

**St. Charles County
Commission on Housing Assistance**

MINUTES

Tuesday, November 16, 2021 9:00 a.m.

Attending Commission Members:

Jennifer George, Chairperson; Mike Hurlbert, and Dorothy Cedano.
Absent: Chief Kurt Frisz

Others Attending:

Robert Myers and Mariza Almstedt, St. Charles County; Dianna Clair, NECAC; and Amber Staples, NECAC

Meeting Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Jennifer George at 9:06 a.m.

Approval of June 3, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Mike Hurlbert to approve meeting minutes from June 3, 2021. Motion was seconded by Dorothy Cedano. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice acclamation.

Public Comments

The floor was open for public comment. There was no public comment.

COMMISSION ACTION ITEMS

- Changes to SCCHAP Administrative Plan

The County's Section 8 program prefers applicants to live and or work in St. Charles County and for elderly and disabled applicants. Dianna Clair will ask the Commission to consider modifying or doing away with those preferences and explained why. Dianna indicated that residents of SCC would prefer to live in the County but leave if they cannot find affordable housing here, then consequently consider moving to a neighboring county such as Warren and Lincoln counties. To qualify, recipients must live in SCC for at least 12 months. Dianna explained applications have been moved online and NECAC will open the wait list in January 2022. Jennifer George stated elected officials have stated a preference to assist elderly and/or disabled first and would like to know how many vouchers are being used by elderly/disabled population and local preference. Dianna will pull the Federal regulations section for Jennifer before any action is taken as it is a significant concern of elected officials. Dorothy stated she is aware of many elderly and disabled people waiting to apply but are not able to because the wait list is closed. According to HUD regulations, recipients will be allowed to leave with their voucher if they choose to whether or not there is a SCC preference. Jennifer asked Dianna for a summary of Federal Regs Sections and show how they interact for us and to forward them to Robert Myers. Dianna informed the Commission that NECAC is beginning to use DocuSign to send documents via email to applicants for recertification. There are 627-unit vouchers in the SCC program. It was noted that Ivy Lakes Apartments and O'Fallon Lakes Apartments have discontinued Section 8 voucher program. Dianna suggested asking HUD's approval to offer payments to landlords of 120% above the normal amount to incentivize landlords through a waiver. Because of the increased cost of housing, Dianna Clair stated Dianna stated SCC is on the watch list with HUD for not leasing up enough vouchers.

Mike Hurlbert and Robert Myers may want to convene a group of landlords who stopped participating in the Section 8 program and another meeting with landlord prospects was proposed. NECAC has a list of landlords supportive of the Section 8 program from years past and today which will be shared with Mike Hurlbert. Dianna mentioned that NECAC is seeing new generations of investors purchasing single family homes. Mike will contact Compass Health and Saints Joachim and Ann Care Service to get information about their landlord advocate program.

There was no action taken on the administrative plan change.

- Contract Renewal between NECAC and St. Charles County Government

The contract is expiring, and the Commission of Housing Assistance needs to recommend approval to the board of Housing Assistance Program. The Ordinance will be introduced at the December 6th County Council meeting and voted on December 20th. There are no substantive changes to the terms of the contract except to delete the last sentence on Page 3, Section 6. Jennifer made a motion to recommend approval of the contract to the Housing Assistance Program Board as amended. Dorothy Cedano made a motion and was seconded by Mike Hurlbert. Motion passed.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION ITEMS

Briefing on Results of Audit

Dianna Clair provided an update on the status of a routine audit of NECAC's administration of the Section 8 program by HUD's Quality Assurance Division. Documentation was submitted before August 2nd by Dianna Clair but went sometime without getting information from HUD that follow-up information had been received. HUD asked us to resubmit everything internally because they were unable to transfer our documentation. Dianna Clair is currently working on resubmitting all the requested documentation. Dianna Clair will keep the Commission on Housing Assistance informed on future communications on this matter until HUD officially closes the audit. All action items have been completed.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Mike Hurlbert and seconded by Dorothy Cedano and was approved by unanimous voice acclamation. The meeting adjourned at 10:21 a.m.