

MEMORANDUM

TO: NWABSD Board of Education
Members

DATE: August 27, 2024

NUMBER: 25-012

FR: Office of the Superintendent

SUBJECT: Adoption of Resolution
25-001; Approval to
Apply for AHFC Rural
Professional Housing
Grants for Noatak

ABSTRACT:

The administration requests approval of a Resolution supporting application for funding to provide additional teacher and professional housing at Noatak and committing funding for the District share of required matching funds.

ISSUE:

AHFC has a program to fund teacher, health professionals and public safety housing in rural areas. A Board resolution authorizing the District to apply for funding is an application requirement.

BACKGROUND AND/OR PERTINENT INFORMATION:

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) currently has approximately \$6 million in available funding. Applications are due October 25th for funding consideration.

The program provides for housing to be developed by school districts, government entities or third parties in partnership with Districts. The AHFC program provides funding for new construction, renovation of buildings into housing and upgrade of existing housing. The grants currently reimburse up to 85 percent of the total cost of the renovation projects with a limit of \$700,000 in AHFC funding per application. There are additional points for multiple units and projects that involve more than one agency or will house more than one type of professional. However, this year there are no additional points for a greater than 15% match as there have been in previous years.

The District needs three housing units for teachers and the Administration is discussing the Borough's potential need for a unit for a public safety officer or other professional in Noatak. At this time the total cost of the project has not been confirmed. However, the recently completed Selawik duplex cost roughly \$550,000. Because Noatak does not have barge service, and escalation has increased the cost of construction, each duplex is estimated to cost \$1.1M. The cost of two duplexes for Noatak can be assumed to be at least \$2.2 million.

A potential application approach would be to submit one application for two duplexes. The maximum AHFC grant award for this approach would be \$700k, and the required match to be covered by NWAB and NWABSD would be \$1.4M.

An alternative approach, which would maximize the grant award, and minimize the local match, would be to submit two separate applications, with each potentially receiving \$700k, or a total of \$1.4M, from AHFC. This would entail the District and the Borough submitting a joint application

for one duplex, and the District submitting a separate application for the other duplex. The grant solely funded by the District would not receive points for partnership, but the projects would be eligible for more AHFC funding while potentially increasing the budgets of each project. Three units would be occupied by teachers. It is planned that the units be constructed by the District using temporary labor. This approach was successful for the Buckland grant applications.

The minimum match requirement is 15%, which is \$105,000 per \$700k grant award. However, it is believed the final cost will be above \$805,000 per duplex. To adequately cover the anticipated project costs, a match of \$400,000 is needed for each duplex, or \$200,000 for each unit. A total of \$800,000, is needed to fully fund both duplexes through two applications.

The applications must include a letter of commitment for the local share of costs as recommended by the Board, and the Assembly as applicable. The District match would be funded from capital reserves.

Applications also require Board and Assembly resolutions supporting the applications for funding. The resolution must also name the person authorized to submit the application. The Administration recommends that Dena Strait, the District's Capital Projects Manager, be authorized to provide application information on behalf of the District. She will work with Kathy Christy who has prepared and submitted several successful grant applications to AHFC including for Kivalina, Selawik, and Buckland.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Adopt Resolution 25-012 approving application to AHFC for funding for Rural Professional Housing in Noatak; approve the District submission of two applications - one as a joint project with the Northwest Arctic Borough, and the other for an additional teacher housing duplex project in Noatak sponsored solely by the District; commit to a local share of at least \$600,000 for its share; and authorize Dena Strait to provide application information on behalf of the Board and Assembly, as presented.
2. Adopt Resolution 25-012 approving applications to AHFC for funding for Rural Professional Housing in Noatak; approve the District submission of two applications sponsored solely by the District; commit to a local share of at least \$800,000 for its share; and authorize Dena Strait to provide application information on behalf of the Board, as presented.
3. Do not support application to AHFC for funding for Rural Professional Housing in Noatak.
4. Take no action.

ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION

The administration recommends the Board adopt Resolution 25-012 approving application to AHFC for funding for Rural Professional Housing in Noatak; approve the District submission of two applications – preferably Alternative #1 as a joint project with the Northwest Arctic Borough, but if the Borough is not able to participate, approval is granted for Alternate #2; with a local share commitment of up to \$800,00; and authorize Dena Strait to provide application information on behalf of the Board, as presented.

A RESOLUTION OF

Northwest Arctic Borough School District Board of Education

Resolution 25- 001

A Resolution of the School Board of Education of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District supporting grant applications for teacher housing duplexes in Noatak. Grant funds are available through the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's SFY 25 Rural Professional Housing Grant Program.

WHEREAS, the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's Teacher and Professional Housing Grant Program provides grant funding reimbursing \$700,000 per successful application for the costs of developing and upgrading teacher housing,

WHEREAS, adequate housing is critical to the recruitment and retention of teachers,

WHEREAS, existing teacher housing within the former elementary school is failing, with only two of the seven units occupiable; and

WHEREAS, due to the age of the existing seven-plex within the former elementary school, it is becoming a financial burden to the district and is not fulfilling the housing needs, thus requires replacement; and

WHEREAS, current teacher housing opportunities within Noatak are limited to what is provided by the district; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough School District is responsible for assisting village teachers to find housing,

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough School District is committed to providing safe and adequate housing for its teachers,

WHEREAS, three housing units are needed to provide adequate housing in Noatak for the number of staff,

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough School District using its own forces with financial support through Alaska Housing Finance Corporation has a successful track record of upgrading and expanding teacher housing,

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough needs a housing unit for a Professionals under their purview in Noatak,

WHEREAS, the Northwest Arctic Borough School District is committed to providing the local share of costs to complete the project,

WHEREAS, Dena Strait, the District's Capital Projects Manager, through guidance of Kathy Christy, the outgoing District Capital Projects Manager, is supported with successful experience applying for and administering AHFC RPH grants on behalf of the School Board and the District,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Northwest Arctic Borough School District, represented by Dena Strait, is authorized to request funding from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation for the Rural Housing Professionals Housing Grant Program for two duplexes in Noatak, Alaska and to partner with the Northwest Arctic Borough as appropriate. NWABSD Board of Education supports application to the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation's Rural Professional Housing Grant Program to build teacher housing units within Noatak.

ADOPTED, August 27, 2024 at a duly convened meeting of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District Board of Education at which a quorum was present and voting:

ATTEST:

Magaret Hansen, NWABSD Board President

Tillie Ticket, NWABSD Secretary