

MINUTES
OWATONNA HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING on FEBRUARY 22, 2021

The regular meeting of the Owatonna Housing and Redevelopment Authority was called to order at 4:00 pm on Microsoft Teams by Vice Chairman Atkinson.

Housing Manager Ghassan Madkour read a statement to allow for the meeting to be conducted by telephonic or electronic means and all votes will be roll call votes.

Members present were Jerry Atkinson, Shari Kropp, and Vicki Olivo. Also present were Housing Manager Ghassan Madkour, Community Development Director Troy Klecker, and Administrative Technician Kristen Kopp.

Approval of the Minutes: Vice Chairman Atkinson called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2021 meeting. A motion was made by Kropp and seconded by Olivo to approve the minutes. Commissioners voting Aye: Atkinson, Kropp, and Olivo. 3-0, motion carried.

Executive Directors Report: Community Development Director Troy Klecker gave project updates. There are three house permits issued so far, and one in review, which is good for this early in the year. Three apartment projects are under construction: The Pointe at Merchant Square, Schrom Construction's apartment on Mound, and Eastgate. City Council approved Tax Increment Financing for the apartment on Pearl Street at their last meeting. They're hoping to start construction in July. Plans for a 71-unit apartment on Lemond Road have been submitted, though construction timing is uncertain.

Old Business: The Housing Choice Voucher program monthly report was presented by Madkour, including the City of Owatonna monthly balance sheet and revenue/expense report. Program utilization: The Housing Voucher program for January totaled 107. Total year to date assistance and administration costs were \$59,590.52 and revenues were \$62,938.46. The Housing Choice Voucher Program fund balance at January month end is \$66,867.10. Madkour provided City of Owatonna HRA monthly balance sheet and revenue/expense reports for the HRA General Fund including the Bridges Programs. The HRA Revenues year to date total is \$40,472.00 and the expenses total \$35,515.29. The HRA General Fund balance is \$335,764.47.

Madkour said that the monetary budget is right where it needs to be. It's not where the vouchers should be, necessarily, but where the money should be. There are still 11 Bridges applications out there, but the applicants aren't finding housing. Several Bridges clients moved up to Section 8, but these 11 applicants should bring the Bridges numbers up to par. The Bridges grant will end in June. We took on one more person in Austin, which was a major need. Austin has a total of four clients for Bridges. Everything is pretty status quo at this point. There has been a steady increase of job losses.

A motion was made by Olivo and seconded by Kropp to approve the reports as presented. Commissioners voting Aye: Atkinson, Kropp, and Olivo. 3-0, motion carried.

New Business: Housing Manager Madkour gave an updated on the Mainstream Vouchers. He reminded the Board that this program is for the homeless population, has an age restriction of 18 to 61, and applicants also have to be disabled. This is a five-year voucher and once someone comes off, they can replace them with someone else on the waitlist. He said that the Board needs to vote on whether or not to accept this to the admin plan. He said the worst case scenario is if no one qualifies, and the money goes back to HUD. Hopefully many will qualify, He has let people who work with the homeless population know that he has these vouchers. After some discussion, the Board decided to accept the Mainstream Voucher program to the admin plan. A motion was made by Kropp, and seconded by Olivo to approve using the Mainstream Vouchers. Commissioners voting Aye: Atkinson, Kropp, and Olivo. 3-0, motion carried.

Madkour said Olmsted County will be going ahead with administering their own Bridges program. Our application is due on March 19th at noon. It will be for Steele, Mower, Dodge, and Waseca Counties. If there is a major change, he will let the Board know at the next meeting. Olmsted will take on six counties and we'll take on four.

Other Business. Madkour presented the final numbers for Steele County's grant that was run through SEMCAC. They serviced 192 households in Steele County, which totaled almost 700 people. This was done by two people in the office here in Steele County. They had to process hundreds of applications, plus their day-to-day work, but they were able to get it done. That's \$390,000 in assistance to help people who were in need be able to stay in their homes. Madkour said kudos to them!

Adjournment: There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Kropp, seconded by Olivo. Commissioners voting Aye: Atkinson, Kropp, and Olivo. 3-0, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:37 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ghassan Madkour
Housing Manager