

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



MEMBERS PRESENT

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

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Diana Colon
Pierre Dorancy
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 Tynise Edwards called the May Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting to order at 12:02 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: April 2021 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve the April 2021 Regular Board Meeting minutes. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Bascoe, and Commissioner Larson voted yes, Commissioner Edwards and Commissioner Rubin abstained. The motion passed five 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 to 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 are moving forward on implementing it at our other sites. Visitor restrictions will be relaxed, but COVID questionnaires and temperature checks continue for all visitors are moving forward with an implementation almost complete. 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 are targeting June 1st as our re-open date for the offices.

Mr. Burr shared that we continue to have weekly meetings with our NYS POP grant consultant to move the grant forward. We will continue to update at the Project Planning meeting.

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

Mr. Burr reported we continue to meet with Common Ground Health, Trillium, and others on opportunities for a "Phase II" program providing vaccinations for our eligible residents, program participants, and employees. Our last clinic was 5/21, where a second dose was administered at Lena Gantt Estates. I want to acknowledge the amazing job our staff has done in making each event happen!! I'm extremely proud of the teamwork and ingenuity of our staff!!!

GREAT JOB, TEAM!!!!!! I was asked to participate in a call with a HUD Washington and NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance staff members to discuss our experiences with providing vaccination opportunities for our

residents, participants, and employees. They were very impressed with how we got out ahead of the pandemic early on and the collaboration with our community partners along the way. I learned that many other PHA's across the State are nowhere near where we are. I bragged about how we were ahead of the pandemic early and communicated often with residents, staff, and participants in addition to the COVID Action Plan we developed and how our Board was involved and supportive throughout. They were taking a lot of notes and asked if they could forward my contact info to others. Absolutely!!

Mr. Burr reported that staff continues to be involved in several community projects and report on them in their Board reports. RMAPI Housing Committee, which will now be a Housing Working Group that will focus on our community's full housing system, 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 the 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; 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 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 as part of the American Rescue Plan, and Congress allocated \$5 billion in funding for Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs). On May 5, 2021, HUD published PIH 2021-15 titled "Emergency Housing Vouchers – Operating Requirements." HUD is using a portion of that funding to allocate 70,000 vouchers to PHAs. In structuring this program, HUD reached out to industry groups to ask for feedback. NAHRO provided comments on how the program should be structured. We are pleased that much of NAHRO's feedback was incorporated into this notice, including creating a services fee, allocating full funding for administrative fees, using enhanced payment standards,

allowing security deposit assistance, allowing utility deposit assistance, allowing rental application assistance, allowing the use of landlord incentives, allowing purchasing essential household items (e.g., furniture), allowing initial self-certification of certain information, and using certain other flexibilities. The following is a summary of the notice. We strongly encourage all PHAs that receive EHV's to carefully read through the entire notice as this summary necessarily streamlines certain details.

Eligibility for PHAs and Individuals and Allocations

To be eligible for EHV's, both PHAs and individuals have to meet certain requirements. To be eligible as a PHA, a PHA must administer a Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program. Non-profit organizations with mainstream voucher programs are not eligible. For an individual to be eligible, the individual must fall into one of the following categories:

- Homeless;
- At risk of homelessness;
- Fleeing, or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking;
- Recently homeless and for whom providing rental assistance will prevent the family's homelessness or having a high risk of housing instability.

The notice describes each category in additional detail. The vouchers will be allocated according to a need-based formula. Factors used to determine the formula include comparative homelessness and at-risk of homelessness need, geographic diversity including rural areas, public housing agency capacity, and minimum allocation. The minimum allocation for most PHAs is 25 vouchers, but certain PHAs in rural areas with high needs may have allocations as low as 15 vouchers. Housing authorities will be notified by May 10th whether they are receiving vouchers. Housing authorities may accept fewer than their allocated vouchers until they reach their minimum allocation.

Administrative and Other Fees

The program has multiple fees for a variety of different uses.

Preliminary Fees - These fees are single, one-time allocations of \$400 per EHV. This fee is to support the anticipated start-up costs of the program (e.g., outreach and coordination with the local Continuum of Care [CoC] and other partners). This may also be used for eligible admin. fee expenses or service fee activities. *Placement Fee / Expedited Issuance*

Reporting Fee - This fee is used for lease-up costs and expedited leasing of EHV's. Initial lease-up costs may include costs to establish and refine the direct referral process with its partners and to expedite income determinations, family briefings, and voucher issuance. It may also cover a PHA's costs to report the issuance of EHV's to HUD ahead of normal reporting deadlines. Housing authorities may receive multiple increments of this fee.

Housing authorities will receive \$100 dollars for each EHV that is initially leased upon the effective leasing date of that voucher, if the PHA reported the voucher issuance date in the PIC-NG system within 14 days of the voucher issuance date after the system becomes available for reporting. The PHA will receive \$500 for each EHV family placed into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract no later than four months after the effective date of the voucher increment. Alternatively, the PHA may receive \$250 for each EHV family placed under a HAP contract with an effective date between 4 and 6 months after the effective date of the voucher increment.

Ongoing Administrative Fee - Housing authorities will be fully funded (i.e., no proration or full eligibility funding) on their ongoing administrative fee account at the column A rate (administrative fees are normally divided into two rates, a higher column A rate for the first unit months leased and then a lower column B rate for subsequent unit months).

HUD notes that it may prorate the administrative fee in future years. There are certain additional notes about the ongoing administrative fee. In each of the first three months, HUD will advance the PHA ongoing administrative fee equal to the amount of ongoing administrative fees the PHA would receive for that month if all EHV's allocated to the PHA were fully leased for initial costs of EHV administration. Additionally, administrative fees may be used to pay for services.

Services Fee - Housing authorities will be allocated a one-time services fees to support their efforts in implementing and operating an effective EHV services program. An amount of \$3,500 will be allocated for each EHV to PHAs. Eligible uses for these fees must be incorporated into a PHA's administrative plan. Any funding returned (e.g., from a security deposit) must be used for services or administrative fee uses. There are certain eligible service uses. These uses include housing search assistance, security deposit (up to two months) assistance, utility deposit assistance (including utility arrears), rental application fees, and hold fees. Uses also include owner-related uses such as owner recruitment and outreach and owner incentive and retention payments (i.e., landlord incentives). Additionally, uses also include moving expenses, tenant-readiness services, essential household items (e.g., furniture), and renter's insurance, if required by the lease.

HAP Funding

The initial funding allocation will expire on Dec. 31, 2022. After this, HUD will provide renewal funding for EHV's on a calendar year basis beginning with calendar year (CY) 2023.

Waivers and Alternative Requirements

The notice provides many waivers to the current voucher program requirements and, in some instances, provides alternative requirements specifically for EHV's. *COVID-19 Waivers* – only certain COVID-19 waivers that apply to the general program will apply to EHV's. The notice provides a detailed list of which waivers these are. *Required*

Partnerships with CoCs and Other Organizations for Referrals – housing authorities are required to work with community partners. PHAs must enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to form a partnership with their local CoC.

Admissions Process – housing authorities must accept referrals for EHV's from the CoC's coordinated entry (CE) system. Admissions may come from either direct referrals from the CoC CE system or partnering organizations or Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA) emergency transfers. A PHA must take referrals from outside the CE system if the CE system does not contain enough eligible families or the CE system does not identify families that are fleeing or attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking. If the PHA is not receiving enough referrals, it should contact HUD. *Required Housing Search Assistance* – the PHA must supply housing search assistance. This assistance must include the following: helping families identify units, providing transportation assistance, conducting owner outreach, assisting with the completion of rental applications and PHA forms, and helping expedite the EHV leasing process for the family. Other recommended—but optional—assistance includes the following: helping families identify and mitigate barriers to lease (e.g., low credit scores or a history of evictions); workshops on how to conduct an effective housing search; enhanced support for portability processing; regular proactive check-ins for families; regular reminders to the family of their voucher expiration date and extension policies; and a dedicated landlord liaison for EHV families. *Separate Waiting Lists for EHV's* – HUD is waiving the requirement for a single waiting list for voucher families. In its place, HUD is establishing a separate waiting list for EHV referrals and applicants to help expedite the leasing process. The PHA will no longer have to give public notice

about this waiting list since it will be composed of referrals. *Local Preference* – local preferences under the voucher program do not apply to EHV. The PHA, in coordination with the CoC, may choose to create local preferences or not but may not prohibit any of the four qualifying categories. *Restrictions on PHA Denial to an EHV applicant* – the notice makes some changes in when it is allowable to deny a family access to an EHV. Individuals convicted of drug-related criminal activity for manufacture or reduction of methamphetamine on the premises of federally assisted housing and individuals subject to a lifetime registration requirement under a state sex offender registration program remain prohibited. Certain other categories remain at the discretion of the PHA, and certain categories may no longer be prohibited, such as previously federally evicted individuals, individuals with debt to a PHA, individuals that have breached a repayment agreement with a PHA, individuals that were previously prohibited under alcohol abuse standards, and individuals that are currently or recently engaged in drug-related criminal activity.

Use of Recently Conducted Initial Income Determinations and Verifications at Admissions – Housing authorities may use income calculations from other rental assistance programs as long as they were in accordance with the HUD income calculations (see 24 C.F.R. Part 5) within the last 6 months and the family certifies there has been no change in income or family composition in the interim. For each new admission, the PHA must review the appropriate EIV page to confirm the income within 90 days of the PIC-NG submission date and resolve discrepancies within 60 days. *Pre-inspection of HQS Units* – if an EHV family selects a unit that passed an HQS inspection within 45 days of the request for tenancy approval (RFTA) form, the unit may be approved. The family must be free to select their unit and not be forced to use the pre-screened unit. *Initial Search Term* – HUD mandates that the initial search term be 120 days. *Initial Lease Term* – the initial lease term may be less than 12 months regardless of whether the shorter term is the prevailing market practice.

Portability – the notice makes certain changes to the normal requirements for billing, family briefings, coordination on services in certain instances, and division of administrative and other fees. *Enhanced Payment Standards* – the notice allows for more flexible payment standards. Payment standards may be set at 90% to 120% of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) and 90% to 120% of the Small Area FMR at the PHA's discretion. Payment standards for EHV may not be lower than the payment standards for the normal voucher program. *Increase in Payment Standard during HAP Contract Term* – if the payment standard is increased during the term of the HAP contract, the PHA has discretion to establish a policy on when to apply the increased payment standard, though it may apply it no later than the effective date of the family's first regular reexamination following the change.

Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Requirements

All nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements apply to these vouchers. Reasonable accommodations may have to be made in certain instances. In communicating with families, PHAs must consider individuals with limited English proficiency.

Inapplicability of Project-based Voucher Assistance and Termination

These vouchers may not be project-based because they sunset. These vouchers may not be turned over after Sept. 30, 2023.

HUD Authority to Revoke and Reallocate Vouchers

After a minimum of one year after the effective date of the funding increment, PHAs will be assessed. Housing authorities that have leased at least 95% of EHV will not have any

of their EHV's recaptured. HUD will refresh the allocation formula in redistributing vouchers so PHAs that achieved higher utilization since the initial distribution will potentially benefit by receiving some of the reallocated vouchers. The notice provides additional information on how funds will be recaptured.

Miscellaneous

There are certain requirements for how funds may be used. Housing assistance payments may only be used for those purposes and not for administrative or service uses. HUD will make certain changes to VMS to collect EHV data. Additionally, REAC will publish additional guidance on FDS reporting requirements. There are certain reconciliations and recapture requirements at the end of the program. All funds must be spent on eligible activities by the end of the program, or they will be recaptured. The effective end date of the program is unknown, but the final end date is known. HUD must allocate all funds by Sept. 30, 2030, and all funds must be used by Sept. 30, 2035.

b. Board Action Requests

- i. Scattered Sites Porch Replacement-P7– Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to Erie Contracting, in the amount of \$146,300.00 (one-time) – Capital Projects

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

- ii. Scattered Sites Porch Replacement-P8 – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award the contract to O & T Drywall for \$132,990.00 (one-time) – Capital Projects

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

- iii. Environmental Engineering Services - Authorize the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to LaBella Associates for \$100,000.00 (with four renewals) – Capital Projects

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

- iv. Bay Zimmer Apt.s - Replace Boilers and DHW (Phase 2) - Authorize the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to Kennedy Mechanical, Inc for \$111,400.00 (one time) – Capital Projects

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

- v. Lake Tower - Replace (1) Aerco boiler – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award the contract to EMCOR Services Betlem for \$66,053.00 (one time) – Capital Projects

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

- vi. Zimmer Street Window Replacement Project – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to Window Specialist, Inc. for \$94,705.00 – Capital Projects

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

- vii. Danforth Towers Façade Repairs – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award the contract to Lupini Construction Inc. for \$867,913.00 – Capital Projects

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

- viii. Network Electronics Upgrade (VoIP Phase 2) – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award the contract to Stellar the amount of \$110,413.47 from the RHA's Local Works Account (one-time) – Information Technology

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

- ix. Scan-to-PDF and document indexing of Participant HCV/Section 8 records – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to MetaSource \$189,117.00 (one time) – Information Technology

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

- x. CARE Package Procurement, Packaging, Delivery – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to award a contract to Foodlink for the amount of \$120,000.00 (one time) – Leasing Operations

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

- xi. 2021 Landscape Services Contingency Increase Request – Authorized the Deputy Executive Director to approve the contingency increase for the amount of 12,408.00 (with four renewals) – Maintenance

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Larson, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five 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- May 2021

ADP Time & Attendance Management Training

This training provided an overview of time & attendance responsibilities in our HRIS for new and existing managers. The training focused on what the supervisor's role is regarding time & attendance responsibilities in the system. In addition, managers received hands-on training with approving associate's timecards, editing timecards approving/denying time off requests, timecard exceptions, and creating reports.

Goal VI: Improve Internal and External communication

Engagement Survey The Human Resource Department is conducting an engagement survey which is a valuable way to gather insight into what is important to employees and to measure the employee's engagement level.

Updates:

Reopening Committee

The Reopening Committee is working on finalizing department plans to re-open RHA locations on June 1, 2021.

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 have been completed and signed by me. We continue to notify staff and residents of vaccination opportunities in the community.
- Some monies are coming to the City to assist tenants who are behind in their rent; EPPI-2.0 Program. 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 working 1:1 with residents to assist with applying.
- Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month- The Morale and Inclusion Committee and the Executive Staff recognized Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month by highlighting different aspects of different countries, honoring their culture through emails sent to staff throughout the month.
- Vaccination Clinic: We have performed five vaccination clinics with the collaboration of Trillium. We have provided approximately 262 vaccines to residents and 14 for staff. The clinics are on pause right now, and we are going to send new packets of information to residents and participants.

Compliance

- **Fraud Investigations**
 - **Leasing Operations** Repayment agreement payment totals YTD as of April 2021, \$32,872 collected (with a total of \$9,219 collected in April 2021). A total of \$429,413.98 has been collected to date as of 2017.
 - **Public Housing** Repayment agreement totals YTD for Vacated Arrears and Collection Loss as of April 2021: \$6,138.51 collected (with a total of \$2,464.82 collected for April 2021). A total of \$47,367.40 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: 6 upheld, 5 overturned, 4 reinstated, 5 adjourned & 0 withdrawn.
 - **Public Housing** – 7 Participant Grievance Hearings Scheduled: 2 withdrawn; 2 upheld; 3 overturned, 0 reinstated & 0 adjourned.

Operations

- **Case Management** –
 - Program Violation Referrals Outstanding – 1,099 – 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 special project and will continue to keep the Board updated in executive sessions. I am currently working on a comprehensive summary report.
- **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. My review is complete, and I can 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, and Evhen has issued an RFP to include RHA access along with the camera project. The RFP is for the RHA wide project. It makes the most sense to do everything at once to ensure consistency across our locations. 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
- 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. We will continue to work with AP Security to insure the guards are adhering to our process. As we

prepare to re-open, security will continue to play a critical role in the safety of our residents.

- 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 scheduled two Zoom meetings with residents for May 18, 2021, from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm and from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. We had a total attendance of 2 residents in the morning meeting and none in the evening meeting. The large dumpster from the Santee Street parking lot has been removed. We have noticed less trash being dumped there since removal.
 - 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.
 - The 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 are working with Legal to remove him from the unit by following the process through the court system.
 - On April 14, 2021, the Rochester Fire Department responded to a 2-alarm fire at University Tower caused by a resident falling asleep while smoking. Unfortunately, the resident passed away due to the fire.
 - Eviction Notices were served to the residents of 39 and 41 Delmar Street on 4/28. The residents got into a physical altercation and threatened each other with weapons over parking.

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 31, 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 have received the results of the Civil Service test and are currently working with the Human Resources Department to canvas the list.

Public Housing Matters:

- ACOP Revisions – staff are working on several revisions to our ACOP. Once complete, they will be brought to Committee for review and Board for approval.
- The Property Manager at Seneca Manor is scheduling a Cleanup day with residents – this day will allow residents to clean out bulk unused items in their homes.
- 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, the staff is 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 May. 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.
- Community rooms have been secured and sanitizing stations installed for when we re-open 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. Staff are updating their re-opening plans to implement on 5/17.
- 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 re-opens.
- 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 were sent in English and Spanish. There is an eviction prevention program (EPPI 2.0) that the City and County have rolled out to assist tenants who are behind in their rent. RHA is eligible to apply on behalf of a resident, but the resident must still meet the eligibility requirements. We have sent EPPI applications to those residents who are more than 60 days behind. Staff are working 1:1 with residents to assist with applying.
- As of 2/1/21, there were over 200 residents who were 60+ days late paying the rent with several owing more than \$6,000 each. The total delinquent rent owed is \$377,000+. We have sent notice after notice, with the latest one referencing 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 and see if eligible for the EPPI 2.0 program. This continues to be a priority that staff is addressing. As of 5/6, the total amount of delinquent rent owed is \$247K.
- 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 re-opening requirements.
- The current year's Agency Plan is in the process of the 45-day comment period. The Public Hearing is scheduled for 5/17 at 2:00. The Plan will be sent to the City for review and Mayor Warren's signature on the 18th. The Plan will also be sent to the Board in advance of the June Public Housing Committee meeting.
- We have performed 5 vaccination clinics with the collaboration of Trillium. We have provided approximately 262 vaccines to residents and 14 for staff. The clinics are on pause right now and we are going to send new packets of information to residents and participants.

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. Two Teams meetings with residents are being scheduled for May 18, 2021, from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm and from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. The large dumpster from the Santee Street parking lot has been removed. We have noticed less trash being dumped there since removal.

- The resident at Hudson Ridge Tower threatened a staff member with a knife. He has been officially served. We are performing a holdover to court because the resident hasn't evicted the unit.
- On April 14, 2021, the Rochester Fire Department responded to a 2-alarm fire at University Tower caused by a resident falling asleep while smoking. The resident passed away due to the fire.
- Eviction Notices were served to the residents of 39 and 41 Delmar Street on 4/28. The residents got into a physical altercation and threatened each other with weapons over parking.

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 300 per month. This is an increase from 200 previously canvassed.
 - Currently being screened- 41 applications
 - Currently going through the intake process (with the Intake Specialist) – 17 applications
- APC is currently operating with 50% staffing. We made offers to two candidates and both candidates declined.
- To address the ongoing 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**
 - Maintenance continues to turn over units for lease as soon as possible. The completed units have been added to the April 2021 vacancy report.
- **Staffing**
 - The second interview with the candidate for the open Scattered Sites BMS went very well and background check is in process. Second interviews for the two internal candidates for the Senior Maintenance Mechanic positions to be scheduled.
- **COVID Sanitizing**
 - The Purus sanitizing equipment and solutions are in place at Lake Tower and Bob Croston is heading up the trial program. North Zone is next.
 - The Purus system is also being used for the Trillium COVID testing and vaccination events.

- The Section 3 and MWBE contractors will be extended into June 2021. This will be reduced as more zones come online after the trial at Lake Tower.
- **Upcoming Contracts in Process**
 - Winter uniforms
 - Snowplowing contracts
- **Work Order Review**
 - Maintenance is processing all regular and emergency Work Orders. Staff are working through the backlog of both regular and UPCS work orders.
 - Open Work Orders as of 4/30/2021 – 2,315
 - Closed Work Orders as of 4/30/2021 – 1,583.

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 have received internal review and are attached for your review. Also, we will post the proposed changes for 45-day public comment period, following that a public hearing will be held.
2. Currently, we have 2,990 applicants on the Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List.
3. Leasing Operations' voucher and funding utilization goal is between 95% to 98%. We are currently at 91.61% utilization of vouchers and 97% 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. Staff continue working overtime and we are using a remote 3rd party vendor to issue 200 vouchers.
4. The monthly inspection goal is 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 860 inspections for April. 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. On 5/10/2021 the local Continuum of Care (CoC) Ranking, and Review Committee completed their scoring and ranking of the CoC renewal projects. **All our grants (8) are in Tier 1, which means guaranteed funding.**

HUD Mobility Demonstration Award

Hi, Jacquetta and Shawn:

Congratulations on being selected to join the HCV Mobility Demonstration! Thank you for taking the time to submit a detailed and thoughtful proposal and for your commitment to helping voucher families access areas of opportunity. We look forward to working with you to implement this exciting new program. Alison Bell

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.

CZB, LLC Eric Ameigh the Director of Operations and Special Projects provided an update on 5/6/2021 informing committee members that the survey closed after three weeks. They completed 218 completed responses, which is terrific and told them a lot! CZB have taken advantage of the opportunity to set up conversations with several rental property owners for 1:1 conversation.

10. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Report

Melissa Berrien

Participant Highlights

We have 240 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:

- Ms. Anderson entered the FSS program on May 1, 2016 with the employment and homeownership goals. Ms. Anderson maintained her employment and is pre-qualified for mortgage assistance and is searching for a home. Ms. Anderson is a successful graduate of the FSS Program and entitled to receive \$2,669.51 in escrow savings.
- Ms. Davis entered the FSS program on November 1, 2020 with the employment and homeownership goals. Ms. Davis maintained her employment and closed on her home at 15 Pauline Circle on July 20, 2020. Ms. Davis is a successful graduate of the FSS Program and entitled to receive \$306.00 in escrow savings.
- Ms. Jackson entered the FSS program on October 1, 2019 with goals of employment, credit repair and homeownership. Ms. Jackson's income increased by 351% percent and she is no longer receiving section 8 assistance. Ms. Jackson is a successful graduate of the FSS Program

Section 3

- Monthly Report (see attached)
- We currently have 19 businesses on the RHA Section 3 Registry
- HUD Buffalo will be hosting a virtual webinar Wednesday, May 26th to share information about the Section 3 Program.

Agency Collaborations

- 2021 Resident Commissioner Election September 2021
 - Date TBD
 - Board of Elections preliminary meeting held on 5/11/21
 - Election's commissioners will meet internally to determine possible dates and voting apparatus

- 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.
 - FEC processing referrals
- 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.
 - Will explore partnering with a community partner(s) who would be interested in providing OST programming, summer, or after-school, or both.
 - Baden and Boys and Girls Club identified as potential partners

Homeownership

- Ms. Baez closed on her home at 205 West Avenue on March 29, 2021.
- Ms. Dickey closed on her home at 198 Magee Avenue on April 7, 2021.
- We have 2 families with anticipated closings and 20 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 5/12/2021 There was one follow-up item from the previous meeting, which is complete.
- We had three action items for this meeting. Each item was presented, questions asked and answered and agreed to move forward to the Board for approval.
- We discussed the status of our current projects by having staff give updates and review progress pictures:
 1. 396 Waring Rd Fire Restoration – project is 65% complete and on schedule.
 2. Kennedy Tower Hallway and unit Rehab – 40% of the work has been completed. The residents are very happy with the new units.
 3. Lake Tower Façade Repair – 35% of the work is completed and is on schedule and gearing back up to resume the project.

4. Bronson Court Fire Restoration Project – project is underway and 25% complete.
 5. 117 Wm. Warfield TH Alterations – project is 10% complete and on schedule.
- 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. The initial summary reports are under review and financing plans are being worked on. The fees for all of this work are covered by the grant. A follow up meeting with the City is being scheduled for June.
 - Other PHA's I've spoken with are experiencing the same increases in construction costs and staff are investigating as well.
 - Staff continues to ensure that contractors are following the NYS COVID-19 Safety Guidelines that have been put in place.
 - We currently have six projects out to bid, others will be going out shortly.
 - We then presented the project summary report for the Site Office Upgrades project. There were minimal change orders and mostly for COVID Safety plans. We did receive a credit back for unused COVID Safety Plan days that weren't used. All in all, the project went well.
 - 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 a presentation by Edge Architecture on the Edinburgh St project.
- Updates were given on our development projects starting with our RAD project at Federal St/Scattered Sites. We continue to work with our developer partner to move the Federal St project forward after not being awarded our 9% tax credit application. We were awarded \$1.6 million in HHAP funds through NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance. A kickoff meeting was held on 5/19 and we are moving forward with the program. We have received approval of HOME

funds: interest only loan of \$250,000 and a PILOT agreement and a ESSHI Grant we applied for.

- Our next RAD project will be Parliament/Luther and we are working with our development team. PCNA's are being completed and we are receiving draft reports for review.
- 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 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.
- Next steps for our Change the Face of Public Housing project at Edinburgh Street. will be scheduling a follow up meeting with the neighborhood association.
- 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 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 complete, and we will submit that to the Special Applications Center as 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 Commissioner Edwards requested a motion to go into Executive Session for a legal and personnel matter. Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Bascoe seconded a motion to go into Executive Session at 2:55 pm. Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Larson, Commissioner Bascoe, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion was passed five to zero.

Board Chair Commissioner Edwards requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Bascoe moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 3:49 pm. Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Cummings, and Commissioner Larson voted yes. The motion was passed four to zero.

13. June Regular Board Meeting

The June Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Wednesday, June 23, 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 May Regular Meeting Business was taken, Commissioner Larson moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded a motion to end the Board Meeting at 3:50 pm. Commissioner Edwards, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Larson and Commissioner Bascoe voted yes. The motion was passed four to zero.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board Deputy
Executive Director