

On June 22, 2016, the Saint Paul Public Housing Agency (PHA) Board of Commissioners approved the following actions:

- Pension Administrative Committee; Appointment of Administrative Employee Representative
- Project-Based Vouchers at Prior Crossing; Minimum Age Threshold
- Cancel July Board Meeting

Copies of these Board reports are available here.....

PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS

**FROM JON M. GUTZMANN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

REGARDING Pension Administrative Committee
Appointment of Administrative
Employee Representative

DATE June 22, 2016

Staff recommends that the Board reappoint Terri (Therese) Gindorff to the HRA/PHA Pension Administrative Committee for a three-year term from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2019. Ms. Gindorff has been a committee member since November 18, 2015 serving as an interim appointment to complete Ms. Kathy Frits' term that began July 1, 2013. Ms. Frits retired on October 13, 2015.

Two employees were nominated for this position on the Pension Committee and all AFSCME members and Supervisory and Confidential employees were eligible to vote. When the voting period ended on June 10, 2016, a total of 50 ballots had been submitted. Ms. Gindorff received 64% of the votes.

Other members currently serving on the Pension Administrative Committee are: Pete McCall, representing the Saint Paul City Council; Mike McMurray, representing the PHA Board; John Falzone representing Local 363 employees; and Gary Grabko representing HRA employees.

MLM/DMM

PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS

**FROM JON M. GUTZMANN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

REGARDING Project-Based Vouchers at Prior Crossing;
Minimum Age Threshold

DATE June 22, 2016

Staff recommends Board approval to allow Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative (“Beacon”) to lease units at Prior Crossing that are subsidized by project-based vouchers (PBV) to 17 year-old minors. If approved this action would suspend—for this project only—the minimum age of 18 which the PHA requires for admission to other PBV projects and public housing, and issuance of a Housing Choice Voucher.

Beacon is developing Prior Crossing as a supportive housing project for homeless youth, in collaboration with the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. The 44-unit development at 1949 West University Avenue (at Prior Avenue) in Saint Paul is currently under construction and is expected to be ready for occupancy in late summer or early fall. The Board approved awarding 32 Housing Choice Vouchers as PBVs for Prior Crossing on November 26, 2014, based on Beacon’s proposal to house youth from ages 18 to 21. Beacon is working with Wilder to finalize their plans for leasing the new units, and they have asked the PHA to lower the minimum age to 17. As explained in the attached letter dated May 11, 2016 from Lee Blons, Beacon’s Executive Director,

Most of the youth that will be housed at Prior Crossing will have reached the age of majority but occasionally there will be youth who need a safe place to live and have not yet turned 18. The new Coordinated Entry for Youth and Singles (CEYS) serves youth who are 16 and older. Unfortunately homelessness doesn't fall neatly into any particular age bracket and the need for the housing and services is just as critical for these youth as it is for the others. Beacon and our service partner, the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, want to be able to serve any youth who will benefit from the Prior Crossing experience and your approval of this request will enable that.

While there is some risk in leasing to youth under the age of 18, Beacon is experienced at working with this population and should any lease violations come up we work diligently with the resident and service provider to resolve issues outside of the court system. Beacon and

Wilder will also help youth moving into PBV-subsidized units understand the rules for retaining their voucher assistance at Prior Crossing and afterwards, if they move elsewhere with a tenant-based voucher (at age 18 or older). Any risk is further mitigated by the fact that we can enter into a new lease once they turn 18 because fortunately, being 17 isn't a lifetime condition.

History: Booth Brown House Foyer. In June of 2010 the Board approved a minimum age of 16 for the Salvation Army's Booth Brown House Foyer program, a six-unit Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy ("Mod Rehab SRO"). The project had struggled with low occupancy rates, to the point that HUD issued a finding that could have resulted in the project's cancelation. At that time legal counsel concurred that lowering the minimum age range for that SRO project to 16 was appropriate and presented minimal risk to the PHA. Lowering the age threshold accomplished its purpose, and the Booth Brown House Foyer has achieved higher utilization since then. The PHA has not encountered any increased administrative difficulties in working with the project and its residents.

Staff is not recommending changing the age threshold for the Booth Brown Foyer if the Board approves a minimum age of 17 for PBV units at Prior Crossing. The two projects operate under different HUD funding sources, with different eligibility requirements and different options for participants exiting the programs.

- The Mod Rehab SRO program is funded through HUD's homeless assistance programs (HEARTH Act, Continuum of Care) under the Community Planning and Development (CPD) division of HUD. To be eligible for the Mod Rehab SRO units an applicant must qualify as "chronically homeless" and have a documented disability. Participants in Mod Rehab SRO projects do not have the option to move elsewhere with a voucher, so there is no issue of a minor under 18 requesting a voucher to move.
- The PBV units are set aside from the PHA's Housing Choice Voucher allocation, funded through HUD's Public and Indian Housing (PIH) division. Homeless youth are the target

population Beacon and Wilder intend to serve at Prior Crossing, but without any rigid requirement of disability or chronic homelessness. Participants in PBV projects have the option to move elsewhere with a tenant-based voucher after a year's residence in the PBV unit. If the PHA allows a minimum age of 17 for PBV units at Prior Crossing, participants who lived there at least 12 months would have reached 18 and could be issued vouchers as adults.

As a supportive housing and services project, Prior Crossing will accept direct referrals and applications from the general public, and then refer potentially-eligible youth to the PHA to determine their Section 8 eligibility.

FAH/DJM

Attachments: May 11, 2016 Letter from Lee Blons, Executive Director, Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative
November 26, 2014 Board Report Approving Prior Crossing

PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL

REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS

**FROM JON M. GUTZMANN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

REGARDING Cancel July Board Meeting

DATE June 22, 2016

Staff recommends Board approval to cancel the July regular business meeting because there are no business items for consideration.

The Agency By-Laws state that “A scheduled regular or special meeting may be rescheduled or canceled only with the concurrence of four commissioners obtained at least three days prior to the scheduled regular or special meeting.” (Article I, Section 3.)

The August regular business meeting will be held on August 24, 2016.

MLM