

HOUSING & REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF CLAY COUNTY **Regular Meeting of April 24, 2025**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Tia Braseth, Anthony Dillard, Bethany Peterson, Cecil Johnson

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Greg Lemke, Commission Liaison, Paul Krabbenhoft

STAFF PRESENT:

Dara Lee, Dawn Bacon, Jill Cossette

9:38 A.M. REGULAR MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

AGENDA:

Commissioner Dillard made a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 20, 2025, MEETINGS:

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to approve March 20, 2025, regular and annual meeting minutes. Commissioner Dillard seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

None

TREASURER REPORT:

Director Lee reviewed the budgets through February.

Commissioner Dillard made a motion to accept and file the Treasurer's report. Commissioner Peterson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

PROJECT UPDATES:

Director Lee provided project updates.

Houge Estates

Houge Estates is a 60-unit building for people who are elderly or disabled. There is an approximately \$735,000 mortgage on the property. The HUD subsidy contract is scheduled for renewal in 2026. Staff are exploring options regarding re-financing the loan and terminating the HUD contract with assistance replaced with Housing Choice Vouchers. The Houge Estates Service Coordinator grant will need to be considered as well.

As of April 1, there were 3 vacant units and one upcoming vacancy. The units have been re-rented. Staff are processing three applications for the remaining openings. We are closing in on the normal 1-2 openings due to turnover.

The waiting list re-opened on October 1, 2024, and closed February 14, 2025. There are 70 applicants on the waiting list.

The building is bug-free. The cameras are working. A service coordinator is present at the property full-time.

Agassiz Apartments

Agassiz Apartments is a 12-unit apartment building for people who are elderly or disabled. The HUD subsidy contract on this property is scheduled for renewal on October 1, 2025. To keep all options open, staff held a meeting and gave tenants a one-year notice of subsidy cancellation. This cancellation can be revoked at ANY time prior to September 30 of next year. Cancelling the contract would result in significantly less administrative burdens and increased income. Tenants would continue to pay the same amount for rent through the Housing Choice Voucher program. This is a topic for on-going board discussion. Since the Continuing Resolution is funded for 2025, it makes the most sense to proceed during this fiscal year. A second notification will be given to tenants in May.

Clay County awarded SAHA funding for both roof replacement and security upgrades. Both activities are now complete.

As of April 1, there are two vacancies, one due to an eviction and one due to a resident moving to a nursing home. Four applicants have been contacted for the opening. The waiting list re-opened February 20, 2025, and there are nine households on the one-bedroom waiting list.

Clay County Affordable Housing LLC/Boyer Apartments

The Clay County Affordable Housing units are in Dilworth, Ulen, and Hawley, and the Boyer Apartments in Moorhead. The CCAH units are composed of twelve duplexes located in neighborhood settings. The Boyer Apartments are two 4-unit buildings that are next to each other and have a total of six 2-bedroom units and two 1-bedroom units.

As of April 1, there are no vacant units and 10 people on the waiting list. The waiting list only opens when there are vacancies.

There is no specific subsidy tied to these units. Residents of these units receive a preference for a Housing Choice Voucher if their family size fits the available unit.

Fieldcrest Townhomes

Fieldcrest Townhomes consists of forty 2 and 3-bedroom units. All units are subsidized. The development was rehabilitated in 2023.

As of April 1, there is one vacant unit. The unit is ready for occupancy. A household was

approved for the unit but now they are non-responsive. Three additional households have been contacted for the opening.

There are 191 households on the waiting list, which was open from October 1, 2024, to January 2, 2025.

Gateway Gardens

Gateway Gardens is a 24-unit permanent supportive housing apartment building. It also has a front desk that is always staffed. The HRA has staff at the front desk from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day. From 8 p.m. to 8 a.m., security company staff are at the front desk. The security company monitors the cameras for Gateway Gardens, River View Heights, Houge Estates, Agassiz Apartments, and Fieldcrest Townhomes.

SAHA funds were received from Moorhead to update the Gateway Gardens security system which is complete. The 2025 budget included \$75,000 in repurposed SAHA funds and tax levy funds to support building operations.

As of April 1, there were 3 vacancies, and three additional move outs for the end of April due to lease terminations and tenant choice. New tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list.

Prairie Horizons Townhomes

Prairie Horizons Townhomes are eight townhome permanent supportive housing units for families located in south Moorhead, across from Fieldcrest Townhomes. Supportive services are provided and funded through the HRA Cares program.

As of April 1, there are two vacancies. One current tenant will be transferring to a vacant unit due to an increase in family size. Tenants are selected from the community Coordinated Entry list, so a waiting list is not kept.

River View Heights (Moorhead Public Housing Agency)

River View Heights is a 14-story apartment building with 104 units. There was a stove fire in the building in March. The fire did little to no damage and no one was injured due to the fire. However, the sprinkler system did go off. The water from the sprinkler went from the 13th floor all the way to the basement. Insurance adjusters are still determining the full extent of the claim.

There are currently 9 vacancies and 4 upcoming vacancies. No vacancies will be filled until the need for unit rehabilitation has been determined. 67 occupied units were impacted in one way or the other. It is anticipated that a minimum of 8 households will need to be transferred to a different unit. Around 25 households will be temporarily displaced when their flooring is replaced.

There are currently 187 people on the public housing waiting list which is shared with Sharp View. It closed on October 30, 2024.

Staff applied for a \$1.45 million Publicly Owned Housing Program loan to replace the windows and generator. Funding will be extremely competitive. An application for an additional \$150,000 in funding for this project and roof replacement has been submitted to Moorhead for SAHA funding. The MPHA will be utilizing \$161,155 from its 2025 Capital Funding if the applications are selected for funding.

Sharp View (MPHA)

Sharp View Apartments is a two-story, 47-unit apartment building designated for seniors aged 62 and over.

As of April 1, Sharp View has 6 vacancies which will remain offline due to the upcoming rehabilitation. The waiting list is shared with the River View Heights waiting list.

The development has been selected to receive over \$1.4 million in bond funding to complete significant updates to the building's plumbing system as well as kitchen and bathroom cabinetry. The project went out for bid on April 22. The bid opening was April 30.

Moorhead Affordable Housing LLC (MPHA)

The Moorhead Affordable Housing LLC consists of 30 units ranging from single family homes, duplexes, and town homes. Most of the units are three bedrooms and primarily house families with children.

On April 11, 2025, a vehicle crashed into one of the tri-plex units and did severe damage to the unit. No tenants were injured, but they were displaced. Staff are working with the driver's insurance company. The driver appears to have had a medical emergency.

As of April 1, there are two vacancies.

Maple Court Town Homes (MPHA and City of Moorhead)

Maple Court Townhomes consists of 34 units of two, three, and four-bedroom townhomes. One 17-unit parcel is owned by Moorhead Public Housing Agency and one 17-unit parcel is owned by the City of Moorhead. MPHA/Clay HRA manages all the units. This property uses on-site caretakers.

As of April 1, there are 2 vacant units. One unit has been re-rented. Applicants have been contacted for the remaining opening. The waiting list is closed due to over a year's wait.

Housing Choice Vouchers

The Housing Choice Voucher Program consists of 514 "regular" units, 30 VASH units, 3 Foster Youth to Independence units, 5 Housing Stability units, 187 Mainstream units, and 14 Emergency Housing Voucher units.

As of April 1, 2025, there were a total of 702 out of 753 units leased in the Housing Choice Voucher program.

We have the following HCV vouchers available: 16 regular vouchers (6 vouchers have been issued to families who are searching), 9 VASH vouchers (six additional vouchers have been issued and one referral has been received); 2 Stability vouchers (one voucher has been issued and should be leased by 5/1); and 24 Mainstream vouchers (11 vouchers have been issued and staff are working with 9 households) available to lease. We are working with one other household from another housing authority.

As of April 1, there are no people on our waiting list. In March we contacted all these households to begin processing them for assistance.

We have 65 individuals enrolled in our Family Self-Sufficiency program and have had 80 FSS participants in the past 12 months. We can serve up to 75 households. 20 households on the waiting list were contacted to join the program.

Becker-Clay-Otter Tail-Wilkin (BCOW)

Adult Mental Health Initiative (AMHI) Rental Assistance

The contract with the BCOW AMHI provides funding for rental assistance and administrative fees to help households who have a member who has a serious mental illness and is leaving an institution or is currently homeless.

The grant was renewed for 2025 with a significant increase in funding. We plan to serve 35 households per month in 2025. As of April 1, we are serving 22 participants. One voucher has been issued. Seventeen people on the waiting list have been contacted to determine eligibility.

HRA Cares

HRA Cares is a HUD-funded Continuum of Care program. It is for individuals and families who are literally homeless and have a family member with a disabling condition. There are no time limits on the supportive services. We provide supportive services at the two Prairie Horizons Townhomes developments and in forty-eight scattered-site units. We are authorized to serve sixty-four households with these funds.

The current grant is funded through December 31, 2025. The grant was approved for renewal from January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026. We are still waiting for our grant agreement to arrive.

We are currently serving 67 households. Seven of these households are still searching for units. Of the 67 households, 56 are in Clay, 3 are in Otter Tail, and 2 are in Douglas Counties, MN; and there are 6 in Fargo, ND. There are 36 singles and 31 families being served. Six of these households currently live at Bright Sky Apartments.

It is expected that the grant will fund a 0.25 FTE at Bright Sky to help those households.

Homeless to Housed Rental Assistance

Homeless to Housed is a Minnesota-funded rental assistance program for high priority homeless families, youth, and singles across the counties of Clay, Douglas, Grant, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin.

Our current grant is to serve 85 households through September 30, 2025. The 2025-2027 application was submitted December 17.

We are serving 88 households now. Fourteen households are searching for units. One has been approved for a unit and is waiting to move in. There are 18 singles and 70 families being served. The grant targets families and youth-headed households. Leased households are from Clay (73) and Douglas (15) Counties. We can serve approximately 100 households per month through the end of the grant term due to lower-than-expected spending at the beginning.

Openings are filled through the coordinated entry process. We believe we will be at maximum capacity after the households who are searching find units.

Homework Starts with Home

Homework Starts with Home is a program offered by Minnesota Housing. In 2014, the HRA was one of three initial pilot locations for a rental assistance program that focused on families with school-age children. We took part in the pilot until it ended in 2018. At the end of the pilot, Minnesota developed Homework Starts with Home. The HSWH program was based primarily upon the pilot run by the HRA.

The HRA was funded in each of three rounds of competitive funding. Throughout this time, the HRA has been the lead agency in a partnership that is working towards ending child homelessness. The first pilot partners were Churches United for the Homeless, Moorhead Public Schools, and Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership (CAPLP). We now have forty-five partner agencies including fourteen school districts across seven counties.

The current grant term runs from 10/1/2023-9/30/2025. We predicted serving a total of thirty-two households during that time. The renewal application was submitted in January.

As of April 1, we are serving 41 households. Three households are searching for a unit. The program can serve approximately 45 households for the rest of the grant.

Households are from Becker (3), Clay (18), Douglas (4), Pope (1), Otter Tail (13), and Wadena (2) Counties. Homework Starts with Home families also live at Fieldcrest and receive services through CAPLP. They are not included in these totals.

Housing Supports (formerly GRH) in Scattered-Site Units

Housing Supports is a Minnesota-funded program run through the Department of Human Services. It provides room and board payments (which we refer to as Rate 1) and supplemental services payments (which we refer to as Rate 2). Rate 1 pays for rent, utilities, telephones, transportation, and all basic needs items. Rate 2 pays for supportive services. We have a contract with Clay County Social Services to provide this program. We began providing it when we opened Gateway Gardens in 2010. Twenty of the twenty-four units in the building use this funding source.

In 2016, we added a community option and started subcontracting for service provision with

several area non-profit partners. The HRA does all program administration, administers all Rate 1, and provides some of the Rate 2 services. It is an extremely complex program to administer.

As of April 1, a total of 136 households were being served by the Housing Supports program in Clay County. Seventeen of the households reside at Gateway Gardens, 18 at Bright Sky, and 101 in other units throughout the county. Services are provided by the following: 29 by the HRA (18 at Bright Sky Apartments and 11 in scattered sites); 15 by CAPLP; 7 by the Presentation Partners in Housing; 3 by LMHC; 4 by Metro Behavioral Health; 10 by the Lotus Center; and 38 with Greater Minnesota Community Services; and 28 by CCRI (17 at Gateway Gardens and 9 in scattered sites.) Twenty-four households are searching for units.

Silver Linings is expected to open this June. The Clay County HRA will provide services to approximately 20 additional households at this location. Since this will be a full case load, the HRA needs to hire an additional supportive services staff to assist these individuals.

CCRI staff who provide supportive services at Gateway Gardens have given notice to CCRI. Since this position will be changing, the HRA will be taking over Housing Supports supportive services at the development. Another staff member needs to be added to meet this need. By using HRA staff, we hope for more flexibility in meeting the needs of the front desk and the distribution of supplies. Budget will be shifted from contracts to salaries so should be cost neutral.

Minnesota DHS Community Living Infrastructure Grant

The Community Living Infrastructure Grant began in 2018. Clay County is the grant recipient and the HRA is the project manager and provides the Housing Resource Specialist. The funds were distributed to help communities build the necessary infrastructure so that individuals with disabilities can live fully integrated into the communities of their choice. The grant funds outreach workers, housing resource specialists, and administration. The original grant covered all ten counties in West Central Minnesota and the three Community Action Programs serving the counties who each performed outreach. Mahube-Otwa has chosen to still be a partner but not be a sub-recipient for the grant. They are interested in participating in the grant renewal.

Funding for the current grant was extended until 6/30/25. The funding for the HRA supports 0.82 FTE. The grant provides funding for administration of the Housing Supports program for Clay County Social Services.

The new grant application was released in the second week in March. The Clay County Social Services Director is currently working on the grant application. It is due May 8.

Minnesota DHS Housing Stabilization Services

Housing Stabilization Services are a Medicaid benefit available in Minnesota. It became available July 1, 2020. The HRA was the second agency in West Central Minnesota to become an approved provider. The HRA was approved to provide Housing Stabilization Services – both Housing Consultation and Transition & Sustaining Services effective July 2020.

This program is on hold.

Owner-Occupied Rehab Program

The HRA has operated and operates several distinct programs under the Owner-Occupied Rehab umbrella. The largest program is the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Small Cities Development Program (SCDP). Funds used for this program are federal HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) that are distributed to the state for Greater Minnesota. DEED then holds annual competitive application rounds to award these funds to non-entitlement communities.

Barnesville

Barnesville requested our services to apply for \$1.2 million from DEED to rehabilitate 21 homes and 13 businesses. HRA staff worked with the City of Barnesville to submit the application which was due April 16, 2025. 43 letters of interest were submitted by homeowners and 25 from local businesses.

Dilworth

The HRA staff is administering a \$922,000 DEED grant for the City of Dilworth. It received funding to rehabilitate 21 homes and 7 businesses. DEED has approved an extension of the grant from September 30, 2024, until September 30, 2025.

To date, 21 homeowner projects are complete; and 2 projects are under construction. There is \$11,274 remaining in this budget line. There are 10 applicants on the waiting list who will not receive assistance.

The grant funded the rehabilitation of 7 commercial properties. Nine applications were received. Only 5 of the applicants decided to follow-through. Four projects are complete, and one is under construction. An additional application is being processed. There are sufficient funds to fully fund three projects so additional outreach is occurring.

RLP (Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program)

The Minnesota Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program is funded by the state. The program has received a number of applications, but little follow through. One home is under construction; two are bidding; and two are in the eligibility stage. 11 are ineligible, dropped out, or are non-responsive.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS CHANGES

Since its inception, HRA staff have participated in the Clay County benefits options. Prior to May 1, 1978, HRA employees were county employees. There were no changes to this process until the Affordable Care Act was passed. The HRA was required to obtain its own health insurance at that time. We were able to obtain coverage through the Lakes Country Service Cooperative (LCSC).

This topic was discussed at the meeting with the Clay County Commissioners. Staff has gathered policy information and is working to obtain more information. Overall, prices look competitive for dental and vision coverage.

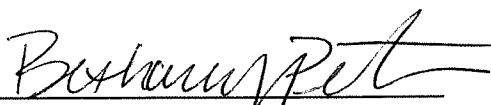
As discussed at the March meeting, the HRA will establish an internal employee committee to review and evaluate benefits offered including the types of benefits offered, HRA contributions, MN Paid Leave premium costs, and any proposed PTO adjustments due to the implementation of the Paid Leave Act for family and medical needs.

Since the county has a large pool and the HRA does not, there may be significant financial implications from these changes which will need to be included in the 2026 budget that is considered at the October meeting. Primary areas of concern are life and disability insurance.

UPDATES AND OTHER

- a. **Commissioner Opening-** We have received one application. Board direction to continue efforts to recruit for the position, with a focus on Glyndon/Dilworth representation.
- b. **Updates on federal and state budget impacts-** Director Lee provided feedback from the NAHRO Washington DC Conference and NAHRO NCRC Regional Conference. The Continuing Resolution (as well as averting a federal government shutdown) provides stability and maintenance of funding for many of the programs that the HRA operates for 2025. The 2026 budget outlook is unclear.
- c. **Updates on Bright Sky and Silver Linings-** Successful transition work has been underway for the Clay County HRA staff to provide Housing Supports at Bright Sky in collaboration with Churches United and Arriving Home. We will be hiring for a position to provide services at Silver Linings, which will be opening June 1.
- e. **Staffing Updates-** The Maintenance Technician position and one of the Rental Assistance Positions are filled.

MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 10:49 A.M.


Bethany Peterson, Secretary

5/15/25
Date