

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE MOLINE HOUSING AUTHORITY**

June 21, 2021

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Moline Housing Authority was held at 5:30 PM in the Spring Valley Community Building located at 1150 41st Street, Moline, IL 61265.

Board members present were Vice-Chairperson Jay McCowan, Chuck Capan, and Diane Fox. Staff members present were Executive Director John Afoun and Recording Secretary Maria Nino. Board Counsel and Kat Williams were in attendance.

1. **Call to Order:** Vice-Chairperson Jay McCowan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. **Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 17, 2021:** Minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 17, 2021 were reviewed. Motion was made, and seconded, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of May 17, 2021, as presented. All voting members present voting "aye", none against; the Vice-Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of June 7, 2021: Minutes of the Special Meeting of June 7, 2021 were reviewed. Motion was made, and seconded, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of June 7, 2021, as presented. All voting members present voting "aye", none against; the Vice-Chairperson declared the motion carried.

3. **Executive Director's Report:** Verbal report provided by Mr. John Afoun.

Mr. Afoun said that following the June 7th meeting he wanted to reacquaint the Board with the programs. He said we have Public Housing and Section 8. The ACOP and Admin Plan are where all of the policies are contained for each program. The Section 8 program is more heavily regulated in comparison to Public Housing.

Mr. Afoun went through the whole process from submitting application, criminal background check, credit check, landlord references, home inspections, and quality control. Mr. Afoun then approves the application and a unit is offered. The person goes to view and either accepts or rejects. If they accept they view a video showing what is expected of them as a tenant. We do this religiously and none of this is skipped. Mr. Afoun said this is previous to history and tangible things. The only issue is the landlord reference tells us if they will be a good tenant here. Mr. Afoun wants commissioners to tell us if the current questions being asked from landlords is sufficient. The recommendation was to see if we could get people's past addresses and ask the police to show us the past two years' worth of calls to that address. Ms. Kat Williams said we should encourage landlords to write some notes about the tenants rather than just yes or no questions. That way you could gauge how much we can put weight on that. Vice-Chairperson McCowan said all commissioners should think about recommendations on improvements to that form that goes out for landlord references. Mr. Afoun said anything that would have gone to court will be there as far as criminal history.

Mr. Afoun said that the policy talks about there being two types of evictions. There are mandatory evictions, such as gun and drug related activity. Non-mandatory evictions are nuisance, nonpayment of rent, altercations with neighbors, and kids not getting along. Three strikes you're out came about during Clinton's administration. We issue lease violations and terminate upon the third one. We investigate when lease violations come up. On the third one we issue eviction. At that point it is up to the judge if the eviction will happen. Vice-Chairperson McCowan asked the lawyer if the judges hold MHA to a different standard than the typical landlords. The lawyer responded that we are not held to a higher standard or

different standard. He feels we are treated very fairly. More often than not we do get the eviction because we are very prepared before taking it to that point. Vice-Chairperson McCowan asked if HUD responds back in letter, email or phone call. Mr. Afoun said HUD prefers not putting things in writing. Commissioner Fox said when you go to evict someone and say we are taking you to court is it often that the person waits until they are physically evicted. Mr. Afoun said that normally people make an agreement and it is rare that the police need to be sent to evict. He said that we work with people and do not try to evict people hastily. Commissioner Capan asked the lawyer if circuit court is following state or federal guidelines. Vice-Chairperson McCowan asked when moratorium is in place through. The lawyer said Federal is up at end of June but state is extended. Vice-Chairperson McCowan asked if there is recourse when someone has been denied. Mr. Afoun responded they can appeal.

Mr. Afoun said that the moratorium is leading up to disaster. The NAHRO Executive Director network says the housing coalition is asking to extend it through the end of the year. NAHRO is very against this. Vice-Chairperson McCowan said there are plenty of organizations that are able to help out people who have been affected by COVID-19. Commissioner Fox said even us that are residents are way against people just not paying. That makes no sense to normal everyday people that are trying to do the right thing. Commissioner Capan asked how many people are not paying. Mr. Afoun said about 20 people. Now they are skipping out on us. Last month we had four of them leave without paying. Vice-Chairperson McCowan mentioned he as a private landlord could take someone to small claims court and we here can't do that. Mr. Afoun said this is what we are experiencing and it is only going to get worse because there is nothing we can do. Although it may help those who are in real need, but others are taking advantage of the situation. He is suggesting to the Board that they, as policy makers, can contact Cheri Bustos and Nick Durbin. He suggested saying that we sympathize, but extending the moratorium does not help the situation as a whole. There was discussion about the repercussions that these tenants will have for the future if they leave with owing a lot of money here with us.

Mr. Afoun said that he and Chairperson Parker, Jr. met with the Mayor and Interim City Administrator. Her main thing is employment. She asked about work ration. We have large proportion of people working. She would like our tenants to get City jobs to help low income residents access better jobs. She wasn't too much on housing but worked with new city administrator to create apprenticeships to help people get in that do not have prior experience. She was very receptive to us. We want to invite her to a board meeting once the new city administrator starts.

a. Resolution #980:

Resolution #980 was to approve/authorize the Annual Audit (2019-2020). All voting members present voting "aye", none against, the Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.

Resolution #981:

Resolution #981 was to approve/authorize the Job Description for the ROSS Coordinator position. All voting members present voting "aye", none against, the Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.

Resolution #982:

Resolution #982 was to approve/authorize the Organizational Structure Revision. All voting members present voting "aye", none against, the Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.

Resolution #983:

Resolution #983 was to approve/authorize the Bad Debt Write Offs. All voting members present voting "aye", none against, the Chairperson declared the motion carried unanimously.

- b. **Approval of Financial Report:** Mr. Afoun stated that the fee accountant had called before the meeting saying that the submittal of the audit report has affected her schedule and she needs to adjust certain things. He said we had gone out for bid for fee accountants, but had received no responses. Our current fee accountant realizes that we are not happy. We told her she is welcome to submit a bid. The consultants are not based on price, Mr. Afoun reminded the commissioners. Commissioner Capan said we take the lowest responsible bidder.
- c. **Section 8 Report:** The Board reviewed the Section 8 Report as presented. Mr. Afoun said they have begun to issue new vouchers. HUD gave us subsidy and the Cares Act money also went into there.
- d. **Public Housing Report:** The Board reviewed the Public Housing Report as presented. There was a report for each AMP as well as one showing the information for both AMPs combined. This report gives a data analysis to track and report the statistics to the Board.

Mr. Afoun said that he and staff have worked hard to bring the occupancy rate to 94%. As of today, it is above 95%. Last month we leased 18 units. Mr. Afoun showed a new report that was created showing why people moved out as well as reasons applicants got denied. He said that provided we don't have a lot of tenants moving out we should be able to maintain the 95%. Vice-Chairperson McCowan wanted to know how many people got denied because of the credit check exactly and asked what the criteria is. Mr. Afoun responded that if you have more than 5 negatives, excluding medicals, in a period of seven years then you will be denied. Vice-Chairperson McCowan wants the other section broke out a little bit. Commissioner Capan noted we are getting plenty of applications, just that they do not qualify. Commissioner Fox feels that not so much stock should be given to credit since a lot of low-income people are not going to have good credit.

Pest control was discussed. Mr. Afoun stated that Mr. Rick Lovett is super and does a great job. Vice-Chairperson McCowan said Mr. Lovett has owned, he thinks 2 or 3 pest control companies with up to 30 employees on one of them. He's been a business owner and he worked in Atlanta Public Housing. He has a lot of experience. Mr. Afoun said he is doing an excellent job and it is paying off. Vice-Chairperson McCowan asked if the FSS person was coordinating with outside agencies to help tenants clean their units. Mr. Afoun responded that this would be something for the ROSS Coordinator. Mr. Afoun wants to know if we can use those funds to contract with an agency or if we have to hire in house.

- e. **Development/Maintenance Reports:** The Board reviewed the Capital Funds & Maintenance Progress Report, which showed current and future projects. The report also addressed work orders which had all been completed for the month.

Mr. Afoun said that the architect is on track. Vice-Chairperson McCowan wants to know where we are at on this project by next meeting. They want to get started as soon as possible.

- f. **FSS Report:** Mr. Afoun gave an update on the program including the number of people who have signed up to date.

Mr. Afoun gave an update on the CARES Act funds. Vice-Chairperson McCowan asked if we have a plan. Mr. Afoun responded we have the new laundry machines now and we are going to be working with the residents to determine a way forward. We have until the end of the year and we will not give back any money. Vice-Chairperson McCowan asked if HUD finally sent a finalized direction on what to spend or not spend it for. Mr. Afoun responded they have not sent anything definitive.

4. **Resident Advisory Board (RAB) Report:** Verbal report provided by Ms. Kat Williams.

Ms. Williams said that she doesn't have any ideas to add to the agenda. She said one of the issues she had during the COVID-19 time was with having groceries delivered. She stated that Google Maps doesn't show correctly for the apartments in Spring Valley. She suggested having a map of units at the entrance or some signs at the entrance of each cul-de-sac indicating what units are in each area would be helpful. Mr. Afoun stated he would look into this.

5. **Any other business that may come before the Board including comments from the general public:**

No other business came before the board.

6. **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, a motion was made, and seconded, to adjourn the meeting. All voting members present voting "aye", none against; the Vice-Chairperson declared the meeting adjourned at 6:51 P.M.

David Parker, Jr., Chairperson