

# ***Advisory Commission on Human Relations & Disability Issues***

## ***Meeting Minutes***

September 12, 2022

5:30pm

### **I. Call to order**

Present: Julie Xiong, Christina VanCleave, Tom Alonzo, Joe Peterson, Marge Gasnick

Absent were Abbie Dillard, Karen Greenwood, Stefanie Caruthers

Tom Alonzo led the meeting in Abbie's absence.

### **Old Business**

- a. Approve meeting minutes – The minutes for July and September will be on the agenda for the October meeting for approval.

- ### **II. Housing:**
- Presentation by Matt Kleinmann on housing in Wyandotte County. Matt works for the UG Health Department as part of the Health Equity Task Force. Matt's presentation addressed the importance of affordable housing. The number one thing residents say they want is help getting improvements made on their homes and home weatherization. About half of the community does not know their housing rights. Evictions cause adverse childhood experiences and the numbers are slowly creeping up through the pandemic. In terms of unfit housing, the highest rates are in northeast KCK and Armourdale. Lots of vacant buildings in the northeast of KCK as well. The problem is a lack of construction of housing, especially in northeast KCK. The Safe and Affordable Housing Working Group of CHIP has been working on housing. They are coordinating a housing summit on Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>. The CHIP group has been working on a longer term plan to address all the facets of housing. They built a tenants rights and responsibilities tool.

Matt says affordable housing is a regional issue and rents are going up quickly all over the Metro. The problem is median income as a region is higher than what it is in Wyandotte County. Affordable housing rates, though, are often tied to the regional median income rather than the local.

The question is who are we building for? Are we building for current residents or new residents? **Churches United for Justice** is a group that has been organizing, and are actively seeking a policy to get to affordable housing in WyCo.

Housing Trust Funds – Money set aside in the local budget to help residents with various housing issues – eg. Rental assistance, loan assistance, home improvements, etc. One effective tool is data, as evidenced by the work of KC Tenants in KCMO. KC West Side and Marlborough Land Trust are other groups working on home ownership.

WyCo is starting to see the wave of gentrification. The proximity of KCK to downtown KCMO suggest it's a question of when people will be displaced. Community land trusts are a tool that can help prevent that. CHWC is one local group working on this.

Recommendations:

Expand the voucher program to get more currently existing units to become affordable, providing assistance to landlords to do needed renovations to be in compliance with Section 8 requirements.

Community Benefit Agreements: Developers look at how they can benefit communities. It is a negotiation between the community and developers.

CHDOS – Community Housing Development Organizations. Get more of those in WyCo; currently one one. Provides special access to funding through HUD to make building housing more affordable.

Community Land Trusts – Land stays with an organization and is purchased by residents at affordable rates. It caps us on how much homes can appreciate. A way to do this is to get homes out of Land Bank and into Land Trusts. Make language more accessible.

There are a lot of tools out there and it requires a collaborative community working together. Matt urges ACHRDI to get coordinated with other groups and then figure out a strategy to get that through.

Christina VanCleave said it's important to know what CHIP is working on and what other organizations are working on. Marge suggested using ACHRDI's social media to help educate people on housing issues.

Next month there will be a FOCUS housing coordinator working under economic development director Katherine Carttar. Matt suggested ACHRDI could help this person get more recognized within the UG.

- III.** Open Discussion – Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> unhoused residents meeting with the UG, 4 p.m. on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor at City Hall. Tom Alonzo said he would be attending.

Helpful websites: <https://community-wealth.org/content/community-land-trust-clt-tools>

<https://www.kansaslegalservices.org/node/2506/tenant%E2%80%99s-rights-responsibilities-toolkit-wyandotte-county-ks-residents>

Link to Matt Kleinmann's presentation:

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAFI3coPkxs/2213Ap-El4eSYRi8\\_W12fA/view?utm\\_content=DAFI3coPkxs&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFI3coPkxs/2213Ap-El4eSYRi8_W12fA/view?utm_content=DAFI3coPkxs&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

**IV.** Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

**Next meeting: Oct. 3, 2022**