



THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.
Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 16, 2020
Three Rivers Community Action, Inc.
Remote Meeting via Zoom
9:00 to 10:00

Members Participating: Paul Drotos, Meredith Erickson, Galen Malecha, Heather Robins, Mark Thein, ReJean Schulte, Julie Steberg, Jo Anne Krier, Ruth Boudet, Brian Goihl, Jodi Johnson, Maritza Navarro, Erick Maki

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Wabasha Office
611 Broadway Avenue
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Staff Participating:
Jenny Larson, Executive Director
Kindra Papenfus, Chief Financial Officer
Vicki McKay, Human Resources Director
Leah Hall, Community Development Director
Jane Adams Barber, Early Childhood Director
Rob Cooper, Transportation Director
Donna Stamschror, Administrative Support Manager
Anna McCann, Support Staff Coordinator

Members Excused: Dave Windhorst, Abdullah Hared

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Chair, Galen Malecha.

Determination of Quorum: Roll call was done. Quorum was met.

***Approval of the August 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Heather Robins made a motion to approve the August 19, 2020 meeting minutes, Mark Thein seconded, motion unanimously approved.

***Approval of the September 16, 2020 Meeting Agenda**

Paul Drotos made a motion to approve the September 16, 2020 meeting agenda, Julie Steberg seconded, motion unanimously approved.

Director's Report

- 1. **COVID-19 Housing Assistance Program** – We are in our second week of processing the state CHAP program, where we have been allocated \$2 million to help households in Goodhue, Wabasha, Rice and Olmsted counties. We have also received \$200,000 from the City of Faribault. Staff are being deployed from many departments to work on this program, and we have also hired 4 temporary staff. We have received over 740 applications in the first two weeks, showing a very strong demand for assistance. The program

provides assistance to help with overdue rent, utilities, mortgage payments, lot rent or association fees. Those who apply and may not be eligible for CHAP are being screened for other direct service funding that is available at Three Rivers or a partner agency.

Jenny answered questions about the CHAP program administration. The program guidelines are set by the state, and we follow their guidelines. The guidelines for the money from Faribault are the same, with a shorter timeframe. There is not a maximum on assistance. All household income is documented. Payments go to vendors, not applicants. We verify to make sure another agency has not already paid the request.

2. **Operations Update** - I am very grateful for all of the work our staff have been doing to meet the needs of our clients during the pandemic. We have been steadily adding staff during the past several months, and have many staff working hard in offices, buses, classrooms and at home to make sure that everyone is getting served. Here are a few updates on our fall programming:
 - a. **Office Operations:** Administrative and outreach staff are working with walk-in clients at our Zumbrota, Faribault and Rochester offices, working with one household at a time and asking others to wait outside to keep numbers down in the reception area. Clients may also call for an appointment to receive assistance from the front desk or program staff. We continue to encourage clients to call for assistance and use our drop box locations if they do not need a face to face meeting.
 - b. **Head Start:** This week our Head Start classes are all open and serving children in the classroom, with smaller class sizes to accommodate public health recommendations. Later in the board meeting, Jane will be providing an update on our Early Childhood programs, including how they are operating in response to COVID-19.
 - c. **Energy Assistance:** Applications are now available for the next Energy Assistance program year, although funds are not available to assist clients until October. Our staff are primarily working remotely to process applications.
 - d. **Transportation:** We continue to serve the communities with a dial-a-ride model. Public transit is providing many rides for students, from pre-school through college.
3. **Filling Gaps in Faribault** – This summer we have been working with many partners to help with food insecurity in the Faribault community. Three Rivers has been providing staff and buses to deliver food since last May, and we will continue to provide the service into the fall. I have also been participating with the group of partners that is planning to add a permanent food shelf in the community. After getting many requests from our clients and community members, Three Rivers is also working directly with the Faribault Public Schools on filling the need for school supplies for low-income kids. We plan to use CSBG funding to provide supplies through the schools to kids and families in need.
4. **Building Projects** – The Zumbrota addition is nearing completion, although there has been a delay with the trim and doors so the completion date is pushed back to later in September. The Faribault front entrance project is now complete, and we have a secure door between reception and classrooms and office space that can only be accessed by a fob or buzzer. Contractors are working on the addition of two large office spaces in Faribault where we will spread out our current staff. In Northfield, we are leasing additional office space previously occupied by the

school district. The landlord is putting in new carpet, and we should be able to access the space by the end of September.

Board members thanked Jenny for the detailed director's report.

***Policy Action Items**

Consent Agenda Items

- August Financial Reports
- Mutual of America – August Statement
- August Head Start Credit Card Expenses Summary

Contracts, Awards & Contributions

Received

- Minnesota Housing Finance Agency - \$123,660 - Grant funds to provide financial empowerment coaching as part of Three Rivers' Achieve Homeownership program
- Department of Health and Human Services Office of Head Start - 89,584 - Cost of Living adjustment of 2% to assist grantees in increasing staff salaries and fringe benefits and offsetting higher operating costs, and quality improvement funds to incorporate trauma-informed approach supporting children, families and staff impacted by adverse experiences.
- City of Faribault - \$200,000 - Support for residents within the city of Faribault who have been affected by Covid-19

Not Received

- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN Foundation - \$25,000 - to address immediate needs due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Grants & Requests Submitted or to be Submitted

- None

Monitoring Reports & Responses

- Minnesota Department of Transportation – letter dated July 28, 2020 – 2017 Public Transportation operating monitoring results, and Three Rivers Response dated August 31, 2020
- Semaaa – Letters dated August 13th & August 27th – Summaries of program reviews for Volunteer Transportation and Caregiver Advocacy.

Approved Purchases between \$10,000 and \$150,000

- AVI Systems - \$10,382.22 – Audio Visual / web conferencing system for Zumbrota board room
- Schmidt Goodman Office Products – \$67,388.07 – office and board room furniture for Zumbrota addition
- Marco Technologies - \$16,768 – 20 laptop and 1 desktop computers – 16 replacements of existing for 2nd half of 2020, 4 new positions, 1 Zumbrota board room

Jenny reviewed the consent agenda items.

Erick Maki made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Ruth Boudet seconded, motion unanimously approved.

***Individual Action Items**

- a) Approval of Updated Fiscal Policies – Policies enclosed.
- Summary of changes
 - Fiscal Policies

Kindra reviewed each fiscal policy update being proposed to board. Kindra asked if there were any questions on the changes or on the policies in general. No one had questions.

Meredith Erickson made a motion to approve the changes to the fiscal policies, Mark Thein seconded, motion unanimously approved.

- b) Approve and execute the attached Riverwood Apartments MHFA Borrowing Resolution #2020-6.
- Overview
 - Resolution #2020-6
 - Legal Description

Leah provided the board with a project summary, project update, and reviewed details of the resolution. It is possible, when this closes, the closing department at Minnesota Housing may request minor changes. If they do that we will contact you via email to approve.

Heather Robins made a motion to approve Resolution Number 2020-6, Jo Anne Krier seconded, motion unanimously approved.

- c) Approve the attached Ridgely Park Apartments LP First Amendment to the Limited Partnership Agreement and the Written Action of the General Partner.
- Project Update
 - First Amendment to Limited Partnership Agreement
 - Written Action of the General Partner Taken in Lieu of a Meeting

Leah said we are finalizing our USDA transfer. She provided the project background and an update. Our attorney has reviewed the documents and found nothing of concern.

Paul Drotos made a motion to approve the Ridgely Park Apartments LP First Amendment to the Limited Partnership Agreement and the Written Action of the General Partner, Mark Thein seconded, motion unanimously approved.

- d) Authorize the new Three Rivers Development LLC to assume 99.99% ownership of Harvest Ridge Apartments and authorize Jenny Larson to execute all documents related to this transaction.

Leah reviewed the project background and all three steps of the ownership change process as the original limited partner exits the project. Leah was asked why it is 99.99% ownership. She explained it is due to tax credit structure, these are the limited partner shares. Three Rivers is already the general partner (.01% ownership).

Mark Thein made a motion to authorize the new Three Rivers Development LLC to assume 99.99% ownership of Harvest Ridge Apartments and authorize Jenny Larson to execute all documents related to this transaction, ReJean Schulte seconded, motion unanimously approved.

Policy Discussion Item

a) Early Childhood Annual Report

Jenny began by thanking Jane and her staff. This spring they turned on a dime to a remote learning model. They did a great job making sure families were given the support they needed.

Jane presented an update of Early Childhood programs. Early Childhood Programs include Head Start, Early Head Start Home Visiting, Evidence Based Home Visiting, and Child Care Partnership.

Jane presented demographic data on Head Start for the 2019-2020 school year. She showed student goals and outcomes that were provided for combined ages, and then broken out for three and four year olds, spoken language, and family life. Children plateaued after distance learning began demonstrating how much in person really helps children to learn, even though we did meet all expectations except for math. Head Start staff analyze this data to plan the next program year.

She shared information on the assessment they use for parents called "Parent Gauge" which is a list of questions given in the fall and spring. She shared some of the comments.

Parent Gauge - Areas of Growth

- I participate in activities that have helped me get my child ready for school.
- I set aside time to read with my child.
- I make sure that my child is in class every day.
- I make sure my child receives regular medical care.
- I make sure my child receives regular dental care
- I feel connected to other parents and adults.
- The program has given me opportunities to connect with other parents and adults.

Parent Gauge - How having a child in Head Start changed my Family

- The parent or family:
 - A lot has changed now- we have our time to read, play and share
 - Has helped put goals into perspective for me and my child.
 - We have more communication, and there is more interest in the needs of others
- The child:
 - She has blossomed, she talks more, has more social skills, and learned how to be a more empathic friend.
 - He learned many things one of them sharing and being nice to other kids and more responsible
 - So much in such a good way! He knows how to share more and be nice to all his friends and family better and has learned so much I just love it and keeps learning.

Jane talked about what outreach looked like during distance learning, what families thought was helpful, and what was difficult for our families. Jane reviewed the COVID guidance received

by the Office of Head Start, State of Minnesota, MN Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control and what modifications were made to the Head Start Program.

Jane talked about the Head Start Extension Study that set out to learn how Head Start children were doing after leaving Head Start. The study looked at children's third grade attendance, MN Comprehensive Assessments data, and identification for special education services. Head Start children consistently do better than their peers according to these studies.

Jane ended by showing the board our grants and partnerships.

Jane was thanked for her presentation.

Advisory Committee

- a) Head Start Policy Council Meeting August 18, 2020 minutes were included in the board agenda packet.
- b) Hiawathaland Transit Advisory Committee Meeting August 13, 2020 minutes were included in the board agenda packet.

Other Comments: None

Comments from the public: None

Date, Time and Location of Next Meeting: 9:00 a.m., November 18, 2020, by Zoom, Three Rivers Community Action Board Room, 1414 North Star Drive, Zumbrota MN, or Three Rivers Community Action Faribault Conference Room, Faribo Town Square, 201 South Lyndale Avenue, Faribault.

Adjournment

Paul Drotos made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ruth Boudet seconded, motion unanimously approved.


Chair

November 18, 2020
Date