

# Housing

Addressing the needs of Housing Authorities & Community Development Organizations in Illinois

focus

## Message from the President: Jackie L. Newman



ILNAHRO'S Annual Conference *Navigating the Future*. . . . was a HUGE success!!

A special *'Thank You Very Much'* to our sponsors: Johnson Controls; AHRMA Insurance Group, The Inspection Group and the Springfield Housing Authority. We greatly appreciate our vendors for their participation at the conference and without workshop presenters and conference attendee's it certainly would not have been possible!! Thank you – thank you – thank you!

The election of ILNAHRO Officers took place during the annual luncheon and I am honored to serve another term as ILNAHRO's Chapter President. ILNAHRO is committed to continue working hard to serve as an advocate and voice on matters of importance to all Public Housing Authorities; whether large, small or rural. Our goal is to continue reaching out to Community Development Organizations ensuring we are addressing concerns important to CD organizations. As we approach the final months of 2015, there is still much work and advocacy ahead as the State of Illinois continues operating without an approved budget.

As I articulate in each issue, ILNAHRO is committed to ensuring we are serving as your advocate and your voice on matters of importance and this year will be no different. Please communicate directly with us about matters that affect and impact your agencies operations. Let us be your voice—communicate with us!!



ILNAHRO is committed to providing up-to-date information; e-blasts and training that we hope will be helpful to your organizations as you navigate through changes, share with us 'training gaps'. Join us next year in Rockford, Illinois August 17-19, 2016.

If you are interested in serving on the Board for ILNAHRO, please contact me directly at [jackie.newman@sha1.org](mailto:jackie.newman@sha1.org) I would love to speak with you about how your knowledge, skills and abilities can be utilized to further affordable housing. Again, please let me know how I can serve you and your organization. We are here to be 'your voice'.

Respectfully submitted,

*Jackie L. Newman*  
Jackie L. Newman  
ILNAHRO President





## **2015 National NAHRO Agency Awards of Merit**

### **RIHA 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Video**

In October 1939, a meeting was called to organize, elect officers, and establish by-laws of the Rock Island Housing Authority (RIHA). As a result, a resolution was passed authorizing the application to fund the first public housing project in the city. Responding to the growing awareness of the social problems connected to concentrated poverty and the economic burden of warehousing low income families in large developments, RIHA established a new vision in 2003 to build communities based on transition and hope. To honor that October afternoon and the fruition of that vision, RIHA created a video telling their story.

**Ms. Susan Anderson**  
**Executive Director**  
**Housing Authority of the City of Rock Island**

### **Debt Recovery Program**

In 2012, the State of Illinois Established the “Local Debt Recovery Program” to allow units of local government to collect outstanding debt in coordination with the Illinois Comptroller’s Office. The Springfield Housing Authority was one of the first PHAs in Illinois to enroll in 2014 and successfully collected over \$33,000 toward vacated tenant accounts. With decreasing funding through pro-ration, this program provides an opportunity to collect funds from past tenants and regenerate to the AMPs for continuing operations. There is little to no administrative costs to enroll and the operational efficiency of the properties is increased.

**Ms. Jackie L. Newman, PHM, CME**  
**Executive Director**  
**Springfield Housing Authority**

### **Neighborhood Stabilization Program**

Facing the problems of a lack of affordable housing, neighborhood blight, and high school dropouts, the Winnebago County Housing Authority and the Rockford Housing Authority partnered to leverage the nonprofit, government, and private sectors to use the Neighborhood Stabilization Community Trust program, YouthBuild, and the Project Based Section 8 Program to rehabilitate and bring housing assistance to six homes. The renovations impacted against encroaching distressed neighborhoods, expanded housing opportunities into neighboring communities, and demonstrated jurisdictional cooperation to maximize a program that rehabbed homes, gave jobs to youths, and housed low income families.

**Mr. Alan Zais, SFHM, PHM**  
**Executive Director**  
**Winnebago County Housing Authority**



## **Junior WDI**

The Junior Workforce Development Institute (WDI) is a summer and after school program created to address behavioral issues in youth, specifically grades K-4. Children develop attitude and behavior that often continues into their adulthood. The program started in the 2014 summer in conjunction with another summer youth program. It addresses key soft skills such as positive behavior and communication. The local schools are supportive of the program, and parents and teachers have seen a substantial positive difference in the behavior of the children who attended the Junior WDI program.



**Mr. Larry Williams, PHM**

**CEO**

**Housing Authority of the City of Freeport**

## **Parenting Classes**

Parenting practices vary, but knowing and understanding the basics are necessary for a healthy relationship with your child. Freeport Housing Authority (FHA) has seen firsthand unsupervised children and children with behavior issues on the property. FHA wanted to empower parents and encourage good parenting practices as the results can help all those involved including the parent, the child, the school, and the community. FHA entered a new partnership to provide traditional parenting classes. The results were the best the partner of FHA has ever seen with 83% of the enrolled participants successfully completing the classes.

**Mr. Larry Williams, PHM**

**CEO**

**Housing Authority of the City of Freeport**

## **Father's Day Farewell**

As the oldest property owned by the Lake County Housing Authority (LCHA), Marion Jones Townhomes is considered the forefather of the LCHA housing development. For more than 53 years, Marion Jones Townhomes served as home to hundreds of Families within the Lake County Community. This development provided security, shelter, and comfort, much like a father would. In 2013, LCHA announced that Marion Jones Townhomes would be closing and a new housing mixed income development would be built in its place. The Lake County Housing Authority hosted its 1<sup>st</sup> annual Father's Day 3K Walk and Run on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in honor of the property.

**Mr. David A. Northern, Sr., CMMO, CMPO, CMVO, PHM, SHM**

**Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer**

**Lake County Housing Authority**

## **3E: Empower.Educate.Employ\***

Peoria's public housing residents see unemployment rates higher than the city's average. To help residents become more self-sufficient, PHA's Brent Baker created the 3E Program, a college preparation course. 3E is designed to Empower, Educate and Employ residents in areas that interest them. Students were acclimated into the school environment, taught how to fill out relevant paperwork, and generous grants and donations eventually allowed them to attend school and study with the right tools, free of charge. Now, five students are on track to become Certified Nursing Assistants in our community.

**Mr. Timm Krueger**

**Community Relations Manager**

**Peoria Housing Authority**

## **Spencer Towers Resident Council**

The Spencer Towers Resident Council was founded in 1996; but came to live in 2013 when three individuals with fresh ideas and desire to make a difference took the reins and ran with it. Spencer Towers is a high-rise with 199 one-bedroom apartments. The residents range in age from 18-97 including 12 shut-ins. In the beginning, the group hosted one event per month with barely a dozen participants. Today they host twelve events a month with between 35 and 50 residents in attendance – and the activity list and participation continues to grow.

**Ms. Susan Anderson**

**Executive Director**

**Housing Authority of the City of Rock Island**

# HUD fair-housing letter, unexpected visit irk Rockford aldermen

By Lindsey Holden  
Rockford Register Star

Posted Aug. 17, 2015 at 6:21 PM  
Updated Aug 17, 2015 at 10:19 PM



ROCKFORD — Aldermen accused U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development officials of extortion and blackmail in response to the agency's warning that the city may jeopardize its federal funding if the City Council does not take action to further affordable-housing efforts in the city.

Antonio Riley, HUD's Midwest regional administrator, and Maurice McGough, the regional director of HUD's [Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity](#), announced Monday that they will meet Thursday with city and Rockford Housing Authority officials. Riley and McGough plan to discuss the implications of [a recent letter](#) the agency sent regarding a housing plan pegged for South New Towne Drive.

Representatives from Gorman & Company, concerned about potential City Council opposition to its housing plan, pulled the proposal last month. The plan would have relocated about one-third of residents at Fairgrounds Valley, a public housing complex on the west side, to a 65-apartment development on the east side.

Council members expressed their displeasure about the short notice they were given to plan for the HUD meeting. Many said they felt resentful of the way they perceive HUD is attempting to further their fair-housing goals. Several aldermen said they have been led to believe by HUD officials that all of the city's federal funding could be threatened if Rockford is not in lockstep with the agency's goal of furthering

affordable housing in Rockford.

"The letter was an outright threat," said Ald. Venita Hervey, D-5, who said Rockford has done more to help Winnebago County's poor than any other town in the area. "Blackmail, extortion and threats is not a way to treat a community that's done as much as Rockford."

Tim Durkee, R-1, said RHA, the Winnebago County Housing Authority and HUD are holding aldermen responsible for a problem those agencies helped to create long before they took office. He's still not on board with RHA and Gorman's proposal: "Creating 'Fairgrounds-lite' on New Towne is no solution."

Jeanne Oddo, D-8, and Joseph Chiarelli, R-14, want to see RHA engage more with residents in neighborhoods where new affordable housing would be located. Holding meetings midday, as RHA has done in the past, is "unfair" to community members and aldermen who work during the day and would be interested in attending, she said.

Tom McNamara, D-3, and Linda McNeely, D-13, said they hope Riley's office would attempt to reschedule the meeting so more aldermen could be present.

"I truly would like to hear what (Riley) has to say," McNeely said.

McNamara and Kevin Frost, R-4, criticized the mayor and his administration for what they described as an untimely, botched communication regarding Riley's visit to Rockford. Both told Morrissey to work with his communication director to improve the quality and timeliness of information given to the City Council regarding public events, meetings and other items of interest so aldermen can make informed decisions and keep constituents in the loop about city business.

A news conference has been scheduled at 1:30 p.m. Thursday at the Regional Center for Planning and Design, 315 N. Main St., in conjunction with HUD officials' visit.



## **August Advocacy Continues: Support the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)**

**August 23, 2015**

August recess – and August advocacy -- continues! Take action today as part of NAHRO's August advocacy campaign to support efforts to extend and ultimately make permanent Low Income Tax Credit (LIHTC) rates at both 9 percent and 4 percent. LIHTC is arguably one of the most important tools we have to finance the production and rehabilitation of decent safe and affordable housing.

Click [here](#) to send a letter to your legislators urging them to expeditiously agree on tax extenders legislation stabilizing the LIHTC rates for two years at 9 percent and 4 percent. The same letter also asks Congress to ultimately make these rates permanent and to raise the LIHTC volume cap to address the desperate need for more new affordable rental housing for vulnerable families.

With specific respect to the shorter-term need to extend LIHTC rates at 9 and 4 percent, we are pleased to note that the Senate Finance Committee before the current recess passed a tax extenders bill that would extend these rates for two years. Prior to final enactment, this measure must be approved by the full Senate, by the House Ways and Means Committee, and the full House. To alleviate the uncertainty of floating rates on into the immediate future, this two-year extension is important.

Additionally, Senator Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) and Representative Pat Tiberi (R-Ohio) have introduced legislation making both 9 percent and 4 percent LIHTC rates permanent. Senator Cantwell's bill is S. 1193 and Representative Tiberi's bill is H.R. 1142. Senator Cantwell's bill would need to be acted upon by the Senate Finance Committee and Representative Tiberi's bill would require approval by the House Ways and

Means committee. During the current recess, please educate your members about the positive impact the LIHTC has relative to the production of badly needed affordable housing and consider tours of your LIHTC projects for interested members and staff. The LIHTC is one of the few remaining tools to finance affordable housing. Making the rates permanent can help avoid uncertainty in the marketplace that may inhibit affordable housing financing and production.

Finally, tax credits are in great demand nationally. Generally speaking there is greater demand for tax credits than the current volume of tax credit authority can provide. Examining the success of the LIHTC along with the current demand for tax credits nationally and on a state-by-state basis, we hope that you will also consider lending your voice to the call for increasing the LIHTC volume cap and or the ability to convert a portion of your local bond authority to tax credits for affordable housing.

The A.C.T.I.O.N. coalition, which NAHRO is a member of, has and will continue to speak out on the points noted above. Please visit [the A.C.T.I.O.N coalition's web page](#), which is an invaluable resource for those who are able to provide information on the importance of the LIHTC. A.C.T.I.O.N. has also provided [state-by-state fact sheets](#) about to the LIHTC which we also hope can be of assistance. We understand fact sheets by Congressional District will be available soon.

Here are NAHRO tools available to you on general budget and appropriations:

- [2015 Legislative and Regulatory Agenda](#)
- [FY16 Funding Chart \(as of June 25\)](#)
- [Public Housing One-Pager](#)
- [Section 8 One-Pager](#)
- [Community Development One-Pager](#)
- [Affordable Housing Production One-Pager](#)

Let us know how it is going or if you need assistance: contact John Bohm at [jbohm@nahro.org](mailto:jbohm@nahro.org) or Tess Hembree at [thembree@nahro.org](mailto:thembree@nahro.org).

# Navigating the Future...

## 2015 IL NAHRO CONFERENCE





# Welcoming the Poor to the Suburbs

Long divided between black and white, Chicago collaborates with its wealthy, white neighbors to foster integration.

By ALANA SEMUELS



August 12, 2015 GLENVIEW, Ill.—This town boasts stellar schools, two golf courses, a children’s museum, and the corporate offices of a handful of big companies, including Kraft Foods. Many wealthy, white communities like this one would not welcome an affordable housing development. Perhaps residents wouldn’t say so outright, but instead they might pass laws prohibiting apartment buildings or deny permits to units targeted at low-income people.

But that’s not the case here. A 20-unit development called Greenleaf Manor, with most of the units set aside for low-income people, was completed early last year. Some of the units can only be rented to people who hold Section 8 vouchers, a class of people that landlords in the suburbs often avoid. And the building, which looks like new condo construction, was completed without a peep of objection from the wealthy town where it is located.

How did this happen? Why is an affluent suburb like Glenview open to the sort of development other similar places have shut down?

The answer is a novel collaboration among Cook County and a group of other counties in the Chicago region, including suburban DuPage, McHenry, Lake, and Waukegan. These counties have created a mechanism for pooling their resources so that low-income people who would normally live in the urban core of Chicago can move to more rural and suburban areas. As housing advocates [criticize](#) the

Housing Choice Voucher program, colloquially known as Section 8, for segregating poor residents in high-poverty neighborhoods, the Chicago collaboration could provide a model for how to make Section 8 work.

The collaboration began in 2002, when the Chicago Housing Authority and the housing authorities of Lake and Cook Counties created a collaboration called the Regional Housing Initiative (RHI). Its goal was to spearhead the construction of affordable housing in “opportunity areas,” which are

essentially middle- or upper-income neighborhoods with good schools and safe streets. Today there are nine public housing authorities that participate in the collaborative.

Here’s how it works: Through the Regional Housing Initiative, the housing authorities pool a portion of their Section 8-voucher funds and use that money to subsidize the construction of affordable developments in areas with a low poverty rate, a high homeownership rate, good schools, and access to jobs. The Section 8 units in those developments are then accessible to voucher-holders from all of the participating counties, and many of the other units are set aside for low-income people.

Typically, small counties and towns don’t have enough voucher funds to underwrite projects like these developments—before the collaboration, no suburban housing authority in Chicago had built affordable housing with voucher funds. Chicago, on the other hand, has the most vouchers in the region by far, but does not have many options for new housing in safe, high-opportunity neighborhoods. By pooling resources and allowing voucher-holders to move across the entire area, the Regional Housing Initiative has given poorer people access to towns and communities they would have otherwise been excluded from.

This has a number of benefits. It guarantees that voucher-holders will be able to find units in



good neighborhoods. It helps finance construction of mixed-income units in the suburbs, where the price of land often makes it tough to do affordable developments. When the state of Illinois distributes low-income housing tax credits, which are essential for developers who want to build affordable housing without losing money, it favors projects that have Section 8 units, so these units are also more likely to get funded than, for example, affordable units in struggling neighborhoods with no Section 8 units.

The project has been responsible for building 2,047 new apartment units in 30 developments since then. About 467 of those units are reserved for residents making less than half of the area median income. The units are all over the area, including in tony suburbs like Glenview.

“It’s really in some ways a workaround that we’ve created in the Chicago area to create more affordable and mixed-income housing in suburban opportunity areas,” Breann Gala, a project manager at the Metropolitan Planning Council, which helps run the RHI, told me. “We see this as a tool for both de-concentrating poverty and promoting access to opportunity.”

The program has helped people like Denise Boyd, who lived in the North Side of Chicago, in an apartment building that she said got a little too busy at night. When she got off the Section 8 waiting list two years, ago, she says, she was skeptical about the idea of moving to Glenview.

Her kids liked the Chicago school they were in and had friends there, and Boyd goes to church frequently and didn’t like the idea of a 45-minute drive, or more, just to get to church.

But then she visited Glenview and loved the trees and flowers in the Glenview building, which has a community garden and a big lawn. The stores are nicer in Glenview, she said, and the schools are excellent, too.

“Adults have to realize, when you have kids, it’s all about your children now,” she told me. “You have to make sure your children are happy and safe.”

While RHI has been effective at convincing both suburban and urban housing authorities to participate in the program, other factors helped too. For example, the recession of 2008 meant that developers had parcels of land that they couldn’t offload, and were amenable to selling

them to people interested in building affordable housing for fair prices. The recession also meant that many municipalities were looking for ways to encourage building on land that had once been zoned for manufacturing or business. The town of Crystal Lake, for instance, changed some zoning laws during the recession to allow the construction of certain apartment units, and the town now has a 60-unit development—many of which are affordable—complete with a pool, volleyball courts, and an exercise center.

“Local towns are now more open to non-traditional uses of suburban land,” said Julie Biel Claussen, the head of the McHenry County Housing Authority.

Before the Crystal Lake project was built, suburban residents worried that affordable housing would look like Cabrini Green, Claussen said. But now that affordable units have been built through the Regional Housing Initiative, residents have been complimenting the townhouses going up, not even knowing the units are for low-income residents.

“It’s a great way to show that affordable housing isn’t just a warehouse of poor people,” she said.

Housing advocates have long debated the merits of moving low-income families from high-poverty urban areas to suburbs like Glenview. The move can be challenging for families, who leave behind family and friends and enter a new, affluent world. But the research is increasingly conclusive: Living in a “good” zip code dramatically improves kids’ chances of going to college, getting a good job, and escaping poverty.

And yet, it can be hard to convince voucher-holders to move to the suburbs. Boyd worried that she would face racism, and that her children wouldn’t like being among only a handful of black kids at their school. Boyd says the move was difficult—her kids miss their friends, and Boyd’s own friends who use public transit never come out to visit, because it’s so difficult to get to Glenview. She still hasn’t found a church she likes—the ones in Glenview are “Catholic or Matholic or who knows what,” she joked. (To help with these sorts of difficulties, the Regional Housing Initiative is testing a program that will give voucher-holders money to move to high opportunity areas, and should have some results by the fall.)

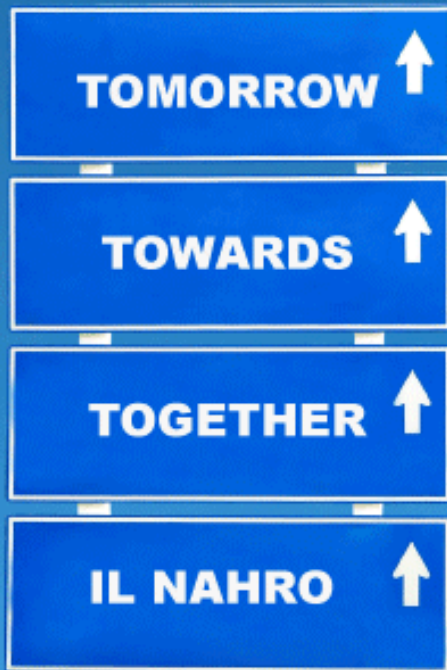
But Boyd, who has a disabled son, says all of those obstacles are nothing compared to the piece of mind she's gotten living in a quiet area with good schools. The move might have been difficult, but it will lead to better life outcomes for her children, she said.

Boyd now joins the ranks of hundreds of low-income Chicago families who have helped test new housing strategies. For half a century, Chicago was a prime example of how housing policy could perpetuate segregation. Its public-housing authority built new complexes in predominantly black areas as white areas refused to approve new public housing, a practice that led to a lawsuit in 1969. As part of a settlement, the [Gautreaux program](#) moved more than 3,000 black families to the suburbs. Later, a program known as Moving to Opportunity sought to do the same thing. But when studies raised questions about the effectiveness of these programs, they ended. Instead, the majority of families lived in complexes not all too different from the infamous Cabrini Green, and when that

was dismantled, they moved to [other](#) majority-black, low-income neighborhoods.

But by 2002, business leaders and suburban mayors were recognizing that the segregation of low-income residents in the urban core was holding back the region's economy. Companies located in the suburbs couldn't find entry-level service workers, and when they did, those workers would have hours-long commutes through heavy traffic, and would have problems getting to work in inclement weather. The Regional Housing Initiative was founded with the goal of creating more affordable housing for low-income workers in the suburbs.

"We're increasingly seeing this as a strategy that's not just about individual gains, but really about the aggregate economic impact of the whole region," said Marisa Novara, with the Metropolitan Planning Council. "Knowing that we need low- and high-skilled labor to be able to converge around jobs, we need people of different incomes to be able to live around the region."



## Save the Date

IL NAHRO Annual Conference

**August 17-19, 2016**

Radisson Hotel  
Rockford, IL

# HUD News

## HUD Publishes Final Rule on Portability Streamlining

August 18, 2015

On August 20, HUD will publish the long-awaited Housing Choice Voucher Program: Streamlining the Portability Process Final Rule. This completes the rule-making process, which began in 2012, to revise existing portability regulations in order to streamline the process and facilitate participating families' ability to move to new jurisdictions. The final rule goes into effect on September 19, 2015 and aims to clarify regulations governing the portability process.

### Key regulatory changes to the final rule include:

Removing the mandatory absorption requirement discussed in the proposed rule and clarifying the notification requirement of 60 days for mandatory voucher suspension;

Requiring an initial PHA to notify the local HUD office within 10 business days of a determination to deny a portability move based on insufficient funding;

Providing that the voucher issued by the receiving PHA to the family may not expire before 30 calendar days has passed from the expiration date of the initial PHA's voucher;

Requiring briefings for all participating on how portability works and the benefits of living in low-poverty census tracts;

Allowing a family to choose the receiving PHA to ad-

minister their voucher should they choose to use portability.

NAHRO previously submitted extensive comments regarding the 2012 proposed rule supporting changes that would improve the regulatory and administrative framework of voucher portability. Many of these changes remain in the final rule:

Setting the maximum amount that the initial PHA is required to pay at 100 percent of the receiving PHA's administrative fee rate;

Mandating suspension for all vouchers issued from the date the family submits the request for tenancy approval until the PHA approves or denies such request;

Requiring that communication by both PHAs be by email or other confirmed delivery methods to expedite the processing of the families' request;

Barring the receiving PHA from reversing its decision to absorb a family at a later date without consent from the initial PHA;

Clarifying language to state that a receiving PHA cannot refuse to assist income portable families as required by §982.355(a).

For more information, please contact Tushar Gurjal, Policy Analyst covering Section 8 programs, at [tgurjal@nahro.org](mailto:tgurjal@nahro.org).



**2015 NATIONAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION**  
**Building Communities Together:**  
*Power and Possibilities*

**OCTOBER 15-17, 2015**  
**Los Angeles, CA**

# Alton Housing Director to Resign

By Linda N. Weller - [lweller@civitasmedia.com](mailto:lweller@civitasmedia.com)

ALTON — Commissioners accepted resignation Tuesday of Alton Housing Authority Executive Director Andy Hightower, naming a 41-year employee as interim director, both effective Aug. 19.

Hightower, who has served as executive director since April 1, 2008, declined to discuss his plans after the regular, monthly meeting.

In a separate vote, commissioners approved temporary appointment of Gregory Denton, 57 — current AHA director of operations — as interim director. Denton began working for the authority while in high school, cutting grass and trimming greenery and then got hired full-time. Over the years, he said he learned about property maintenance and housing modernization. He was promoted to maintenance supervisor in 1988, then moved up to director of operations.

“As interim director, I look forward to the opportunity to lead the Housing Authority, and also work with the community,” Denton said. “I hope to be considered for executive director.” He said he plans to apply for that position.

“I’ve had the opportunity to work at each site before I was maintenance supervisor, I know the properties pretty well,” he said. “I then took a stronger role as director of operations.”

Denton also founded Bread of Life Fellowship Church in Godfrey, and has served as its pastor for 20 years.

The panel also voted to temporarily utilize Hightower as a consultant for \$50 per hour until the AHA appoints a new executive director, or for 60 days, whichever occurs first; and for Commissioners Diana Williams and Doug Martin Sr. to serve on a committee to review applications for the position that the AHA receives, with attorney Clifford Emons to advertise the vacancy.

Those four personnel votes happened after an executive session that lasted for more than a half hour.

Prior to the closed session, the panel OK’d a resolution allowing AHA officials to enter into a contract with Morrissey Construction of Godfrey to build five single-family houses that the authority owns off Toledo

Avenue. Hightower said Morrissey was low bidder in the second round of bidding, but the AHA negotiated the price to \$603,000 for three, two-bedroom homes after getting permission from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Madison County Community Development will pay \$407,000 for its part of the construction project, with Morrissey building two, three-bedroom homes, bringing total cost to \$1,010,000. Emons will review the contract before the executive director signs the document.

There will be a pre-construction meeting on Aug. 20, during which time the contractor will determine start date of the houses, which all will be built at once, Hightower said. The AHA will operate and maintain the homes.

Other resolutions the board OK’d unanimously allow AHA officials to renew a \$108,547 certificate of deposit with CNB Bank and Trust NA at 0.75 percent interest; and, for any commissioner who is interested, to attend the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials’ 2015 National Conference for Commissioners in Los Angeles in October.

Reach Linda N. Weller at 618-208-6450 or on Twitter @Linda\_Weller.

# Workplace Etiquette

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Tip of the Month

## SOUND

- Monitor the volume of your conversations. Be sensitive to how loudly you may be speaking. Do you notice that people down the hall comment on your conversations? That might indicate your voice is too loud. Consider closing your office door and lowering your voice whenever speaking in person or on the telephone.
- Keep personal telephone conversations-and emails-brief and at a minimum. Be ever mindful that others are nearby and that this is a place of business. Do not use the company telephone, fax, or email, for any inappropriate and personal matters.
- In some workplaces, privacy is difficult to find. If you overhear a private conversation, practice selective hearing. Avoid the urge to be "helpful" in areas best left to the other person to handle on their own. Your best bet for being treated as a professional at work is to keep all workplace conversations professional.
- Sharing professional information is wonderful, gossiping is not. Only discuss personnel matters directly with specific individuals, superiors, and management. NOTE: For an informational sheet on "Gossip" please write us at [Info@AdvancedEtiquette.com](mailto:Info@AdvancedEtiquette.com) and we will send it to you.

## SCENT

- Be sensitive to scents and smells surrounding you. Save cologne and perfume for social occasions, and ask if fresh flowers and potpourri bother co-workers before installing them in your space.
- When eating at your desk or in shared areas, avoid foods with strong smells and aromas that will travel throughout the office. As great as French fries, Chinese food, and Indian food are, smelling them

together in the same room and office can become unpleasant. Dispose of empty food containers and other items where they won't contribute negatively to the office atmosphere.

## SIGHT

- Keep your personal workspace clean and neat at all times. Generally, less is better when it comes to office and cubicle decor. Use discretion when displaying personal items such as family photos and mementos so as not to overdo, clutter, and obstruct your work area.
- Use shared areas with respect and courtesy. Workplace kitchens can be the biggest source of co-worker tension. If you expect everyone you work with to cleanup after themselves, model that behavior yourself. Wash and return all kitchen items to their proper place, clean spills, and wipe countertops and tables as needed. Help maintain supplies as needed. When leaving food items in a shared refrigerator, mark all items with your name and date. Remove all items at the end of your work week and toss or recycle empty containers.
- Restrooms run a close second to kitchens as annoyance spots. After use, wipe the countertop and sink of any spilled water or soap. Be sure the toilet is clean for the next user. Notify the proper attendant if supplies are low or out, and of any plumbing problems.
- Maintain all shared items in "like new" condition and return borrowed supplies. Leave the photocopier in working condition and be sure to take back that borrowed stapler with at least a few staples left inside. If a machine stalls or jams, take time to undo the jam or to alert the proper person to attend to it. We all expect and want to be able to use items and equipment when needed.

Have you visited the **Advocacy Action Center** lately?



There are a few **TAKE ACTION** items featured that you may want to check out.

<http://www.nahro.org/nahro-advocacy>

### *2015 National Conference Dates*

National Conference—October 15-17 - Los Angeles, CA

### *2016 National Conference Dates*

Washington Conference— April 10-12; Arlington, VA (just outside Washington, DC)

Summer Conference - July 15-17; Portland, OR

National Conference - October 14-16; New Orleans, LA

## **ILNAHRO Membership Has Its Privileges!**

***There is still time*** to get your membership dues to ILNAHRO. Membership in ILNAHRO has its privileges!

- Cutting edge training;
- Resources through information sharing of best practices by PHAs, IHDA and Community Development Organizations
- State & National Level Advocacy on Housing Issues
- Networking and Much, much more!!!

**Agency Membership: \$60**  
**Individual Membership: \$20**

Membership Year:  
October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016

Send your membership payment to:  
IL NAHRO, State Coordinator, 169 Templar Ave. • Pinckney, MI 48169



# 2015 Illinois NAHRO Board of Directors

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Executive Director  
Winnebago County Housing Authority  
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## **NCRC At Large Representative 4 year**

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## **Housing America/Poster Contest**

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## **IL NAHRO State Coordinator**

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