

WI-CARH/RURAL DEVELOPMENT LIAISON MEETING

February 7, 2012
Stevens Point, WI

Those in attendance were: Cheryl Halvorson, Mary Vinopal, Debbie Biga, Bob Hernandez and Dave Sheperd and Russ Endres.

RD Budget Update. Debbie reviewed the funding for 2012: Rural Rental Housing (RRH) 515 new construction was up from last year to \$64,000,00, \$1.5 million in Rental Assistance (RA), MPR \$2 million, farm labor \$14 million, \$2.5 million in RA for farm labor. Preservation Loan Fund (RLF) was funded at \$4 million, housing program preservation grant was funded at \$3.6 million (this was funded at \$9 million last year). Notifications of Financial Assistance (NOFA) drafts are due in the upcoming months for how to allocate the housing preservation grant funding.

MPR has a large backlog; however, they continue to take new applications hoping the program will become permanent. Debbie mentioned that there were no prepayments last year and they have not done one since 2009. There is no one on the late waiting list for Wisconsin prepayment; applications will perhaps be funded in 3 to 4 years.

WI-CARH has received the prestigious honor of being named the State Association of the Year presented by CARH.

MPR Program. There have been no proposed changes to the **MPR** program for 2012.

Voucher Program has \$15 million allocated for new vouchers as well as the renewal of old vouchers. There are approximately 200 vouchers in the state of Wisconsin NOFA published in January 24 of this year indicate no changes from last year. Again they are working on making the program permanent. Rent comparable studies can now be done in-house eliminating the need to hire contractors which has not received consistent funding.

IPIA (Improper Payment Information Act) Update. Last year 666 tenant files were sent to the national office for review; 14 files came from Wisconsin. There were no errors in Wisconsin. The overall rate for errors in 2011 was 1.48 which is up from 1.39 on the previous audit. This is the first year Wisconsin has had no errors!

WHEDA. Dave Sheperd reported on the 2012 LIHTC Program. In the preservation set aside, there were five proposals submitted by RD out of 17 requested projects. All LIHTC awards will be given in April. Last year the preservation site was not oversubscribed, but this year it is very much oversubscribed. Overall, for the 2012 LIHTC cycle, there is one dollar of tax credits available for every four dollars requested.

USDA training area office staff met in January to discuss items that needed additional training. Some of the suggestions were unauthorized assistance, proper verifications, self-evaluation plans and how to implement civil rights training. It was also suggested that we consider working with WAHA. It was stated that there is a lot of work that needs to be done in terms of budgets;

constructing, submitting and the budgeting process. Cheryl and Debbie believe there is a great need for education in this area. It was also discussed that a webinar from RD may be done in the future.

Lease & Addendum: Nothing new to report on the lease project; things are moving along according to plan. Russ pointed out that there were substantial costs with the software vendor Onsite and getting the WICARH leases formatted. We have not heard if there is a big demand for Spanish leases; we may want to check in with UMOS to determine demand.

Harmonization Project. Cheryl Halverson reported that the harmonization project with Rural Development, WHEDA and HUD has been signed relative to the physical inspections. HUD REAC inspections will be acceptable for Rural Development projects. Rural Development inspections will also qualify on tax credit projects for WHEDA .

2012 WHEDA Conference will be at Monona Terrace on December 4, 2012 per Dave.

Next Liaison Meeting: Our next liaison meeting will be August 14, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,
Russ Endres
Secretary