

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
April 28, 2021
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



MEMBERS PRESENT

Rosalie Remarais, Acting Chairperson
Florine Cummings, Resident Commissioner
Duwaine T. Bascoe, Commissioner
Joanne Larson, Commissioner
Tynise Edwards, Commissioner
Henry Rubin, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Diana Colon
Jacquetta Harris
Linda Kavanagh-
Schwenger
Shawanna Lawrence
Mark Plantholt
Mariam Rodriguez-
Machuca
Shelby Simpson
Evhen Tupis

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Todd Bullard, RHA Legal Counsel
Julie Panna, Tipping Point Communications

Commissioner Rosalie Remarais called the February Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting to order at 12:04 pm. It was noted for the record that notice of this meeting was posted as required by law and that there was a quorum present.

1. Open Forum – Public Comments

There were no Public Comments.

2. Approval of Minutes: March 2021 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Edwards moved, and Commissioner Bascoe seconded the motion to approve the March 2021 Regular Board Meeting minutes. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, and Commissioner Larson voted yes, Commissioner Edwards and Commissioner Rubin abstained. The motion passed four to zero

3. Director's Report and Board Approval Requests

a. Deputy Executive Director, Shawn Burr, presented his Director's report as follows:

Mr. Burr would like to **CONTINUE** to recognize Staff across the Authority who continue to go above and beyond to ensure our quality services are performed and resident and participant needs are taken care of especially during this pandemic! They are doing a remarkable job! Efforts are being made in the planning and execution of when we re-open as it will be soon upon us. Procurement and Maintenance are helping greatly. The teamwork displayed before, during, and after the vaccination clinics is a true testament of the great staff we have.

Mr. Burr shared that as the pandemic continues, we all need to remain diligent in maintaining each other's safety. RHA continues to monitor and adhere to new regulations, recommendations, and Executive Orders as we receive them. Mark and staff have tested the new sanitizing system and is moving forward on implementing it at our other sites. Visitor restrictions, COVID questionnaires, and temperature checks continue for all visitors. Temperature kiosks for staff and visitors are moving forward with implementation. The Executive Team monitors current conditions daily and meets weekly to discuss our processes. The re-open committee has also prepared plans to re-open and modify them as conditions change. We have allowed two visitors for residents, as long as they have been designated by the residents and we have their names on file and at the security guard stations

Mr. Burr congratulated RHA Public Housing resident Luz Figueroa, who was awarded second place with her NYSPHADA Scholarship application. She will receive a \$1,000 college scholarship!! Congratulations to Ms. Figueroa!! Congrats also to Melissa and her team for working with Ms. Figueroa on getting her application submitted on time.

Mr. Burr shared that we were awarded \$1.6 million in funding for our Federal St. RAD project from NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) through their Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP)! We are hoping that this award strengthens our HCR LIHTC application.

Mr. Burr shared that we continue to have weekly meetings with our NYS POP grant consultant to move the grant forward. We met with our City of Rochester partners again on 3/22/21 to update on progress, strategies and target area and will meet again in late May. We will continue to update at the Project Planning meeting.

Mr. Burr shared that Trillium's COVID testing/Primary Care services for our residents continue with April's schedule moving along.

Mr. Burr reported we continue to meet with Common Ground Health, Trillium and others on opportunities for providing vaccinations for our eligible residents, program participants, and employees. He wanted to acknowledge the amazing job our staff have done in making each event happen!! We've sent packets of information to our residents to sign up for vaccination appointments and sent out Robocalls, have gone door to door,

and posted the events on our Facebook page. We have provided transportation with our resident driver for one van and James Waters from resident services, for the other van. Additional transportation has been arranged with Medical Motors. I'm extremely proud of the teamwork and ingenuity of our staff!!!

GREAT JOB TEAM!!!!!!

RHA Vaccine Team:

Harolda Wilcox, Property Manager at HRT is our Team leader and has done a fantastic job!

Lisa Tarantello – has gone door to door to inform and sign residents up and assists at the clinics

Mariam Rodriguez-Machuca – assists at the clinics and also with translating

Kathy Short - gets right on procuring things we need for the clinics

Diana Colon - The ROCK for all functions

Mark Plantholt - Assistance with walk throughs and organizing maintenance

Maintenance Team – room and site set up and take down along with sanitizing the areas before and after the clinics

Christal Webb, Linda Kellogg, Jesse McCarthy, Property Managers and GREAT team. They keep a flow going of the lines in and out of the clinics and assist people with forms and questions.

Last but not least, the rest of the Public Housing Team. Everyone pitches in and helps wherever they can. Trillium has stated that the RHA clinics are the MOST organized they've been part of!!

Mr. Burr reported that staff continue to be involved in several community projects and report on them in their Board reports. RMAPI Housing Committee, City FEC Program Initiative, Connected Communities Housing Committee, Private Sector Rental Market Study, and Benefits Project are a few that are in the works. I really appreciate their efforts in representing RHA on critical projects in our community, and their extra efforts are commendable.

Mr. Burr reported that RHA participated in the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge. This initiative proved to be a powerful opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of how inequity and racism affect our lives and community. It's imperative we continue to improve our community and ourselves in our commitment to implement antiracist practice. We will continue to hold meetings with staff to further RHA's commitment, and Shawanna is working with Dr. Archie from the City to provide staff training.

Mr. Burr reported that he is participating on the West Main Steering Committee as planning takes place on the redevelopment of the "Bull's Head" neighborhood. We will be creating an actionable vision for West Main St that reflects a revived multimodal, economic, and cultural corridor. This study will create a roadmap for making investments and changes to the neighborhood, street, and streetscape design. I'm also part of the North Inner Loop Planning project.

Mr. Burr reported on an update from NYSPHAD NYSPHADA Update: they continue to put on ED forums for ED's and staff to discuss various topics and conduct trainings and info sessions along with coordinating/participating in HUD sessions. RHA staff are

attending and keeping up to date. We are working on a virtual Spring conference to be held on June 3rd and 4th. Here is a link if you'd like to attend, and Diana will assist you with payment and registration: [Register TODAY for NYSPHADA's 2021 Virtual Spring Conference! \(mailchi.mp\)](#). I am on the By-Laws Committee, and we have been working on a couple of revisions that were approved at the 4/9/21 Board meeting. The Legislative Committee continues to work hard on advocating at the State level for funding for PHA's, especially upstate.

Mr. Burr reported **President Calls for Increase in HUD Budget, Expansion of Vouchers** President Biden unveiled topline details of his upcoming FY 2022 budget proposal, calling for a 15 % increase to HUD funding and a broad expansion of vouchers. If enacted, it would be the single largest expansion of the voucher program ever. "This budget is a big deal," said NAHRO President Sunny Shaw. "A 15% increase in HUD funding is a strong statement and shows that this Administration prioritizes affordable housing and strong communities. We certainly look forward to seeing additional details, including the proposed public housing operating fund level and more details on the voucher expansion." The proposal provides for \$30.4 billion in Housing Choice Vouchers, including for 200,000 additional vouchers with a focus on those who are homeless or fleeing domestic violence, increasing the overall level of Tenant-Based Rental Assistance funding by \$5.4 billion. The Public Housing Capital Fund received a \$435 million increase, for a total funding level of \$3.2 billion. The outline does not include a proposed funding level for the Operating Fund. President Biden also calls for an increase in community development funding, raising the HOME Investment Partnerships program by \$500 million for a total of \$1.9 billion. The budget also increases the Community Development Block Grant program by \$295 million, targeting the increase to address poverty and disadvantaged communities. The proposal also includes a request for \$800 million to "modernize and improve energy efficiency, resilience, and safety in HUD-assisted housing across the HUD portfolio." While specific details are not included, it does specify that the "retrofits would help lower the costs and improve the quality of public and HUD-assisted housing." The outlined released today does not include the full HUD proposal and is missing some key details. However, the topline numbers show that HUD and expanding access to assistance is a priority of the Administration. A full, detailed proposal is expected in the coming months. The President's budget proposal is simply that – a proposal. Congress ultimately determines funding levels for all federal programs, including HUD. The budget and appropriations process will kick off now that some details from the President have been released. The increases proposed by the President cannot happen without a robust allocation to the Transportation-HUD appropriations bill. Join NAHRO and our affordable housing colleagues in calling on Congress to provide the highest possible funding level for the FY 2022 Transportation-HUD bill.

Congress Holds Affordable Housing Hearing

On April 14, the House Financial Services Committee held a virtual hearing called "Build Back Better: Investing in Equitable and Affordable Housing Infrastructure." Committee Chairwoman Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) opened the hearing by celebrating the \$213 billion for housing infrastructure included in President Biden's American Jobs Plan. Ranking Member Rep. Patrick McHenry (R-NC), on the other hand, expressed his frustration that Biden's plan includes more than what is traditionally considered as "infrastructure," such as roads, bridges, and dams. Five witnesses testified at the hearing. Diane Yentel, President and CEO of the National Low Income Housing Coalition

(NLIHC), urged Congress to focus on long-term housing solutions. She specifically mentioned the \$70 billion needed to preserve the nation's public housing stock and an expansion of the Housing Choice Voucher program to all eligible households. Dr. Michael McAfee, President and CEO of PolicyLink, explained that housing is one of the biggest drivers of the racial wealth gap. He is supportive of community-based solutions that promote racial equity. Ms. Jacqueline Waggoner, Solutions Division President for Enterprise Community Partners, noted that 22.2 million people lost their jobs during the pandemic. She emphasized that recovery efforts, including those focused on infrastructure, should center on the people who are suffering the most. The final two witnesses – Dr. Saule Omarova, Beth and Marc Goldberg professor of law at Cornell University, and Brian Riedl, senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute – offered counterpoints to the proposed investments in housing infrastructure. They proposed the creation of a national investment authority as an alternative source of infrastructure investment and a smaller, targeted package, respectively. During the question-and-answer portion, Rep. Nydia Velazquez (D-NY) mentioned her Public Housing Emergency Response Act and asked why the \$70 billion for public housing is so important. Yentel responded that we lose about 10 to 15,000 units of public housing each year. Funding for the Public Housing Capital Fund would preserve units for the lowest income households and prevent negative health impacts that result from unit deterioration. Rep. Bill Posey (R-FL) noted that he has been a realtor for most of his professional life. He understands the need for investments in affordable housing and homeownership. Rep. Posey asked Riedl about the impact of a healthy economy on homeownership. Riedl responded that wage increases can help more families access homeownership. Several other members of Congress also questioned the witnesses before the hearing closed.

b. Board Action Requests

- i. FY 2021 2nd Quarter Vacated Arrears Write Off – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to approve the write off in the amount of \$15,124.92 - Finance

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

- ii. Trash Compactor Replacement Project – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award the contract to BE Equipment, Inc for \$115,805.00 (one-time) – Capital Projects

Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

iii. 2021 Turf Mowing Services

- a. North Zone 1, South Zone 2, and the Central Zone 3 - Authorize the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to AA Blades for \$110,880.00 (with four renewals) – Maintenance

Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Bascoe seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. Commissioner Edwards and Commissioner Rubin abstained. The motion passed four yes votes and two abstentions.

- b. Scattered Sites - Authorize the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to Cardinal Lawn & Landscape for \$87,444.00 (with four renewals) – Maintenance

Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Bascoe seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. Commissioner Edwards and Commissioner Rubin abstained. The motion passed four yes votes and two abstentions.

- c. Central Office Operations - Authorize the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to Cardinal Lawn & Landscape for \$7,840.00 (with four renewals) – Maintenance

Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Bascoe seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. Commissioner Edwards and Commissioner Rubin abstained. The motion passed four yes votes and two abstentions.

iv. 2021 Landscaping Services – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award the contract to Cardinal Lawn & Landscape for \$29,860.00 (with four renewals) - time) – Maintenance

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Larson seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

v. Thermal Temperature Camera Kiosks – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to purchase 10 Temperature Camera Kiosks from Certify.ME for \$52,677.00.00 (with four renewals) – Information Technology

Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

- vi. Renovations tp 596 Glenwood Gardens – was tabled to be reviewed during the May Capital Projects Committee Meeting
- vii. 373 – 375 Central Park Renovations – was tabled to be reviewed during the May Capital Projects Committee Meeting
- viii. Kennedy Tower Boiler #1 Abatement – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award the contract to Genesee Environmental LLC for \$37,200.00 (one-time) – Capital Projects

Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

- ix. Maintain and Develop RHA owned 100 Fernwood Ave Parcel – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to use and not exceed the amount of \$100,000.00 from the RHA’s Local Works Account (one-time) – Capital Projects

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Larson seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

- x. Communications RFP Award – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to Tipping Point Communications \$50,000.00 (with four renewals) – Executive Office

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

4. Executive Personnel Administrator's Report

Shawanna Lawrence

The Human Resource Department is continuing to implement the Strategic Plan Goal III: "Support our Employees to Enhance an Organizational Culture of Excellence" Please see the update below:

Goal III: Support our Employees to Enhance an Organizational Culture of Excellence

We are continuing to achieve Goal III of supporting our employees to enhance an organizational culture of excellence by providing training. Human Resources is committed to the development of an organizational culture of excellence.

Recent Training

Combat Sexual Harassment Training- Week of April 16, 2021

Proper education not only helps to safeguard against inappropriate behavior and unwanted advances by clearly defining violations, but also empowers those who may encounter sexual harassment to recognize and report these cases to management. The Combat Sexual Harassment training webinar reviewed recent changes in the law and responsibilities for employees and the employer.

Financial Education Training- The month of April 2021

NYS Deferred Compensation Plan is hosting free educational webinars for all employees during the month of April. The NYSDCP is a supplemental retirement plan, and they help State and local-public employees achieve their retirement savings goals and help bridge any potential financial gap in retirement.

Recent Events:

Administrative Professional Day: April 21, 2021

Administrative Appreciation Day was on Wednesday, April 21, 2021. Directors and Managers are committed to improving internal communication and further enhancing our culture of excellence. We recognized and celebrated the work of office administrative staff for their contributions to the workplace, and we provided breakfast and a gift.

Goal VI: Improve Internal and External communication

Code of Ethics & Standards of Conduct for Commissioners and Employees of RHA/Conflict of Interest Forms

The Human Resource Department provided all Associates the current Code of Ethics policy and Conflict of Interest forms. We are collecting all the documents from Associates that are currently not out on leave.

Updates:

COVID-19 Vaccine Strategies

The Human Resources Department is working on COVID-19 Strategies to provide education and encouragement to employees regarding the COVID-19 Vaccine. and we provided breakfast and a gift.

5. Compliance, Inclusion, and Diversity Officer's Report Shawn Burr

Inclusion

- COVID Strategy – We continue to work with community partners to facilitate addressing resident needs around testing and education. The COVID testing and primary care services are taking place at most of RHA's senior sites with Trillium's

mobile unit. Trillium has now added telehealth services being available for residents, and we are working on adding to our MOU. A regular schedule has been established and posted at our sites. We have had discussions with URMC and Unity about medical, dental, behavior health, eye care services, and telehealth services for our residents. Discussions are ongoing to work out logistics and develop MOU agreements. The MOU with Trillium addendums has been completed and signed by me. We continue to notify staff and residents of vaccination opportunities.

- Some monies are coming to the City to assist tenants who are behind in their rent. We have notified residents on how to apply for the funds. Staff is following up with phone calls to each resident who is 90 days past due with their rent to offer assistance. Staff is also meeting today to discuss strategies in applying for the residents.
- Women's History Month - The Morale and Inclusion Committee recognized the National Women's History Month celebrating the contributions that Women made to history. There were emails sent on a weekly basis to RHA Staff and Commissioners with different personalities' histories and their contribution to history.
- Vaccination Clinic: RHA, in collaboration with Trillium, we have provided approximately 215 vaccinations to residents and staff. The next date is 4/23/21 at Lena Gantt. The second dose clinic at Lake Tower is scheduled for 4/22/21.

Compliance

- **Fraud Investigations**

- **Leasing Operations** Repayment agreement payment totals YTD as of March 2021, \$23,653 collected (with a total of \$7,517 collected in March 2021). A total of \$420,194.98 has been collected to date as of 2017.
- **Public Housing** Repayment agreement totals YTD for Vacated Arrears and Collection Loss as of March 2021: \$3,673.69 collected (with a total of \$1,063 collected for March 2021). A total of \$44,902.58 was collected to date as of 2017.

- **Termination Hearings**

- We have upgraded the process to be able to conduct hearings remotely.
- **Leasing Operations** – 20 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 5 upheld, two overturned, four reinstated, nine adjourned & 0 withdrawn.
- **Public Housing** – 0 Participant Grievance Hearings Scheduled: 0 upheld; 0 overturned, 0 reinstated & 0 adjourned. Hearings are currently being scheduled for April.

Operations

- **Case Management** –

- Program Violation Referrals Outstanding – 1,084 (Previously 1,139) – which is a total to date since 2015. We have a staff member working on addressing violations and getting them up to date. I have detailed information that can be shared in the executive session.

- **Rochester Housing Charities – Commissioner Cummings serves as RHA's ex-officio representative on the RHC Board of Directors.**

- We continue to work on the RHC project and will continue to keep the Board updated in Executive Sessions.

- **Audit and Review** – I will be working closely with Legal to address areas in need of assessment within RHA. *(Executive Session for any requested reporting)*

- Compliance has completed the 2021 Audit of Leasing Operations Department's use of Admin Fees. I am currently reviewing the audit results and will present them in an Executive Session at the Board's request.
- Compliance began the Finance Audit in the month of March.
- **Public Safety** – Please see the Activity Chart for Public Safety and the new revised reports. The targeted problem strategy appears to be having an impact.

Current Actions:

- Conduct Violations – We continue to mail violation letters to residents that do not comply with the restricted visitation protocol and other lease violations.
- Security Camera Project – I am working with IT and Procurement to restart the vendor process. An RFP will be needed for the RHA-wide project, but we are getting quotes for two sites that need to be addressed asap – Glenwood and HRT. After modification of the scope of work, quotes are due by 4/1/21. We have a lot of information gathered and an Authority-wide scope of work to proceed with.
- We continue to use the COVID questionnaire that was developed, and each visitor is required to complete and sign it before visiting a resident. Temperature checks are also implemented for visitors.
- Glenwood has seen an increase in criminal activity, as reported by residents. We are working on a perimeter access control project, as reported in the Project Planning meetings. We assessed our lighting to see if improvements can be made. We did replace all the exterior lighting fixtures with LED type in 2019 and added two new fixtures several weeks ago. We will be replacing the fixtures next to the unit doors soon with LED types. The security camera project will assist in deterring criminal activity. I've had conversations with RPD and AP Security, and we will continue to work together to address issues and improve communications. We are currently in a design phase and are going to the City Planning Department for review. Our property manager, Harolda Wilcox, is working on scheduling a virtual meeting with residents.
 - Update: We began additional security at Glenwood Gardens, which began on January 31, 2021, and will continue through May 3, 2021. We currently have 24/7 Road Patrol conduct tours of the site at least twice throughout each shift. Security is paying close attention to laundry rooms and walkthrough areas as they are hot spots for criminal activities. AP Security is monitoring the activity and is providing updates and feedback to me. There was a meeting to review the current situation with PH Management, County and City Representatives on 2/3/21. The perimeter access project is with the City Planning dept for their review and comment. We mailed to our residents' informational materials RPD has provided us. We also sent an update on the projects we are working on at the site.
- Resident at Hudson Ridge Tower threatened a staff member with a knife. He has been officially served, and his eviction date was 4/16/2021. The resident hasn't moved out of the unit. We will work with Legal to remove him from the unit, following the process through the court system.

6. Finance

Sinclair Carrington

Mr. Carrington reported the monthly Finance Report, the actual vs. budgeted figures, and variances for year-to-date through February 28, 2021 for the COCC, Public Housing, and Section 8 income and expenses.

Mr. Carrington also reported on the COVID-19 CARES Funding income and expenses for year-to-date through March 30, 2021, and also reported on the projected ways of

spending the remaining \$2.7 million of the HCV Cares Funding.

7. Public Housing Report

Shawn Burr

Interim Public Housing Structure:

- While the Public Housing Director position is vacant, I will continue to oversee and coordinate the management of this department in coordination with property managers. We are still waiting on results of the Civil Service test.

Public Housing Matters:

- I have approved a Standard Operating Procedure for deceased residents that staff developed.
- “Hearings” Standard Operating Procedure has been updated to include remote hearings and it has been implemented.
- ACOP Revisions – staff are working on several revisions to our ACOP. Once complete, they will be brought to Committee for review.
- There are several open positions in Public Housing currently. Due to the number of vacancies and the length of the vacancies it continues to take a toll on the current employees. Open staff positions listed below:
 - Public Housing Director: 8/14/2020
 - Central Zone: One Clerk: LT vacated on 3/1/18
 - South Zone: One Housing Specialist vacated on 10/30/2020
 - Scattered Sites: One Housing Specialist: vacated 10/07/20, One Clerk: vacated 07/01/20, BMS: vacated 04/15/2019
 - APC: Two Housing Specialists – vacated on 2/7/20 and 7/31/20

We continue to work with HR to fill positions. Meanwhile, staff are doing a great job keeping things moving.

COVID Matters:

- Building Security – RHA properties continue with the protocol of restricted visitation to minimize the COVID virus impact. COVID questionnaires have been put in place for each essential visitor to fill out and sign. Guards are also performing temperature checks. Center for Disease Control (CDC) and other notices have been posted. The RHA Reopen Committee has developed plans to re-open community rooms, common spaces, and revised visitation and it looks like we may be able to slowly open things up beginning in April. Until that time, all visitor restrictions and the closure of community rooms remain in effect. Resident notices have been delivered, reminding of current restrictions and safe practices and informing of Re-opening only when it is safe to do so, along with information on vaccination. We relaxed the visitation restrictions over the Easter Holiday to up to two visitors per resident based on following the same procedure as we did over the Thanksgiving weekend. There were minimal incidents. We continue to monitor local conditions and recommendations weekly.
 - Residents – Family Self Sufficiency in partnership with Lifespan, Foodlink, United Way, and our Resident Council members are delivering food to those seniors in need.
 - Disinfection of the main lobby areas, elevators, door handles is still being done twice daily.

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- Community rooms have been secured and sanitizing stations installed for when we reopen them.
- Essential visitor procedure is still in place with security and staff increasing presence at the sites to control entry. The essential visitors to enter must be listed, complete the screening form, and perform a temperature check.

- The waiver process is being utilized to assist residents with recertification. Staff continues to assist and send balance reminder notices to residents. I am working closely with management and legal to develop a temporary process for serving 14-Day Notices when the court reopens.
- Evictions are still on hold. We met last week again to ensure we are up to date on the local court situation. We have a plan for restarting this process once we can secure court dates. Property Managers are currently mailing out the Covid-19 New York State Declaration Notice along with a Temporary Moratorium Letter on Eviction Filing informing residents on the current status of eviction filing through the court systems. The forms will be sent in English and Spanish. There is an evction prevention program that the City and County will be rolling out to assist tenants who are behind in their rent. RHA will be eligible to apply.
- As of 2/1/21, there were over 200 residents who were 60+ days late paying rent with several owing more than \$6,000 each. The total delinquent rent owed is \$350,000+. We have sent notice after notice, with the latest one refernceing the Governor's order and included the affidavit form tenants must use if their income has been affected by COVID. Staff continue to work with each resident and have set up many repayment agreements. This continues to be a problem that we are seriously addressing.
- The Property Management office continues to offer applicants several methods to view a unit e.g. virtual, email & text pictures, solo unit showings (staff will wait outside of the unit as the applicant walks through the unit). This will meet our COVID reopening requirements.
- We have re-established the additional Covid-19 security coverage.
- Last year's Agency Plan (2021) has been submitted to HUD. Meanwhile this current year's Agency Plan is in the process of the 45 day comment period. HUD has approved our 2021 Annual Plan!!
- We advertised the Rochester Mass Vaccination via robocall and flyers at each site and continue to communicate vaccination opportunities to residents, participants, and staff. We provided several info sessions with Commonground Health staff for residents.
- We have performed 3 more vaccination clinics in collaboration with Trillium. We have provided aproximately 215 vaccines to residents and staff.
- Staff attended the Eviction Prevention Program Initiative 2.0 Meeting hosted the City of Rochester.

Security Matters:

- Glenwood Gardens Security Issue: We began additional security at Glenwood Gardens which began on January 31, 2021, and will continue through April 3, 2021 when we will reassess its effectiveness. We will have 24/7 Road Patrol conduct tours of the site at least twice throughout each shift. AP Security will monitor the activity and provide updates and feedback to me. We sent a Security Letter updating residents on upcoming security projects plus additional security tips (provided by RPD) to residents. Harolda Wilcox, Property Manager, sent a letter and information from RPD to all the residents, bringing them up to date with what we're working on. We have made some site lighting improvements and are purchasing LED fixtures for the entry doors to each unit. Capital Projects is working with City Planning on the perimeter fencing/gate project.

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- Resident at Hudson Ridge Tower threatened staff member with a knife. He has been officially served. We will be performing a holdover because resident hasn't evicted the unit.

Online Applications:

- The Online application process is working well.
- To address the high number of high-rise vacancies, APC continues to canvas the 1 bedroom waiting list. Based on the low responses to past canvases, we have increased the number of applicants we are canvassing to 200 per month.
 - Currently being screened- 64 applications
 - Currently going through the intake process (with the Intake Specialist) – 27 applications
- APC is currently operating with 50% staffing. We made offers to two candidates and both candidates declined.
- To address the on-going issue of extending deadlines for applicants not having access to a copier to make copies of the required eligibility and intake paperwork, APC purchased and had delivered on 3/1/21, a Toshiba copier that will be located in the APC lobby area.

8. Maintenance Report

Mark Plantholt

- **Vacant Unit Report**
 - The newly completed units in March are on the report.
- **Staffing**
 - Continue to interview candidates for open BMS, mechanic and laborer positions. There are two internal candidates for the Senior Maintenance Mechanic positions.
- **COVID Sanitizing**
 - The new sanitizing equipment and solutions are in place and Bob Croston is heading up the program. Trial at Lake Tower is in process and the North Zone is planned to be next. The Purus system is also being used for the Trillium COVID testing and vaccination events.
 - The Section 3 and MWBE contractors are extended into April 2021. This will be reduced as more zones come online after the trial at Lake Tower.
- **Contracts/Request for Proposals**
 - 2021 Turf Mowing Services – to be reviewed at the April PH and Board meetings.
 - 2021 Trash Compactor Replacement Project – to be reviewed at the April PH and Board meetings.
- **Work Order Review**
 - The Maintenance COVID recovery plan for processing all regular and emergency Work Orders is activated. Staff are working through the backlog of both regular and UPCS work orders.
 - Open Work Orders as of 3/31/2021 – 2,897.

9. Leasing Operations Report (Section 8)

Jacquetta Harris

Director Harris, Leasing Operations Department, shared utilization and funding information with the Board of Commissioners.

Leasing Operations Matters:

1. Staff developed a draft proposal for Administrative Plan language changes. The proposed changes are under internal review. Once edits are captured a copy will be provided to the Board for review. At the same time, we will post the proposed changes for 45-day public comment period, following that a virtual public hearing will be held.
2. Currently, we have 3,212 applicants on the Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List.
2. Leasing Operations' voucher and funding utilization goal is between 95% to 98%. We are currently at 92.13% utilization of vouchers and 97.6% utilization of funds. Leasing Operations Department has a Leasing Plan for 2021 to fully maximize HUD funding for Housing Assistance Payments. To best optimize our Housing Choice Vouchers our plan is to issue 600-750 HCV from the Waiting List by 9/30/2021. As of 4/16/2021 Leasing Operations Department has filled the lease up Housing Specialist vacancy in our Eligibility Unit, which will help us issue 35 more vouchers a month. Staff continue working overtime and we are using a remote 3rd party vendor to issue 200 vouchers within the next 60 days.
3. The monthly inspection goal is 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 1012 inspections for March.
4. Permanent Supportive Housing projects are being monitored monthly for financials and project participation. All projects that are projecting a funding deficit, by the end of the grant period, have an action plan to address the deficit. *** In preparation for the soon and upcoming release of HUD's Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), Partners Ending Homelessness announced (on 3/5/2021) the beginning of the local ranking criteria and local application process for new and renewal projects (we have eight projects) .

Committee Update:

A group of nonprofit and local government stakeholders: ESL, the Wilson Foundation, the Rochester Area Community Foundation, the City of Rochester, Rochester Housing Authority, and Monroe County is engaged in a research project seeking to understand the nature of the rental property ownership business in Rochester and Monroe County. The overall project is intended to help determine whether policies and programs at the local level (for example, code enforcement or publicly funded housing assistance) are properly suited to the *financial* realities of the rental marketplace. The research is focused especially on those rental property owners who have smaller properties like single-family homes or duplexes, and/or only a small number of properties in total. The week of April 12, 2021 a survey went out to landlords.

10. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Report

Melissa Berrien

Participant Highlights

We have 239 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:

- Ms. Slingerland entered the FSS program on March 1,2020 with the employment and homeownership goals. Ms. Slingerland maintained her employment and closed on her home at 6083 Chili Riga Road on January 25,2021. Ms. Slingerland is a successful graduate of the FSS Program and entitled to receive \$990.00 in escrow savings..

Section 3

- Monthly Report (see attached)
- We currently have 19 businesses on the RHA Section 3 Registry

Agency Collaborations

- Eviction Prevention Study - RHA is collaborating with the City of Rochester, FEC and Harvard University to evaluate the impact of FEC programming on eviction outcomes for RHA residents and the effectiveness of different Marketing tools.
- Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) offers free financial counseling which focuses on increasing savings, reducing debt, and increasing access to safe and affordable banking products.
 - 74 participants/residents referred
 - 54K increase in combined savings
 - 28K in debt reduction
- Action for a Better Community (ABC) – Benefits Cliff Project - We are participating on a community wide initiative led by ABC to create a tool that will help individuals receiving public assistance to understand and mitigate benefit cliffs and their impacts
- We are in talks with URMC and Unity Health systems to create a partnership that will increase access to healthcare for residents and participants
- Afterschool Program Initiative - Collaborative initiative with ROC the Future (RTF), Greater Rochester After-School Alliance (GRASA) and the Community Foundation to implementing after- school engagement opportunities for residents.

Homeownership

- Ms. Cooper closed on her home at 16 Taft Avenue on March 5, 2021.
- Mr. Burroughs closed on his home at 286 Magnolia Street on March 29, 2021.
- We have 3 families with anticipated closings and 19 families who have been approved for financing and are searching for homes.

11. Planning Committee Report

Shawn Burr

- The Planning Committee meeting was held on 4/14/2021. There was one follow-up item from the previous meeting, which is complete.
- We had five action items for this meeting. Each item was presented, questions asked and answered, and agreed to move forward to the Board for approval, with the exception of the Local Works Request, which was voted on and approved. Thank you again for your flexibility.
- We discussed the status of our current projects by having staff give updates and review progress pictures:
 1. 396 Waring Rd Fire Restoration – the project is 40% complete and on schedule.
 2. Kennedy Tower Hallway and unit Rehab – 37% of the work has been completed. The residents are very happy with the new units.
 3. Lake Tower Façade Repair – 30% of the work is completed and is on schedule and gearing back up to resume the project.
 4. Bronson Court Fire Restoration Project – the project is underway and 20% complete.
 5. 117 Wm. Warfield TH Alterations – the project is getting underway.
- We continue to work with our internal team and the consultant team of D+B/Calogero on a preservation plan for a portion of the RHA Public Housing portfolio as part of the New York State Preservation Opportunity Program (NYPOP) grant. We hired a consultant, Bureau Veritas, through D&B/Calogero to provide NEPA reviews and RAD Physical Conditions Assessments on the identified PH properties. Inspections

began during the week of April 12th. Residents were notified, and we worked one on one with those that have contacted us with concerns. We will not be going into any unit where the resident doesn't want us to. The fees for all of this work are covered by the grant. A follow-up meeting with the City went well, and we will update again in late May. I have connected with Jordan Health and Baden Street Settlement, and both are supportive of our project. There have been some changes with CONEA, and I'll be connecting shortly with their new ED.

- We continue to see a rise in costs across the board associated with the pandemic. Material lead times have increased, material costs have gone up, and contractor overhead costs have also increased. We have not seen a downward trend as of yet but are still hopeful. As you know, contractors must have COVID-19 safety plans and procedures as part of the bid response, which is reflected in higher bid amounts. Other PHA's I've spoken with are experiencing the same. Attached is some info on the rising lumber costs.
- Staff continues to ensure that contractors are following the NYS COVID-19 Safety Guidelines that have been put in place.
- We currently have five projects out to bid; others will be going out shortly.
- Our MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report was presented and will continue to be updated each month.
- The status of our current CFP Budgets as of March 31st are: 501.18 budget is 100% obligated and 90% Expended, and 501.19 is 62% obligated and 35% expended. RHF Funds grants as of January 31st are: 502.13 is 56% obligated and 56% expended, and 502.14 is 0% obligated and 0% expended.
- We then discussed our A/E status report.

Project Planning

- Our Project Planning meeting followed the Committee meeting. We began with updates on our development projects, starting with our RAD project at Federal St/Scattered Sites. We continue to work with the architect and developer partner to move the Federal St project forward, and each are performing the assigned tasks. We resubmitted the NYS HCR application on 1/13/2021 for LIHTC funding on time; the application is stronger as we have received additional approvals and additional support letters since the last submittal. We have received approval of HOME funds: an interest-only loan of \$250,000 and a PILOT agreement, and an ESSHI Grant we applied for. We also were just awarded \$1,600,000 in HHAP Funds which we hope will strengthen our HCR application even more.
- Our next RAD project will be Parliament/Luther, and we are working with our development team. PCNA's are being scheduled, and we are working with the residents to conduct safety inspections.
- We have submitted a proposal in response to the City for the Affordable Housing Development RFP. We haven't received a response yet.
- Our Change, the Face of Public Housing project at Bond/Hamilton A/E firm, presented the alternative layouts last month. The project was unanimously approved at the March 18th Zoning Board of Appeals meeting for the two necessary variance requests we submitted. Once the final site plan approval is received from the City, the architect will complete the bid documents. We are also working on the HUD SAC application.
- We also discussed our Change the Face of Public Housing project at Edinburgh Street; updated elevations are almost ready. We will be presenting these at next month's Project Planning meeting. We will also be scheduling a follow-up meeting with the neighborhood association after that.

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

- We then discussed the Holland Townhouse Site Improvement Project; the Traffic Control Board approved the plan. It was presented at the March 16th City Council meeting and unanimously approved. We are working with the City on a possible right of way that will allow the City-owned portion to become RHA property.
- Our eight Section 32 homeownership homes have now turned back to seven. We are hoping to complete our SAC application soon. Property appraisals are being coordinated, and we will submit that to the Special Applications Center once it's complete. Melissa has sent another survey out to PH residents in single-family homes to see who is interested in purchasing. The plan is to create a pipeline of residents and units.
- We then reviewed the projects in the CFP Project Pipeline, which are all in various stages of planning and design.

12. Commissioner Comments

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to go into Executive Session for a legal and personnel matter. Commissioner Edwards moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded a motion to go into Executive Session at 2:45 pm. Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Cummings, and Commissioner Remarais voted yes. The motion was passed six to zero.

The Board would like to note that it has been decided to withdraw the Waiver Application for the Executive Director and the Director of Administration position. RHA will start the search for an Executive Director within 45 days.

Board Chair Reamais requested a motion to approve the filing a waiver with the Civil Service for the following three exempt positions: Director of Administration, Director of Operations, Director of Diversity, Inclusion & Compliance Officer. Commissioner Bascoe moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. Commissioner Edwards abstained. The motion passed 4 with one abstention.

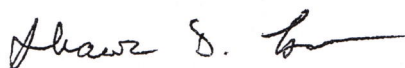
Board Chair Reramais requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Edwards moved, and Commissioner Bascoe seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 4:22 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Cummings, and Commissioner Rubin voted yes. The motion was passed six to zero.

13. May Regular Board Meeting-

The June Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 25, 2020**, at 12:00 pm via Teams and the RHAtv on YouTube.

There were no further items to come before the Board, a vote to end the Regular Meeting Business was taken, Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Edwards seconded a motion to end the Board Meeting at 4:39 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson and Commissioner Bascoe voted yes. The motion was passed five to zero.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board Deputy
Executive Director