

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**February 23, 2022
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**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
February 23, 2022
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



February 23, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT

Duwayne Bascoe, Commissioner
Florine Cummings, Resident Commissioner
Willie Otis, Resident Commissioner
Henry Rubin, Commissioner
Rosalie Remarais, Acting Chairperson

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Sinclair Carrington
Diana Colon
Robert Croston, Jr.
Pierre Dorancy
Cynthia Herriott
Shawanna Lawrence
Shelby Simpson
Evhen Tupis
Harolda Wilcox

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Todd Bullard, RHA Legal Counsel
Erin Foster, 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: January 2022 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Otis seconded the motion to approve the January 2022 Regular Board Meeting minutes. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, and Commissioner Otis voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

3. Director's Report and Board Approval Requests

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

Mr. Burr would like to I would like to



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 the pandemic! They really are doing a remarkable job! Kudos to the maintenance staff who came in to remove snow and salt walkways during our last storm, especially since we were closed.

Mr. Burr shared RHA continues to monitor and adhere to new Federal, State, and Local regulations, recommendations, and Executive Orders related to the pandemic as we receive them. Bob and staff continue to use the new sanitizing PURUS system following a schedule for our sites. Visitor restrictions have been relaxed somewhat, but masks are required to be worn indoors when in any common space for all staff, residents, and visitors. Community rooms have been closed, locked, and residents notified. The Executive Team monitors current conditions daily and meets weekly to review discuss our processes.

Mr. Burr shared RHA mold remediation grant under the Housing-Related Hazards Capital Fund Program in the amount of **\$896,649** is moving forward, and the priority sites are Holland Townhouses and Bay-Zimmer to start.

Mr. Burr shared that our 117 Emergency Housing Vouchers by HUD as a result of the RESCUE Plan are being issued in accordance with the process we developed with the Continuum of Care. All EHV's have been issued, and we have housed 26 people so far. The RHA team has done a great job implementing and continues to assist those looking for units.

Mr. Burr shared that our Community Choice Demonstration RHA Team is working very hard on this with the HUD team. The RHA Team issued an RFP for a community partner for the demonstration and will make a selection very soon. We will continue to update at the Section 8 Committee meeting.

Mr. Burr reported that Trillium's COVID testing/Primary Care services for our residents continued with January's schedule moving along. Todd and I are meeting with Trillium on 1/21/22 to discuss strategies and opportunities moving forward. We will be continuing our partnership and expanding services where we can.

Mr. Burr reported that Staff continues to be involved in community projects and report on them in their Board reports. RMAPI Housing Committee, which will now be a Housing Working Group which, will focus on our community's full housing system, City FEC Program Initiative, Connected Communities Housing Committee, Private Sector Rental Market Study, RUBI, 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 Our Strategic Planning Team continues to meet bi-weekly with our consultant, Bronner Group. We are currently working to fine-tune our goals and strategies. The team has been very busy! Thank you to our Commissioners for their involvement.

Mr. Burr reported that as a follow-up to the 21-Day Racial Equity Challenge, Dr. Archie from the City provided senior Staff and Board training. Training for remaining Staff is complete. The senior staff and Board will reconvene next, and Shawanna is scheduling a follow-up meeting with Dr. Archie.

Mr. Burr shared that he has been asked by Mayor Evans to participate on his Quality Housing Task Force, and I attended the press conference on 2/15/22. The team members who were present, met with the Mayor, and he gave his vision on what he would like the Taskforce to accomplish. I am very excited to be part of this. I continue to participate on the North Inner Loop Planning project, which is also moving forward.

Mr. Burr shares that he continues to participate on the North Inner Loop Planning project, which is also moving forward.

Mr. Burr share that Melissa, Hank, and I participated on the City Reparations RUBI committee and collaborating on the impact of homeownership and other services we provide here at RHA. The draft recommendations were presented to City Council, and they approved moving forward. We are awaiting "next steps".

Mr. Burr share a NYSPHADA Update: The Legislative Committee continues to work hard on advocating at the State level for funding for PHA's, especially upstate. I forwarded some information to you regarding additional Emergency Housing Assistance Funds, and we are advocating for PHA's to be moved up on the priority list. RHA's public housing arrears have exceeded \$490K! Staff continue to work 1:1 with residents and provide options for becoming current with their rent. I also met with Senator Jeremy Cooney coming up to discuss RHA's successes and challenges, along with strategies around bringing the Boy Scout opportunities back to our public housing residents. A follow-up meeting was held on 2/10/22 with the Scouts, and we will be moving that forward. The Spring Conference was announced, and Diana sent the information out to the Commissioners.

Mr. Burr share:

Fiscal Year 22 Appropriations and Build Back Better

Members of Congress are making crucial decisions about what to include in the overdue appropriations bill for fiscal year (FY) 2022 and the scaled-back "Build Back Better Act." Both bills present opportunities to significantly expand affordable housing resources for households with the lowest incomes.

Leadership will make key decisions on the FY22 appropriations bill soon. The bill presents Congress with an immediate opportunity to make significant investments in affordable housing, including by expanding the Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs) program to an additional 125,000 households with low incomes.

The Build Back Better Act proposes an historic \$150 billion investment in affordable housing, including significant funding for NLIHC's top priorities: \$25 billion to expand rental assistance to an additional 300,000 households; \$65 billion to preserve public housing for the nation's almost 2 million public housing residents; and \$15 billion for the national Housing Trust Fund to construct, preserve, and operate over 150,000 new units of affordable, accessible housing for households with the lowest incomes. If enacted, these provisions would be the largest single investment in our history in quality, affordable, accessible homes for the country's lowest-income people.

We cannot let Congress pass up these opportunities! Please contact your senators and representatives today and urge them to:

1. Quickly enact an FY22 spending bill with the highest possible funding for affordable housing and community development programs, including the expansion of HCVs to an additional 125,000 households.
2. Ensure critical housing resources remain in any budget reconciliation bill.

Background

Members of Congress are working to enact an overdue FY22 appropriations bill. Appropriations leaders in the House and Senate announced on February 9 they had reached a bipartisan agreement on a "framework" for the spending package, but decisions are still being made about how to divvy up funding among the 12 appropriations subcommittees. The House appropriations subcommittee bill includes a significant expansion of the HCV program to an additional 125,000 households and would provide an additional \$7 billion for HUD programs over FY21 enacted levels. The Senate appropriations subcommittee bill would provide almost \$1 billion less to HUD and would not include an HCV expansion.

It is critical that advocates continue to urge members of Congress to protect and advance the historic affordable housing investments in the Build Back Better Act and the FY22 appropriations bill. As homelessness increases and millions of the lowest-income renters struggle to stay housed, we cannot let Congress miss these opportunities.

Take Action!

- Contact your members of Congress and urge them to quickly enact a final FY22 spending package with the highest possible funding for affordable housing and community development programs and to include the House's proposal to expand Housing Choice Vouchers.

Your members of Congress need to hear from you about why investments in rental assistance, public housing, and the Housing Trust Fund are critical to your community and why they must remain in any budget reconciliation package. Breaking housing investments off into a separate bill is unacceptable

b. Board Action Requests

- i. Marshal Services - Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with Joseph Polizzi, City Marshal. for \$24,000.00 (5th and final renewal – Public Housing

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

- ii. Renewal of Legal Services – Action Item was withdrawn due to the Attorney is retiring March 31, 2022 – Public Housing

- iii. Proposed ACOP Language Change for Animal/Pet Policy - Authorized the Executive Director to approve the change in the RHA ACOP – Public Housing

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

- iv. Contingency increase for 596 Glenwood Ave Rehabilitation Project – Authorized the Executive Director to approve the award of the contract to Fleetwood Accessibility Services for \$132,481.00 – Capital Projects

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Otis seconded the motion to approve this request, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Otis voted yes, and Commissioner Cummings voted no. The motion passed four to one.

- v. Bulk Bid Environmental/Engineering Services – Capital Projects

- a. Environmental Assessment, Design and Remediation Consulting Services - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to BE3 Corp. for \$300,000.00 or four years of service (whichever comes first)

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

- b. Environmental Assessment, Design and Remediation Consulting Services - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to LaBella Associates for \$300,000.00 or four years of service (whichever comes first)

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

- c. Environmental Assessment, Design and Remediation Consulting Services - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to LiRo Engineers, Inc. for \$300,000.00 or four years of service (whichever comes first)

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

- vi. EJP Consulting Group, LLC renewal – Authorized the Executive Director to approve the final renewal for \$100,000.00 – Executive

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

- vii. Audit Services – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with EFPR Group, LLP for \$36,000.00 (1st renewal of 4) – Capital Projects

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

- viii. 2022 Employee Medical Insurance (Retirees <65 yrs.) – Authorized the Executive Director to approve the request for the purchase of Aetna/Brown & Brown for \$75,000.00 – Human Resources

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve this request. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Bascoe, Commissioner Rubin, and Commissioner Otis 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

Annual Performance Evaluations- February 2022

Management is currently working on Annual Performance Evaluations, which are automated through our HRIS.

Wellness Initiatives- February 2022

Partnered with MVP to provide employees with virtual and in-person wellbeing programs.

The Wellness Committee rolled out their first monthly wellness newsletter to staff, focusing on American Heart month and recognizing an employee for being a healthy hero.

Goal VI: Improve Internal and External communication

Recruitment Strategies

Monroe Community College Job Fair – February 17, 2022

B.O.O.K.B.A.G.S. Express Community Connecting Fair – February 22, 2022

Employee Referral Program- Ongoing

5. Compliance, Inclusion, and Diversity Officer's Report Cynthia Herriott

Inclusion

- COVID Strategy – We continue to work with community partners to facilitate addressing resident needs around vaccinations, testing and education. The COVID testing and primary care services continue at most of RHA's senior sites with Trillium's mobile unit. A regular schedule is established and posted at our sites. We still need to schedule a follow-up meeting with Trillium to discuss new strategies, and Todd Bullard is working on this. Mandatory mask-wearing in all common areas for everyone is in place.
- The City and County continue to issue funds to assist tenants who are behind in their rent; EPPI-2.0 Program. NYS is also issuing funds through the ERAP Program. The City/County is doing much better than the rest of the state in administering these funds. We have notified residents on how to apply for the funds. Staff continues to follow up with phone calls to each resident who is 90 days past due with their rent to offer assistance. Staff is also working 1:1 with residents to assist with applying for the emergency rental relief funds. Kudos to those staff members involved.
- Nutrition Lessons- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee is partnering with Cornell Cooperative Extension to provide Nutrition Lessons to our residents and staff.
- Language Access Plan- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee is working on a Language Access Plan to adopt new procedures and to work with community organizations and Language Access Liaisons to identify opportunities to enhance services provided to LEP residents/participants

Compliance

○ **Fraud Investigations**

- **Leasing Operations:** Repayment agreement payment totals YTD as of January 2022, \$5,459.00 collected (with a total of \$5,459.00 collected in January 2022). A total of \$410,683.60 has been collected to date
- **Public Housing:** Repayment agreement payment totals YTD as of January 2022, \$5,459.00 collected (with a total of \$5,459.00 collected in January 2022). A total of \$410,683.60 has been collected to date

○ **Termination Hearings**

- **Leasing Operations** – 21 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 11 upheld (2 due to “No Show”), zero overturned, five re-instated, three adjourned & zero withdrawn.
- **Public Housing** – 1 Participant Grievance Hearings Scheduled: zero withdrawn; zero upheld; zero overturned, zero re-instated & 1 adjourned.

Operations

○ **Case Management** –

- Program Violation Referrals Outstanding – 1,346 (Previously 1,326)– which is a total to date since 2015. Due to staffing shortages, program violation referrals will be temporarily on hold. Compliance is working with HR to fill the positions.

○ **Rochester Housing Charities** – Commissioner Cummings continues to serve as RHA’s ex-officio representative on the RHC Board of Directors. Deputy Executive Director, Cynthia Herriott, will return as an RHA representative.

- We continue to work on the RHC special project but have been gradually transitioning duties over to the new Executive Director (ED).
- Board member recruitment for RHC is ongoing, and staff are working on a Board training.
- The IED will work with the ED to schedule a retreat with both the Rochester Housing Authority and Rochester Housing Charities once Board members are in place.

○ **Audit and Review** – The IED works closely with Legal Counsel to address areas in need of assessment within RHA. *(Executive Session for any requested reporting)*

- Compliance Audits are currently on hold until vacant positions are filled.
- Prior audit of Leasing Ops admin fees resulted in training for Staff to be scheduled.

- **Public Safety** – Please see the Activity Chart for Public Safety.
- **Current Actions:**
 - Security Camera Project – Evhen Tupis is leading this initiative. Video Safety has been combined with Electronic Access Control (a.k.a. “Key Cards”) since both systems need to be modernized. IT is getting the Project Management firm under contract and will be scheduling a “Team” meeting soon. While the scope will be Authority-wide, it will start with Glenwood Gardens and Hudson Ridge Towers.
 - Glenwood Gardens Security Issue: AP Security continues to monitor the activity and provide updates and feedback. Capital Projects is working with City Planning on the perimeter fencing/gate project. The large dumpster from the Santee Street parking lot has been replaced, and RHA is working with a contractor to fence it in.
 - A resident at Hudson Ridge Tower threatened a staff member with a knife. Mr. Santoro’s office advised that RHA will have to re-file the eviction paperwork for this tenant. Public Housing has followed up and is moving forward with the eviction.
 - Mask Violations – Due to the updated CDC guidelines pertaining to Covid-19, Compliance has resumed mailing violation letters to residents that do not comply with the restricted protocols.

6. **Finance**

Sinclair Carrington

Mr. Carrington reported the monthly Finance Report, the actual vs. budgeted figures, and variances for year-to-date through December 30, 2021, for the COCC, Public Housing, and Section 8 income and expenses.

7. **Public Housing Report**

Harolda Wilcox

Public Housing Activities:

- ACOP CHANGES/UPDATES: Respectfully submitting the Pet/Animal Policy and No Trespass Policy.
- Update of Chapter 16 Repayment Policy and Part I: The Application Process in March 2022.
- In partnership with Trillium Health, RHA hosted a booster clinic on Friday, January 28, 2022, with a total of 42 residents receiving their boosters. Trillium had Fizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson boosters available. Trillium also gave away \$25.00 Walmart cards to those that received the booster vaccination.

Public Housing Matters:

Staffing

- We still have open positions in Public Housing currently. With the number of vacancies and the length of the vacancies, it continues to take a toll on the current team members. Currently, available team member positions are listed below:
 - South Zone: One Housing Specialist vacated on 10/30/2020 -**submitted to HR – still waiting for an eligible applicant-have a Housing Specialist split between two zones to assist with the workload -**
 - Scattered Sites: One Housing Specialist: vacated 10/07/20 **posted-- still waiting for an eligible applicant**, One Clerk: vacated 07/01/20 **submitted to HR-- still waiting for a qualified applicant**, BMS: vacated 04/15/2019-- **still waiting for an eligible applicant**, Property Manager: vacated 6/18/2021 **posted** waiting for qualified.
 - North Zone – vacated 10/4/21 **filled – New team member started on 1/10/22**
 - APC: One Housing Specialists – left on 2/7/20 and 7/31/20 – **still waiting for an eligible applicant**

The **TEAM** continues to do an **EXCELLENT** job of keeping things moving.

- The Property Managers walk their sites and regularly meet with the maintenance staff to address issues.
- In partnership with Trillium Health, RHA hosted a booster clinic on Friday, January 28, 2022, with a total of 42 residents and employees receiving their boosters. Trillium had Fizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson boosters available. Trillium also gave away \$25.00 Walmart cards to those that received the booster vaccination.
- Property Management and Maintenance Staff are working very well with Capital Projects staff on our current projects and those in the pipeline.

HUD Waiver Update:

- Waiver #33 Community Service & Self Sufficiency Requirement: 1 Total (Expires 12/31/2021) **Extended to April 30, 2022, per notice PIH 20214(HA)**
The Public Housing Team reported these numbers, not Resident Services

COVID Matters:

- I am working with the Interim Chief of Maintenance to address snow removal efficiently.
- Building Security – RHA visitor restrictions are still in place, with visitation hours are from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm. Residents and visitors are required to wear masks when outside of their units. Everyone is encouraged to social distance. Resident notices have been delivered, reminding of current restrictions and safe practices.
- Residents – Partnership with Foodlink is still providing food to those seniors in need.
- Disinfection of the main lobby areas, elevators, door handles are performed in-house with the Purus system.
- Community rooms are closed until further notice.
- Offices continue to receive residents by appointment only. Residents will always need to wear facial coverings for scheduled appointments.

RENT ARREARS

- The NYS Eviction Moratorium has expired on January 15, 2022. RHA will begin to charge late fees beginning February 10, 2022.
- The arrears committee has determined that another letter will go out to residents to attempt to get those that owe rent into repayment agreements which are more than 60+ days behind in their rent and owe more than \$6,000.00.
- To avoid eviction and to assist residents in becoming current with rental arrears, the team will have the resident sign a repayment agreement along with applying for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).
- RHA has experienced a substantial increase in vacancies due to residents either not reporting their move out (skipping out) or last-minute reporting to the team while owing back rent. These move-outs have affected our vacancy rates and rental arrears substantially. Move-outs in the last 60 days have increased from 22 to 53.
- RHA Public Housing department Received \$9,800.00 in EPPI 2.0 monies for January 2022.
- **In December 2021, the total delinquent rent amount owed was \$417,541.36. As of 1/24/22 total outstanding rent amount due is \$499,385.63, which is an increase of \$81,844.27.**

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- 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).

SECURITY MATTERS:

- Glenwood Gardens Security Issue: **This detail has ended for now due to the weather changing, and the site has been quiet.**
- AP Security will monitor the activity and provide updates and feedback to the Public Housing Director.
- Capital Projects is working with City Planning on the perimeter fencing/gate project at Glenwood Gardens. **Still awaiting, in process, and will provide further updates as they become available.**
- Attempted break-in to Management office. A hole cut through the city fence, and they tried to break into the garage. **The camera to be installed is not the ring but will be like our current system with viewing in the office. A contractor has been secured, awaiting wiring to be completed in-house by Electrical Team. Still in process and will provide further updates as they become available. The camera is ordered, but no ETA on delivery due to supply chain disarray.**
- The resident at Hudson Ridge Tower threatened a staff member with a knife. The resident has officially been served. We are performing a holdover to court because the resident hasn't evicted the unit. We have a scheduled court date of 6/28/2021. The resident has agreed to move out of the unit on or before 9/30/21. The resident understands that rent still must be paid until they move out of the unit. The resident, as of 9/3/2021, hasn't moved out of the unit. The resident has not moved out yet. Once 9/30/21 arrives, if the resident has not moved, will have Marshal

serve notice. Informed by Attorney Ernie Santoro that the 120 days has not expired, and RHA must wait until 10/26/2021 before RHA can move to evict. I was informed by RHA's Attorney's office on October 27, 2021, that the courts withdrew the motion.

- Laura called the court on 10/27/21 and submitted a motion to the presiding Judge to inform them that the resident had not complied with the agreed stipulations. The Judge has not responded to our request. We are trying to get the name of the Judge for Commissioner Edwards. (Still awaiting a response from Attorney's office for Judge's name). I received an email from Team member Celeste Langston that the resident has secured a place. **The resident was still in the unit, and the resident stated that the unit he was moving to fell through. I will continue to email the Attorney for information on when a Judge will be assigned. Updated on January 4, 2022, there has been some confusion with assigning Judges. Once Laura has a date, she will let us know. Laura emphasized that it may be altogether rejected due to the matter previously being dismissed. Finally, I received a response from the courts, and the case was dismissed, and RHA had to start all over with the eviction process. I have issued a Lease Termination for February 28, 2022, and the Marshal will serve the resident. New Termination letter sent to resident to start the eviction process again.**
- Eviction Letter sent to the resident at William Warfield due to threatening maintenance staff as they tried to make repairs. RHA is currently waiting for a court date.
- RHA will send an eviction letter to the resident at one of RHA's Scattered sites, where the resident's son threatened a maintenance team member while attempting to make repairs at the unit.
- Currently investigating a resident at HRT who has been renting an RHA unit out to a couple and staying with his wife on the 4th floor.

Application Processing Center:

Waiting List Management:

- APC continues to pull from the waiting lists monthly.
 - After reviewing the status of the Public Housing Studio Waitlist, I recommend that the studio waitlist be closed, effective February 15, 2022. Studio applicants can expect to wait at least 29 months before coming to the top of the waiting list. HUD recommends 12 months; RHA policy is 24 months.

Online Applications:

- APC continues to accept online applications for studio apartments only with no issues.
- APC Manager met with MRI for Waitlist Check and Assistance Connect – Applicant Portal Demo.
 - A follow-up meeting was held to see another waitlist software option to address/manage bedroom-specific waitlists.

- The PH Director will discuss how RHA will implement this software with Leasing Operations.

Unit Offers:

- APC Manager is extending offers to 'ready drawer' applicants to fill vacancies. This process is slower than desired because the manager has absorbed most of

the responsibilities from the staff vacancy in APC, reduced staff hours, and extension of applicant's response time due to covid.

- Current applications in Screening and Intake Phase as of 1/31/22.

Currently being screened - 29 applications

- Studio/1 bedroom – 18 applications
- 2+ bedrooms – 11 applications

Currently going thru intake (w/Intake Specialist): 43

- studio/1-bedroom – 13 applications
- 2+ bedrooms – 20 applications

Staffing

- Currently, there is one **vacant position** in APC –Housing Specialist.
- **As of 2/1/22 - No interviews are currently scheduled at this time.**

8. Maintenance Report

Robert Croston

○ **Vacant Unit Report**

The Maintenance Department is working hard to keep up with the number of new vacancies. With the moratorium being lifted, we are seeing a higher number of skip outs and expect the numbers to rise once evictions startup. Maintenance will continue to make rehabs a high priority to provide Public Housing units to rent out for our residents and the public while generating income for RHA.

○ **Staffing Update**

We lost one more employee in the Maintenance but had two new interviews, which look promising, and we expect to hold second interviews with those candidates soon.

○ **Signage Project - schedule**

- We expect to use the model provided by the consulting firm to convert four sites to the new signage once the details have been agreed upon. Danforth Towers East and West, Lena Gantt, William Warfield, and Bronson Ct. We would then expand this project to update all sites signage.

○ **Enterprise Lease Vehicle Program**

- We are waiting for Enterprise to update us on the cost and availability to upgrade the fleet. With the shortage on new vehicles, we are hopeful there will be enough time from when the costs are announced and they begin taking orders. That we can bring to the board our plans for exchanging out our older vehicles for new.
- Transponders for all RHA vehicles have all been updated to 5G.

- **City Service Contract**
 - Maintenance has continued the contract with the City of Rochester to service and provide fuel for all RHA vehicles and equipment. This is the 4th year of a 5-year agreement with the City of Rochester for these services.

9. **Leasing Operations Report (Section 8)**

Cynthia Herriott

Interim Deputy Executive Director Herriott, Leasing Operations Department, shared utilization and funding information with the Board of Commissioners.

Leasing Operations Matters:

1. The Administrative Plan language changes have been approved. Staff is working on implementing the changes. Robocall will be used to notify participants and landlords of the changes that affect them.
2. Currently, we have 2,139 active 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 88.88% utilization of vouchers and 100.00% utilization of funds. Leasing Operations Department has a Leasing Plan for 2022 to fully maximize HUD funding for Housing Assistance Payments. From 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021, we issued 687 HCV Vouchers. Staff continues working overtime, and we are using a remote 3rd party vendor to issue 200 vouchers. With a total CY 2021 HAP expense of \$58,652,889, if not for the CARES Act funding, RHA's program utilization rate would have been 97.76%, compared to the 95.85% as reported to the Board.
4. The monthly inspection goal is 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 757 inspections for the month of January.

Care Packages

The Food Link Care Package deliveries are completed. Additional deliveries are being made for participants who reported not receiving their Care Packages.

Overall, participants were very surprised and happy about receiving a Care Package. Many expressed their gratitude and wanted to say thank you to everyone at RHA and to know how much they appreciate that we think of them. Great teamwork here!!

HUD Community Choice Demonstration (formerly Mobility Demonstration)

As previously reported, RHA was one of nine (9) PHA's selected to join the HUD's HCV Mobility Demonstration Program. The program is now known as Community Choice Demonstration. Briefly, this is a 6-year demonstration program designed to increase participation for voucher families with children with better access to low-poverty neighborhoods and other areas of opportunity with high-performing schools and other strong community resources. HUD will conduct regular and rigorous randomized trials and experiments to evaluate program impacts. The first year is a planning and pilot year. The RHA Mobility Team participated in a learning session held by Stefanie Deluca of Johns Hopkins University on October 6th to learn about the research data from previous mobility demonstrations and what families found beneficial about the program.

The RHA Mobility Team has submitted the RFP again, seeking partnership with an agency who will provide services to assist our families. RHA has met with consultant agency FirstPIC on a weekly basis to continue discussing processes and mitigating any barriers. The goal is to complete implementation so that we are ready for the April 1st, 2022, program implementation date.

HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers

EHV vouchers are moving along!

As of 01/31/2022, out of 117 EHV vouchers authorized:

- 102 moving papers have been issued,
- 26 applicants have been housed.

The EHV Manager has been working with the local CoC and other housing authorities and has statistics on the status of EHV lease-ups. These reviews indicate that RHA is working at a similar pace as other public housing agencies.

The Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Chapter of the RHA Administrative Plan was approved by the Board on 9/22/21 and has been added to the HCV Administrative Plan.

Training

The Leasing Operations team will be developing a training schedule for Calendar Year 2022, in coordination with Human Resources. Topics include Rent Calculations, HCV Program Management, Effective Use of HUD's Two-Year Tool to maximize voucher utilization, Reasonable Accommodations, Personal and Professional Development such as effective communication with participants and co-workers.

10. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Report

Melissa Berrien

Participant Highlights

We have 247 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:

- Ms. Marshall entered the FSS program on December 1st, 2015, with an employment goal. Ms. Marshall's income increased 254% percent, and she is no longer receiving section 8 assistance. Ms. Marshall is a successful graduate of the FSS program and entitled to receive \$4352.00 in escrow savings.

Section 3

- Monthly Report contains suggested updates for your approval. Highlighted sections are suggested changes.
- We currently have 21 businesses on the RHA Section 3 Registry

Agency Collaborations

- Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) offers free financial counseling, which focuses on increasing savings, reducing debt, and increasing access to safe and affordable banking products.
 - 2021 Stats
 - 124 clients
 - 341 counseling sessions
 - \$83,143 debt reduction
 - \$104,457 increased savings
 - FEC awarded 150K to assist RHA families, of which 50 new homeowners eligible for 1k grant. The project was submitted to council on 1/27/22 in hopes to get on the February Agenda for approval.
- 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
 - Calculator development and Pilot agency selection underway
- 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.
- The Leasing Operations department is distributing care packages to 3000 senior and disable participants. Food link procured and is delivering boxes from September through December.
 - Foodlink deliveries completed on 1/6/2022
 - Assessing leftover quantity to distribute to those who reported they did not receive their box
- RMAPI Housing Subcommittee – Collaborative initiative focused on making housing more accessible, affordable, and equitable in our community.
 - Reviewing Monroe Housing Market Study to determine committee focus
- Closing the Gaps 6 city cohort (Albuquerque, NM; Austin, TX; Memphis, TN; Minneapolis, MN; Rochester, NY; and St. Paul, MN) is a one-year initiative that brings together leaders from cities across the country who are committed to imagining what an anti-racist society might look like and playing an important role in building it through the transformation of government policies, practices, and operations.
- Jordan Health Community Engagement Committee - Understanding how we as community organizations can better serve one another and our community in hopes of linking various community organization (churches, service centers, recreation centers, neighborhood organizations) and them having a stronger, visible presence in the community.

Homeownership

- Mr. Diaz closed on his home at 479 Glide Street on December 30th.
- Ms. Smith closed on her home at 11 Alonzo Street on January 25th.
- We have 3 families with anticipated closings and 24 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 2/9/2022 There were two follow-up items from the previous meeting, and both are now completed.
- We had two action items for this meeting which were presented, questions asked and answered, and agreed to move forward to the Board meeting for approval.
- We discussed the status of our current projects by having staff give updates and review progress pictures:
 1. 596 Glenwood Rehab – project underway, on schedule, and 20% complete.
 2. Kennedy Tower Hallway Rehabilitation – project is 82% complete and behind schedule due to COVID and material delays.
 3. 117 William Warfield Dr. Townhouse Alterations – project is 95% complete and behind schedule due to material delays.
 4. 43-47 Bronson Ct. Townhouse Alterations – project is 90% complete and behind schedule due to material delays.
 5. Scattered Site Porch Replacement P-7 – 99% complete and on schedule.
 6. Scattered Site Porch Replacement P-8 – 95% complete and on schedule.
 7. Danforth Towers East & West Façade Repair – project is 3% complete and on schedule – project on hold until Spring.
 8. Kennedy Tower Steam Boiler Replacement – 100% complete.
 9. Lena Gantt Site Lighting Upgrades – 98% complete and on schedule.
- We continue to work with our internal team and our 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. NEPA reviews and RAD Physical Conditions Assessments and Environmental testing on the identified PH properties have been completed. Financing plans are being worked on. We have reviewed the RFP responses for the PNA's and Environmental testing and are getting contracts in place. We are also prioritizing properties, starting with our Section 32 Homeownership candidate pipeline. We will be working with property management and maintenance on creating a schedule and then communicating with residents.
- Staff continue to ensure that contractors are following RHA and NYS COVID-19 Safety Guidelines that have been put in place. We are adjusting accordingly based on current conditions.
- We currently have one RFP under review and one project out to bid.
- Our MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report was presented and will continue to be updated each month. Two additional contractors have been added.
- The status of our current CFP Budgets as of December 31st are: 501.18 budget is 100% obligated and 97% Expended - 501.19 is 99% obligated and 83% expended, and 501.20 is 26% Obligated and 10% Expended. RHF Funds grants as of December 31st are: 502.13 is 100% obligated and 100% expended, and 502.14 is 63% obligated and 63% expended. We are using these funds to cover eligible RAD project costs.
- We then discussed our A/E status report, and no issues are present.

Project Planning

- Our Project Planning meeting followed the Committee meeting, and 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 being awarded our 9% tax credit application!! We are now communicating regularly with HUD on the RAD conversion and the City on the coordination between agencies as the project moves forward. A resident meeting is also in the works, but we may need to conduct it virtually, given the current pandemic conditions. We have a meeting scheduled with NYS HCR on 2/28.
- Our next RAD project will be Parliament/Luther and we are working with our development team. PCNA's and environmental testing are complete and final reports issued. Design plans for renovation and redevelopment are being finalized by our A/E and environmental firms. Weekly meetings continue.
- Our Glenwood-Fernwood development project is moving along, and we are combining it with the RAD project as a more competitive LIHTC application. Currently, we are envisioning 2 phases but now may have to consider one very large project in order to get enough funding sources to cover the costs. We have met with the City's development team and other departments to review the proposed plans, which have been favorable. We continue to fine-tune the design to be ready for the next LIHTC RFP. We held two resident meetings at Glenwood that were well attended and will schedule the next one when we have more definitive answers.
- Atlantic Townhouses Site Upgrades (Design Phase)
 - The project architect continues the final stages of completing bid-ready documents of this project. We plan on putting the project out to public bid soon for a summer 2022 start.
- Lexington Court Interior and Common Area Upgrades (planning Phase)
 - The project architect is working on the schematic design documents for this project. The essential upgrades will include window refurbishment to all windows in all seven buildings, common area light fixture replacement, interior apartment light replacement, rangehood, and bathroom exhaust replacement. Replacement of the sites intercom system on all seven buildings, and possible changes to the stair railing systems for code compliance.
- Scattered Site Parking Lot Project (Design Phase)
 - RHA has hired LiRo Engineers to create bid ready construction documents for parking lot replacements and concrete sidewalk work at seven of RHA's scattered sites.
- Bronson Court Site Upgrades – the architect is moving forward with Phase I, which is roof replacement. Harold is working on the HVAC upgrades, and both will go out to bid soon. Phase II will include new siding, porches, and rear decks. Phase III will include landscaping, gazebo, picnic tables, grills, and site lighting. This multi-phased project will align with our Change the Face of Public Housing Initiative!
- Change the Face of Public Housing project at Bond/Hamilton is moving along, and once final site plan approval is received from the City, the architect will complete the bid documents. We are working with the residents to determine relocation needs for each. We are also working on the HUD SAC application, and resident relocation is

part of it. We are working with the City on the NEPA review, which is required to move forward with the HUD and City processes.

- Next steps for our Change the Face of Public Housing project at Edinburgh Street are the SAC application for demolition and the finals plans and specifications for bidding.
- We discussed the Holland Townhouse Site Improvement Project; the Traffic Control Board approved the plan. I've discussed this with the City on a possible right of way that will allow City-owned portion to become RHA property. More discussion with our City partners needs to take place, and the City team will be scheduled.
- Our seven Section 32 homeownership homes SAC application will be completed soon, but we did have one person drop off as unwilling to purchase for the price we approved. We've received 39 responses to a survey sent to our public housing single-family scattered-site residents to see who is interested in purchasing their home. Melissa's team is working with each resident to determine eligibility and a path forward for them. The plan is to create a pipeline of residents and units. We will be using NYSPOP funds to perform physical needs assessments on each home and determine what repairs we will make before ownership is transferred.
- We then reviewed the projects in the CFP Project Pipeline, which are all in various stages of planning and design. We will be starting the next Annual Plan process shortly, which will include meeting with the JWRC to gather input for the CFP 5-year Plan.

12. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Cummings: Wanted to thank the staff for all that they have done and continue to do since we are short-staffed. She also wanted to let them know that we have heard their concerns and that the Board is working on those concerns; thank you.

Commissioner Otis: no comment

Commissioner Rubin: He wants to echo what Commissioner Cummings stated also. He stated that the Board relays on Shawn and the other senior staff members to convey to the staff the Board's serious support of the staff. He doesn't know if there is a more visible way that as Commissioners interact, share, and show our collegial respect for staff members throughout the organization, but if there is something that would work, he is sure that most if not all the Commissioners would be willing to do it.

Shawn suggested a Thank You e-card that can be sent to all staff at RHA.

Commissioner Remarais: Wanted to echo Commissioner Cummings and Commissioner Rubin and is extremely grateful for all the hard work they do. Thank you to the maintenance staff that came in for the Snowstorm we had. Thank you to everyone for all your hard work and dedication at RHA.

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

Board Acting Chair Commissioner Remarais requested a motion to go into Executive Session for a legal and personnel matter. Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded a motion to go into Executive Session at 1:45 pm. Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Otis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion was passed four to zero.

Board Acting Chair Commissioner Remarais requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Bascoe moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 2:54 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Otis, Commissioner Bascoe, and Commissioner Rubin voted yes. The motion was passed five to zero.

- ix. MOA with the Union AFFCME Local 1635-F – Authorized the Executive Director to submit to City Council for approval the salary range adjustments for Bargaining Employees – Authority Wide

Comment from Mr. Bullard a formal Resolution will follow to affirm the vote, the resolution number will be 02.23.22.01

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

13. March Regular Board Meeting

The March Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Thursday, March 24, 2022**, at 12:00 pm.

There were no further items to come before the Board, a vote to end the January Regular Meeting Business was taken, Commissioner Otis moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded a motion to end the Board Meeting at 3:02 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Otis, Commissioner Bascoe, and Commissioner Rubin voted yes. The motion was passed five to zero.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board,
Executive Director