



WI-CARH

Wisconsin Council for Affordable & Rural Housing

WI-CARH Quarterly Newsletter December 2016

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Looking Back On 2016

-Russell Kaney, WI-CARH President

We all knew that 2016 was going to be an exciting year. In today's world, you need to keep informed any way you can, which is why WI-CARH has continued to provide training, information and advocacy for affordable housing in Wisconsin.

2016 was an election year for the top office in the country. It is not every four years that we have two candidates running who are not incumbents but that was the case in 2016. With the changing administration coming in 2017, the rural housing industry will be put to the test, once again, to



deliver quality housing, service and programming to rural residents.

Russell Kaney, WI-CARH President

WI-CARH had a productive year. In March, we hired April Forer to be our new Executive Assistant for your organization. April came on board just before our spring training event held in Madison, Wisconsin in April. As we progressed through the year, April has taken on all the responsibilities we have expected and she brings an added dimension of marketing and networking to strengthen our organization.

WI-CARH continues to have great relationships with Rural Development-USDA as evidenced by our continued open discussions at our liaison meetings and their attendance and participation in our trainings and annual conference. State Director, Stan Gruszynski, has been a great asset to this relationship and he is commended for providing the leadership needed for a well-run federal agency in Wisconsin. Many thanks to Stan for all his efforts over the past 8 years!

On the programming side, 2016 saw some turmoil but also resolution in the rental assistance program. Rental assistance is the backbone of the Rural Rental Housing 515 program. Additional funding was provided to make owners/managers whole and avoid unnecessary stress to residents dependent on rental support. The maturing mortgage issue continues to be discussed with different approaches for resolution. Preservation and rehabilitation of our older housing stock is also at the top of the list for discussion any time resources are on the table.

Although there are always issues needing attention, you can be assured that WI-CARH will continue to follow these and other issues as they arise, particularly with a new Congress forming in January 2017. As a WI-CARH member, we are always interested in your ideas, comments and suggestions for training, conference agendas and items to add to the discussion. We optimistically look forward to a productive 2017.

19th Annual Meeting & Conference A Success

Breaking Down Barriers was the theme for WI-CARH's 19th annual meeting and conference held at Kalahari Resort & Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin.

Over 100 attendees enjoyed breakfast and registered to attend this year's conference. After a brief welcome and announcements by Russell Kaney, President of WI-CARH, our conference got off to a strong start with remarks from outgoing State Director Stan Gruszynski of Rural Development-USDA. State Director, Stan Gruszynski has been a strong supporter of rural housing programs and efforts in Wisconsin. He has attended numerous conferences and always willing to provide insight and an optimistic view of the rural perspective. At the conclusion of Mr. Gruszynski's remarks, Russell Kaney presented him with a plaque commemorating his time and dedication to Rural Development and his support of WI-CARH.



Russell Kaney, WI-CARH President & Stan Gruszynski, USDA State Director

Our featured morning speaker was Elaine Simpson of Occupancy Solutions. Elaine brings a breath of experience and talent to her presentations including her conference presentation on Communication Solutions. Mark your calendars - Elaine will join us once again April 20, 2017 for a full day of training at the Madison Marriott West in Madison, Wisconsin.



Elaine Simpson's Interactive Presentation

After an introduction to all the exhibitors and a networking break, our conference continued with the latest news and updates from Rural Development, Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority and the Department of Administration. Colleen Fisher was a guest from the Council for Affordable and

Rural Housing (CARH) in Alexandria, VA with the latest on federal appropriations, the potential shifts from the election and the hot spots in rural affordable housing.

Our lunch was highlighted by our annual awards program. Denise Loveland from the WI-CARH Board oversaw the recognitions for property of the year, managers of the year and the maintenance person of the year. Congratulations to all winners for their exemplary service! Prior to the membership meeting, a few select winners were announced from our raffle drawings.



The afternoon activities started with the general membership meeting. Russell Kaney, President of WI-CARH highlighted several of the activities WI-CARH supported, sponsored or initiated during the year. The report was followed by nominations from the floor along with two candidates for Board seats submitted by the Nominating Committee. Congratulations to Brittany Leonard and Chris Hand being elected to the Board (see related article)

Our featured afternoon speaker was Kent Rader with his presentation titled Bottom Line or Punch Line. Kent brought a great story telling ability and experience to his talk on integrity, commitment and how to conduct yourself, whether you are a leader or an employee.



Kent Rader

After an afternoon break, our sessions resumed with Doug Buck, Counsel to WI-CARH, from Foley & Lardner, on updates in 2017 for the WI-CARH lease. Leases are available from WI-CARH and you can find the order form [online here](#).

The afternoon closed out with a session on housing advice from Rural Development staff on a number of issues. A final raffle was held along with closing remarks.

Our conference concluded with a reception held in the Ivory Coast Lounge providing the perfect venue to catch up on the day's events and discuss the issues of the day.

Special thanks to all our sponsors and exhibitors for this years' conference support! Their participation helps keep our conference costs reasonable to all who attend. Our gratitude is also expended to the conference planning committee and Board of Directors who coordinate and generate ideas for this event. Finally, we are grateful for all the hard work from April Forer, Executive Assistant, leading up to and during the conference. Well done by all!

Congratulations WI-CARH Award Recipients!

There were multiple nominations for WI-CARH awards this year. We were pleased to announce the following award recipients at our 2016 annual conference in November:



Property of the Year: Fairview Crossing II (ACC Management Group)

- This 30+ year old property was acquired and rehabbed through the section 42 tax credit program.
- There have been many wonderful improvements to the physical property in the form of kitchens, baths and common areas.
- The wonderful landscaping touches to the site make Fairview Crossing II a Kiel community standout in curb appeal.
- The 24 residents are proud to call Fairview Crossing home.



Maintenance Person of the Year: Joseph Scott (Wisconsin Property Management)

- Joe has been responsible for the HVAC, plumbing, painting, and grounds keeping for over 14 years.
- We received 19 letters of recommendation in praise of Joe.
- Resident's praise his ability to "do anything" they ask and to deliver the requested service promptly in a professional manner.
- Joe's attention to detail keeps his properties running smoothly and looking great!



Site Managers of the Year: Rob & Dolly Owens (Genesis Housing)

- Genesis Housing is a 56 unit senior development

- Genesis Housing is a 50 unit senior development.
- Rob & Dolly Owens have been associated with the property for 7 years.
- Rob & Dolly work as a team as site manager and maintenance. They have provided prompt and personal service to their residents
- In nominating letters, residents described them as professional, caring, respectful, and hardworking.

New Youth Grant Opportunities/Scholarship Change

The scholarship committee is excited to announce new youth grant opportunities in addition to a change to the scholarship eligibility program in order to broaden the pool of eligible applicants.



The Wisconsin Council for Affordable & Rural Housing (WI-CARH) would like to encourage students in grades 3-12 to participate in academic enrichment programs and encourage academic excellence among all applicants. The WI-CARH Scholarship Committee will offer annual grants in the amount not to exceed \$500 per student, per year, until all funds are used, to enable students to participate in an academic enrichment activity.

The scholarship eligibility requirements have been revised to also now include vocational/technical programs.

Applications for the grant and scholarship program will be accepted starting January 1, 2017. An email will be sent out with the applications soon!

Welcome New WI-CARH Board Members!

At the annual meeting held during the November conference, two new Board members were nominated and unanimously approved to serve three year terms. Congratulations to Brittany Leonard and Chris Hand. We look forward to your advice and participation with the Board. The 2016-2017 Board of Directors list can be found [online here](#).



Brittany Leonard, CPA, is with Hawkins Ash CPA which is based in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. Her background includes tax return preparation, small business bookkeeping and auditing for commercial enterprises, nonprofit organizations, tax credit projects and housing authorities.

Chris Hand is a Partner and Director of Operations for ACC Management Group. In his role, Chris provides leadership and oversight of all ACC Management Group operations. Chris has an extensive background in property management, business



development and affordable housing.

Our sincere thanks to our departing Board members, Mary Pavek from the Antigo Housing Authority and Abraham Leis of Hawkins Ash CPAs. In addition to their Board roles, Mary served most recently as WI-CARH Vice-President and Abe served as WI-CARH Treasurer. Your experience and talents will be missed. Thank you for serving!

Keeping It Affordable: Update on New LIHPRHA Rules

By Adam Diehl, Vice President, Lancaster Pollard

Preserving, improving and increasing the stock of affordable multifamily rental units across the nation is a perennial goal of both the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)/Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the affordable housing industry in general. Unfortunately, sometimes a housing owner's best option from a financial perspective is to convert their affordable units to market-rate. In response, HUD has issued new guidelines meant to incentivize owners to keep their units affordable.

In a previous [edition](#) of *The Capital Issue*, we detailed a new law that provides fiscal benefits to owners of Low-Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership Act (LIHPRHA) properties that recapitalize their properties and maintain them as affordable. In October of this year, HUD released a notice that clarifies aspects of that law and details how the new rules for LIHPRHA use agreements can benefit developers and lead to refinance and/or acquisition transactions that will preserve the viability of affordable multifamily properties nationwide.

Read the full article [here](#).

Lancaster Pollard is a member of WI-CARH. To learn more about becoming a member, please visit our [website](#).

FHA Small Buildings Risk Sharing Initiative

By Lisa Vecchietti, Vice President, Lancaster Pollard

Much attention is paid to preserving and constructing mid-size and large affordable multifamily rental complexes, and rightfully so. Those complexes house a considerable number of people and their preservation is important. Equally important, but often less talked about, is the need to preserve smaller rental properties. Thanks to a new federal program, owners of complexes with as little as five units will soon have a new option to obtain much-needed preservation funding

Although the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)/Federal Housing Administration's (FHA) stable of insurance products offer multifamily developers an array of financing solutions, the upfront costs can be viewed as a barrier to those seeking fixed rate mortgages for smaller properties. Being aware of this issue, FHA has instituted the Small Buildings Risk Sharing (SBRS) initiative. Effective January 2016, FHA Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP) lenders are eligible to apply for the demonstration program under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, Section 542(b).

Read the full article [here](#).

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Mark Your Calendars - 2017 Dates!

January 23-25: CARH Mid-Year Meeting, Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota, FL

February 14: Liaison Meeting at Rural Development, Steven's Point, 10am-12pm

April 20: Spring Training Session at the Madison Marriott West

May 9: Board of Director's Meeting at Wisconsin Management Company, Madison, 10am-12pm

June 19-21: CARH Annual Meeting & Legislative Conference, Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City, Arlington, VA

July 19-20: A Home for Everyone Conference at the Radisson Hotel, LaCrosse, WI

August 15: Liaison Meeting at Rural Development, Steven's Point, 10am-12pm

September 12: Board of Director's Meeting at Wisconsin Management Company, Madison, 10am-12pm

September 18-21: WAHA Annual Conference at the Wausau Holiday Inn

November 2-3: Annual WI-CARH Conference & Board Meeting, Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI



Do you have news to share? We would love to hear about it!
Please submit your news to info@wicarh.org

