

**WINNEBAGO COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 16, 2021
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Getty called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. In light of the COVID – 19 pandemic and consistent with Governor Pritzker’s Executive Orders, Disaster Proclamation and Senate Bill 2135 (that was signed into law and became effective on June 12, 2020), the meeting was held via video conference, telephone conference or in-person. Following the call to order, roll call was taken.

The following Board Members participated:

Present: Chairman Dina M. Getty (via video conference)
Vice Chairman Alanna D. Conard (via video conference)
Commissioner Ronald E. Ballard (via video conference)
Commissioner Danielle J.A. Potter (via video conference)
Commissioner Fred S. Wescott (in-person)

Absent: Commissioner Mustafa Abdall

Also participating: Executive Director Alan Zais, Deputy Director Deb Alfredson, Finance Director Vickie Huwe and James R. Pirages of AGHL Law.

Executive Director Alan Zais and Finance Director Vickie Huwe participated both via video conference and in-person at the Winnebago County Housing Authority (WCHA) offices at 3617 Delaware Street, Rockford, IL, 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.

Public Hearing on Proposed Project Based Voucher Rent Increases for Collier Garden Apartments, Johnston Garden Apartments and certain Champion Park Properties

A Motion to Convene a Public Hearing on Proposed Project Based Voucher Rent Increases for Collier Garden Apartments, Johnston Garden Apartments and certain Champion Park Properties was made by Commissioner Wescott; that Motion was seconded by Commissioner Potter. The Motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) Commissioners present with none against and one (1) Commissioner absent. The Public Hearing convened at 5:31 p.m.

Executive Director Alan Zais noted that the Public Hearing had been advertised and that there had been no comments received as a result of the advertisement and that no one was present from the public. Alan also noted that he, Finance Director Vickie Huwe and Commissioner Wescott were present at the WCHA’s offices to allow anyone from the public to be present if they so desired.

A Motion to Conclude the Public Hearing was made by Commissioner Wescott and that Motion was seconded by Commissioner Potter. The Motion to Adjourn the Public Hearing was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) Commissioners present with none against and one (1) Commissioner absent. The Public Hearing concluded at 5:32 p.m.

Introduction of Guests

There were no guests present.

Changes to Agenda

Attorney Jim Pirages asked that the “New Business” matter, Item XI(A) on the Agenda, be moved to this portion of the meeting. The consensus of the Board was to allow that change to the Agenda.

New Business

Attorney Pirages suggested to the Board that it consider suspending a by-law provision. Specifically, he cited to provisions of the by-laws (Article IV, Section 4) 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 considered to suspend that requirement in keeping with the provisions of Governor Pritzker’s Executive Orders, Disaster Proclamation as well as Senate Bill 2135. A motion to suspend that by-law provision was made by Commissioner Porter and that motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Conard. The motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) Commissioners present with none against and one (1) Commissioner absent.

Public Comments

Executive Director Alan Zais noted that he and Finance Director Vickie Huwe were present at the WCHA’s offices and no one from the public was present. Therefore, there were no public comments.

Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Alan Zais noted that his written report had accompanied the Board packet.

Executive Director Alan Zais advised the Board of a recent fire at Collier Garden Apartments; he characterized the fire as a five (5) minute incident that led to the sprinklers running for approximately two (2) hours. As the fire occurred on the second floor, he noted that there was water damage to several units – the details of which he said would be explained by Deputy Director Alfredson. He said that the insurance company had been notified of the fire and that resident services had been provided through Red Cross, through staff donations, etc. He commended Deputy Director Deb Alfredson and maintenance employee TJ Herman for their assistance during this incident. He credited them with keeping the residents notified, for interacting with the fire department and for other follow-up measures.

Deputy Director Deb Alfredson added that four (4) apartments were damaged during the fire with one (1) having already been repaired and three (3) requiring a full redo. He said that five (5) residents were relocated, two (2) of whom have already returned and three (3) of whom have been placed in different apartments. She said that there will be training on the fire panel provided by the Rockford Fire Department and by the contractor, Nelson, and that they will also be providing guidance on fire prevention and similar topics. She added that the audio engineering contractor will also be assisting with a facility map on the light board.

Chairman Getty thanked Deb Alfredson for her efforts.

He discussed a few of the items on the proposed Consent Agenda. He noted that the Agency Plan is a requirement of HUD which, while required, is not necessarily a helpful tool. He also discussed the rent increases that are proposed for certain project based voucher rents; he said that these rents have not been adjusted for awhile and that the WCHA – not the residents – pays the increases. He said that the increase in rents ultimately benefits Winnebago Homes Association. Lastly, he discussed the Resolution about the Mainstream Program Vouchers for Fifth Avenue Capital Partners, Inc. which is a clarification from the November 18, 2021 meeting and Resolution No. 21 R 38 that was passed at that meeting.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Getty asked that one item on the Consent Agenda (Item VIII(A): Resolution No. 21 R 39 “Resolution Approving the Minutes of the November 18, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners”) be separated from the other items on the proposed Consent Agenda for consideration by the Board.

With regard to Resolution No. 21 R 39, Chairman Getty noted that there is an error in the last paragraph of the section setting forth the “Executive Director’s Report” where it refers to Chairman Getty as “Vice Chairman Getty”. It was noted that the word “Vice” needs to be dropped from that title. A Motion to Approve Resolution No. 21 R 39 “Resolution Approving the Minutes of the November 18, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Board of the Board of Commissioners” as amended (dropping the word “Vice” as noted above) was made by Commissioner Potter; that Motion was seconded by Commissioner Wescott. The Resolution was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the four (4) Commissioners present with none against and one (1) Commissioner absent.

The remainder of the five items on the Consent Agenda (specifically, Items VIII(B) through (F): Resolution No. 21 R 40 “Resolution Approving the FY2022 Agency Plan”; Resolution No. 21 R 41 “Resolution Approving Project Based Voucher Rent Adjustment for Collier Garden Apartments”; Resolution No. 21 R 42 “Resolution Approving Project Based Voucher Rent Adjustment for Johnston Garden Apartments”; Resolution No. 21 R 43 “Resolution Approving Project Based Voucher Rent Adjustment for certain Champion Park Properties”; and Resolution No. 21 R 44 “Resolution Confirming the Approval of the Contingent Award of Certain Mainstream Project Vouchers to Fifth Avenue Capital Partners, Inc. and amending Resolution No. 21 R 38”), was made by Vice Chairman Conard; that Motion was seconded by Commissioner Potter. The Motion to Approve Items B – F on the Consent Agenda as noted above was approved by unanimous roll call vote of the five (5) Commissioners present with none against and one (1) Commissioner absent.

Financial Report

Finance Director Vickie Huwe noted that the Financial Report had accompanied the Board packet. No questions were asked by the Commissioners regarding that report.

Old Business

None

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Wescott noted that he continues to make the Veterans plaques which have now been distributed to over 3,000 veterans.

Executive Session

None

Action Taken from Executive Session

None

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Vice Chairman Conard 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 one (1) Commissioner absent. The meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle J.A. Potter, Recording Secretary