minute increments, optional summer hours, as well as an updated telework policy. Commissioner Conway asked if the assumption is employees come in and work at the office unless they cannot make it in. Ms. Rizer said there are still positions that cannot work from home due to software constraints, but the agency is hopeful with the transition to new software this summer more positions will have the flexibility to work remotely.

Commissioner Lewis moved to policy 06.08 and asked if “vaping” should be included because e-cigarette and other electronic smoke devices may not be specific enough. Ms. Reis confirmed vaping would be included in the manual that is presented to staff.

There being no further discussion, the Study Session adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
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Secretary, Hani Jacobson

  
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Chair, Nancy Gohman

**ST. CLOUD HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**Wednesday, March 27, 2024**

A Regular Meeting for the St. Cloud HRA Board of Commissioners was held on Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 1225 West St. Germain Street. Chair Nancy Gohman called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m. Commissioners present: Mike Conway, John Dvorak, Seal Dwyer, Nancy Gohman, George Hontos, Hani Jacobson, and Carol Lewis.

Consent Agenda:

1. Roll call was taken and the pledge of allegiance spoken.
2. Approval of Agenda – Commissioner Dwyer moved for approval; Commissioner Conway seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted in favor; the agenda and consent agenda moved as presented.
3. Approval of Study Session Meeting Minutes, February 28, 2024 – approved as presented.
4. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes, February 28, 2024 – approved as presented.
5. Approval of Contracts for Lawn Services – contracts approved for various St. Cloud HRA properties with Gapinski Property Services (Quarry Ridge, Westwood 1, Westwood 2, 152 19<sup>th</sup> Ave. N, 814 Savanna Ave, 310 Laundenbach Ct, 1618 Pine Cone Rd, and Meadows Edge Parcels), Ideal Lawn (Al Loehr, Creeks, Flintwood, Grace McDowall, Northway B, and Swisshelm 1), and LB’s Luxury Lawns (Brownstones, Cedar Ridge, Eastwood, Empire, HRA Office, Riverside, Swisshelm 2, and Wilson) for a total approximate amount of \$42,000.00.
6. Approval of Personnel Manual – approved as presented.
7. Approval of Interfund Transfers – approved as presented.

Open Forum: Chair Gohman asked Louise Reis, Executive Director, if any member of the public had requested to speak; Ms. Reis responded there was an individual that had reached out to HRA staff and the board members about a port-out issue. Voucher Programs Manager, Lori Lygre, added it was a portability policy with the agency the voucher holder is trying to port to and the situation has been addressed with the voucher holder.

Old Business: none.

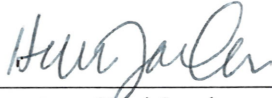
New Business:

8. Approval of Resolution 2024-05 – Authorization of Housing Tax Credit Suballocator Joint Powers Agreement. Ms. Reis noted this is an annual tax credit allocation and St. Cloud has a tax credit estimate of \$161,155.00. Commissioner Conway asked if the allocation can be specified to a certain project. Ms. Reis said the HRA is unable to dictate what project it goes to. Commissioner Conway moved for approval; Commissioner Dwyer seconded the motion. All commissioners voted in favor; the motion carried.
9. Report on Activities – Ms. Reis shared the annual audit started and the preparation for converting to the new software, Yardi, is underway. Ms. Reis said the board should discuss the CDBG allocations, and Ms. Rizer added she was speaking with the City of St. Cloud about the CDBG allocation. Commissioner Hontos responded that it was intended for the HRA to make the decision about what project would be funded with the awarded amount. Commissioner Conway agreed, he understood the amount awarded to the HRA could be used in any way the HRA wanted the funds to be spent. Commissioner Lewis confirmed she heard the \$190,000.00 amount was awarded to the HRA and the HRA had flexibility with how the money would be spent. Commissioner Hontos asked how much of the

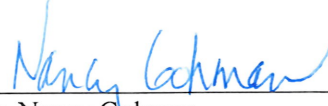
CDBG allocation would be used for the Brownstones and Ms. Reis and Ms. Rizer confirmed they would like to see all of it go towards the Brownstones project because there are still funds to continue with the CDBG waiting list and the loan paybacks continue to be strong.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

ATTEST:



Secretary, Hani Jacobson



Chair, Nancy Gohman