

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
October 25, 2023
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



October 25, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rosalie Remarais, Chairperson
Florine Cummings, Resident Commissioner, Vice Chair
Willie Otis, Commissioner
Robert Davis, Commissioner
Henry Rubin, Commissioner
James Water, Jr. Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Diana Colon
Robert Croston
Natasha Dicks
Pierre Dorancy
Julie Fox
Cynthia Herriott
Kimberly Huffman
Joyce Kinsey
Shawanna Lawrence
Daniel Long
Loretha J.
McCullough
Mariam Rodriguez –
Machuca
Evhen Tupis
Harolda Wilcox

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Todd Bullard, RHA Legal Counsel
Amy Blum, Tipping Point Communications

Commissioner Rosalie Remarais called the October 2023 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”

A resident from Glenwood Gardens came to express concerns about safety and security at that site.

2. Robert Davis Resident Commissioner was sworn in by Board Chairperson, Rosalie Remarais

3. **Approval of Minutes:**
**September 27, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes and September 28, 2023,
Special Board Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the September 2023 Annual and Regular Board Meeting Minutes Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Rubin, and Commissioner Waters, voted yes, Commissioner Davis abstained from voting. The motion passed four to one.

4. **Director's Report and Board Approval Requests**

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



Mr. Burr

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 long-lasting pandemic! They really continue to do a remarkable job day in and day out!

Mr. Burr gave kudos to the HR, Wellness Committee and Diversity & Inclusion Committee teams for all their continued hard work informing staff and planning and facilitating staff functions that build morale and brings us all together. Great work!!!

Mr. Burr shared our Community Choice Demonstration RHA Team continues to work diligently with families. We have made significant progress and I'm very proud of our dedicated team!

Mr. Burr wanted to continue to recognize the extra efforts of staff involved in community projects. Partners Ending Homelessness, RMAPI Housing Working Group which will focus on our community's full housing system, Closing the Gaps Six City Cohort, Jordan Health Community Engagement Committee, Boy Scouts, City FEC Program Initiative, Connected Communities Housing Committee, Guardian Ad Litem Program, Private Sector Rental Market Study Working Group, Eviction Response Team, Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning and Benefits Cliff 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 stated Our RMAPI Steering Committee met on 9/21 and reviewed some of the progress made and actively participated in a group exercise to review key messages and

talking points that the committee members will commit to present to their organizations and other. Stay tuned, as I will be sharing the finished “product” with you soon!

Mr. Burr share that the Development projects are moving forward with Federal St-SS construction/demo well under way! We are scheduled to have the first residents moving back to some of the scattered site homes in early December. Parliament-Fairfield is officially closed!! Thank you for your support and to all the staff members, legal counsel, development partners, City, State, who were integral in getting this project over the finish line! Our residents will be soon living in more modern, energy efficient homes with more accessible units and community space. Public housing staff continue to meet 1:1 with the residents who are moving to address their needs. We will be submitting a 9% LIHTC application by the deadline in November for Fernwood Phase I, despite the new challenges raised by HCR staff. Glenwood is moving along with finalizing design and environmental testing. We met with the residents and brought them up to speed in August and I will be meeting with them again in November.

Mr. Burr attended the NAHRO National Conference from 10/5 – 10/8. What a great conference! We had three staff members, Commissioner Waters, and three residents from Hudson Ridge Tower attend out of the 1900 + attendees. I can’t recall a conference where there was something I wanted to attend during every session and many times more than one. I was fun spending time with the RHA contingency.

Mr. Burr gave an update on NYSPHADA Update: The Legislative Committee has been very busy advocating at the State level for funding for PHA’s. We have met with the Commissioner of HCR and her team and several state legislators on the importance of budget line items that support PHA’s. We continue to push for more ERAP funds for upstate PHA’s as we all have significant arrears, capital improvement and gap funding for upstate PHA’s. We are lining up additional meetings.

Mr. Burr gave an update on:

HUD Announces \$212 Million Funding Opportunity to Expand Affordable Housing Options for Persons with Disabilities

Funding provides capital to produce new or rehabilitate existing housing along with project rental assistance to support very-low and extremely low income-persons with disabilities.

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Office of Multifamily Housing announced today that \$212 million in funding is available to expand the supply of affordable housing and supportive services for very-low and extremely-low-income persons with disabilities. The funding is available to participants in the Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program, which helps develop, subsidize, and provide supportive services for rental housing to meet the needs of this vulnerable population.

“Every American should have the ability to live in affordable housing that caters to their needs. Unfortunately, today, far too many housing options are inaccessible to those with disabilities – and those with the appropriate accommodations are often too expensive,” said **HUD Secretary Marcia L. Fudge**. “This announcement delivers serious progress,

making \$212 million available to expand housing supply and supportive services for low-income folks with disabilities.” Through the Section 811 Capital Advance/Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC) program, \$106 million in capital advances can be used for the development of new or rehabilitation of existing supportive housing, along with project rental subsidies to keep homes affordable. The Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) provides \$106 million to state housing and other agencies for project rental assistance to cover the difference between the tenants’ contributions toward rental payments and the HUD-approved rent for the property for eligible tenants with disabilities. “The goal is to provide people with disabilities the opportunity to live with dignity and independently within an integrated community that provides them with access to appropriate supportive services that they choose,” **said Ethan Handelman, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Multifamily Housing Programs.** “This funding is a small but important part of HUD’s overall commitment to meeting the housing needs of all communities.” For more information, read the funding notices for the Section 811 Capital Advance Program and Section 811 Project Rental Assistance. Applications must be submitted by February 8, 2024.

About the Section 811 Program

Section 811 allows persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible in the community by subsidizing rental housing which provides access to appropriate supportive services. The Section 811 Capital Advance Program aims to expand the supply of integrated affordable housing by providing Capital Advance funding for the development of permanent supportive rental housing for very-low-income (those earning 50 percent or less of the area median income) with disabilities who are 18 years of age or older and less than 62 years of age at entry. The program also provides project rental subsidies in the form of a Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC) to maintain ongoing affordability over at least the next forty years.

Mr. Burr explained that the primary purpose of the Section 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) Program is to identify, stimulate, and support innovative state-level strategies that will transform and increase housing for extremely low-income persons (those earning 30 percent or less of area median income) with disabilities while also making available appropriate support and services. HUD is seeking to support collaborations between State Housing and Health and Human Service/Medicaid Agencies that will result in or will increase access to affordable permanent supportive housing units – new and existing – with access to appropriate services.

b. Board Action Requests

- i. Remote Annual Certification Services - Authorized the Executive Director to approve additional purchase order to finish paying the last bill in the amount of \$36,288.00 – Leasing Operations.

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- ii. Mobility Servies– Authorized the Executive Director to renew agreement with The Housing Council in the amount of \$714,606.86 – Leasing Operations.

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- iii. Nights and Weekend – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with Catherine’s Home Improvement in the amount of \$75,000.00 – Maintenance. - TABLED

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Waters seconded the motion to approve the action item, after some conversation, Commissioner Rubin and Commissioner Waters **withdrew the motion to approve this item.** Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to table the action item. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- iv. FY 2023 4th Quarter Vacated Arrears Write-off – Authorized the Executive Director to in the amount of \$119,769.12 – Public Housing.

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- v. HR Works– Authorized the Executive Director to approve a Bulk Purchase Order in the amount of \$40,000.00 – Human Resources.

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- vi. Server Maintenance – Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to Entre Computers and Innovative Solutions in the amount of \$50,880.00 – Information Technology.

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- vii. Video Safety System – Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to Omni Security with 4 renewals of a term of 1-year, in the amount of \$ 59,770.00 – Public Housing.

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- viii. Temporary Employment Services – Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to Apple One, Clovity Inc., and RADgov, Inc. with 4 renewals of a term of 1-year, in the amount of \$ 200,000.00 – Authority Wide.

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

- ix. 1321 Lexington Demolition Under Abatement – Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to Durable Demolition, LLC, in the amount of \$ 34,632.00 – Local Works.

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Waters seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

5. **Human Resource Coordinator Report** **Shawanna Lawrence**

The Human Resource Department is dedicated to "Supporting our Employees to Enhance an Organizational Culture of Excellence." In October 2023, HR focused on critical activities such as recruitment, employee engagement, and creating a positive workplace environment.

Recruitment and New Hires:

- Welcomed a new Director of Human Resources in the Human Resources Department, who started on October 9, 2023.

Employee Promotions:

In recognition of outstanding performance and dedication, the following employees have been promoted within RHA:

Previous Position: Administrative Assistant

New Position: Compliance Coordinator:

Department: Compliance Department

Date of Promotion: October 9, 2023

Previous Position Sr. Human Resource Consultant

New Position: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Officer:

Department: Compliance Department

Date of Promotion: October 16, 2023

These promotions align with the Human Resources Department overarching strategic goal of promoting an organizational culture of excellence.

Recruitment Strategies:

- Online Presence: We increased our brand awareness on social media platforms to attract potential candidates.
- Employee Referral Program: Ongoing program to encourage current employees to refer candidates.

Employee Engagement Initiatives:

- We continue to prioritize the employee experience, focusing on creating a positive and engaging work environment.
- Training and Development: HR provided coaching sessions to four (4) managers/directors to enhance their leadership skills.

Upcoming Events:

Open Enrollment Event, the date and time of which are currently pending finalization. This event is an essential annual activity that provides our employees with crucial information about their benefit options and facilitates their enrollment in our employee benefits programs. The primary goals of open enrollment event are to educate employees about available benefit options, changes, and to promote employee engagement and participation in the enrollment process.

Demographic Information:

Ms. Lawrence provided the Board of Commissioner's with current demographic information for the Authority as of October 5, 2023. The breakdown of the demographic information for Employees and Managers in the following categories are: (1) the age of Employees, (2) Employees over 40, (3) Employees Self-Reported Ethnicity, and (4) Employees by gender.

Conclusion:

The HR Department remains committed to these critical areas and will continually address challenges and opportunities to align with the organization's goals and objectives.

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

Inclusion

- Guardian Ad Litem Program - C. Herriott is chairing the Monroe County Court Housing Court Subcommittee to implement a guardian protocol for participants with behavioral health issues. She is going to meet with the Rochester Police Department, Law NY, and Councilmember Patterson to further discuss this project.
- On-Site Mini Libraries- The Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee is in the early stages of developing the On-Site Mini Libraries – Reading Education Program for Public Housing residents. These books will promote diversity and inclusion as well as growth, literacy, and empowerment. A meeting took place on 8/9/22. Commissioners Cummings and Rubin are members.
- Hispanic Heritage Month: The Diversity and Inclusion Committee commemorated the month through a Hispanic Heritage Festival called "The Big Fiesta" which included a Mexican Taco Bar, games, piñata and informational data. We also had Hector Rodríguez, Contracts Unit Housing Specialist, speaking of the cultural impact being raised in a Hispanic household in the US.
- Italian American Heritage Month: The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will commemorate the Irish American heritage by a festival with traditional sweets and drinks, informational data, and fun activities.
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month: The Diversity and Inclusion sent out an informational email regarding the Domestic Violence Awareness Month and will have a "Purple Dress Day" to support the cause on October 19th.

Compliance

- **Fraud Investigations**
 - **Leasing Operations** Repayment Agreement payments total YTD as of September 2023, \$38,875.78 collected (with a total of \$3,727.00 collected in September 2023) A total of \$595,898.27 has been collected to date.
 - **Public Housing** Repayment agreement totals YTD for vacated arrears and collection loss as of September 2023, with \$6,490.97 collected (with a total of \$1,009.00 collected in September 2023). A total of \$62,338.63 was collected to date.
 - **RAD Parkside** Repayment agreement totals YTD for vacated arrears and collection loss as of September 2023, with \$565.00 collected (with a total of \$113.00 collected in September 2023). A total of \$565.00 was collected to date.
- **Termination Hearings:**
 - **Leasing Operations** – 6 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 0 Upheld; 0 No Show, 0 Overturned, 0 Reinstated, 5 Adjourned, 1 Withdrawn; 0 Pending Hearing Decision..
 - **Public Housing** – 0 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 0 Upheld; 0 No Show, 0 Overturned, 0 Reinstated, 0 Adjourned; 0 Withdrawn.

Operations

- **Case Management**
 - Program Violation Referrals Outstanding – 1,444 (Previously 1,449)– 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 (RHC) – Commissioner Florine Cummings and Deputy Executive Director, Cynthia Herriott serves as RHA’s ex-officio representative on the RHC Board of Directors.**
 - Both attend monthly board meetings.
 - Board member recruitment for RHC is ongoing and staff are working on Board training.
 - The DED 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.
 - RHC’s draft audit and budget have been provided to the board representatives.

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

- The Compliance Department regular rotation Audits are temporarily on hold until vacant positions are filled. The DED has conducted several small-scale audits.

○ **Public Safety** – Please note the attached Activity Chart for Public Safety.

- Public Safety works with the Rochester Police Department to develop strategies to address crime trends.
- There were several attempted break-ins to Glenwood Gardens. I am working with AP Security for them to pay special attention in that site.

7. **Finance**

Kimberly Huffman

Ms. Huffman share the actual vs. budget for the month of August 2023 for COCC, Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and the RAD Projects.

8. **Information Technology Report**

Evhen Tupis

RFQ: Video Safety – Glenwood Gardens – 41 Kestrel St., Rochester NY

Background: Trouble spots were identified by key stakeholders Jesse McCarthy, Bob Croston/Maintenance, and Daniel Long/Capital Projects and supported by impromptu interviews of various residents as we walked through the property. Multiple quotes were received, and evaluations are in-process.

- Authorization to proceed with award was presented at this meeting.
- Selected vendor believes they can start installation within 3-business weeks of receipt of Purchase Order and be complete in 60-days or less.

RFP: Video Safety System & Electronic Access Control – 18 sites

- RFP Timeline:
 - ~~Questions due on Friday, September 22~~
 - ~~Responses released by Tuesday, October 3~~
 - Modification: multiple potential proposers requested an extension, due to the overwhelming complexity of engaging sub-contractors who are not as responsive as desired. The date for delivery of proposals has been extended to December 1.

RFP: Tenmast Upgrade/Replacement

Background: Tenmast WinTen2+ is the software used to manage RHA's business operations including Finance, Maintenance, Public Housing, Leasing Operations, and Family Self Sufficiency, though all departments access it for data processing purposes.

RHA has reached the end of its 5-year agreements so an RFP for renewal/upgrade/replacement is in order.

- RFP's have been received and are being evaluated by the first-round committee now.
- Reminder: this is an enterprise-wide initiative that is not trivial. It will demand active participation by both the Lead Advocates and members of the department that they are associated with. Senior Staff are members of the Lead Advocate team, by default.

9. **Public Housing Report**

Harolda Wilcox

Public Housing Activities:

- On September 5, we attended a back-to-school event at Exploration Elementary School located at 1001 Lake Avenue. Backpacks were handed out with RHA Fact sheets, QR codes, and school supplies.
- RHA Public Housing was invited to the Henrietta Senior Fair on September 22, 2023. This was a great outreach opportunity to inform the community what RHA offers. The one feedback was that RHA does not have any units in the suburb. Glad we were invited to the table. QR codes for our studio apartments, and information about RHA senior sites and how to apply.
- Commissioners' elections were held at all the Public Management offices. I want to thank Resident Services team and our staff for participating and ensuring the commissioners elections ran smoothly.
- We met with the president and vice president of Kennedy Tower to discuss furniture options for their community room. We provided furniture selections, and the top three choices were submitted to their residents to vote and select. We are in the process of ordering the chairs for the community room.
- Laundry Room hours have been extended to Midnight.
- Lake Tower received their furniture and maintenance is in the process of setting it up.

Public Housing Matters:

The **TEAM** continues to do an **excellent** job of keeping things moving within the department.

RENT ARREARS

- RHA Public Housing department Received \$5,289.51 in EPPI2.0 monies for September 2023.
- As of September 2023, the total delinquent rent amount owed is \$617,367.70, which is an increase of \$21,061.05 for the of August.
 - 0 to 30 days -- \$177,566.81
 - 31 to60 days -- \$124.352.64

- 61 to 90 days – 8,879.48
- Over 90 days -- \$617,367.70
- Friendly reminder that RHA arrears are larger due to not taking partial payments from residents. This is due to the residents not paying their rent in full, which is not in accordance with RHA policies. Also, there are residents who have not paid their rent in two-plus years. These residents are in the process of court proceedings.
- RHA is sending all partial payments back to the resident with a letter of explanation as to why RHA is not accepting their payment.
- 5 - 30-day notices were sent to the City Marshal in September.
- We are still collaborating with residents to address arrears in lieu of court proceedings. As of September, RHA has entered into ninety-six repayment agreements year to date.
- As of September 30, 2023, the following is an update of the Public Housing zones repayment agreements:
 - North – Five residents are currently in lease termination status and four residents are in delinquent status.
 - South – Four residents are currently in lease termination status and four in delinquent status.
 - Central – Five resident is currently in lease termination status and four residents are in delinquent status.
 - Scattered Sites – Three residents are in lease termination and five in delinquent status.
- Parkside
 - 3 Vacant Units
 - 2 Units Ready to Lease 0
 - 2 Offers
- Parkside Arrears
 - \$ 64,275.56 outstanding rent
 - \$ \$ 8,668.00 0-30 days
 - \$ 6,227.56 31-60 days
 - \$ 3,979.00 61-90 days
 - \$ 45,401.00 over 90 days (represents six tenants)

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Staffing

- 4 positions open – Housing Specialist
- 4 positions open – Clerk

Application Processing Center: Waiting List Management:

Housing Specialists are still making unit offers to applicants for the promo high-rise offers.

- APC will begin pulling from the studio wait list to address the number of vacancies at DT and UT.

- As of August 2023, the Studio Wait List has been exhausted. The Studio Wait List is still open and applicants applying to this wait list will be immediately contacted to process their application.
- Next Studio Wait List Pull: 10/9/23 and 10/23/23.

Wait List Purge:

- Wait list purge was delayed due to massive wait list canvassing for RAD wait list. Last day for applicant to mail in their letter of interest is 10/2/23 – APC will accept any letters postmarked 10/2 up until 10/6/23.
- Starting 9/19/23, all wait lists except the Studio Wait List will be closed. APC will begin purging all of the 2 – 4-bedroom Wait Lists. This process will take around 60 days to complete. Once after the purge has been completed, I will assess each list to determine the wait time an applicant will experience. If the wait time is near/around 24 months, the wait list will remain closed. If the wait list is around 12-16 months, it will be reopened soon afterwards.

Current Department Operation Status:

- Sheila Rivera is now establishing an intake caseload in addition to managing wait lists, prequals and unit offers. She will be expected to maintain a caseload of 25 applicants. Lisa Colon has been temporarily assigned to assist Scattered Sites with catching up on Annual Recerts. Her caseload for APC will be monitored to ensure that while assisting Scattered Site, she is processing intakes in a timely manner.
- No updates to report as of 10/5/23.

Unit Offers:

- The APC Manager and designated staff continue to extend offers to ‘ready drawer’ applicants to fill vacancies. We are now establishing an approved 1-bedroom waiting list (ready drawer) for applicants to fill upcoming 1-bedroom vacancies.
- Current applications in Screening and Intake Phase as of 10/5/23:

Currently being screened - 7 applications*

- ❖ Studio - 1
- ❖ Regular 1-bdrm – 3
- ❖ High Rise 1-bdrm canvas - 0
- ❖ 2+ bedrooms – 3

Currently going through intake (w/Intake Specialists): 84 applications

- ❖ studio/1-bedroom – 57 applications
- ❖ 2+ bedrooms – 27 applications

Staffing

- 1 position open – Housing Specialist

Renovation projects

- **Fed/Scattered Site –**
 - As of 10/5/23 – All residents, except for the Section 32 resident and resident requiring a 504 unit, have received a final relocation unit offer, per the Relocation Plan.
 - As of 10/5/23 - NO OTHER UPDATES
- **Bond St. –** As of 5/2/23 - All families have been extended an offer. All have accepted their offers except 1 resident. Property Manager is currently addressing this issue.
 - As of October 5, 23 – no updates.
- **Luther Circle** -all residents have been assigned a unit to relocate to. APC is waiting on transfer paperwork/preferences from Property Manager and residents to officially add them to wait list and extend offer according to transfer policy and relocation plan.
 - APC is currently extending offers to residents with construction project start dates of 1/2024. All other residents with earlier construction project start dates have been extended a unit offer. Most of those residents have accepted their relocation unit and are either waiting for their stipend to move or moving date by moving company.
 - ❖ As of 10/5/23, no other updates.

10. Maintenance Report

Robert Croston

1. Vacant Unit Report

- The Maintenance Department continues to work on keeping up with the high number of vacant units. This is to prepare for the upcoming projects at Fairfield Village and Parliament Arms and the need to move residents out for renovation to those sites.

2. Site Beautification

- At Kennedy Tower we have a contractor in place to move the gazebo to the new concrete pad and are just waiting for them to schedule the move. With the hopes of having, it done before any seasonal weather change.
- We are updating some of the hallway colors with the direction from Public Housing at Hudson Ridge Towers. To continue the upgrades to the building after replacing the flooring and painting of the library.
- Maintenance has received in the floor planking for the offices and Kitchen at 321 Lake Tower and have scheduled a contractor to install in the coming weeks.
- We will be looking at finding some new wall coverings for the lobbies at DTE and DTW with direction from Public Housing. To try and update the looks of the buildings when you first walk in.

3. Preparing for Winter

- Maintenance has started preparing for the winter season. We are checking all of our winter equipment making sure it is ready for the season.
- We will be finishing up the lawn cutting at the end of October the lawn cutting for the year. Then we will have a contractor do a fall clean-up of the sites, once we feel the majority of the leaves have fallen to prevent any winter damage to the lawns and to give the sites a final clean-up for the year.

11. Leasing Operations Report (Section 8)

Pierre Dorancy

Leasing Operations Matters:

1. The Administrative Plan language changes have been approved. Staff have implemented the changes. Robocall was used to notify participants and landlords of the changes that affect them.
2. Currently, there are 1,009 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 83.48% utilization of vouchers and 96.39% utilization of funds. Leasing Operations Department has a Leasing Plan for 2023 to maximize HUD funding for Housing Assistance Payments. Staff continues to work overtime to issue vouchers and to maintain utilization.
4. The monthly inspection goal has been 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 864 inspections in September 2023.

HUD Community Choice Demonstration (formerly Mobility Demonstration)

As previously reported, RHA was one of nine (9) PHAs selected to join the HUD's HCV Mobility Demonstration Program. The program is now known as Community Choice Demonstration (CCD). 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.

As of the pilot start date of October 17, 2022, the Managers implementing the program have updated the RHA website with CCD information. Interested families can reach out to a dedicated phone line and email address to communicate interest in participation. The CCD email address is communitychoice@rochesterhousing.org and the phone line is

(585) 697-6210. The Leasing Operations staff have sent out nine (9) batches of letters of interest to qualifying families with recertifications from May 2023 through April 2024 were randomly selected and provided with program information. As of 2 – Leasing Operations Section 8 Meeting 04/19/2023 10/11/2023, one hundred sixty (160) families have been enrolled in the program of which eighty (80) have been randomly selected for mobility services. Three (3) applicant families from the HCV Waiting List have enrolled and one (1) was randomly assigned to receive services. CCD families continue to search for units throughout the Opportunity Areas and four (4) families have leased up in an Opportunity Areas. Two (2) CCD families have moved into a non-Opportunity Areas; fourteen (14) families renewed their lease and did not move.

HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers

As of 10/12/2023, out of 117 EHV vouchers authorized:

- 175 moving papers have been issued,
 - 120 applicants have been housed.
 - 9 applicants are searching for housing.
 - 2 applicants have moving papers submitted to Contracts Unit.
- No additional referral has been requested from the COC.

RHA continues to collaborate with the local CoC and consult with 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 policies of the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program were approved by the Board on 9/22/21 and are reflected in the RHA HCV Administrative Plan.

Additional Mainstream Voucher Awards

RHA has been awarded 25 additional Mainstream Vouchers to assist households that include a non-elderly person(s) with disabilities to lease up affordable units. This award includes extraordinary administrative funding to support administrative costs, including activities to support housing search and lease-up of eligible applicants. Fees can also be used for costs related to the retention, recruitment, and support of participating owners in the form of security deposits, signing bonuses, vacancy payments, and damage mitigation.

As of 10/12/2023, out of 25 new Mainstream Vouchers authorized, 21 applicants have been housed and 3 have submitted moving papers to RHA.

Training

The Leasing Operations team will continue to provide training for staff in Calendar Year 2023 in collaboration with the HR department. Topics include:

- Trainings on SEMAP, HOTMA and NSPIRE have been attended and scheduled.
- Rent Calculations & HCV Program Management.
- Effective Use of HUD's Two-Year Tool to maximize voucher utilization.

- Personal and Professional Development such as effective communication.

12. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Report

Melissa Berrien

Participant Highlights

We have 181 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:

- Ms. Tubbs entered the FSS program on September 1st, 2014, with employment and credit restoration goals. Ms. Tubbs sought and maintained employment with Rochester General increasing her income by 97,900%. Ms. Tubbs increased her credit score by 100s of points and completed her surgical tech program. Ms. Tubbs is a successful graduate and entitled to an estimated 5,173.20 in escrow savings.

Section 3

- Monthly Report – no updates

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.
 - 2022 Stats
 1. 93 clients
 2. 286 counseling sessions
 3. \$255,000 debt reduction
 4. \$111,000 increased savings
 - FEC awarded 150K to assist RHA families, of which 30 new homeowners are eligible for a 1k grant.
 - Project approved by City Council at February council meeting. The agreement was signed by Executive Director and to the mayor for signature on 3/4/22.
 - Executed Agreement received on 3/25/2022, Meeting to discuss payment issuance with Finance on 4/25/22.
 - Homeowner grants awarded to six participants.
 - Four additional grants were awarded in December.
 - FEC is requesting additional time to assist new homeowners as the original agreement ends February 2023

- City Council approved the extension of the HO grant project through September 30th of 2023. Amendment to Executive Director and Mayor for Signature. A signed extension was received on 4/5/2023.
- Program extened until September 2024 or until funds expended
- To date we have issued 17 homeownership grants.

- **RMAPI Housing Subcommittee Cochair** – Collaborative initiative focused on making housing more accessible, affordable, and equitable in our community.
 - Mission - Increase housing equity and access, improve housing stability, and close the wealth gap in Monroe County.
 - Areas of focus: Housing Navigation, Displacement/Transiency, reviewing list of budget priorities aligned with RMAPI’s housing policy.
 - The team is reviewing RMAPI’s state level housing policy to inform our local delegation at RMAPI’s legislative breakfast.
 - RMAPI presented their Policy Agenda to a delegation of local state representatives on 2/10/2023. Policy Priorities:
 1. Raise Income
 2. Invest in Families
 3. Decriminalize Poverty
 4. Reform Housing
 - RMAPI Housing Navigation – RMAPI is surveying participants, landlords, and experts to examine the navigation of our local housing systems and ways to make it easier.
 - The project has moved to the next phase of ideation after completing interviews with 56 renters, landlords, and field experts.
 - Next phase- the team is working on drafting “How Might We” statements incorporating the insights gathered from the interview process.
 - We are planning a prototyping session to review possible solutions and create a pilot around housing navigation.
 - Housing prototyping summit scheduled for 9/29.
 - Over 75 attendees from across our community, including tenants, landlords, multiple levels of government, housing agencies, community-based organizations, and more participated in the prototyping session. The Housing Working Group will be coming back together again soon to work through the seven prototypes.

- **Closing the Gaps** – This 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.
 - Closing the gaps seeks to improve homeownership and entrepreneurial outcomes for people of color. The proposed plan would add outreach dollars and incentives for young families to pursue homeownership.
 - Next steps: Create collaborative outreach materials, meet with Head Start staff, explore RHA/Landbank partnership.
 - The City of Rochester team is planning a site visit scheduled with the Living Cities team September 13-15.
 - Informative meeting held with Living Cities, City of Rochester staff, RMAPI and RHA staff and board on 9/13.
- **Housing Crisis Community Forum**
 - Attended August 16th meeting at City Hall which focused on code violations. No RHA issues discussed.
 - Met with Councilman Smith and RAHA on Monday August 28th with ED Burr and the Leasing Ops Assistant Director, Huertas. The discussion was primarily an overview of RHA programs.
- **Monroe County Housing Fair** – tabled at the housing fair on September 30th to promote landlord, homeownership, and rental program opportunities.
- **Homeownership**
 - Ms. Joiner closed on her home at Woodbine Avenue on August 31st.
 - Ms. Alomar closed on her home at Northeast Avenue on September 26th.
 - We have four families with anticipated closings and thirty-five families who have been approved for financing and are searching for homes.

13. **Resident Relations Report**

Melissa Berrien

Community Rooms Resident Rental – Procedural draft is being recirculated to presidents for final comment.

Resident IT needs – Resident services is working with IT to assist the residents with their IT needs. We are asking for patience until we can implement a new plan.

Tenants on Patrol (TOP) – Executive Director Burr is working with Public Housing to determine a budget for the TOP program volunteers.

Resident Commissioner Election – The election was held on Friday September 29th, the results for the position of Rochester Housing Authority Board Commissioner, as stated by the Monroe County Board of Elections. The vote count was:

Candidate Florine Cummings – 143 votes
Candidate Robert Davis– 43 votes
Candidate Joseph Kelley– 5 votes
Under Vote(s) – 3 votes (blank ballot)
Over Vote(s) - 5 votes (more than one candidate selected)

This vote count indicates that Florine Cummings and Robert Davis will be named as the incoming RHA Resident Commissioners.

Commissioner’s report – Commissioner Cummings discussed extended hours for laundry and the importance of safety mindfulness and suggested presidents use their bulletin boards at the high-rises to get information to their residents.

Executive Overview – ED Burr discusses the Video safety RFP, potential government shutdown, NAHRO conference and RAD closings.

Senior Activities

- Senior Holiday Luncheon is planned for December 7th.
 - Registration period for Public Housing seniors age 55+ 10/30-11/13
 - Commissioner Cummings communicated an open invitation to join the choir.
 - Council officers requested officers under 55 be allowed to attend.

Family Activities –

- Employment fair in partnership with RochesterWorks scheduled for Thursday 11/2 from 3pm-6pm
- College Fair in partnership with the Rochester Education Foundation (REF) scheduled for Thursday 11/16 from 3:30pm-6pm
- Toy Giveaway- Registration flyers mailed to PH families with children ages 0-14 for the December toy giveaway due August 18th. Toy pickup scheduled for the week of December 18th.

14. Planning Committee Report

Daniel R. Long

- The Planning Committee meeting was held on 10/11/2023. There were no follow-up items from the previous meeting.
- There is 1 potential action item to move forward to the Board (bid opening is 10/19):
1321 Lexington Avenue – Demolition under Abatement
- We then discussed the status of our current projects by having staff give updates and review progress pictures:
 1. Unit’s 43 & 60 Wm. Warfield Dr. Fire Restoration – is at 25% with abatement and demo completed and re-installations progressing.

2. Atlantic Townhomes Site Upgrades – project is 85% complete and on schedule.
 3. Unit 910 University Tower Fire Restoration – project is at 30% with restoration work having begun.
 4. Bronson Court Phase II project is under contract and proceeding into construction.
 5. Holland Townhouses Window Refurbishment is at close out.
- We are under contract with Bureau Veritas to undertake the PNA work on the CNI target sites and evaluation needs for that effort. This should be completed within a month.
 - Our MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report was presented and will continue to be updated each month and we continue to work on percentages of possible funds allocated/obligated.
 - As we move forward with our development projects, there will be regular reporting on status of MWBE goals. We have a neutral third party that will be monitoring and ensuring compliance.
 - The status of our current CFP Budgets as of September 12th are: 501.20 is 100% Obligated and 60% Expended and 501.21 is 100% Obligated and 54% Expended and 501.22 is 67% Obligated and 4% Expended. With the latest projects and upcoming bid openings, we expect to meet all our deadlines.
 - We then discussed our A/E status report, and no issues were 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 as we move forward from permitting into abatement and construction. RHA has been attending site visits to review any site issues that come up on the Scattered sites to ensure timely response to our Contractor. The Federal site is well underway with the pouring of one foundation slab and wall framing commencing. The second multi-unit building will be poured at the end of this month.
- Our meetings for Parliament / Fairfield will shift to construction meetings now that RHA has closed on the financing and contracts for the project! Congrats to all the people who made this happen for RHA and our residents!
- Fernwood Development was reviewed during our HCR Technical Assistance meeting and revisions have been made to address concerns HCR had over zoning and environment items.
- Our other development projects in various stages were discussed with funding applications submitted and more being submitted prior to submission deadlines.
- Updates were given on our Change the Face of Public Housing projects.
- Updates were then given on our pipeline of capital projects in planning and design stages.
- Updates were also given on the Hazard Related Grant and Section 32 progress.
- The Bond Street Development project restart is in the updated planning stages, anticipating approval of ADA accessibility concepts for the site and all units.
- The rest of our project pipeline was presented, and the meeting was adjourned.

15. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Cummings: Thank you to the staff for all your hard work every day.

Commissioner Rubin: Thank you to the staff and Shawn.

Commissioner Davis: Thank you for the warm welcome.

Commissioner Waters: Thank you.

Commissioner Remarais: We all are super proud of the work you're doing when you're giving your team and. I want to thank everyone for all your reports, and for coming to our meetings.

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to go into Executive Session for a legal and personnel matter. Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded a motion to go into Executive Session at 2:05 pm. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Remarais voted yes. The motion was passed, five to zero.

- x. Resolution 10.25.23-01 resolve the litigation by approving the settlement and authorizes the execution of all related documents.

Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, and Commissioner Lee, voted yes. The motion passed four to zero.

- xi. Implementation of an increase to the employee quarterly bonuses - Authorized the Executive Director to approve the increase of the quarterly bonus to \$750.00 per each employee – Authority Wide

Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, and Commissioner Davis voted yes. The motion passed four to zero.

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 2:50 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Waters voted yes. The motion passed four to zero.

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end the Regular Board Meeting; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 2:51pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, , Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Waters, voted yes. The motion passed four to zero.

16. December Regular Board Meeting

The December Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at 12:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board, Executive Director