An Invitation

On behalf of the Foundation for Rural Housing, please accept our appreciation for your interest in our organization.

The intention of this manual is to provide a brief introduction to interested new members of the Board. Chances are that another Board member or staff has already introduced you to the Foundation for Rural Housing as a candidate for the Board of Directors. We are always looking for people that have knowledge or skills that could represent the community on our volunteer Governing Board.

Volunteering means using your talents, knowledge, skills and community relations to help advance the mission and goals of the Foundation. As a Board member you are joining into a partnership, adopting the philosophies, goals and ideals as your own. Our current Board is representative of several leaders from the community with various areas of expertise that have a heart to improve services for low income individuals. We hope you will consider adding your skills and knowledge to our diverse Board.

After reviewing the materials, you can complete the application and say, “I want to help the Foundation for Rural Housing as a Board member!” We believe this opportunity will enhance your life both personally and professionally.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Fasula
Executive Director

Tom Mackie
President, Board of Directors
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About the Foundation

The Foundation for Rural Housing, Inc., started in 1970 under the leadership of Bill Thomas, Director of the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative (WEC) and George Davis. The first founding meeting was held on April 30, 1970 in Spencer, Wisconsin.

We serve in 69 of the 72 counties. Excluded from our territory is Dane, Milwaukee and Racine Counties.

Over the past 49 years the Foundation has worked on many projects encompassing our value, philosophy and mission. Some of these achievements include:

- Assisting hundreds of families to achieve home ownership
- Training individuals in the constructions fields to earn better wages
- Funding for thousands of home repairs including senior repair programs
- Worked collaboratively with rural communities to obtain water and septic funding by leveraging millions of dollars
- Provide critical assistance to prevent evictions, foreclosure and tax liens for thousands of individuals

Over the years the Foundation has been a strong partner in projects throughout the State of Wisconsin. The Board of Directors and staff has laid the groundwork for our organization to be an essential program in preventing homelessness in the State.

Mission

- Assist low-income families to obtain adequate, safe and sanitary housing.
- Help low-income households acquire appropriate water and waste water services.
- Enable small communities and local organizations to address the needs of those with substandard shelter more effectively.
- Demonstrate new services and new approaches that address rural housing problems.
- Alert the public and private sectors about housing, water, and community development needs of low-income rural residents

Funding Source Information

Department of Administration, Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR) Critical Assistance Grant: (This is an annual competitive grant award)

- Direct funding for Individuals at risk of homelessness: $240,400
- Administrative contract $42,400

Community Service Block Grant, administered through the Department of Health and Human Services: (this is an annual grant that all Community Action Agencies receive—we are considered a single focus agency)

- Administrative dollars and can be used for direct assistance: $121,824.00
Rural Electric Cooperatives – Electric Cooperatives provide discretionary funding each year for operational expenses: (this typically is generated from attending an annual manager’s meeting and sending letters out to all cooperatives in the State)

- Range is $10,000 - $15,000 each year

**Restricted Money**

- ECE - East Central Electric Cooperative. These are dollars designated for the Cooperative’s territory and are paid at their direction.
- Revolving Loan – These are dollars that are returned when we pay a Security Deposit and the individual moves out. We do not always receive the full security deposit back. If the client moves into another unit within 3 years after issuing our first check, we can continue to pay this Security Deposit forward. Each year our contract allows us to allocate up to 15% of these restricted dollars back into operations.
- Bader Grant – These are dollars that were used for securing low interest loans for individuals that needed home repairs and had credit concerns. This grant is closed, however, there are dollars available that will be designated toward strategic plan is completed.
- Home Depot- These are dollars specific for home repairs for veterans in Juneau County.

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**The Foundation Board of Directors**

The Foundation for Rural Housing Board of Directors uses the Collective wisdom as a body to guide in serving people at risk of homelessness in 69 counties in the state of Wisconsin. Each Board member is a steward for the public by extending their knowledge and skills to the Foundation by:

- Providing policy direction,
- Exercising legal and fiscal control,
- Ensuring sound management and
- Supporting the mission, beliefs, vision and philosophy of the Foundation

The Board of Directors works as a team. The Board and the Executive Director work in partnership. The Board governs the plans, policies and management and the Executive Director manages the operations. Together we provide the structure and supports to assure the success of our organization.

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**Commitment**

We recognize that your time is a commodity to be used wisely. Serving on the Board does require a commitment of time to fulfill our mission. The following provides some idea of the time commitment associated with being an important volunteer of the Board of Directors:

- We are a Board of 7 members representing low income individuals throughout the State of Wisconsin.
- The term for the Board of Directors is (2) year terms and are on the Board until they resign, or their successors have been elected.
- The Board meets once per quarter (four times a year). Meeting times may vary and are determined by a majority vote at each meeting. Currently, the Board meets from 8:00 – 10:00. Special meetings can be called, and these are usually held via telephone conference. Meetings are held in Madison, Wisconsin. The Foundation for Rural Housing reimburses mileage, lodging and meals for Board members at required meetings.
While attendance at each meeting is expected, there is recognition that busy schedules, personal matters, or illness might occasionally interfere with board attendance. Board members are expected to be physically present at one (1) board meeting per year. You may notify the President or the Executive Director if you are going to miss a meeting and give input you wish to share with the other members. To accommodate the schedules of busy Board members, it is possible to have board members participate in a board meeting through telephone conference speakerphone.

The Board has at least one day of strategic planning every three years. This is where we review the accomplishments of the previous year, reaffirm our Mission statement and draft our plans for the years to come. The importance of attendance at this event cannot be expressed enough.

The Foundation for Rural Housing provides paid training opportunities for the Board Members in recognition of their services to the Foundation for Rural Housing. This also provides an opportunity to socialize with other organizations with similar Missions. The Foundation for Rural Housing reimburses mileage, lodging and meals for Board members.

How much time is involved?
The average amount of time a Board member will devote to Board obligations is 5 – 8 hours per quarter. Meetings are located typically in Madison, Wisconsin, therefore, you will also need to commit to driving to and from meetings. Time obligations would be increased for members serving as officers or on more than one committee. Board members can selectively increase the amount of time devoted to Board issues by increasing their activities. The Foundation for Rural Housing, Inc., reimburses all expenses for Board Members.

Other Pertinent Information
✓ The Foundation has Directors and Officers insurance that will cover up to One Million Dollars per incidence. We also carry general liability insurance.

✓ The Foundation has an Annual Audit performed by a public accounting firm. This is sent out for Request for Proposals every 3 years per our fiscal policies.

✓ The Foundation has a staff of 2.
Governance Application

When there is a vacancy on the Foundation of Rural Housing’s Board of Directors, I would like to be considered. I would be committed to the support and advancement of the organization’s missions.

Please Print:

Your name as you would like it to appear on our materials.

Your preferred address to receive mail for the Fountain for Rural Housing.

Preferred method of phone contact: ____________________________________________

E-mail) ___________________________________________________________________

See attached business card for above information

Once we have received this form, the Board of Directors will receive your application. If we are follow-up questions, we will contact you. The Board of Directors will then vote to extend an offer to become a Board member. A letter with the official confirmation of nomination will be mailed out by the Executive Director to you. We will communicate with you during this entire process.

Any further questions please feel free to contact the Executive Director:

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