

Hope for Homes Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2023 at 10:00 AM at Engage Winona and online

Present: Marie Kovecsi, Nancy Brown, Kalene Engel, Rachel Stoll, Patrick Michener, Dan Wilson, Rosemary Fagrelus, Ndea Young, Judy Gilow, Maureen Holte, Tim Hunter

1. **Welcome & Introductions**

2. **Update on Grants:**

- a. **Strengthening Rural Communities Grant:** At the July MHP Institute, Harlan Buckalew of MHP provided additional information SRCG Grant. Although the original grant submission was strong and well-written, Harlan was unable to convince the review committee that our goals with the Local Housing Trust Fund meshed with the grant purposes. However, he did state that tweaking the grant application to use the grant funds for improvement of the units of the Scattered Sites Supportive Housing Project would likely be approved. Match for the grant could come from activities related to the SS project, such as advertising and costs incurred by HVMHC for the Housing Support Specialist position. *Marie, Tim, Rosemary and Crystal will meet to review and revise the original grant application.* The new timeline for submitting the revised grant is August 31st, but Harlan is attempting to get the deadline extended to the end of November.
- b. **Winona Community Foundation:** The deadline for the 2nd round application is September 1, 2023. The max award is \$7,500.
- c. **Community Living Infrastructure Grant:** The state has decided that it will not release the RFP for the CLI Grant until 2025.

3. **Scattered Sites Project:** The Housing Resource Specialist position has been offered to another individual and there are two other strong candidates who are interested in the position.

4. **Local Housing Trust Fund:** The Winona County Board recently approved a preliminary levy for SEMMCHRA (Southeast Minnesota Multi-County Housing and Redevelopment Authority), which is the HRA that serves Winona County OTHER than the City of Winona (which has its own HRA). The levy included \$40,000 to hire a grant writer to pursue additional state housing funding on behalf of Winona County. It also included an allocation of \$50,000 to a Local Housing Trust Fund, the details of which are yet to be determined. However, if the \$134,000 of housing funding that was awarded to Winona County from the state can be used for the SEMMCHRA levy, those funds will be used for the “Option B” portion of the levy of \$90,000. *Rosemary will reach out to Buffy Beranek of SEMMCHRA to bring her up to speed on what our group is doing and to discuss Buffy’s intentions regarding the grant and Winona County LHTF.*

It is unknown whether the City of Winona will be receiving a similar allocation of funding from the state to address housing needs. The establishment of a County LHTF will likely prompt questions about/interest in a LHTF for the City of Winona. Kalene suggested that Nick or someone else talk to Chad Ubl, City Manager, to give him a heads up about LHTFs. *Marie will*

talk to Chris Meyer about reaching out to Chad about LHTFs. The Hope for Homes page on the CJCC website contains resources on LHTFs: <https://winonacountycjcc.org/hope-for-homes/>.

5. **Housing Study:** A preliminary draft of the Winona County Housing Study has been released. Dusty Liston of CEDA is assisting with the Winona County Housing Study. The housing study survey has been reopened for additional feedback and is available online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VK92QWT>. *Members were encouraged to take the Housing Study Survey and utilize the comments section to advocate for the Hope for Homes projects.* The Housing Study group is expected to meet at the end of August. The EDA webpage with notes and explanation of Housing Study can be found here: <https://www.co.winona.mn.us/379/Economic-Development>
6. **Debrief on Housing Institute:** There were several interesting presentations, including one from the Federal Home Loan Bank in Des Moines, which can provide up to 1 million in funding for projects. Crystal asked about funding for a program called “rehab in place” where older adults living in large houses are provided with funding to divide up a house and add rental units while still allowing the homeowner to remain in the home. People at the Institute thought it was a good idea but were not sure how to implement it.
7. **Member Updates:**
 - a. Hub: The Hub works with a lot of housing insecure people, but the Hub’s focus is on health and they would prefer not to be so focused on housing and are supposed to be referring housing issues elsewhere. Unfortunately, there’s no one place for people to go for housing services in Winona. The HUB has a lot of data on housing insecurity that they are willing to share.
 - b. Engage Winona Kitchen Table: N’Dea and Dan are part of Engage Winona’s new Winona Area Kitchen Table Program, which is a cohort of local community members who have faced housing instability or homelessness who are working together on solutions to housing issues. Currently the group is working on learning how to tell their stories and build relationships. Dan is meeting with a lot of different people to get feedback on housing issues.
 - c. Winona Community Foundation: Emily L. has been hired part-time as a replacement for Zoe.
 - d. Day Center/Warming Center: There is a huge amount of funding available for overnight shelters, so Catholic Charities is looking at suitable locations for a shelter in Winona. They would like to include space for families.
8. **Next Meeting:** August 11th at Winona Community Foundation. Regular meetings will be held on the 2nd Friday of each month at 10:00 a.m.

Marie will send an e-mail to all persons currently on the distribution list to see if they are still interested in participating.

Meeting adjourned: 11:30 a.m.

Minutes by Kalene Engel

Summary of Action Steps:

- *Marie, Tim, Rosemary and Crystal will meet to review and revise the original grant application.*
- *Rosemary will reach out to Buffy Beranek of SEMMCHRA to bring her up to speed on what our group is doing and to discuss Buffy's intentions regarding the grant and Winona County LHTF.*
- *Marie will talk to Chris Meyer about reaching out to Chad about LHTFs.*
- *Members were encouraged to take the Housing Study Survey and utilize the comments section to advocate for the Hope for Homes projects.*
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VK92QWT>.
- *Marie will send an e-mail to all persons currently on the distribution list to see if they are still interested in participating.*