

**MINUTES**  
**BROWN COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**Monday, July 18, 2016, 3:30 p.m.**  
**City Hall, 100 N. Jefferson Street, Room 604**  
**Green Bay, WI 54301**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ann Hartman – Chair, Sup. Andy Nicholson – Vice-Chair, Tom Deidrick, and Andy Williams (arrived at 3:39pm).

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Corday Goddard

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Robyn Hallet, Matt Roberts, Patrick Leifker, Mackenzie Reed-Kadow, Lori DeGrave, and Megan Walker

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

1. Approval of the minutes from the June 20, 2016 meeting of the Brown County Housing Authority.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson and seconded by T. Deidrick to approve minutes from the June 20, 2016 Brown County Housing Authority meeting. Motion carried.

R. Hallet introduced M. Walker as new Housing Authority Intern.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

2. Letter from HUD dated July 6, 2016, regarding New Administrative Fee Formula Proposed Rule.

R. Hallet explained a letter from HUD regarding a new Administrative Fee Formula Proposed Rule. She reminded the Authority that at the end of 2015 there was an Administrative Fee study conducted by HUD which resulted in information indicating that most housing authorities were not being paid enough in administrative fees to run an effective and efficient Housing Choice Voucher program. As a result of that information HUD has put together a proposed rule to change the formula by which housing authorities are funded for administrative fees. Included with this letter HUD also released information that indicates how much housing authorities would receive under the new formula. This information was based off 2015 information which will allow the authority to compare what was received in 2015, and if all other situations are the same once this formula is put into place, what the new amounts would be. For BCHA the new amount would be over \$500,000 a year more in administrative fees.

A. Hartman inquired if it was important for the authority to know the new formula. R. Hallet responded that the formula is complicated and there are six different factors that go into it. If more details about the formula are needed the links are provided in the letter to access the websites which provide all of the details.

3. Letter from HUD dated July 7, 2016, regarding funding opportunity for Project Basing HUD-VASH Vouchers.

R. Hallet explained a letter from HUD regarding the availability of funding for housing authorities to apply for additional VASH Vouchers. VASH Vouchers are Veteran Assistance Supportive Housing Vouchers, which BCHA currently has 31. Contact was made with the VA representative who indicated that there is a need in Brown County for more VASH Vouchers and would be supportive of the authority applying for more. The VA representative indicated that according to her records there is a need for approximately 15 more VASH Vouchers in Brown County, of which approximately five would be beneficial for families. The BCHA current VASH Vouchers are available for families or individuals, but with Veteran's Manor the units are one bedroom and only single individuals live there. Another facility that is able to house families of veterans would be well received in Brown County. R. Hallet created a white paper summarizing the VASH Vouchers to make it available for developers or property owners who might consider project basing some of their units for VASH. The white paper will be released to the public and if there is an interest the BCHA would publish a request for proposals to accept proposals for developers or property owners who would be interested in partnering with the BCHA on VASH Vouchers.

A. Hartman inquired if the application would be sent in right away for the ten individual vouchers, or if the application would have to be for all 15. R. Hallet indicated that the authority would want to apply for all 15 vouchers at one time.

#### **REPORTS:**

#### 4. Report on Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Program:

##### A. Preliminary Applications

P. Leifker reported that for the month of June there were 225 preliminary applications received.

##### B. Unit Count

The unit count for the Month of June was 3,146.

##### C. Housing Assistance Payments Expenses

The HAP expenses amount to \$1,320,378.

##### D. Housing Quality Standard Inspection Compliance

There were a total of 400 inspections, of which 193 passed the initial inspection, 69 passed the reevaluation, 86 resulted in a fail, and 52 were no-shows.

##### E. Program Activity/52681B (administrative costs, portability activity, SEMAP)

P. Leifker stated they are working on updating this and once they have more of the financial statements available he will send that information out.

##### F. Family Self-Sufficiency Program (client count, participation levels, new contracts, graduates, escrow accounts, and homeownership)

M. Reed-Kadow reported that for the month of June, there were 81 participants enrolled in the FSS program. Of that number, 54 participants are at level one, 11 are at level two, and eight are at levels three and four. There were six new contracts established, one graduate, 34 open escrow accounts, and 51 homeowners.

M. Reed-Kadow shared an FSS success story of one of the participants: This participant is new to the program and also relatively new to the United States and English is not their primary language. They just finished all levels of their ESL classes and have

recently enrolled in the GED program at NWTC. They are quickly working on their ultimate goal of getting a bachelor's degree in computer science in Green Bay. They have also recently started working and have started earning escrow as well.

G. VASH Reports (new VASH and active VASH)

P. Leifker stated that there was one new VASH client for the month of June. Currently, there are 28 total participants in the VASH program.

A. Hartman inquired how many VASH Vouchers were available to the BCHA. P. Leifker responded that BCHA has 31 vouchers total.

H. Langan Investigations Criminal Background Screening and Fraud Investigations

P. Leifker stated that for the month of June there were four new investigations assigned, five previous investigations were closed, and 12 remain active. There were 88 applications processed; all 88 applications were approved. P. Leifker summarized the Fraud investigation by Municipality and the Initial Applications by Municipality charts.

I. Quarterly Langan Denials report

P. Leifker explained that for the months of April, May, and June there was one denial. The reason for the denial was for disorderly conduct. ICS did not have access to the site that Langan did, which is why ICS missed it but Langan did not.

J. Quarterly Active Cases Breakdown

P. Leifker explained 51 percent of HCV participants have a head of household that is elderly or disabled, 37 percent the head of household is not elderly or disabled but has earned income, nine percent the head of household is not elderly or disabled, does not have earned income, but has dependents in the household and three percent the head of the household is not elderly or disabled and does not have earned income or dependents.

K. Quarterly End of Participation

P. Leifker explained there were 96 total terminations in this quarter of 2016. The top three reasons were voluntary termination, violation of family obligations, and unreported household members.

A. Hartman inquired if those reasons have stayed consistent. P. Leifker responded that yes they have been consistent, with voluntary termination being the highest every quarter followed by family obligations.

L. Quarterly Customer Service Satisfaction

L. DeGrave explained that 81 percent rated the services of ICS as excellent, 17 percent rated very good, two percent at good, and zero percent rated services fair or poor.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

5. Discussion and possible action regarding use of Administrative Reserves and HCV Lease up.

R. Hallet explained that this item was tabled from the May BCHA meeting in regards to ICS's request use of money from the administrative reserves to fund the position of a Landlord Resource Specialist. Before discussing the Landlord Resource Specialist position specifically, the dollar amounts in the administrative reserves were discussed. R. Hallet stated that from the

year ending 2015 the Pre- 2004 Administrative Fee Reserves amount is \$176,687 which is unrestricted funds, meaning they could be used for any purpose; the Post-2003 Administrative Fee Reserves amount is \$1,158,996 which are restricted funds meaning they must be used only on the HCV program. Ideally the restricted funds would be used for the administration of the HCV program but the regulations do allow the Authority to use it for housing assistance payments if needed. Total there is over \$1.3 million in administrative reserves.

R. Hallet also explained that in 2015 \$75,526 was added to the administrative reserve and as of now for 2016 BCHA is on course to add over \$50,000 to the reserves.

A. Hartman questioned why so much money was being added to the reserves. R. Hallet explained that it is because BCHA gets more money from HUD than what it is spending.

P. Leifker referenced the job description handout for the Landlord Resource Specialist. The benefits of the position were discussed. One of the benefits is that this position would create and develop partnerships with landlords to promote program participation and program compliance. It would be an opportunity to educate landlords on the inspection process as well as the entire process of the HCV program. ICS does get several calls from perspective landlords inquiring as to how the program works, what their responsibilities are, and what additional paper work is needed from them. This proposed position would offer some benefit in educating landlords. The hope is that with the increased partnership with landlords there would be an increase in housing opportunities for program participants. This position would also be an opportunity to help with the implementation and education of the UPCS-V demonstration. The position would help differentiate between the HQS standards that are currently being abided by, and the UPCS-V standards that may be implemented down the road. Increased landlord participation could provide better opportunities for landlords to be more proactive rather than reactive when policy changes come about.

A. Williams questioned if the position would be full time. P. Leifker responded that as the position is drawn up currently it would be a full time position. A. Williams questioned whether or not the BCHA was accepted into the UPCS-V demonstration program. R. Hallet indicated that the status of the UPCS-V Demonstration Program was coming up on the agenda, but stated that the BCHA was accepted into the demonstration program. Because of the acceptance into the program the Landlord Resource Specialist position would help landlords understand the new requirements that will fall within the UPCS-V. Without this position there will be a lot of work put onto the other staff at ICS to help landlords through the transition.

A. Nicholson questioned if item #10 on the agenda should be handled first. A motion was made by A. Williams and seconded by A. Nicholson to take item #10 out of order.

#### 10. Status of UPCS-V Demonstration Program.

M. Roberts stated that he was contacted by HUD via email indicating the acceptance into the UPCS-V program as well as information on setting up phase one. A. Williams questioned if there was a timeline. M. Roberts stated there is a conference call planned for July 25<sup>th</sup>, which will provide information on how phase one starts. More information will be provided to the Authority with information on what will occur during phase one.

Discussion then returned to Agenda item 5:

R. Hallet indicated that over the past year ICS has been working very hard to increase the number utilization rate in the voucher program. This was a mandate from HUD otherwise BCHA could be at risk of losing funding. The BCHA was recently on a hot list from HUD, but has made improvements to come off that list. According to recent reports the number of vouchers utilized has dropped slightly, so there is always the concern that HUD could put BCHA back on the hot list. Based off the waiting list and the number of applicants there is a need in the community for the HCV program and research has been done to find ways to increase the utilization of the program. If one staff member could dedicate their time to landlords, that could potentially help the program get utilization numbers where they need to be as well as improve the rapport with the landlords in the community

A. Hartman stated that landlords in her neighborhood don't like the HCV program because they don't like the people on the program. R. Hallet asked how many of the landlords have a perception in their mind from an experience 10 or 15 years ago. A. Hartman stated when the landlords do a background check and see that a person was just thrown out of their last place, the landlords refuse to sign a lease with that person. Part of the problem is a bad perception, but the landlords also need help in clearing out the people who are going to cause them major headaches. R. Hallet stated that landlords can have a bad experience whether the person is on the voucher program or not.

A. Nicholson questioned if port outs are included in the need for the vouchers. R. Hallet responded that it is hard to know. There were 225 applicants for the month of June, of which some may be intending to port out, but at the time of application that is unknown. A. Nicholson questioned if we ask applicants if they are intending to move their voucher to a different community. P. Leifker stated that the question can be asked, but it may cause potential Fair Housing concerns because the Authority cannot deny based on the answer to that question. A. Nicholson stated he was trying to understand where the vouchers were going, or if they were staying with our community. P. Leifker stated he would look into HUD regulations to see if that is an allowable question to ask.

A. Hartman questioned if P. Leifker is able to tell from some of the answers the participants give if they are planning to port out. P. Leifker stated that he is not able to tell from the application, but once they are taken off the waiting list they will often indicate during their appointment their desire to port out of Brown County. At that point the participant is expressing their desire to utilize portability which is a right within the program. A. Hartman stated that the need is not just in Green Bay, but that it is in all of the areas where participants are porting out to. Because BCHA has an open wait list the applicants are seeing it as a source for our voucher.

A. Nicholson stated that the number of port outs also puts a burden on BCHA's finances. R. Hallet asked if P. Leifker could estimate the number of lease ups that do port out. P. Leifker stated that he would look into it but that he did not know that information off hand. R. Hallet stated that she believes the majority of them are still using their voucher in Brown County. A. Hartman stated that if 20 percent of participants are porting out that is a large number. P. Leifker stated that based off a report from last quarter there was a total of 660 participants that have been accounted for as port outs. That is a rolling number and equals to be about 250 each month, but emphasized that is not new port outs each month as each port out participant continues to be counted each month until the receiving PHA absorbs them. A. Hartman stated that the port outs are not being absorbed in the new community as quickly as we would like to see, and questioned if more housing authorities absorb the vouchers at the end of the year. P. Leifker stated that historically ICS does see that trend occurring. This happens because it is

beneficial at the end of the year as it increases their leasing immediately, but negatively affects BCHA at that time.

A. Williams questioned what ICS is looking for in terms of background for the Landlord Resource Specialist position. P. Leifker stated they are looking for candidates with property management experience. M. Roberts added that lease knowledge would be beneficial as well. He also referenced that the Landlord Resource Specialist would help create a good renter program that would work with the clients in terms of lease compliance so they understand how to abide by the regulations.

A. Williams indicated that he would prefer to see the position be more of a landlord liaison who could focus more on helping the landlords. The purpose of the position should be to focus on adding more landlords to the program. R. Hallet stated that the focus of the position should also be to maintain positive relationships with the landlords so as to retain landlords who are willing to work with the program. She added that if landlords are renting to participants who are struggling to comply with their lease the Landlord Resource Specialist could possibly step in to help alleviate problems which could help retain a good rapport with the landlords, thus retaining their involvement with the program. A. Williams questioned if there was a position currently that does that. R. Hallet responded that there is not, and the current specialists do not have the time to dedicate to the extent that the Landlord Resource Specialist would. A. Nicholson questioned what would be the difference between the proposed Landlord Resource Specialist and A. Williams' idea of a Landlord Liaison. A. Williams stated the Landlord Liaison would be dedicated to working with landlords; they would focus on bringing in new landlords as well as maintaining landlords in the program. R. Hallet stated that by working with the participant you are also working with the landlord. If the participant is on the verge of being evicted and there was a person who could step in to resolve the problem that would help build better relationships with the landlords. A. Williams stated he does not believe that the Landlord Resource Specialist would have the ability to solve problems between landlords and participants in order to prevent evictions. If that is what the position would be used for he would not be in favor.

T. Deidrick stated it would be important to make contact with landlords in outlying areas in order to get people out of the inner city. This could be done by building relationships and getting rid of misunderstandings that landlords have in the more rural areas of the county. The position may also help reduce the number of no shows on HQS's which could save some money.

P. Leifker stated that a lot of the job description is based off information received from a similar position within the Madison, WI Community Development Agency. A. Williams stated that he is concerned with the number of different duties assigned to the Landlord Resource Specialist and if the position will have enough time to actually interact with the landlords. If the position is filled by someone who has landlord experience the potential landlords would feel like they have someone on their side. This person would have the ability to go out and dedicate themselves to helping landlords.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson to hold the item until the next meeting for the job description to be rewritten and measurables to be developed, seconded by A. Williams. Motion carried.

T. Deidrick suggested that ICS talk to some of the key landlords in the program and ask what they would want from the position. Discussion should be had with both big and small landlords to find out what they need help with.

6. Discussion and approval of use of additional administrative fees due to increased proration.

R. Hallet explained that this item was tabled from the June BCHA meeting and was in regards to ICS's requested to use \$48,000 additional money received from HUD for increase staff salaries as well as an upgraded phone system. M. Roberts stated that at the last meeting the Authority requested an additional quote for the phone system upgrade. He provided quotes from their current vendor as well as a new vendor. The current vendor would cost \$5,795 and the new vendor proposed \$13,553. The new vendor's price is much higher as they would not be able to update the current system, but would instead bring in their own system.

A. Nicholson requested clarification on the cost of the upgrade. M. Roberts explained the two different quotes. M. Roberts stated that the new vendor would have to bring in new phones as they do not use the manufacture that ICS currently uses. A. Nicholson questioned if M. Roberts was asking for a total of \$13,553 for the upgrade. M. Roberts clarified that ICS is only looking for the \$5,795 to upgrade the phone systems with their current vendor.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson to approve \$5,795 for ICS's phone system upgrade with ESG, seconded by T. Deidrick. Motion carried.

R. Hallet referenced a hand out provided by M. Roberts which shows comparable salaries for ICS salaries. M. Roberts stated that he put together a list of jobs from other housing agencies and non-profits where the job duties are very similar to what ICS's Housing Specialists do. He broke down the different position's hourly minimum, hourly maximum, yearly minimum, and yearly maximum, and used that information to show the variance from those positions to ICS's salaries. M. Roberts explained that the information on the comparables chart shows that ICS is under the average of both public and non-profit in terms of salaries. M. Roberts further explained that \$16.86 is the average minimum salary for all public authorities and non-profits together. That number is compared to ICS's average salary right now which is \$15.99 shows that ICS is \$0.87 under the minimum with their current salaries. R. Hallet reminded the authority that the request last month was for one dollar increase per employee which would put ICS in line with the average minimum pay scale for all other comparable positions. The request last month was for a total of \$33,000 for the year. That amount would be about two percent of the current reserves.

A. Nicholson stated that he believes the pay increases should be budgeted and that giving pay raises in the middle of the year is not good practice. T. Deidrick stated he thought there was an understanding that this item would be reviewed in November and a decision would be made then. M. Roberts clarified that he was just following up from the last meeting by providing the Authority with the information they requested and that this information would be used when creating the budget for next year in order to budget increases in pay for ICS employees.

7. Approval to amend BCHA bylaws to add a section regarding absences from meetings.

A. Nicholson stated that he had a conversation with A. Hartman concerning this topic and that they felt this should be done on a case by case basis and that nothing should be added to the bylaws concerning this topic. A. Hartman expressed that the emergency absence of C. Goddard at this meeting is why it is hard to determine what is considered excused or unexcused. A. Williams stated that he had to adjourn a hearing in Sheboygan in order to get back to Green Bay for the meeting on time. A. Hartman expressed that she would be

uncomfortable putting into the bylaws that in order to be considered excused the absence must be called in by a certain time on the Friday before the meeting.

R. Hallet explained that whether the commissioner's absence is excused or unexcused they are still not able to participate and gain knowledge about the discussion first hand, and they are not there to share their knowledge and experience which could add value to the discussion. She suggested that the absence being excused or unexcused may be irrelevant, and the wording of the policy could be after a set number of absences, whether excused or unexcused, the Authority would have the right to remove the commissioner. A. Hartman questioned if this would be based off a 12 month period from January to January, or 12 months rolling. R. Hallet explained it would be 12 months rolling.

Motion made by A. Nicholson to receive and place on file, seconded by A. Williams. T. Deidrick requested more discussion.

T. Deidrick stated that there are several unique reasons why commissioners could be absent and that the Authority needs to find a way to figure out excused and not excused. A. Hartman expressed that life happens which can cause commissioners to miss meetings, but they all made a commitment to be on the Housing Authority and to the best of their ability they should be there. R. Hallet stated T. Deidrick emailed her with the absence policy for the board at Options for Independent Living. Their policy is two unexcused absences or no more than three absences in a year. T. Deidrick explained that the problem with following that is Options only has eight meetings a year and the BCHA has 12. He suggested the Authority needed to discuss this further to work out an appropriate policy that everyone feels is fair. A. Nicholson suggested leaving the decision up to the Chair, and allowing the discussion to be brought up again if there are issues.

A. Hartman asked if there was any further discussion. Being none, she called for a vote on the previous motion. Motion carried.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

8. Approval of revisions to Chapter 14 (Program Integrity) of the Administrative Plan.

R. Hallet explains this item is in reference to the OIG audit from 2015. One of the items from the audit is that OIG is recommending the Authority reinforce the quality control procedures for the file reviews of the HCV Program. A proposed paragraph would be added to the administrative plan which explains PHA staff or a contractor hired by the housing authority would conduct the quality control reviews.

A. Williams questioned if this was just an administrative change that OIG wanted, this is not based off problems that were not being reviewed. R. Hallet explained that she has been doing the file reviews but it was never part of the Administrative Plan. The OIG recommended that R. Hallet follow up on the corrections to ensure that they are being made.

A. Nicholson questioned who would benefit from this revision. R. Hallet explained the clients and the program would both benefit from the files being calculated properly.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson to approve, seconded by A. Williams. Motion carried.

9. Discussion and possible action regarding BCHA loan on property at 1239 St. Clair Street in Green Bay, WI.



R. Hallet explained there may be possible litigation regarding this issue, so requested the Authority go into closed session to discuss it.

A. Hartman read the closed session language but A. Williams stated that without legal counsel present, the Authority cannot go into closed session to discuss this item. R. Hallet stated that Attorney Hooker from Corporate Council was unable to attend today's meeting but shared information with her that she could share with the Authority. A. Williams stated that this is not permissible. Staff attempted to contact Attorney Hooker by phone but was unable to reach her. R. Hallet stated she will communicate with Attorney Hooker and if the information is time sensitive a special meeting will be called.

A motion was made by A. Nicholson to refer to staff and have director report back to the commissioners if a special meeting needs to be held, seconded by A. Williams. Motion carried.

The Authority took agenda items 11 and 13 out of order:

11. Glossary of HUD acronyms.

The Authority members reviewed the HUD acronym definitions and expressed appreciation for this document.

13. Review of Budget section of Lead the Way training.

Item #13 will be held over for the next available meeting.

**INFORMATIONAL:**

12. Moving to Work Expansion Program.

As requested at the last meeting, R. Hallet provided more information on the Moving to Work and it's Expansion Program. Moving to Work is a special program that housing authorities could opt to participate in that has three main initiatives: to develop policies to make the program and its funding more efficient, to help residents find employment and become self-sufficient, and to increase housing choice for low income families. Housing authorities that choose to participate in Moving to Work need to develop policies that would reach those three objectives. The program is not available for individual participation and is only available for entire housing authorities. Examples were provided on different strategies and policies that housing authorities could take to attempt to reach the three objectives. A map was provided to show the 35 existing housing authorities that are participating in the Moving to Work program currently. HUD will be opening up an expansion to the Moving to Work program and housing authorities have the chance to apply to participate. R. Hallet explained that participation in MTW would involve more work from the authority, but it could have a lot of great benefits in helping to form the future of the HCV program. The program could also have direct impact on the clients by helping them to be more successful in the community.

A. Hartman questioned if there was an opportunity to use policies that other housing authorities have already developed. R. Hallet explained that the existing housing authorities on the program are required to report promising practices which can be duplicated by other housing authorities. The policies would not necessarily be quick and easy and would require a lot of thought and strategizing as to how to best formulate them in our community. The policies would be things that may require additional costs to the Authority, for which HUD does not provide any

additional funding to participate in the program. R. Hallet explained that HUD is not accepting applications at this point and that this item was just for the commissioner's information so they can begin to consider if the Authority might want to become involved.

A. Hartman question if there was any idea as to what the cost would be. R. Hallet stated it would depend on what the Authority implements, and could involve an expansion to programs such as FSS which are already in place. A. Hartman questioned if there was any information on the timeline for HUD to start accepting applications. R. Hallet stated in fall HUD will publish a notice through which housing authorities can apply to be a part of the initial cohort of housing authorities in the program. HUD then hopes to select the housing authorities in the spring or summer of 2017. R. Hallet explained that no action needed to be taken at this time.

T. Deidrick suggested if the Authority is selected to participate in the program that the Authority could contract the work out to someone who has as background in this work.

**BILLS:**

A motion was made by A. Nicholson to approve the bills, seconded by T. Deidrick. Motion carried.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

A motion was made by A. Nicholson to receive and place on file, seconded by T. Deidrick. Motion carried.

**STAFF REPORT:**

14. Date of next meeting: may be cancelled, or if needed, August 15, 2016.

R. Hallet indicated that there were hopes to cancel the August meeting, but in light of item #10, there may be a need for a meeting.

Motion to adjourn made by A. Nicholson, seconded by A. Williams. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:58 pm.

MW:RAH