

**MINUTES  
EMPORIA REDEVELOPMENT & HOUSING AUTHORITY  
CITY OF EMPORIA MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
SPECIAL MEETING  
JULY 28, 2009**

*Note to Reader:* Although the printed agenda document for this Redevelopment and Housing Authority meeting is not part of these minutes, the agenda document provides background information on most all of the items discussed by the Board at this meeting. The Clerk of the Redevelopment and Housing Authority maintains the agenda document. One may see a copy of the agenda for this meeting by contacting the Clerk.

The Emporia Redevelopment and Housing Authority held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, July 28, 2009 at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Building, 201 South Main Street, Emporia, Virginia. Steven Hall, Executive Director, presided over the meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon roll call, the following Emporia Redevelopment and Housing Authority members indicated their presence:

Ms. Veronica Leach	Mr. Dave Thomas
Ms. Sandra Skinner	Ms. Marva Dunn

Absent: Ms. Brenda Harrell  
Ms. Carolyn Carey  
Mr. Mark Owen

Others present: Steven B. Hall, Assistant City Manager  
Lori Jarratt, ERHA Clerk  
Sheila Cutrell, Fiscal Agent

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

***C. Improvement Association Partnership***

Mr. Hall reported that at the July 1, 2009 ERHA Regular Meeting, he informed the ERHA that he would contact Ms. Barbie Roundtree of the Improvement Association in order to seek information regarding a potential partnership with the ERHA. He also reported that while the Improvement Association also serves Greensville, Sussex and Surry Counties; he believed having the ERHA as a partner would assist in ensuring the delivery of services to residents in the City of Emporia. He further reported that it is his goal for the ERHA to serve in some capacity and assist the Improvement Association in implementing its programs in the City.

He stated that he had received e-mail correspondence from Ms. Roundtree on Tuesday, July 21 regarding the partnership request. He also stated that Ms. Roundtree advised that the Improvement Association is “always open to expanding its partnerships to assist the residents of its service areas.” He further stated that she provided a list of services available to residents of Emporia. He advised that over 100 local residents were served in fiscal year 2008. He also advised that she has spoken with Mr. Tyler, Executive Director and has indicated the organization would welcome the opportunity to partner with the ERHA.

He recommended an ERHA Commissioner volunteer to contact the Improvement Association, continue the dialogue and determine the means the ERHA can best assist the organization.

Ms. Dunn stated that she would volunteer to contact the Improvement Association in initiating the partnership.

Mr. Hall advised that he would invite Ms. Roundtree to attend a meeting of the ERHA.

#### ***D. Home Repair Grants***

Mr. Hall advised that as discussed at the July 1, 2009 ERHA Regular Meeting, a preliminary “Home Repair Grant” application had been prepared based on the Chattanooga, TN example. He also advised that it was determined at that meeting the maximum funding amount would be \$500 per household. He further advised that these funds would be disbursed in the form of a grant or a loan. He stated that the determination of a grant or zero-interest loan would be based on HUD income levels for Emporia-Greenville. He also stated that a household that is considered low-income (51-80% of median income) would be eligible for a zero-interest loan while a household that is very-low income (below 50% of median) would be eligible for a grant.

He advised that items that still must be confirmed include:

- Application questions and details
- Estimates for repair work (who will obtain)
- Ranking indicators
- Loan paperwork
- Participants on the review committee
- Means of public awareness

He recommended the ERHA review the preliminary application and confirm the remaining details prior to implementing the Home Repair Grant program.

Ms. Skinner stated that the application asked, “Have you been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor?” She stated that if this was not going to be criteria, this question should be removed. Mr. Hall stated that this item should be removed.

Ms. Dunn inquired as to the relevance of an individual being handicapped. Mr. Thomas stated that an individual may request a ramp and not be handicapped but someone living there may be handicapped. Mr. Hall stated that this would be one of the ranking indicators.

Mr. Hall stated that the potential ranking indicators did not need to be included, Very Low Income, because it is a grant and Structure Characteristics also needed to be removed, because the structure may be vacant or occupied. He also stated that Investor-Owner Characteristics would need to be changed to Home Owner Characteristics. He further stated that the question "Are you willing to pay anything toward the improvement, if so what percentage?" should be added to the application.

Ms. Skinner stated that the Home-Owner Characteristics could read as follows:

Share of total investment/leverage (10%) 1 point

Share of total investment/leverage (20%) 2 points

Share of total investment/leverage (25% and over) 3 points

Mr. Hall inquired if there needed to be a set percentage of individuals that received the loans as opposed to the grant. Mr. Thomas advised that this would need to wait until you get applications. Ms. Skinner stated that 20% could be given a grant. She also stated that this could be changed at a later date.

Mr. Hall stated that the application needed to have a statement for proof of income. He also stated that a copy of the deed would be required to show home ownership.

Mr. Hall stated that under E. Repairs/Improvements Desired, there needed to be a maximum amount of improvements. He also stated that the funds for the Lowground Road had to be used in the Lowground area. He further stated that the limit in the Lowground area could be set to a maximum funding of \$500. Mr. Hall stated that outside the Lowground area could have a cap of \$500 but within the Lowground Road area, there would be no limit.

Mr. Thomas stated that the maximum should be \$500 outside the Lowground area and the maximum within the Lowground area could be on a case-by-case basis. He inquired if the funds, paid back in the Lowground area, would have to be used again in the Lowground area.

Ms. Cutrell advised that the funds that are paid back in the Lowground area would have to be used in the Lowground area.

Mr. Hall stated that there could be a separate application for the Lowground area. He stated that the application outside the Lowground area would have a disclaimer of the \$500 cap.

Mr. Thomas stated that the Lowground area application would need to have a disclaimer stating that "These funds are from former grant funding within the Lowground Area and must be used in the Lowground Area."

Ms. Cutrell stated that when the city disbursed funds from the Lowground area, the applicant had to sign a Deed of Trust so that in the event they were to move or sell, the city would get their money back. She also stated that with the funding being a lot less, she did not see a need to do a Deed of Trust if Butler Barrett, City Attorney, did not think there would be any problem.

Ms. Skinner stated that we could have the applicant sign a promissory note. Ms. Cutrell advised that a promissory note would be acceptable.

Ms. Skinner stated that should the applicant fail to pay, you could place a judgment against them in General District Court and the ERHA would get their money back.

Ms. Cutrell also advised that there needed to be a time frame that the applicant would have to re-pay the funding.

Mr. Hall stated that he would contact Butler Barrett, City Attorney regarding the promissory note.

He stated that some of the repairs would require building permits. Ms. Skinner inquired if the fees could be waived. She stated that Council could have a set building permit fee and take that off of the grant amount. Mr. Hall stated that the total building permit fees could be taken from the grants.

Mr. Hall stated that he would request City Council, on August 18, 2009, to offer some relief on the building permit fees. He also stated that the contractor may include the building permit fees within their cost.

Mr. Hall stated that the applicant would need to get the estimates from a licensed contractor.

There was no further discussion regarding this item.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### ***West Atlantic Street Project***

Mr. Hall reported that the City had been informed that the West Atlantic Street Improvement Project was not funded in the initial round of grant recipients and fell just below the scoring cut-off line. He also reported that with that being said, there still is the chance the project would be funded this fiscal year as a result of unused emergency funds, close-out of other projects and funded projects that do not receive the full level of requested funds. He further reported that based on discussions with KW Poore and Associates and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), there is a fair chance the project will be funded. He advised that Ms. Denise Ambrose of DHCD indicated that, "While not a guarantee, there is usually enough available to fund an additional 3-4 projects that fell short in the initial competition." He also advised that information on unused funds would become available as the DHCD program year closes on September 30, 2009. He reported that as a result, all public and private funds that were initially committed to the project should remain allocated until additional information is received. He also reported that the City would be meeting with DHCD staff in the coming months and he would keep the ERHA apprised on information as he received it.

Mr. Hall advised that this item was for information.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Thomas made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Skinner seconded the motion, which passed as follows:

Ms. Veronica Leach  
Mr. Dave Thomas  
Ms. Sandra Skinner  
Ms. Marva Dunn

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Veronica Leach, Chairperson                      Date

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Lori R. Jarratt, Clerk                                      Date