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17-1537

November 27, 2017

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Teri Lehrke, City Clerk
 City of La Crosse
 400 La Crosse Street
 La Crosse, WI 54601

**RE: CITY OF LA CROSSE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
 COMPLAINT OF PATRICIA THOMAS**



Dear Ms. Lehrke:

The purpose of my letter today is to ask the Human Rights Commission to extend the time for the Housing Authority to respond to this complaint until such time as the complainant has granted the Housing Authority authorization to release information.

Failure to provide an authorization for release of information limits the Housing Authority's ability to respond, as well as participate in a mediation or hearing. Our office requested Ms. Thomas sign this authorization by copy of a letter sent to your office dated October 26, 2017. Mail to Ms. Thomas was returned. At Ms. Thomas's instruction, the request was sent to another address on November 13, 2017. As of the date of this letter, we have had no response from Ms. Thomas.

The Housing Authority is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD") and is subject to federal law and HUD administrative rules. Federal law and HUD regulations prohibit the Housing Authority from unauthorized disclosure of tenant personally identifiable information. These laws include: Section 6 of the Housing Act of 1937, the Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. § 552a (Privacy Act), The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. § 552, and Section 208 of The E-Government Act, The Housing and Community Development Act of 1987, 42 U.S.C. § 1437d (q)(4), 42 U.S.C. § 1437d (t)(2), 42 U.S.C. § 3543, the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1988, 42 U.S.C. § 3544; 24 C.F.R Part 5, Subpart B, and 48 C.F.R. 24.104. It is our assessment that these laws supercede local ordinance.

Again, we have already asked Ms. Thomas to sign the authorization but she has not yet responded. In light of this, the Housing Authority is asking that this commission extend the time for it to respond to Ms. Thomas's complaint. By copy of this letter, the Housing Authority is asking Ms. Thomas either withdraw her complaint from this Commission and


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resubmit it to HUD or to sign and return the enclosed Authorization. If this complaint were submitted to HUD, an authorization by Ms. Thomas for the release of her information would not be necessary.

Please direct any questions regarding this letter to my office.

Best regards,

HALE, SKEMP, HANSON, SKEMP & SLEIK

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah E. Fortune". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S".

Sarah E. Fortune

E-mail address: sef@haleskemp.com

SEF/crm

Enclosures

cc: Housing Authority of the City of La Crosse
Patricia Thomas