

BLUFF COUNTRY MINNESOTA MULTI-COUNTY HRA ANNUAL MEETING

MINUTES

**Monday, January 12, 2015
10:00 a.m.**

**Semcac Office
Rushford, MN**

I. CALL TO ORDER – INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER

Sandy called the meeting to order. Harry Root was introduced as the new board member representing Fillmore County. Harry is Tom Kaase's replacement. Harry is a County Commissioner for Fillmore County.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Sandy Wright, Harry Root, Judy Storlie and Bob Carlson
Absent: None
Staff Present: Terry Erickson, Cindy Vitse and Vonda Budde
Guests: Steve Sarvi, City of Rushford and Sam Whitehead, CEDA

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (November 2014)

Sandy W made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Harry. Motion carried.

IV. BUSINESS

- A. **Election of Officers**-Judy nominated Sandy to be president, Sandy declined. Judy made a motion to keep the officers as they currently are, seconded by Bob. Motion carried.
- B. **Financial Report** – Vonda handed out the report and reviewed it with the board. Judy made a motion to approve the report, seconded by Sandy. Motion passed.
- C. **Loan Progress Report** – Vonda is waiting to hear back from AmeriNational of Albert Lea to see what they would charge the HRA to service loans. Vonda will report back at next meeting regarding this option.
- D. **City of Rushford Housing/City of La Crescent Update** – Steve Sarvi from the City of Rushford was present along with Sam Whitehead from

CEDA to discuss possible options for the current school building in Rushford. The referendum passed to build a new school so that will leave the old school site available to rehab/re-purpose it. Steve handed out a proposed idea that was used during the referendum process to show residents what could possibly be done with the current site. He said they would like to see the 1906 and 1936 structures saved and rehabbed along with the 1970's portion. The 1957 structure, elementary wing, is proposed to be removed and then build new housing units in its place. They are proposing more workforce housing with two and three bedroom units with some single story and some two stories. The existing structures would be rehabbed for mixed uses. Part would be rehabbed for senior housing, public space while also preserving the theatre and gymnasium. They are now waiting to hear if they will be selected for a grant through Minnesota Housing Partnership to help cover the cost of updating the housing study. The two older portions of the building does not meet the qualifications for historic designation because there have been too many modifications done to the structures. They were encouraged to apply for a Historic District instead so they could access Historic Tax Credits for the proposed project. Terry told Steve the HRA/Semcac Housing staff are interested in assisting with this project in any way that they can. Steve thanked Terry for his assistance so far.

Terry updated the board on the La Crescent project. Since the referendum didn't pass the project is on hold for now.

- E. Small Cities Development Program 2015** –Terry updated the board on the status of Preston's project and also that Semcac is applying this funding round in the City of Albert Lea in partnership with the Albert Lea HRA. Terry said hopefully the City of Houston will be ready for the 2016 funding round. It was suggested that maybe a half day Housing Summit could be held to inform other cities of this opportunity and what other housing programs the HRA/Semcac offer. It would also give communities the opportunity for input of what needs they may have. Terry will work on this suggestion.
- F. Counties financial allocation to BCHRA**-Both counties allocated \$5,000 each in their 2015 budgets. It was suggested that the HRA attend a Commissioners meeting once a year to update each board on what the HRA is working on and accomplished during the current year. Terry will take care of doing this.
- G. MCPP** – Cindy informed the board that MN Housing's application period was now open for past participants of MCPP. All we had to do is respond back to MN Housing that the HRA was interested in participating again. Cindy responded to MN Housing on January 2, 2015 that the HRA is interested in participating again.
- H. Open Discussion** –Sandy asked about who a party should talk to if interested in a similar project like Vesterheim. Terry is the contact person for the HRA & Semcac when it comes to potential housing projects.

- V. **Next Meeting** – Monday, April 13, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at the Semcac Office in Rushford.
- VI. **Adjourn** – Sandy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Judy. Motion carried.