



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Meeting Minutes - Approved CDA HOUSING OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 10, 2013

4:30 PM

Madison Municipal Building
215 Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard
Housing Operations Division - Suite 120
Conference Room (First Floor)

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Chairperson Zamzow called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

CDA Staff Present: Sherri Amos, Tom Conrad, Lisa Daniels, Shannon Davis, Natalie Erdman, Vicky Kutz, Augie Olvera, Melissa Steinmann

Visitors Present: Tahisha Jordan, Heidi Wegleitner

Present: 5 -

Debbie K. Zamzow; Marilyn A. Feil; Sariah J. Daine; Jerome Holliday and Trina Protz

Excused: 2 -

Andrew F. Heidt and Sue Ellingson

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Daine, seconded by Holliday, to Approve the Minutes of March 13, 2013. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT / SUGGESTIONS FROM RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Sariah Daine provided update on Romnes Resident Association. Elections to be held.

Jerome Holliday reported that Triangle library has new computers. He expressed concerns with Legal Action of Wisconsin proposed changes to the ACOP. He believes CDA is doing a wonderful job and recommends CDA's proposed new ACOP.

Tahisha Jordan spoke about the proposed ACOP. She has an issue with CDA looking at past credit of applicants and this has affected her personally because she was denied and did not have evictions or utility issues. People obviously need the help and wouldn't be applying if they didn't need it.

4. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

None

5. REPORTS

Housing Operations Monthly Report

Augie Olvera presented Housing Operations Monthly Report.

A motion was made by Feil, seconded by Daine, to Accept. The motion passed

by voice vote/other.

6. NEW BUSINESS

CDA Resolution No. 4022 - Approving the revised Public Housing Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policies (ACOP) found at: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/formshousing/index.htm>

Heidi Wegleitner, Legal Action of Wisconsin (LAW), distributed responses to the CDA's responses to LAW's ACOP comments. Wegleitner also distributed a draft policy by the New Orleans housing authority. Wegleitner encouraged the CDA to follow suit in regard to criminal activities. Wegleitner also has concerns about the CDA's guest policy.

Marilyn Feil stated that she would like to go thru all of LAW's comments.

Sariah Daine stated that she is not interested in going through LAW comments, line-by-line.

Deb Zamzow recommended that the committee address their specific questions. Zamzow requested clarification on whether or not former tenants, who have been evicted, are banned from CDA property?

Lisa Daniels stated that former residents, who have been evicted, are not permitted as overnight guests. Augie Olvera added that people could be banned when they engage in negative behavior on the property.

Feil stated that there needs to be a policy on a resident's right to request a payment plan for utility or maintenance charges, that people feel uncomfortable about asking for a payment plan, and that people do not know that they can ask for a payment plan.

Olvera stated that CDA has not pursued an issue where tenants have excessive use of utilities. In places where tenants pay their own utilities, there have been no issues.

Daniels stated that the new ACOP has 2 to 4 pages on repayments plans in Chapter 16.

Daine recommended that the CDA add repayment agreement language to the tenant notice or monthly bill.

Feil stated that the notice should clearly state the tenant must pay the charges due within 14 days and that the tenant may make a request for a repayment plan within the 14 days.

Amendment to motion, on a motion by Feil, and seconded by Holliday, to have language added to tenant notices informing tenants of their right to request consideration of a repayment agreement. Amendment passed unanimously by voice vote.

Feil stated that she has a problem with how the CDA handles applicants, who are leaving the household. For example, a person leaving is an ex-partner and not cooperative in providing required verification. They have no incentive in helping if they are the one leaving.

Sherri Amos stated that staff does not require verification when someone is on the wait list for six months and then decides to remove a household member. Amos stated that she believes Feil is referring to a case, where the applicant had a partner who was denied because of criminal activity and at appeal, the applicant wanted to drop the person from the application.

Daniels stated that the family has to clarify that they want that option on lieu of a denial, and must provide verification.

Feil stated that it is too hard, because the person leaving becomes homeless. What do you do now if someone leaves the household and you ask for verification?

Olvera stated that the CDA would ask for proof (e.g. they are on a lease someplace else). The CDA has had cases where couples are married, but a spouse has a bad history, so they don't add that person to household and the mother will write a note saying that person is staying with her.

Feil inquired as to whether shelter verification is accepted and if the CDA would accept a notarized statement from the person who is still in the household.

Trina Protz inquired how someone would prove a bad, family break up.

Olvera stated that separation papers are generally provided.

Daniels stated that the CDA would require third party verification that the person is gone, for a clear audit trail. The ACOP states what is acceptable in Chapter 7 and staff will rely on this chapter. In cases like these, changes can affect income and deductions. If an adult household member is permanently absent, the family has to provide documentation that the family member is no longer there receiving the subsidy.

Feil requested that denial notices be more specific about credit information, such as the name of the bill, why the debt is a problem, and the name of the collection agency.

Daniels stated that the denied applicant has the right to come in and request copies of their credit report or anything else in their applicant file and the CDA has to follow the Fair Credit Act. The CDA has been assured by the courts that the correct credit information is being provided and that this information provides adequate information for the applicant to prepare a defense.

Feil stated that most people do not know they can come in and do that.

Tom Conrad stated that all notices of adverse action state appeal rights and state that you can come in and look at your file and obtain copies for a fee.

Amos stated that the CDA really does want to approve people for the program and in doing so, does not base a denial solely on credit. 24 months of rental information is also reviewed along with criminal information.

Feil stated that the CDA should keep the victim of domestic abuse preference, which is valuable, because people will stay in the house with their abuser and do not leave without any other options. In regard to the homeless preference, if someone reaches the top of the list and are no longer homeless, then they should no longer keep the preference.

Daine stated that she feels more comfortable with the removal of the homeless/victim of domestic abuse preference now that she has read Olvera's preference handout.

Protz stated that she is concerned about the single moms, at the poverty level, who are paying too much for rent. Protz remembers what it was like to put 1 ½ paychecks toward rent. It does not seem fair that someone who is homeless would be served before that single mom. The victim of domestic violence preference is a hard decision.

Jerome Holliday stated that he feels the same as Protz.

Zamzow stated that she is fine with leaving the ACOP as it sits.

Feil motioned to keep the victim of domestic abuse preference. Motion failed due to no second to the motion.

Feil stated that checking arrest and police contacts in the application process makes her uncomfortable due to race issues, and she can understand that convictions could be considered.

Olvera clarified that for the CDA to look at police contact, the reporting of a crime would not be considered, but activity resulting in an arrest might be considered.

Daine inquired if being stopped by the police for traffic issues would be considered.

Daniels stated that the federal regulations say we must look at "activity." We would not consider traffic violations, but would consider "activity" that is of a criminal nature or disrupts the neighbors and community.

Amos stated that police contacts are reviewed as needed and could be from another City. Amos will focus on the last two years and does not consider traffic stops. Criminal activity, such as disorderly conduct, battery, or domestic abuse, is looked at. If there is something of concern, a report is then requested. 75 percent of the time, there is nothing of concern.

Wegleitner stated that she had a client who was denied due to a catch-all provision of negative behavior with police contact cited. There was no criminal activity. There was a dispute with the mom, because she wouldn't release the children. In another incident, there was a person arrested in her building, with no citation issued. The neighbor called the cops. The woman was denied because the CDA reflected negatively on her character.

Daine inquired if this client of Wegleitner had any other denial reasons.

Wegleitner acknowledged that there were other issues outlined.

Holliday stated that he is not seeing where the CDA is saying you have done something with police contact and are going to remove us from the property or evict. The policy should stay as it is. The guest policy should also not be changed to 45 days. Holliday inquired with Bayview and 45 days is too long. Holliday would expect someone staying that long to pay rent.

A motion was made by Daine, seconded by Holliday, to Approve with Amendment(s). The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: 4 -

Debbie K. Zamzow; Sariah J. Daine; Jerome Holliday and Trina Protz

Noes: 1 -

Marilyn A. Feil

Excused: 2 -

Andrew F. Heidt and Sue Ellingson

CDA Resolution No. 4024 - Authorizing the filing of revised Capital Fund Performance and Evaluation reports for the 2009, 2010 and 2011 Grants

A motion was made by Feil, seconded by Daine, to Approve. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

7. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Feil, seconded by Holliday, to Adjourn. The motion passed by voice vote/other.