

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE APRIL 15, 2021
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Getty called the meeting to order at 5:35p.m. (In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and consistent with Governor Pritzker’s Executive Orders and Senate Bill 2135 (that was signed into law and which became effective on June 12, 2020), the meeting was held via video conference and/or telephone conference). Following the call to order, roll call was taken.

The following Board Members participated:

Present:	Chairman Dina M. Getty Vice-Chairman Alanna D. Conard Commissioner Ronald E. Ballard Commissioner Danielle J. A. Potter Commissioner Fred S. Wescott
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Absent:	Commissioner Mustafa Abdall Commissioner Tasha N. Reddic
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Also participating: Deputy Director Deb Alfredson and James R. Pirages of AGHL Law.

Executive Director Alan Zais and Finance Director Vickie Huwe also participated via video conference and in-person at the Winnebago County Housing Authority (WCHA) offices at 3617 Delaware Street, Rockford, Illinois, so as to allow for public attendance (if any).

Inasmuch as the meeting was held via video/telephone conference, the Pledge of Allegiance was not recited.

Introduction of Guests

None

Changes to Agenda

Attorney Jim Pirages asked that the Board, consistent with past meetings, suspend a by-law provision. Specifically, he noted Article IV, Section 4 of the by-laws which provide that the “physical presence of four (4) commissioners shall constitute a quorum for purposes of conducting its business...”. He asked that a motion be made to suspend that requirement in keeping with the provisions of Governor Pritzker’s Executive Order. A motion to suspend that by-law provision was made by Commissioner Ballard and that motion was seconded by Commissioner Potter. The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) commissioners present with none against and two (2) commissioners absent.

Public Comments

There were no public comments. Executive Director Alan Zais also noted that the meeting was being recorded in keeping with the Executive Orders and that while staff was on site, there were no members of the public present.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Alan Zais referred the Board to his written report that had accompanied the Board packet. He noted that an item for the agenda for the May meeting will be the health insurance that is made available to the WCHA's employees. He reminded the Board that at the March meeting this topic had been discussed and had since been further reviewed by Chairman Getty and Vice-Chairman Conard and that he and Finance Director Vickie Huwe had been spending significant time and effort in looking for cost effective options. He noted that enrollment in the new program will have to occur during the coming month with a June 1st effective date. He said that he and Vickie had revisited the options with the health insurance consultants and were looking for cost savings. As a result, various options have been identified including maintaining the current coverage (at the same price to employees but with increased costs to the WCHA); as well as two other plans that would allow for reduced out-of-pocket costs as to contributions by employees but would increase the level of risk for other expenses. He said that the options will allow employees to determine how much they want to pay out-of-pocket and what level of risk they are willing to accept. He said that this was a "win/win" for the WCHA and its staff and that he would be bringing this for a formal vote at the May meeting. The consensus of the Board was for Alan to proceed with enrollment pending approval of the proposition at the May WCHA meeting.

Alan also noted the proposed redevelopment of St. Thomas High School. He said that he would bring these matters back to the Board for review and approval, but he wanted to obtain Board consensus on whether he should proceed with discussions with the Veterans Administration, with the potential issuance of a request for proposals involving project based vouchers and with an initial request to HUD. He said that before proceeding this initiative would also require future Board approval. The consensus of the Board was for Alan to proceed with this initiative.

Alan also noted that the Vera Institute has been selected to perform research on re-entry programs and that the WCHA and a program in Colorado were the only two (2) housing authorities in the nation to be picked for this study. He also noted the thank you note received from Rhonda Greer Robinson of the NAACP for the work done on its office at the Washington Park Community Center.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Getty noted that there was one (1) item on the Consent Agenda (approval of the minutes from the March 18, 2021 Board meeting). A motion to approve the one (1) resolution on the consent agenda was made by Commissioner Wescott and that motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Conard. The motion to approve the item on the Consent Agenda was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) commissioners present with none against and two (2) commissioners absent.

Financial Report

Finance Director Vickie Huwe noted that the financial statements were included in the Board packet. She asked if there were any questions, and none were asked.

Old Business

None

New Business

Election of Officers: Vice-Chairman Conard nominated a slate of officers as follows:

- Chairman Dina Getty
- Vice-Chairman Alanna Conard
- Secretary-Treasurer Danielle J.A. Potter

A motion to close the nominations and to approve the slate of officers was made by Commissioner Wescott and that motion was seconded by Commissioner Ballard. The motion to approve the slate of officers was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) commissioners present with none against and two (2) commissioners absent.

Regular Meeting Schedule: The consensus of the Board was to continue the current schedule (with Board Meetings to be held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 5:30 p.m.).

In-person Board Meetings: There was discussion regarding the resumption of in-person Board meetings. Executive Director Alan Zais noted that such a meeting would be held in the computer lab at the Washington Park Community Center and that most if not all of the Board and staff will have had their vaccinations in time for the May meeting. There was discussion among the Board and those in attendance were all comfortable with the idea of resumption of in-person meetings on a trial basis. Therefore, the May 2021 WCHA Board meeting will be held in person.

Commissioner Comments

None

Executive Session

None

Action Taken from Executive Session

None

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Potter and that motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Conard. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) Commissioners present with none against and two (2) Commissioners absent. The meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle J. A. Potter, Recording Secretary