

**HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2013, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Randy Backous
 Commissioner Jill Johns
 Commissioner Mark Kuzma
 Commissioner John LeTourneau
 Commissioner Chris Riley (arrived at 6:06 p.m.)
 Commissioner Sarah Strommen

Members Absent: Commissioner Jason Tossey

Also Present: HRA Executive Director Kurtis G. Ulrich
 Deputy Executive Director Timothy Gladhill
 Finance Director Diana Lund
 Fire Chief Dean Kapler
 Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
 Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
 City Engineer Bruce Westby
 Assistant to the City Administrator Patrick Brama
 City Attorney Joe Langel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Backous called the regular meeting of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Kuzma, seconded by Commissioner LeTourneau, to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Commissioners Kuzma, LeTourneau, Johns, and Strommen. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioners Riley and Tossey.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- None.

5. HRA BUSINESS

5.01: Adopt Resolution Approving Proposed 2014 HRA Levy

Finance Director Lund presented the proposed 2014 HRA Levy in the amount of \$207,802, an increase of \$20,534 or 10.96% from 2013. It was noted that this amount can be lowered prior to adoption but cannot increase.

Commissioner Riley arrived at 6:06 p.m.

Chairperson Backous stated he supports eliminating this HRA levy so he will not support a motion to adopt the resolution.

Motion by Commissioner Strommen, seconded by Commissioner LeTourneau, to adopt Resolution #HRA-13-09-153, Approving Proposed 2014 HRA Levy.

Further discussion: Commissioner LeTourneau stated he could also support eliminating the HRA levy if done through a phased transition over several years. Chairperson Backous stated he opposes raising the levy and would prefer it remain even instead of being increased. Commissioner Strommen stated she moved the resolution as it is included in the Council's Strategic Goals and if the HRA levy is eliminated it should be accomplished through a transition. Commissioner Strommen commented on the need to build the City's tax base to fund HRA items so a levy is not needed. She felt there was need for a larger focus on economic development and hoped this levy can be lowered prior to adoption in December.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Commissioners Strommen, LeTourneau, Johns, and Kuzma. Voting No: Chairperson Backous and Commissioner Riley. Absent: Commissioner Tossey.

5.02: Discuss Request for Proposals for Real Estate Broker Services

Executive Director Ulrich reviewed the staff report and described the HRA's residential and commercial properties that could be marketed through real estate broker services. He explained the Request for Proposal (RFP) process and suggested sale of The COR properties be discussed separately from this decision. Executive Director Ulrich suggested revising the RFP to add reference to carry-over compensation and a provision for conflict of interest statement by the professional so the City will know other properties they have listed that could result in a conflict.

Chairperson Backous asked why this is an HRA action if it includes City-owned land.

Executive Director Ulrich stated the RFP is written for both the City and HRA since land ownership is under both entities.

Commissioner Strommen asked if this will also be considered by the City Council.

Executive Director Ulrich stated approval of the RFP can be handled administratively; however, the contract would need to be authorized for signature by both the City Council and HRA.

Commissioner Strommen asked that the RFP be revised to reflect that.

Commissioner Riley stated his support for the RFP, noting it requires a licensed broker, which is not a skill of City Staff. He stated he finds this to be a good start.

Commissioner Kuzma stated he supports issuing an RFP, noting sale of properties will also help raise funds for road maintenance.

Commissioner Strommen stated the interested firms are being asked to identify if they are interested in residential and/or industrial land. She asked if more than one firm may be considered in the event that a firm is not interested in marketing both types of property.

Executive Director Ulrich stated it is the intent that more than one brokerage firm would be involved but it could be one firm depending on the strengths of the firm. He stated the RFP can be revised to indicate there may be more than one firm involved.

Commissioner Strommen stated she supports the RFP and clarifying the language so it is clear there may be more than one firm involved.

Commissioner Riley suggested adding language indicating the companies need to be in good standing with real estate and corporate taxes.

Chairperson Backous stated he would prefer to address all properties, including The COR, but understands that will involve additional discussion. He noted this property is an asset worth millions and the sale of this property should have been resolved years ago.

Motion by Commissioner Kuzma, seconded by Commissioner Johns, to authorize staff to draft and issue a Request for Proposals for real estate broker services.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Commissioners Kuzma, Johns, LeTourneau, Riley, and Strommen. Voting No: None. Commissioner Tossey.

5.03: Consider Sidewalk at North Commons Park

Executive Director Ulrich reviewed the staff report and how the sidewalk would be funded.

Motion by Commissioner LeTourneau, seconded by Commissioner Strommen, to approve installation of a sidewalk at North Commons Park.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Backous, Commissioners LeTourneau, Strommen, Johns, Kuzma, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: Commissioner Tossey.

6. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Ulrich reported on the satisfactory resolution with the contractor to level the stockpile of dirt that had raised concerns related to sight lines.

Commissioner Riley stated it appears the HRA paid to have dirt moved to this location and is now paying to have it removed.

Executive Director Ulrich stated this fill material came from the Lake Ramsey site and was stockpiled in this area to complete development of COR TWO. At that time, it was under the direction of Landform to bring a certain amount of fill onto this site but this is excess fill.

Commissioner Strommen stated she remembers conversations about the need to bring in fill. She stated she would be interested in reviewing past notes about that conversation held with Darren Lazan (Landform). She asked about the process for staff to review work of consultants to assure there are checks and balances. Commissioner Strommen stated she is interested in having such a process in place to avoid additional costs.

Chairperson Backous stated a mistake was made along the way and now the HRA is being expected to pay for it. He stated there is also a road that has to be repaved due to an error and early release of escrow funds, which he would like to further discuss with staff and determine if the City Attorney should become involved. Chairperson Backous stated these types of costs should be paid by the contractor and/or its insurance company and not by the residents of Ramsey.

Executive Director Ulrich stated he will report back on how this stockpile came to be in this location.

Commissioner Riley stated he likes that staff has found a way to remove this stockpile at no cost to the City; however, does not like how the stockpile got to this location in the first place.

Executive Director Ulrich reported that SuperAmerica is no longer interested in the Ramsey Boulevard site or the Armstrong Boulevard site so staff has contacted the developers to see if there is another user for these sites.

Commissioner Strommen stated during Happy Days, many asked when McDonalds and SuperAmerica were coming to Ramsey. She stated she remembers a conversation last year when those projects were heavily promoted in the City's newsletter and Chairperson Backous had expressed concern that the "cart was before the horse." Commissioner Strommen cautioned against prematurely promoting projects because if they do not come to fruition, it is perceived as a failure.

Chairperson Backous stated he found that prior action to be of a political nature.

7. COMMISSIONER INPUT

None.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner LeTourneau, seconded by Commissioner Riley, to adjourn the regular meeting of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
HRA Executive Director

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Carla Wirth
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.