



HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota
Regular Meeting

April 20, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hanson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

2. ROLL CALL

HRA Present: Gordon Hanson, Chair; John Young; Sean Hayford Oleary; and Brett Stursa.

HRA Excused: Mary Supple.

Staff Present: Melissa Poehlman, Executive Director; Hilary Lovelace, Housing Specialist; and Michelle Friedrich, City Clerk.

3. OPEN FORUM

Chair Hanson gave instructions on how to participate in the open forum. No residents participated.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: made by Hayford Oleary, seconded by Young to approve the agenda as presented.
Voting aye: Hanson, Young, Hayford Oleary, and Stursa.

Motion carried: 4-0

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: made by Young, seconded by Stursa to approve the minutes of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority meeting of March 16, 2026, as presented.

Voting aye: Hanson, Young, Hayford Oleary, and Stursa.

Motion carried: 4-0

6. PRESENTATION

None.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

8. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS, IF ANY, REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. Public hearing on the sale of 6326 14th Avenue South and consideration of a Contract for Private Development with Dereje Demessie and Beza Gebrehiwot for the development of a new two-family home through the Richfield Rediscovered Program.

Housing Specialist Lovelace presented a proposal to sell 6326 14th Avenue South to Dereje Demessie and Beza Gebrehiwot for the private development of a duplex. She noted the buyers plan to live in one unit and rent the second unit. The project includes energy-efficient features and airport sound attenuation measures.

Housing Specialist Lovelace explained that the HRA purchased the property in 2021 through the Richfield Rediscovered program to replace a substandard home with higher-density housing. She also noted that a previously approved duplex proposal from 2023 did not move forward due to rising construction costs.

Housing Specialist Lovelace stated that staff recommend selling the lot for \$81,500, which is below the appraised value, because the project supports HRA redevelopment goals. She noted the staff recommendation for approval of the sale and development agreement.

Chair Hanson opened the public hearing at 7:05 pm and reviewed the process for speaking during the public hearing.

Three residents commented during the public hearing.

Enriqueta Rocha, Richfield resident, who lives adjacent to the proposed duplex development commented on maintenance concerns related to 6326 14th Avenue South. She stated that tree growth, stems, and weeds from the property had damaged her fence and requested removal of the remaining vegetation, tree stumps, and debris before construction begins so she can proceed with installing a new fence.

Gabriel Flores, son of the adjacent property owner Enriqueta Rocha, commented on ongoing maintenance and safety concerns related to vegetation at the proposed duplex development at 6326 14th Avenue South. He stated that remaining trees, stumps, and overgrown weeds along the property line continue to damage and push over the fence and noted that some branches are near power lines. He requested removal of the remaining tree stumps and vegetation debris before a new fence is installed, citing safety concerns for children who frequently use the backyard.

Roger Swanson, Richfield resident, expressed concerns about the proposed duplex development and stated that insufficient information had been provided regarding the project. He noted that the neighborhood currently does not contain duplexes and requested additional details, including renderings or design information, to better understand the size and appearance of the proposed development.

MOTION: made by Hayford Oleary, seconded by Young to close the public hearing.
Voting aye: Hanson, Young, Hayford Oleary, and Stursa.

Motion carried: 4-0

Commissioner Hayford O'Leary asked about reported tree and vegetation concerns from neighboring residents. Housing Specialist Lovelace stated that some trees along the lot edge were removed last year, but the roots were left in place. Executive Director Poehlman said staff will re-inspect the site this spring to assess any remaining volunteer growth and its impact on the fence and will determine next steps after reviewing current conditions before the property is sold.

Commissioner Hayford O'Leary addressed a public comment, noting that site plans are available in the digital packet and offering to review them after the meeting if needed. He expressed support for the larger proposed duplex, stating it aligns with city housing goals. Executive Director Poehlman added that printed packets with project images were available in the Chambers and that staff would be available after the meeting to assist with questions.

Commissioner Young asked about any requirements for owner-occupancy duration and affordability restrictions for the rental unit. Staff responded that there are no affordability requirements under the Richfield Rediscovered program and no minimum owner-occupancy period required, though the buyers have indicated plans to make the home their long-term residence.

Commissioner Stursa expressed support for the duplex proposal and asked whether it is more likely to be successfully built than a previous approved project on the same lot. Staff responded that the prior proposal did not move forward due to rising construction costs. Staff noted that appraisal challenges remain due to limited comparable duplex developments in the area but stated they are more confident this project will proceed.

**RESOLUTION NO. 1528
AUTHORIZING THE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT
6326 14TH AVENUE SOUTH TO DEREJE DEMESSIE AND BEZA GEBREHIWOT**

MOTION: made by Young, seconded by Hayford Oleary to approve resolution authorizing the sale of real property located at 6326 14th Avenue South to Dereje Demessie and Beza Gebrehiwot.
Voting aye: Hanson, Young, Hayford Oleary, and Stursa.

Motion carried: 4-0

MOTION: made by Young, seconded by Hayford Oleary to authorize execution of a contract for private development between the Housing and Redevelopment Authority with Dereje Demessie and Beza Gebrehiwot for the redevelopment of 6326 14th Avenue South.
Voting aye: Hanson, Young, Hayford Oleary, and Stursa.

Motion carried: 4-0

10. RESOLUTION(S)

None.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

12. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Poehlman provided an update on the Bring It Home program, noting that the launch has been delayed from May to June due to delays in census data release and updated income limit calculations.

13. HRA DISCUSSION ITEMS

None.

14. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

<u>U.S. BANK</u>	<u>4/20/2026</u>
HRA Check #'s 37383-37396	\$26,131.08
Section 8 Check #'s 137639-137798	\$228,718.46
TOTAL:	<u>\$254,849.54</u>

MOTION: made by Young, seconded by Hayford Oleary, to approve claims as presented.
Voting aye: Hanson, Young, Hayford Oleary, and Stursa.

Motion carried: 4-0

15. ADJOURNMENT

This meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:18 p.m.

Date Approved: May 18, 2026



Gordon Hanson
HRA Chair



Michelle Friedrich
City Clerk



Melissa Poehlman
Executive Director