

A regular meeting of the Leelanau County Housing Action Committee (HAC) was held on Monday, July 10, 2023 at the Leelanau County Government Center.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Chair Lois Bahle.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: L. Bahle, F. Clements, R. Foster, M. Lautner, S. Oriel
T. Wessel,

Members Absent: S. Yoder, G. Allgaier, J. O’Neill, C. Noonan, P. Hallstedt, C. Wood

Staff Present: T. Galla, Director, G. Myer, Senior Planner

Public Present: W. Irvin

CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA

Members approved the agenda by consensus.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

STAFF COMMENTS – None.

Bahle mentioned the “Housing Needs Assessment” presentation. Oriel commented that they have had good press coverage under it and she encouraged members as they communicate to marry the housing needs assessment with the ALICE Report. These two complement each other for our county and make the need very clear.

CONSIDERATION OF MAY 8, 2023 MINUTES

Minutes accepted by consensus.

OLD BUSINESS -None.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

Letter of Support for Leelanau County Rural Readiness Grant Application

Galla gave a brief update, saying the County Board approved moving forward with this grant application. Galla said they submitted the first step which was a letter of interest which outlined what the county anticipated doing with the money. Galla said they are now working on the grant application which requires at least three letters of support and she is asking this board for a letter.

Motion by Oriel, supported by Wessell, to provide a letter of support for the Leelanau County Rural Readiness Grant application. Motion carried 6-0.

Galla clarified that it is written in the grant that this would be a contracted position, not a county employee.

Discussion on Funding Options for Housing

Bahle said the Housing Trust Fund presentation had an amazing list of options, but she is not sure what they can offer. Perhaps they could compile a list of options and present it to the County Board. Bahle said fees on STR's (Short Term Rentals) are one possibility, but that is cumbersome. She wondered how hard it would be to access funds through a transfer fee for building a fund base or how much money would that actually generate?

Clements asked if they knew what was allowed in the county or state. Also, interest rates were mentioned in the presentation and he doesn't know where that is coming from. How do they find out about these programs that only someone in the county or state government would know about. Galla said the interest rate is probably the interest earned on the money sitting in the fund. She is not sure about the transfer tax. She has asked a few different agencies in the past, but she isn't sure if this requires a change in state law or not. Galla mentioned the \$29.00 recycling fee and said that it brings in a good amount of money. Maybe there is a way of tweaking that, since it is already law, so that money could be used for other things. Lautner agreed that they need to get that legislation changed, so money can be used for other things that they are charging a millage for now. This would be a fairer taxation.

Lautner questioned who they were looking to that would help put in affordable rental housing. Clements said all of the people that applied for the affordable housing in Northport. Oriel said firemen, teachers and essential workers. Lautner said people who do not currently live here then. Foster stated that all of the fire department in Northport lives outside the county. Lautner said that may be a problem for Northport but that is not a problem for the southern township. Bahle said it is a problem for Suttons Bay. Foster added it is for Glen Arbor. Lautner said she does not want to tax people in the southern part of the county to put housing in the northern part. She said they are assuming that the people they would potentially be helping are working in this county. Oriel said they could make that a requirement. Clements felt they were getting ahead of themselves. Wessell spoke regarding the families living and working in the housing project in Northport and said it is written into the contract that they can't appreciate the value of the house in the short term.

Discussion ensued on housing and restrictions in the county for keeping workers here and keeping kids in our schools.

Galla said the Housing Needs Assessment and the ALICE report data along with knowing what other organizations could do, makes it possible to figure out how many housing units are needed and what the "gap" would be. Bahle felt they could work on how many units are needed, what that cost is, and the gap funding needed. Lautner mentioned Carter Rd. and the trouble there. Wessell stated that is voucher housing, which is not what HAC is talking about. Assessments on housing with a value over half a million dollars might be a source of funding. Wessell concluded by saying that zoning reform is the most important tool.

Discussion ensued on ADU's (Accessory Dwelling Units)

Oriel questioned what from the list of revenue sources (handed out) is possible in the county. Galla said a lot of the things being brought up are things that would be in a housing plan; Leelanau County has never done a housing plan. She will share some old documents that were put together, but never adopted.

Updates on other projects:

Irvin reported that Habitat for Humanity sold the four units in Maple City and are starting the final two. They will also be starting 14 more with New Waves soon.

Bahle reported on the Homestretch project on Marek Rd., saying that the windows are in and the siding is going up. Peninsula Housing just closed on a duplex in Lake Leelanau. The tenants will remain in the house. In conclusion, Bahle said the Herman Rd. house is being rehabbed and they are looking for applicants.

COMMUNICATION ITEMS – None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

STAFF COMMENTS

Galla said Hallstedt and Wood volunteered to work on the HAC goals, both have been too busy.

MEMBER/CHAIR COMMENTS

Clements mentioned Sara Lucas doing a presentation and said her organization ties together a lot of things.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by consensus at 4:51 p.m.