

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
November 15, 2023
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



November 15, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rosalie Remarais, Chairperson
Florine Cummings, Resident Commissioner, Vice Chair
Robert Davis, Commissioner
Shanai Lee, Commissioner
Henry Rubin, Commissioner
Kabutey Ocansey, 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 November 2023 Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting to order at 12:09 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 - none

2. Approval of Minutes: October 25, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to approve the October 2023 Annual and Regular Board Meeting Minutes Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Waters voted yes, the motion passed four to zero.

3. 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 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 under construction with two meetings under our belts. Dan will have some

pictures with his report. We are excited that 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 submitted a 9% LIHTC application by the deadline of November 7 for Fernwood Phase I, despite the new challenges raised by HCR staff and City. 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 on November 15. Big kudos to Harolda and her team for assisting residents and preparing and training on tax credit compliance, Bob and his team for assisting wherever and with the contractors and Dan for representing RHA in the field and at the table!! They are truly doing great work!

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 our communications consultant; Tipping Point meets with Sr. Staff once a month to gather insight to what is going on within their respective departments at RHA in effort to promote the accomplishments. They routinely post on our Facebook page and Linked-In account and have made some recommendation in the handouts you have. I participated in an interview with Affordable Housing News on 11/2 that was facilitated by Tipping Point.

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 with more legislators.

Mr. Burr gave an update on:

Senate Passes FY24 T-HUD Bill, House to Vote

As the expiration of the Continuing Resolution fast approaches on November 17, both sides of Congress are working to pass their Transportation-HUD (T-HUD) appropriations bills. Yesterday, the Senate passed three Fiscal Year appropriations bills, including the T-HUD bill. Overall, the bill provides \$70.1 billion for HUD, a slight decrease over current levels but higher than the House FY24 T-HUD spending bill. Importantly, the bill provides critical funding for the HOME program and the Choice Neighborhoods program, which were respectively cut and eliminated by the House.

Over on the other side of Capitol Hill, the House will move to vote on their T-HUD Appropriations bill as soon as today. Although the House T-HUD Subcommittee largely preserved critical housing and community development programs in their bill (except for

significant cuts to HOME and the elimination of the Choice Neighborhoods Program), a handful of proposed amendments have been introduced that would call for significant cuts to the HUD budget, causing considerable harm to our programs. NAHRO members have worked hard to see substantial increases in funding for our programs over the past years – and we will continue to push for FY24! Let your representatives know that preserving funding for housing and community development programs is critical. Visit our Action Alert Center today and tell your representatives to prioritize funding for housing and community development in FY24.

b. Board Action Requests

- i. Scattered Site Porch Replacements Rebid-P9 - Authorized the Executive Director to ratify awarding a contract to Taouk Development, LLC for the sum of \$43,500.00 – Capital Projects

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

- ii. General Counsel Legal Services Renewal – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with Harris Beach, PLLC in the amount of \$150,000.00 – Executive.

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

- iii. Legal Services Contract for Landlord/Tenant Matters - 2nd Year of 4 years – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with Harris Beach, PLLC in the amount of \$100,000.00 – Public Housing/Leasing Operations

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

- iv. Security Services Contract for Year 2 of 4 – 2024 – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with AP Safety and Security Corp. the amount of \$1,156,284.00 – Authority Wide

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

- v. Nights and Weekend maintenance coverage 2023-2024 for Year 3 of 4 – Authorized the Executive Director renew the contract with Catherine’s Home Improvement in the amount of \$95,000.00 – Authority Wide.

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

- vi. Request for Purchase Order for 2024 Employee Medical Insurance (Active Employees and Retirees <65 yrs.) – Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to MVP Healthcare in the amount of \$ 2,947,271.25 – Authority Wide.

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

- vii. Request for Purchase Order for 2024 Retiree Medicare Insurance (Retirees <65 yrs.) – Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to in the amount of \$ 100,000.00 – Authority Wide.

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

- viii. Temporary Employment Services –

- a. Apple One - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract in the amount of \$75,000.00 – Authority Wide.

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

- b. Clovity Inc. - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract in the amount of \$100,000.00 – Authority Wide.

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

- c. Radgov, Inc. - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract in the amount of \$75,000.00 – Authority Wide.

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

- ix. Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) – Authorized the Executive Director to submit SEMAP data for HUD Certification – Leasing Operations.

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

- x. Proposed Changes to Administrative Plan Language – for NSPIRE – Authorized the Executive Director to delegate implementation of the proposed Administrative Plan changes – Leasing Operations.

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

4. 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 Purchaser in the Procurement Department, who started on October 30, 2023.

Employee Promotions:

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

Previous Position: Housing Specialist
New Position: Property Manager
Department: Public Housing Department
Date of Promotion: October 30, 2023

Previous Position: Human Service Specialist
New Position: Property Manager
Department: Public Housing Department
Date of Promotion: October 30, 2023

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

Recruitment Strategies:

- National Human Resources Association (Pro Roc) Job Fair- November 8, 2023
- Ensured all job postings are on multiple career sites.

Employee Engagement Initiatives:

- We continue to prioritize the employee experience, focusing on creating a positive and engaging work environment.
- Offered a Lunch/Learn on November 2, 2023, regarding the benefits of having a HDHP to employees.

Upcoming Events:

Biometric Screenings- November 13, 2023
This event is aimed to promote employee well-being and proactively manage health risks within our workforce.

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.

5. **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 commemorated the Italian American Heritage by a festival with traditional sweets and coffee, informational data, employee speaker 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 October 2023, \$54,073.06 collected (with a total of \$15,197.28 collected in October 2023) A total of \$611,095.55 has been collected to date.
 - **Public Housing** Repayment agreement totals YTD for vacated arrears and collection loss as of October 2023, with \$9,708.97 collected (with a total of \$3,218 collected in October 2023). A total of \$65,556.63 was collected to date.
 - **RAD Parkside** Repayment agreement totals YTD for vacated arrears and collection loss as of October 2023, with \$678.00 collected (with a total of \$113.00 collected in October 2023). A total of \$678.00 was collected to date.

- **Termination Hearings:**
- **Leasing Operations** – 4 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 1 Upheld; 0 No Show, 1 Overturned, 0 Reinstated, 2 Adjourned, 0 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 – 1,433 (Previously 1,444)– 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.

6. Finance

Kimberly Huffman

Ms. Huffman shared that Finance is still working on finalizing the closing of FY 2023, she should have a report in the month of January 2024.

7. Information Technology Report

Evhen Tupis

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

- 25 October 2023: Quote awarded to Omni Security by Board of Commissioners.
- 8 November 2023: Omni Security met with Owner (Security and Compliance) and Key Stakeholders (Public Housing and AP Security) for pre-launch strategy setting.
- Outcomes of that meeting:
 - Critical Path: PO (with Procurement as of this memo's creation) and signed.
 - agreement (complete, awaiting PO) is pending delivery to Omni; however, they are meeting with us proactively to sustain meaningful progress.
 - Timeline: Work expected to begin 30-days after receipt of all required documentation and completed within 60-days after that. Omni shall communicate actual dates upon receipt of abovementioned documents.
 - Concurrently (no dependencies): Owner to identify Point(s) of Contact (POC) for: Systems Administration, Real-time Viewing Station, Authorized Remote Viewers, Desired Alerts and Alert-targets, and training recipients.

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

- (No update) Proposals are due December 1, 2023.

Resident Workshops: Affordable Connectivity Program (\$30/month Internet Subsidy)

- 8 November 2023 – The ACP workshop in Orleans County (Medina, NY) took place, with thanks to our partnership with Cornell Cooperative Extension. While RHA voucher participants received both post cards and phone calls to encourage attendance, it was published on OrleansHub.com and open to the public as well.

RFP: Tenmast Upgrade/Replacement

- RFP's have been received and initially evaluated.
- Senior Staff have until December 1 to review the proposals and assemble questions to ask during future direct interviews with proposers. Have I mentioned this is not trivial?

8. Public Housing Report

Harolda Wilcox

Public Housing Activities:

- On October 2, 2023, we had a meeting with the residents at Parliament Arms and Luther Circle to provide them with an update on the RAD project. Both meetings yielded a good turnout. Residents were reminded of the moving process and the dates that they needed to be relocated from their units. The resident's questions and concerns were answered to their satisfaction.
- The Public Housing Department continues to work diligently to get arrears to a substantial level. We have finally received a court date for December 7th and 8th. The courts are only allowing 10 evictions per session. We are rolling pending evictions to the attorney's office for submittal to the courts. Included in this report is a breakdown of evictions served and their status.
- Currently, we have 24 evictions for the upcoming court dates. Out of the 24 eviction proceedings, there are 20 families with children.
- We offer overtime to staff to catch up on late recertifications and perform special projects such as auditing accounts. This audit includes Utility Reimbursement Payments (URPs), Security deposits, and overall balancing of accounts.

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 \$1389.00 in EPPI2.0 monies for October 2023.
- As of October 2023, the total delinquent rent amount owed is \$658,048.650, which is an increase of \$40,068.50 for the of September.
 - 0 to 30 days -- \$200,465.72
 - 31 to 60 days -- \$122,602.00
 - 61 to 90 days -- \$ 97,995.02
 - Over 90 days -- \$563,139.82
- 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.
- Repayment agreements are offered in extreme circumstances due to the
- We are still collaborating with residents to address arrears in lieu of court proceedings. As of October, RHA has entered into 121 repayment agreements year to date totaling \$214,231.94.

- As of September 30, 2023, the following is an update of the Public Housing zones repayment agreements:
 - North – Zero residents are currently in lease termination status and five residents are in delinquent status.
 - South – One resident is currently in lease termination status and five in delinquent status.
 - Central – Zero residents are currently in lease termination status and two residents are in delinquent status.
 - Scattered Sites – One resident is in lease termination and six in delinquent status.
- Parkside
 - 1 Vacant Units
 - 2 Units Ready to Lease 0
 - 2 Offers
- Parkside Arrears
 - \$ 60,296.56 outstanding rent
 - \$ 7,233.97 0 -30 days
 - \$ 4,954.58 31-60 days
 - \$ 2,617.00 61-90 days
 - \$ 45,491.00 over 90 days (represents six tenants)

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Staffing

- 4 positions open – Housing Specialist
- 4 positions open – Clerk
- **Wait List Purge:**

Application Processing Center: Waiting List Management:

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

- The Studio Wait List is still open and applicants applying to this wait list will be immediately contacted.
- Next Studio Wait List Pull: 11/10/23 and 11/27/23.

Wait List Purge:

- As of 10/2/23, RAD wait list canvassing has been completed.
- Fairfield – 276 applicants are interested in this site.
- Federal – 289 applicants are interested in this site.
- Parliament - 236 applicants are interested in this site.
- Scattered – 368 applicants are interested in this site.
- The Last day for the 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 the 2 – 4-bedroom Wait Lists. This process will take around 60 days to complete. Once the purge has been completed, APC 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, date to be determined.
- Update: APC's USPS Business Reply account expired and will need to have another account set up and the balance from the previous account transferred to a new account to proceed with purge.

Current Department Operation Status:

- No updates to report as of 10/25/23.

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.

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 10/25/23 - 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.
- **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 10/2/23, no other updates.

9. 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

- We are planting mums at many of our sites to bring a better curb appeal to our buildings and usher in the fall season. This adds color and a better look to our sites, while sprucing up the looks of the neighborhood. (Pictures to be provided once completed)
- 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. (Pictures to be provided once completed)
- 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 for a better first impression.

3. Preparing for Elections

- Maintenance is preparing sites to provide the Board of elections polling places throughout the Authority. Every year at election time, Maintenance with the help of Public Housing and the Security Department, has provided polling places not just for our resident's convenience but also for the general public. These polling places are located at Hudson Ridge Tower, Danforth Tower West, University Tower, Lake Tower, Lexington Ct, Glenwood Gardens, Kennedy Tower, and the William Warfield site. Just one of the many ways RHA provides not just for the residents, but the community at large.

10. 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 909 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 83.38% utilization of vouchers and 96.13% 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 (10) batches of letters of interest to qualifying families with recertifications from May 2023 through May 2024 were randomly selected and provided with program information. As of 2 – Leasing Operations Section 8 Meeting 04/19/2023 10/11/2023, 170 families have been enrolled in the program of which 85 have been randomly selected for mobility services. Three applicant families from the HCV Waiting List have enrolled and one was randomly assigned to receive services. CCD families continue to search for units throughout the Opportunity Areas and 4 families have leased up in an Opportunity Areas. 3 CCD families have moved into a non-Opportunity Areas; 17 families renewed their lease and did not move.

HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers

As of 10/30/2023, out of 117 EHV vouchers authorized:

- 175 moving papers have been issued,
 - 120 applicants have been housed.
 - 8 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, 22 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.

11. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Report

Melissa Berrien

Participant Highlights

We have 176 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:

- Ms. Forman entered the FSS program on December 1st, 2015, with employment, credit restoration and homeownership goals. Ms. Forman sought and maintained employment with the University of Rochester increasing her income by 161%. Ms. Forman increased her credit score and has received a preapproval from a lending institution. Ms. Forman is a successful graduate and entitled to \$18,787.51 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 extended 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.
-
- **Together Now Summit** – Systems Integration team held a summit on October 2nd. I was invited to participate in a panel discussion with other local leaders who have used Human Centered Design (HCD) to address some key issues facing the Rochester community. We discussed RMAPI’s (HCD) work around employment and housing.

- Greater Rochester Association of Realtors (GRAR) – Discussed Rha’s homeownership program at the GRAR real estate class on October 10th.
- **Homeownership**
 - Ms. Moore closed on her home in the city of Rochester area of 14611 on October 3, 2023.
 - We have five families with anticipated closings and thirty-six families who have been approved for financing and are searching for homes.

12. Resident Relations Report

Melissa Berrien

Community Rooms Resident Rental – Policy, procedure, and contract complete. The next step is the drafting of an MOU for RHA and the individual councils.

Mold vs. mildew Presentation - Chief of Maintenance Croston gave a brief presentation to the residents about potential causes of mold and mildew. The presentation stressed the importance of reporting these issues early.

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.

Commissioner’s report – Commissioner Cummings discussed using the vans on 11/10 to transport residents to Baden Street so they may participate in Ms. Pearl’s Thanksgiving Basket giveaway. Ms. Cummings also discussed the need for sitting areas for residents waiting for transportation. Commissioner Davis discussed an intercom issue at West and issues with the council office computer both of which staff are addressing.

Executive Overview – Tenants on Patrol (TOP) – Executive Director Burr has scheduled a meeting to discuss TOP plan with Resident Board commissioners and staff. Mr. Burr also discussed the recent closing of Parliament/Luther and new developments with Federal and Fernwood.

Senior Activities

- Senior Holiday Luncheon is planned for December 7th.
 - Registration period for Public Housing seniors age 55+ 10/30-11/13

Family Activities –

- Employment fair in partnership with RochesterWorks scheduled for Thursday 11/2 from 3pm-6pm.
 - 30 residents/participants attended. Discussion with the resident council presidents about promotion so we can get better attendance.

- 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.

13. Planning Committee Report

Daniel R. Long

- The Planning Committee meeting was held on 11/1/2023. There were no follow-up items from the previous meeting.
- There is no potential action item to consider.
- 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 50% with abatement and demo completed and re-installations progressing.
 2. Atlantic Townhomes Site Upgrades – project is 95% complete and on schedule.
 3. Unit 910 University Tower Fire Restoration – project is at 50% with restoration work having begun.
 4. Bronson Court Phase II project is under contract and proceeding into construction.
- We are under contract with Bureau Veritas to undertake the PNA work on the CNI target sites and evaluation needs for that effort. BV has proposed site visit dates to be confirmed by stakeholders (PH, Maintenance).
- 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 beginning of November with the single-family building foundation / plumbing work nearing completion.

- Our meetings for Parliament / Fairfield have shifted to construction/ site meetings. Walk-throughs for both sites to update any outstanding scope of work items have been completed.
- 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, we are working with the City to obtain an updated support letter prior to re-submittal.
- 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, new TDC limits have been published by HUD and we are preparing to engage the A/E consultant to finalize bid documents.
- The rest of our project pipeline was presented, and the meeting was adjourned.

14. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Remarais: Good afternoon, everyone. My apologies for being late. I had a meeting in my office that I could not get away from. Probably caught up on anything that I've missed in executive. But as always, thank you to the staff, to the executive team for a great job, you know, you know, wishing everyone a great holiday weekend coming up.

Commissioner Davis: Thank you, Happy Thanksgiving.

Commissioner Rubin: Hey, everybody. Go home and hug somebody you love today. Thank you very much for your hard work.

Commissioner Waters: Thank you.

Commissioner Rubin: Thank you.

Commissioner Lee: Thank you.

Commissioner Cummings: I just want to thank the staff for all the work and that they're doing in their dedication and commitment not only to the authority, but to our residents. Have a happy Thanksgiving. Enjoy your days off and don't forget to come back.

Board Vice Chair Cummings requested a motion to go into Executive Session for a legal and personnel matter. Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded a motion to go into Executive Session at 1:55 pm. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Remarais voted yes. The motion was passed, seven to zero.

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 3:03 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Lee, and Commissioner Waters voted yes. The motion passed four to zero.

- xi. Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Assistance RHA Federal St Associates, LLC – to authorize the Executive Director to award a 2-year contract with 3 renewals to PMCS, Inc in the amount of \$20,000.00 - RHA Federal St Associates, LLC.

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

- xii. Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Assistance RHA Federal St Associates, LLC – to authorize the Executive Director to award a 2-year contract with 3 renewals to PMCS, Inc in the amount of \$35,000.00 – RHA Parliament-Fairfield Associates, LLC.

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

- xiii. Resolution 11.15.23-01 - RAD Signatory – Executive Director Shawn Burr and Deputy Executive Director Cynthia Herriott are authorized signatories on the Federal Street and Parliament Fairfield Projects

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

- xiv. Resolution 11.15.23-02 - Authorize the Executive Director to execute the Project Agreements for both the Glenwood Project and the Fernwood Project, as negotiated and drafted with the Development Team for the Rental Assistance Demonstration program to further the proposed Glenwood and Fernwood RAD Projects

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

- xv. Resolution 11.15.23-03 – RHA Board supports the mission and to pursue the enhanced security services and the appointment of a person to fill the newly created Public Safety Aide position, and approves the finalization of the awards to Enterprise Security Consulting and Training Inc. and Blackhawk Security and Investigations Inc.

Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, and voted yes. Commissioner Remarais abstained from voting. The motion passed six to one.

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end the Regular Board Meeting; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 3:04pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Waters, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

15. January Regular Board Meeting

The December Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 12:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board, Executive Director