

WFH Steering Committee Minutes

May 27th, 2021 4:00pm

Meeting Purpose: Monthly workforce housing steering committee meeting to discuss and take action on Committee mission and goals.

Attendees: Kim Haman, Jo Ann Eder, Russ Born, Valentine Smith, Jenn Capp, Hope Rubyhawk, Chris Lorash, Marcella Manuel, Robin Adams (RLACF Staff), Theresa Whistler (City representative)

Minutes

Action Items:

1. Americorps Housing VISTA VAD
 - a. Val moves to approve the VISTA, Jo Ann seconds. Motion passed.
 - b. The position is still open! The link to apply is here:
<https://my.americorps.gov/mp/listing/viewListing.do?fromSearch=true&id=102090>
2. Workforce Housing Steering Committee Member Position Description
 - a. General consensus that a process to becoming a voting member is needed and will help us recruit new members.
 - b. Members will represent:
 - i. Property management (at least 1 position)
 - ii. Bank (at least 1 position)
 - iii. Business (at least 1 position)
 - iv. Insurance (at least 1 position)
 - v. Realtor (at least 1 position)
 - vi. Engaged community member (at least 2 positions)
 - vii. Non-voting City representative (at least 1 position)
 - c. Robin updated the position description to identify there will be 7-11 members, 9 meetings out of the year must be attended, terms will be staggered, the county residence requirement will be waived, and a quorum will be needed to vote on action items.

- d. Joining sub-committees does not require WFH Steering Committee membership.
- e. Robin will send out an email with a poll to see who is interested in becoming a steering committee member and which sub-committees they'd like to focus on.

Status of Owner-Built Housing Program

- 3. Build is going well, porches up, countertops up, been a year since they started and Kristen says that the homeowners are looking forward to finishing up and moving in this summer.
- 4. Chris says that Mark is gathering bids for the next rounds, they're coming in higher than we want them to. Chris would like a copy of the appraised value of the homes to reference for the next round. The one that Chris has is aged about 18 months.
 - a. Robin will be in touch. They may not have done a full appraisal yet but even a preliminary one would be helpful.
- 5. Volunteers are still a case-by-case basis until we secure a VISTA member, for now interested volunteers and groups can contact me to get more information. Robin will look into getting the Care-A-Vanners back this summer/fall.

HOME Fund update

- 6. Because the updated purchase price limits for Carbon County are \$237,000 for an existing single-family home are too low, the HOME fund sub-committee and City decided to pivot and use the recaptured HOME funds for construction of affordable housing. This is an eligible use of funds and identified in the 2018 program income plan by the committee.
- 7. Current funds must be spent before the City is eligible to reapply, so this will hopefully help the City spend the current pot faster.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning Grant

- 8. Robin is preparing a CDBG Planning Grant application for a Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR) for affordable/workforce housing development. This will help us approach businesses, investors, and other potential partners to get involved with long-term rental development.
 - a. Val would like to expand past City limits and potentially get County involved to include the Red Lodge area.

- b. The County just announced the American Rescue Plan Grant Application - Carbon County Commissioners plan to make up to \$1,041,603 of the County's American Rescue Plan Act funding available as direct grants. They are also considering projects for potential Community Development Block Grant planning projects. Deadline is June 18th, 2021.

Property Management (*Jenn Nelson*)

9. Jenn is the owner/operator of AAA rentals, been in business for 16 years – they started out renting out themselves in town. Served as president / vice president of Business Alliance and TBID (Tourism Business Improvement District)
 - a. At \$2 per night per room per house, TBID has a budget of \$100k per year that allows Red Lodge to qualify as a CBB community to get the Chamber allocated State funding. Piney is TBID president with 2 business partners.
10. Currently manage 35 vacation rentals. 50/50 in City limits, used to managed long term rentals that they sold to Fischer and Erwin.
11. Lots of social media posts about how short term rentals are hurting the town – lots of myths to correct. AAA pays taxes (TBID, state bed tax, resort taxes), units are inspected. If they feel a unit would do better in long-term rental market, that's where they direct those owners. Airbnb and VRBO are not regulatory agencies – they're booking/advertising platforms. They now collect state bed tax after a lawsuit.
12. Long-term rentals were difficult to manage and can be expensive
 - a. \$1k-2k for tenant turnover from replacing appliances and other costs related to long-term use.
13. Ideas to attract long-term rental landlords
 - a. Build into the lease that included in the monthly rent, a cleaner will come in once a month to help maintain the property
 - b. Restoration fund, possibly from the foundation, for a landlord to be able to access if the unit is damaged after long-term use
 - c. Educational course for tenants may make landlords more likely to take them on – Homeward, a Missoula nonprofit, is piloting a similar program called 'Rent Wise'

- d. All short-term rental properties within City limits are required to get a business license, undergo inspections, and pay taxes. Software to track these properties is expensive, the City could do more education to increase compliance.

BFCF Housing Webinar: Summary, Next Steps tabled to next meeting

Other news/announcements none

Meeting adjourned 5:33pm, next meeting June 24 at 4pm