

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
March 21, 2023
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



March 21, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Marvel Carter-
Shaw
Diana Colon
Robert Croston
Pierre Dorancy
Julie Fox
Cynthia Herriott
Kimberly Huffman
Joyce Kinsey
Shawanna Lawrence
Daniel Long
Mariam Rodriguez –
Machuca
James Senger
Evhen Tupis
Harolda Wilcox

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Todd Bullard, RHA Legal Counsel
Amy Blum, Tipping Point Communications
Erin Foster, Tipping Point Communications
Jeffrey Heller, Tipping Point Communications

Commissioner Rosalie Remarais called the March Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting to order at 12:05 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: February 22, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Otis moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to approve the February 2023 Regular Board Meeting Minutes Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, and Commissioner Cummings, 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 would like 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 reported that the Executive Team monitors current conditions daily and meets weekly to review and discuss our processes.

Mr. Burr reported that 117 Emergency Housing Vouchers by HUD as a result of the RESCUE Plan, and 137 have been issued in accordance with the process we developed with the Continuum of Care. We have housed 98 applicants so far, 9 are searching for housing and 2 applicants have submitted paperwork. Several have found housing and contracts will be executed shortly. The RHA team continues to assist those looking for units. Still, no word on HUD reallocating unused vouchers.

Mr. Burr reported that Community Choice Demonstration RHA Team is working very on implementation since the kick-off in October. We have randomly selected 405 qualifying families so far. 42 families have been enrolled and 22 have been randomly selected for services. I'm very proud of our dedicated team! NYS and Enterprise are partnering on a similar program and have issued an RFP for funding. We are not eligible since we are participating in the HUD program.

Mr. Burr reported that Trillium's COVID testing/Primary Care services for our residents continue with February's schedule moving along. Property managers have been reminded to notify residents each month of the schedule. We will be continuing our partnership and expanding services where we can.

Mr. Burr stated he continues 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. He

really appreciates their efforts in representing RHA on critical projects in our community and their extra efforts are commendable.

Mr. Burr shared that RMAPI's Steering Committee is moving along and a slate of nominees for the Executive Committee is in process of being approved. Our last meeting was on 3/16 and the working groups presented their past year's accomplishments. Melissa is the Co-Chair of the Housing Working Group and presented very well! The "Wildly Important Goal" (WIG) of RMAPI involved the recognition of "Level Up Champions" who established a \$15/hr. or higher starting wages within their organizations, of which RHA is one of the 147 organizations recognized. The draft report is under review, and I will share it when appropriate.

Mr. Burr share that RHA along with our development partner submitted our NYSHCR LIHTC funding applications for the Fernwood project. We have submitted other applications and are working on additional funding applications for both projects as well.

Mr. Burr stated that our Strategic Goal Tracker has been completed and our plan is to update at least monthly and report on a quarterly basis with the first report in early March 2023.

Mr. Burr gave an NYSPHADA Update: The Legislative Committee continues to work hard on advocating at the State level for funding for PHA's, especially upstate. We continue to push for more ERAP funds for upstate PHA's as we all have significant arrears. The New York State Senate and Assembly have agreed on a One-House Bill that calls for \$385 million to fund rental arrears for Public Housing Authorities and Subsidized Housing across New York State. The funding would cover the estimated cost of providing rental assistance for all eligible tenants throughout the state who have applied for assistance but have been denied assistance to date solely because they reside in public housing or subsidized housing. We will continue advocating for the Governor to agree and include the funding in the Final Budget. If successful we will then monitor the details of the process to be developed by the Office of Temporary Assistance and Disability for payments. NYSPHADA has joined with NYSAFA on the ERAP funds advocacy, and I've sent letters to our elected officials highlighting our need for ERAP, or another program to assist us in reducing our rental arrears.

President's Proposed HUD Budget In-Depth: Public Housing Public Housing Fund

Like the FY 2023 Appropriations Act, the President's 2024 budget combines all federal grants necessary for PHAs to operate, maintain, and make capital improvements to public housing into the Public Housing Fund. The President's budget proposes \$8.893 billion for the Public Housing Fund, which is \$113 million more than the 2023 enacted budget.

Public Housing Operating Fund:

The President's budget would provide \$5.133 billion for public housing formula grants. This is a \$24 million increase over FY 2023 enacted. While HUD anticipates this represents a 100% proration for the Operating Fund for FY24, NAHRO remains concerned that this amount does not

account for the rapid rise of inflation and increases to tenant account receivables experienced by PHAs. NAHRO will continue expressing this concern to HUD and to Congress.

Additionally, the President's budget includes the stipulation that any instances of a Jobs Plus program increasing tenant incomes will not result in higher rents for these residents but will instead be factored into the Operating Fund formula.

Operating Fund Shortfall Funding: The President's budget proposes \$50 million for PHAs that experience, or are at risk of, financial shortfalls as determined by HUD. After all shortfall needs are met, HUD may distribute any remaining funds to all PHAs via the Operating Fund formula. HUD reported more than \$350 million in unmet shortfall needs in 2022, and NAHRO has advocated for increased amounts to this fund to ensure shortfalls do not grow over time.

Public Housing Capital Fund

The President's budget proposes \$3.225 billion for the Capital Fund, a \$25 million increase from FY 2023 enacted but less than the projected accrual of needs across the inventory per year, estimated in 2010 to be \$3.4 billion annually. HUD is currently engaged on a portfolio-wide study that assesses the usefulness of underlying capital needs data available to HUD, how PHAs estimate capital needs and best practices, and estimates the nationwide capital needs of public housing. NAHRO estimates that the Capital Fund backlog is at least \$70 billion.

The budget includes the provision that HUD issue Capital Fund formula grants to PHAs no later than 60 days after the passage of an Appropriations Act.

High-Impact Capital Investments: The President's budget proposes \$300 million for "high-impact capital investments" including for improving energy, water, or natural disaster preparedness. Additionally, \$20 million or less of this total amount will go toward utilities benchmarking. Of this \$20 million, \$7 million can be added to the Information Technology Fund to further public housing benchmarking goals. The budget refers to these grants as Site-Based Public Housing Enhancement, Resilience, and Efficiency (SPHERE) grants.

Emergency Capital Needs: The President's budget would provide \$40 million for grants to public housing agencies for emergency capital needs resulting from unforeseen or unpreventable emergencies and natural disasters excluding presidentially declared emergencies and natural disasters under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Act. The budget also proposes \$20 million to be made available for safety and security measures. In total, this is \$10 million less for emergency capital needs and safety and security grants than FY 2023 enacted.

Competitive Housing Health Hazards Grants: The President's budget would provide \$85 million in competitive grants to PHAs to evaluate and reduce housing-related hazards including carbon monoxide, radon, and mold in public housing. This represents a \$20 million increase over FY 2023 enacted.

REAC: The President's budget would move REAC expenses related to public housing into a new account named Operational Performance Evaluation and Risk Assessments (OPERA). This new, consolidated single account would be for all REAC inspections including Public Housing, PBRA, and Section 202 inspections. The budget proposes \$61 million for this account.

Physical Needs Assessments: The President's budget would provide \$15 million to support Physical Needs Assessment activities. This amount replaces \$50 million set aside in the FY 2023

Consolidated Appropriations Act for supporting assessments, including the National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE). The budget would also provide \$45 million for the cost of administrative and judicial receiverships. This is \$30 million more FY 2023 funding.

Mandatory Spending Request

The budget proposes \$7.5 billion in investment in funding to preserve distressed public housing through rehabilitation and redevelopment. Mandatory spending is outside the appropriations process and creates a mandatory requirement that the money be allocated. This one-time investment would address the capital needs of the most severely distressed public housing through rehabilitation and redevelopment.

Public Housing Subsidy Flexibility

The President's budget proposes granting full flexibility to transfer funds between the Operating and Capital Funds. Currently, PHAs with 250 or more units of public housing can transfer up to 25% of their annual Capital Fund grant to operations. Through the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2016 (HOTMA), PHAs are also allowed to transfer 20 percent of their operating subsidy to their Capital Fund grant. This provision would allow all PHAs, including small agencies, the flexibility to make fungible 100% of their annual grants.

Exemption from Asset Management

The President's budget includes the provision in the FY 2023 Appropriations Act that exempts PHAs that own and operate 400 or fewer public housing units from asset management requirements.

Correction of Allocation Errors

The budget requests the authority to correct formula errors for any HUD formula program on a prospective basis by offsetting amounts from any previously overpaid grantee award in the current fiscal year and distributing them to grantees that received less formula funding than they would have as a result of the error in the prior fiscal year.

Triennial Recertifications

The President's budget proposes allowing PHAs to implement triennial recertifications of income for all families, including those without fixed incomes.

Changes to Flat or Income-based Rent Selection

The President's budget proposes language allowing families that initially chose the flat rent option but switch to income-based rent during financial hardship the option of reverting back to flat rent if their income increases.

Community Service Self-Sufficiency Requirement (CSSR)

The President's budget proposes removing the CSSR to decrease unnecessary complexity and burden for residents, administering PHAs, and for HUD. NAHRO fully supports this provision.

Self Sufficiency Programs

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS): The President's budget would provide \$175 million for the FSS program, a \$50 million increase from FY 2023.

The President's budget removes a provision in the FY 2023 Appropriations Act that prohibits HUD from making funding decisions for FSS based on performance metrics.

Jobs-Plus Initiative: The President's budget would provide \$15 million to the Jobs Plus Initiative, level with FY 2023. The direct funding is not limited to providing "incentives" to participants, meaning that it can also be used to support the service component of the program. The President's budget also requests language expanding the Jobs-Plus Initiative to Project Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) and Project-Based Voucher (PBV) developments. HUD also proposed allowing the Jobs Plus financial and rent incentive to be paid from the housing assistance source (Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA), PBRA, and Public Housing Fund accounts) rather than the Jobs Plus grant.

Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS): The President's budget proposes \$35 million for the ROSS program. This is level with FY 2023 enacted.

Rental Assistance Demonstration

The President's budget would make certain changes to the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD). The budget proposes eliminating the sunset date for participation in RAD. The budget would also exempt Second Component conversions from the FMR cap to accommodate service provision and coordination. The budget would allow for the conversion of Tenant Protection Vouchers to PBRA and PBV following a Section 18 approval in RAD. And lastly, the budget would allow residents in converted Public Housing to continue participating in the Jobs-Plus Initiative, Resident Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (ROSS), and Congregate Housing Services Program (CHSP).

Choice Neighborhoods Initiative

The President's budget would provide \$185 million for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative – a \$165 million decrease from FY 2023 enacted. Of this amount, \$10 million would be made available to fund planning grants. Not less than \$92.5 million of the funding shall be awarded to PHAs, and not more than \$5 million of the funds can be used for planning grants. The President's budget would also provide additional flexibility in affordability requirements for homeownership units developed with Choice Neighborhoods funding and an extension of the period of availability from three to four years. Additionally, the President's budget includes a provision that unobligated HOPE VI funds from FY 2011 or earlier may be used for this program.

Annual Contributions Contract (ACC)

The President's budget removes language included in the FY 2024 Appropriations Act that the Secretary shall comply with all process requirements, including public notice and comment when seeking to revise any annual contributions contract. NAHRO strongly believes that the ACC is a contract between HUD and PHAs and will continue advocating for that language to be included in future appropriations bills.

PHA Employee Compensation

The President's budget includes language that would prohibit PHAs from using any Tenant-Based Voucher, Operating Fund, or Capital Fund dollars to pay any amount of salary above the base rate of pay for level IV of the Executive Schedule for 2024. This restriction includes salary as well as bonuses or other incentive pay. This provision affirms a policy which is already been in place since the 2015 Omnibus extended the restrictions to all future appropriations acts.

President's Proposed HUD Budget: Section 8 Programs

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) – Discretionary Spending

Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Renewals: The President's budget includes \$27.840 billion for HAP renewals. This is a \$1.438 billion increase over the enacted Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 level. At this time, NAHRO believes that this amount will fully fund the renewals account.

HAP Renewal Formula: The President's budget calls for HAP renewal funding based on validated calendar year (CY) 2023 voucher management system (VMS) leasing and cost data adjusted by an inflation factor set by HUD and by making any adjustments for costs associated with the first-time renewal of vouchers. The President's proposed budget includes costs associated with forgone increases in tenant rent payments due to the implementation of rent incentives (e.g., from the Jobs Plus program) in the renewal formula.

ACC Caps: The President's budget removes language limiting HAP funding to fund a total number of units at or under the Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) unit caps, except for MTW agencies, which would be governed by their contracts or MTW agreements (i.e., under the President's budget, funding could be used to exceed the caps).

Proration Authority: The President's budget states that HUD has the authority to prorate each PHA's renewal allocation. Housing agencies in the MTW demonstration program will be funded in accordance with the MTW demonstration or their MTW agreement and would be subject to the same pro-rata adjustments.

Notification Provisions: The President's budget removes language stating that HUD must notify PHAs of their annual budgets by the later of March 1, 2024, or 60 days after enactment, though HUD may extend this timeline with written notice given to the Congressional appropriation committees. This language is usually in budgets enacted by Congress.

Offset Authority: The President's budget authorizes HUD to offset PHAs' calendar year (CY) 2024 allocations based on the excess amounts of PHAs' net restricted assets accounts, including HUD-held programmatic reserves (in accordance with VMS data in the calendar year 2023 that is verifiable and complete). Housing agencies participating in the Moving to Work (MTW) demonstration would be subject to any offset. (Typically, Congressional appropriations bills except MTW agencies' single fund amounts from the offset.) The Department must use any offset amount to prevent the termination of rental assistance for families and avoid or reduce the proration for renewal funding allocations. The President's budget includes new language stating that MTW agencies that are not subject to offset due to the terms of their MTW agreements may not receive amounts to avoid or reduce the proration as determined by HUD.

The President's budget includes new language to allow HUD to use offset amounts to enable HCV programs with high utilization rates and a demonstrated capacity to serve additional families to assist more families.

Reallocation of Authorized Units: The President's budget includes new language allowing HUD to reallocate authorized units from PHAs with a history of significant under-leasing and utilization to certain other PHAs to receive funds to assist more families and that have under lease all, or nearly all, of their authorized units.

Unutilized Funds: The President's budget allows for HUD to utilize unobligated balances, including recaptures and carryover, remaining from prior years (excluding funds from special purpose vouchers), to avoid or reduce the proration of renewal funding allocations.

HAP Set-Aside Funds: The President's budget would obligate \$100 million for HAP set-aside funding to seven categories: (1) PHAs that experience a significant increase in renewal costs of vouchers resulting from unforeseen circumstances or from portability; (2) vouchers that were not in use during the previous 12-month period in order to be available to meet project-based voucher commitments or an adjustment for a funding obligation not yet expended for a MTW-eligible activity to develop affordable housing; (3) costs experienced with HUD-VASH vouchers; (4) PHAs that would be required to terminate rental assistance despite taking cost-saving measures; (5) for adjustments in allocations for PHAs in high-cost areas that are not MTW agencies; (6) for withheld payments in the previous year that were subsequently made related to the correction of inspection deficiencies; and (7) PHAs that have experienced increased costs or loss of units in Presidentially-declared emergency areas.

HCV RAD Funding: The President's budget allocates \$50 million of the HAP Renewal Funding for the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. The funding would be used to further long-term financial stability and promote energy or water-efficiency, climate resilience, or preservation of properties. The funding can also be used for Participating Administrative Entities to provide direct support, carrying out due diligence, underwriting, and certain technical assistance activities for formerly public housing owners who have converted under RAD.

HAP Flexibility Demonstration: The President's budget includes new language creating a demonstration that would test whether additional assistance increases the ability of families to lease a unit. It would continue through 2027 at a limited number of PHAs in difficult rental markets. It would also allow—for PHAs participating in the demonstration program—the use of HAP and HAP reserve funding to fund utility and security deposit assistance payments (including last month's rent) and "other costs consistent with the terms of the demonstration." Any utility or security deposit payment returned to the PHA, with any interest that was held by the owner, will be available only for future HAP expenses, including demonstration-eligible uses.

Tenant Protection Vouchers: The President's budget allocates \$385 million for new Tenant Protection Vouchers (TPVs). This amount would be a \$48 million increase over the FY 2023 enacted budget. The President's budget allows TPVs to be used for the following: (1) relocation and replacement of public housing units that are demolished or disposed of; (2) conversions of section 23 projects; (3) witness relocation; (4) enhanced vouchers; (5) Choice Neighborhoods vouchers; (6) mandatory and voluntary conversion of public housing; and (7) tenant protection assistance for elderly residents of properties formerly assisted under section 202. The President's budget adds language allowing up to \$20 million of the allocated amount to be used for tenant protection assistance for low-income tenants assisted under section 521 when the United States

Department of Agriculture (USDA) determines that 521 assistance is no longer available in certain scenarios.

The President's budget states that when a public housing development is submitted for demolition or disposition, HUD may provide rental assistance when the units pose an imminent health and safety risk. Additionally, TPVs may also be used to assist families under a project-based rental assistance contract, where the owner has received a notice of default and the units pose an imminent health and safety risk to residents.

The President's budget also includes a \$5 million set aside for residents residing in low vacancy areas who may have to pay rents greater than 30% of household income for certain reasons like the maturity of certain loans or the expiration of certain contracts.

The President's budget states that these TPVs sunset unless HUD specifies otherwise by notice. HUD may only provide replacement vouchers for units that were occupied within the previous 24 months that are no longer available as assisted housing.

Administrative Fees: The President's budget allocates \$3.202 billion for administrative fees (\$3.172 billion for ongoing administrative fees and \$30 million for additional administrative fees). This is \$424 million more than the FY 2023 enacted budget. The Department states that this amount will fully fund the administrative fee account.

The President's budget continues to instruct HUD to use the current administrative fee formula. It also gives HUD the ability to prorate the administrative fee and utilize unobligated balances to increase the proration, except for those special purpose vouchers for which administrative fees have already been allocated. MTW agencies shall be funded according to the terms of their contracts or the requirements of the MTW demonstration, though they will also be subject to any administrative fee proration. The administrative fee may only be used for "activities related to the provision of tenant-based rental assistance including related development activities."

The additional administrative fees, which would be available to PHAs that need additional funding to administer their HCV program, including fees associated with tenant protection rental assistance, disaster-related vouchers, HUD-VASH, and other special-purpose incremental vouchers.

Mainstream Vouchers: The President's budget allocates \$686 million for the renewal of mainstream vouchers, including their associated administrative fees, which is \$79 million more than the FY 2023 enacted budget. The President's budget removes language stating that administrative fees for these vouchers are subject to the same proration requirements as other HCV administrative fees. HUD must allocate these funds based on need and, upon turnover, these vouchers must be provided to non-elderly people with disabilities.

The President's budget allocates \$10 million set aside for mainstream vouchers for (1) adjustments in the allocation for PHAs that experienced significant cost increases from unforeseen circumstances and (2) for PHAs that, despite taking cost savings measures, would otherwise be required to terminate the rental assistance for mainstream families.

The President's budget also requests waiver authority to waive or specify alternative requirements for any provision of any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers in connection with Mainstream vouchers, except for requirements related to fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards, and the environment.

HUD-VASH Tribal: The President's budget allocates up to \$5 million for HUD-VASH tribal funding for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, including administrative fees. These amounts are for renewal grants for prior recipients of these vouchers.

HUD-VASH: The President's budget removes HUD-VASH vouchers from discretionary spending and includes a mandatory policy ask for vouchers for veterans. See below.

Family Unification Program (including Foster Youth to Independence): The President's budget removes Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers and Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers from discretionary spending and includes a mandatory policy ask for all youth aging out of foster care. See below.

The President's budget also requests waiver authority to waive or specify alternative requirements for any provision of any statute or regulation that the Secretary administers in connection with FUP and FYI vouchers, except for requirements related to fair housing, nondiscrimination, labor standards, and the environment.

New Incremental Vouchers: The President's budget allocates \$565 million for new general-purpose vouchers. This is \$515 million more than the prior enacted budget. The President's budget would allow HUD to add "terms and conditions" to ensure that PHAs use vouchers for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking, or individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The President's budget states that the vouchers are to be allocated according to a formula that may include factors such as "severe cost burden, overcrowding, substandard housing for very low-income renters, homelessness, and administrative capacity" and the allocation should include both rural and urban areas.

Mobility Services: The President's budget allocates \$25 million for mobility services. These services would be for voucher families with children and modeled after services used in the mobility demonstration. The President's budget also states that the funding would be available to PHAs on a competitive basis and give preference to PHAs with that have high concentrations of families with children living in high-poverty areas.

Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) – Discretionary Spending

The PBRA program assists approximately 1.2 million extremely low- to low-income households in obtaining decent, safe, and sanitary homes. The President's budget would allocate \$15.504 billion for the project-based rental assistance account. This is \$997 million more than the previously enacted amount. The President's budget also contains language that would include costs associated with forgone increases in tenant rent payments due to the implementation of rent incentives (e.g., from the Jobs Plus program) in covering the costs of contract renewals. The President's budget would also provide up to \$448 million for performance-based contract administrators.

PBRA RAD Funding: The President's budget allocates \$62 million of the PBRA funding for the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. Of this amount, \$50 million will be for properties converting from public housing. The funding would be used to further long-term financial stability and promote energy or water efficiency, climate resilience, or preservation of properties. Another \$10 million is allocated for properties converting from Section 202 Housing for the Elderly. Finally, another \$2 million is allocated for Participating Administrative Entities to provide direct support, carrying out due diligence, underwriting, and certain technical assistance

activities for owners who have converted under RAD. Finally, of the amounts allocated for PBRA funding, not less than \$28 million is allocated for certain rent adjustments. Additionally, an amount not to exceed \$31 million shall be available for budget-based adjustments for service coordinators for the elderly, while an amount not to exceed \$25 million shall be available for certain direct loans.

Other Section 8 Policy Provisions

Student Rule: For the purposes of determining Section 8 eligibility, the President's budget counts as income any assistance from private sources or institutions of higher education in excess of amounts received for tuition and any other required fees, except for persons over the age of 23 with dependent children. This provision also states restrictions on students receiving Section 8 funding.

MTW PHA Reserve Flexibility: This provision would allow PHAs that are designated as MTW agencies to use their fungibility for funding in their reserves, including voucher account reserves.

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) – Mandatory Spending

The President's budget is proposing \$22 billion in mandatory spending to create two voucher programs for vulnerable populations. Mandatory spending is outside the appropriations process and creates a mandatory requirement that the money be allocated. Since the passage of these proposals falls outside the appropriations process, legislative language is not included with the President's budget.

Veterans with Extremely Low Incomes – the budget proposes \$13 billion to make housing vouchers available for all veterans with extremely low incomes. The Department estimates that there are 450,000 veteran renters with extremely low incomes that do not receive assistance and have “worst-case housing needs.” These renters meet all of the following criteria:

1. They have incomes that do not exceed the Federal Poverty Line or 30 percent of the Area Median Income.
2. They either pay more than half their income for rental costs or live in housing with severe problems (e.g., faulty heating or plumbing); and
3. They do not receive housing assistance.

The Department would like to expand rental assistance over a ten-year period, beginning with a 50,000-voucher allocation in 2025, so that all veterans that require assistance will be covered by 2033.

Youth Aging Out of Foster Care – The budget proposes \$9 billion to make vouchers available for all youth aging out of foster care. Approximately 20,000 youths exit foster care annually and HUD would like to provide guaranteed housing voucher assistance for all of them beginning in 2025.

Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) – Mandatory Spending

The President’s budget is proposing an additional \$7.5 billion in project-based rental assistance. Since the passage of these proposals falls outside the appropriations process, legislative language is not included in the President’s budget.

PBRA for ELI Households – the President’s budget is proposing \$7.5 billion in project-based rental assistance to serve extremely low-income households. The contracts would combine “LIHTC, the Housing Trust Fund, and FHA-insured mortgages” to create additional affordable housing. The Department would allow these new contracts to encourage mixed-income housing and prioritize properties in “resource-rich” urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods.

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) – Legislative Proposals

The President’s budget supports certain legislative proposals that the Department will attempt to enact through authorizing committees. Since the passage of these proposals falls outside the appropriations process, legislative language is not included with the President’s budget.

New Repair Timeframe Authority for HCV – the Department would like the authority to establish shorter timeframes for certain repairs. The inability to do this for certain repairs means that inspection requirements cannot be fully aligned across programs as the new multi-program NSPIRE protocol is designed to do.

HCV Pre-inspections – the Department would like to allow PHAs to conduct pre-qualifying inspections for units not currently in the HCV program.

Triennial Recertifications – this provision would allow for PHAs to conduct reexaminations once every three years.

Expand PBV Payment Standard Range – the Department currently has the authority to expand the basic payment standard range for standard FMRs but lacks the statutory authority to expand the payment range for project-based vouchers. This legislative proposal would give HUD the authority to also expand the payment range for PBVs.

Expand Eligible Uses of HCV Administrative Fees – while current appropriations language allows for expanded eligible uses of the HCV administrative fund (e.g., using administrative fees for security deposits, etc.), the Department would like to modify Section 8 to permanently allow these flexibilities.

FUP and Mainstream Voucher Recapture – HUD would like the authority to recapture the Mainstream voucher and FUP voucher funding when it is not being utilized. The funds would be reallocated to PHAs that have a need and are successfully utilizing vouchers under those programs.

b. Board Action Requests

- i. Chapter 2 -- Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity -- 2.1.A. OVERVIEW-
Authorized the Executive Director to revise RHA's ACOP – Public Housing

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

- ii. Chapter 2-I.B. NONDISCRIMINATION– Authorized the Executive Director to revise RHA's ACOP – Public Housing

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

- iii. 1321 Lexington Ave. Demolition Under Abatement – Design and Monitoring-
Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to LiRo Engineers, Inc.
in the amount of \$26,109.00 – Capital Project

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

- iv. Unit 910 University Tower Fire Restoration - Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to Eric Contracting the amount of \$162,000.00 – Capital Projects

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

- v. Marshal Services- Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to Mr. Joseph Polizzi in the amount of \$24,000.00 – Public Housing

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

4. Human Resource Coordinator Report

Shawanna Lawrence

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

Recruitment Information:

New Hires:

Position- Housing Specialist – (1) Leasing Operations Department started on March 20, 2023.

Position- Clerk II/Typing/Bilingual – (1) Leasing Operations Department started on March 20, 2023.

Position- Maintenance Mechanic – (1) Maintenance Department started on March 20, 2023.

Position- Director of Development & Capital Projects – (1) Capitol Projects Department started on March 13, 2023.

Position- Senior Housing Specialist – (1) Compliance Department, started on March 6, 2023.

Position- Clerk I – (1) Leasing Operations Department, started on March 6, 2023.

Rehires:

Position- Housing Manager III – (1) Resident Services Department, started on March 20, 2023.

Position- Housing Specialist – (1) Public Housing Department, started on March 6, 2023.

Promotions:

Position- Housing Manager III to Housing Manager II: Public Housing Department, started on February 20, 2023.

Position- Systems Engineer to Systems Engineer III: IT Department, started on February 20, 2023.

Trainings/ Learning Development:

HR provided coaching sessions to two (2) managers, to help managers develop their skills and become more effective leaders. and four checking-ins with new hires. Successful Supervision Training Program for Managers: February-March 2023: Four Managers (4) participated in a five-week training program that provided tools for supervisors and managers to be successful. The training provided role clarity, the

achievement of goals, the development of people, decision-making skills, successful delegation, effective communication, and the selection and retention of talent.

Key Activities:

1. The Wellness Committee submitted its monthly newsletter to staff.
2. The employee experience is extremely important, so we continue to strive on creating a positive and engaging work environment. Some of the strategies for improving the employee experience include employee engagement initiatives and highlighting the benefits and perks we offer.

Events March 2023:

Employee Appreciation Day: March 3, 2023

Lunch & Learn: Hosted by the IT Department, March 14, 2023

Employee Chili Cook-Off: March 28, 2023

Opportunities:

Talent Retention:

While we have successfully attracted new talent, we are also focused on retaining our existing talent.

HR checked in with four (4) new hires which is an important part of the onboarding process. These check-ins provide an opportunity for HR to assess the new hire's progress, address any concerns, and ensure a smooth transition into the company.

Updates March 2023:

We had two employees retire with the following years of service.

Maintenance Mechanic- 44 years

Housing Specialist – 30 years

We partnered with U of R to offer internships to their students and have officially been matched with an Urban Fellow candidate that will start in May.

Conclusion:

The HR department has accomplished its goals for the month, which have resulted in successful recruitment, improved employee engagement, and learning & development. We will continue to focus on these critical areas and address challenges and opportunities to support the organization's goals and objectives.

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

Inclusion

- COVID Strategy – We continue to work with community partners to facilitate addressing resident needs around vaccinations, testing, and education.
- Language Access Plan- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee is working on a Language Access Plan to adopt new procedures and to work with community organizations and Language Access Liaisons to identify opportunities to enhance RHA services. The plan draft has been provided to the board and senior staff as an FYI. No action is necessary, but feedback is welcome.
- 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 met with Wade Norwood to discuss potential support from Common Ground Health.
- 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.
- Black History Month – The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will be acknowledged Black History Month with a series of activities:
 - Black History Newsletter
 - E-mail acknowledgments of contributions of African Americans to the United States
 - Black History Month Speakers
 - Black History Month Luncheon
 - Donation to Black Community Focus Fund Donations
 - Raffles
 - Arts and Crafts
- Irish Heritage Month- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will be acknowledging the contributions of Irish Americans through a series of emails.
- Holi Festival- The Diversity and Inclusion Committee will be celebrating our own Holi Festival with staff on March 17, 2023, by playing with colorful powders and a variety of Indian sweets.

Compliance

- **Fraud Investigations**
 - Leasing Operations Participant Hearings Scheduled: 2 Upheld; 0 No Show, Overturned, 2 Reinstated, 2 Adjourned, 1 Withdrawn; 2 Pending a Decision.
 - Public Housing Repayment agreement totals YTD for vacated arrears and collection loss as of February 2023, with \$914.00 collected (with a total of \$351.00 collected in February 2023). A total of \$44,785.31 was collected to date.
- **Termination Hearings:**
 - Leasing Operations –Participant Hearings Scheduled: 2 Upheld; 0 No Show, 0 Overturned, 2 Reinstated, 2 Adjourned, 1 Withdrawn; 2 Pending a 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 – 1,496 (Previously 1,480)– which is 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.
 - Legal Case Management – Compliance has worked with Finance to develop a database to monitor any open pending legal matters. Finance will ensure the information is kept up to date.
- **Rochester Housing Charities (RHC) – Commissioner Florine Cummings and Deputy Executive Director, Cynthia Herriott serve 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*)
 - Most Compliance 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.
 - RHA is working with residents to address the violence spikes that are occurring in the City of Rochester. Public Safety works with the Rochester Police Department to develop strategies to address crime trends.

6. Finance

Kimberly Huffman

Ms. Huffman reported the monthly Finance Report, the actual vs. budgeted figures, and variances for year-to-date through January 2023, for the COCC, Public Housing, and Section 8 income and expenses.

7. Information Technology Report

Evhen Tupis

Video Safety and Access Control (potentially two separate projects) (14 sites, expanded to 18)

Summary: RHA's video safety system is antiquated, and lacks needed features. Our Access Control system is old and clumsy to maintain. We have been directed to pursue an RFP to replace both with modern systems.

Status: Target: All RFP documents have been created. We are now waiting for final cost estimate from the consulting firm. As soon as it is delivered, I will pursue approval to proceed with the RFP. The target for releasing the RFP remains as late March or early April.

Making the Internet More Affordable for Residents

Summary: E.D. Burr directed RHA to find a way to help residents better afford Internet access when desired. IT is launching a campaign to both inform all residents of the Federal Subsidy program (reducing costs by \$30/month) and coach them through the application process with the help of Resident Services staff.

Status: The direct-contact campaign has concluded. Shifting to the sustainability phase. Working with the Public Housing and Resident Services teams to have locally available Associates help "shy" residents through the application process in-person and with Public Housing and Leasing Operations teams to incorporate ACP application into ongoing resident and participant onboarding activities.

Telephone System Modernization/Upgrade

Summary: Our telephone system is outdated. Four years ago, we pursued an upgrade only to discover that our foundational communication circuits were not capable of delivering the service and our telephone line records were in disarray. Both dependent issues have now been resolved.

While leveraging some of the work that was done four years ago, both the state-of-the-art and our needs have matured since then. We will launch this initiative now with an updated focus, while targeting implementation in F.Y. 2023-24.

Status: The "Non-construction Project Approval" form covering Project Consultant services has been submitted to the Executive Team for funding approval. Awaiting outcome.

RochesterHousing.org Website Upgrade

Summary: RHA's website is outdated both technically (the modules it was built upon are reaching end-of-life) and navigationally. An upgrade is available and is being pursued.

Status: The initial phase of seeking "Stakeholder Input" has been completed. Several inputs shared profound insight that will involve follow-up interviews with those that submitted them. 18 responses came from RHA Department stakeholders and 8 responses from "Community Partners". Next: share the feedback with our website hosting company

and mutually vet the feedback to assure that the features and functions that were suggested can be implemented in a sustainable manner through the available upgrade.

MRI ResidentCheck, automated resident screening system

Summary: MRI's ResidentCheck system provides an automated way to initially screen applicants, relieving that burden from RHA staff. RHA inputs the initial applicant demographic information and ResidentCheck will interrogate available creditworthiness information and deliver a pass/fail report for review by an RHA associate prior to a final human-based determination being made.

Status: Complete and in production. This is the final update on this item.

Upcoming: IT System Security Audit and Penetration Testing

Summary: The "bad guys" are always trying to compromise systems and convince nice people to do things that they shouldn't. Their tactics evolve constantly. RHA intends to release an RFP to seek a security firm-of-knowledge to perform IT System Security Auditing and Penetration Testing in the near future.

Status: Initial plan was shared with the Deputy Executive Director. The goal is to establish a 2023-24 budget for this service and launch it in September unless directed to do so sooner.

Upcoming: Upgrade of Tenmast WinTen2+ to MRI Property Management X (PMX) or Migrate to Different Vendor/Product

Summary: An upgrade to Tenmast (RHA's core operations software) is available. We will have an opportunity to upgrade to the new "Property Management X" offering at no additional product cost (though charges for data migration and retraining will apply) - or choose to change to a competing product from a different vendor.

None of these choices are trivial. They both require commitment, dedication, and focus by Executives, Department Directors, and the user-community for an extended period of time. For time-budgeting, we should expect a year to decide on the pathway forward, and 2-years to properly implement it.

Status: This process will include two phases: (1) Securing a Consultant of Knowledge to help to expose and guide RHA through the choices that we have and the decisions that we face (a 1-year process), and (2) act on the choices made (a 2-year process). Next step: Create a budget for the Consultant of Knowledge services and secure approval from the Executive Team to fund and release an RFP for their services with the goal of launching by September 1, 2023.

8. **Public Housing Report**

Harolda Wilcox

Public Housing Activities:

- On February 9, we participated in the Health & Wellness event held at 700 North Street community room. We interacted with more than 30 people and hand out 25 bags with QR codes and RHA fact sheets along with gifts.
- On February 22, we participated in the Health & Wellness event held at 271 Flint Street in the Willie Light Foot Recreation Center. We interacted with more than 25 people & hand out 12 bag packs with QR codes and RHA fact sheets along with winter hats, gloves, and other gifts.

Public Housing Matters:

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

COVID Matters:

- Building Security – RHA visitor restrictions are still in place, with visitation hours from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm. Everyone is encouraged to social distance.
- Residents – Partnership with Foodlink is still providing food to those seniors in need.
- Community Rooms are currently open on the weekends. Protocols sent to Resident Council presidents. Notices sent to residents of optional mask-wearing.
- Offices continue to receive residents by appointment only. Residents will always need to wear facial coverings for scheduled appointments.

RENT ARREARS

- To avoid eviction and to assist residents in becoming current with rental arrears, the team will have the resident sign a repayment agreement along with applying for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP).
- RHA Public Housing department Received \$0.00 in EPPI 2.0 monies for February 2023.
- As of February 2023, the total delinquent rent amount owed is \$443,255.32 which is an increase of \$3,319.19 from January.
- 20 – 30-day notices were served by the City Marshal in February
- We are working diligently with residents to address arrears in lieu of court proceedings. As of February 2023, RHA has entered into 89 repayment agreements year to date.
- We are still encountering vacant units where the resident has skipped out. This affects both Public Housing arrears and vacancy rates. As reported at the last Board Meeting, we had \$118,904.68 in skip out loss.

Parkside

- 6 Vacant Units (One unit is a non-dwelling unit for Resident Council)
- 2 Units Ready to Lease
- 0 Offers

- As of 9/15/2022 we have not received any responses to the canvas letters mailed on 8/29/2022. We will have to move those next on the list.

Parkside Arrears

- \$ 31,860.75 outstanding rent
- \$ 6,246.75 0-30 days
- \$ 3,230.00 31-60 days
- \$ 2,577.00 61-90 days
- \$ 19,331.00 over 90 days (represents 9 tenants)

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- The Property Management office continues to offer applicants several methods to view a unit, e.g., virtual, email & text pictures, and solo unit showings (staff will wait outside of the unit as the applicant walks through the unit).

Application Processing Center:

Waiting List Management:

As of 2/28/2023, high rise canvas pull no updates

- A. To address the number of high-rise vacancies, APC is conducting a high-rise canvas for applicants that are interested in residing in one of the high-rise communities (LT, UT, HRT, DTE, UT)

Scheduled High Rise Canvas Pull – No longer pulling for high rises. We have pulled over the number needed to address vacancy concerns. Housing Specialist are currently processing applications for unit offers to start for those that are approved by mid-March. Next wait list pull – 2/10/23 – (TOTAL OF 20) AND 2/24/23 (TOTAL OF 20)

PH began offering moving incentives for applicants as of 1/1/23. Move-in incentives will be given to the first 100 applicants that are housed at Lake Tower, Danforth Towers, and Kennedy, and that remain in good standing for 1 year.

As of 2/28/2023 – No Updates

Unit Offers:

- APC Manager is extending offers to 'ready drawer' applicants to fill vacancies. This process is slower than desired because the manager has absorbed most of the responsibilities from the staff vacancy in APC, reduced staff hours, and the applicant's response time was extended as a response to COVID.
- Current applications in Screening and Intake Phase as of 1/27/23
 - Currently being screened - 91 applications
 - Studio– 11
 - Regular 1 bedroom – 0

- 2+ bedrooms - 11 applications
- Currently going thru intake (w/Intake Specialist): 30 applications
 - studio/1-bedroom – 13 applications
 - 2+ bedrooms – 17 applications

Renovation Projects:

- Fed/Scattered Site – From the 37 households that will have their units demolished or renovated, we have 25 residents that have accepted unit offers. Maintenance Chief, Bob Croston has been notified of each accepted unit offer to follow up on to ensure units are ready for move-in. Many high-priority residents (those that have a project start date within the next 6 months) have been given a final offer.
 - As of 9/27/2022 – 36 residents have received a final relocation unit offer, per Relocation Plan. One of those residents have been identified as a Section 32 participant. Will need to discuss further the plan to relocate the family.
 - As of 2/28/2023 – no other updates
- Bond St. – From the 11 households that are a part of this project, 3 families have been extended offers with 2 residents having accepted their unit offer.
 - As of 2/28/2023- no other updates.
- Glenwood – As of 9/27/2022, APC Manager was instructed to resume extending offers to Glenwood as the project is not slated to begin for at least 3 years.

9. Maintenance Report

Robert Croston

- **Vacant Unit Report**
 - • The Maintenance Department continues to work hard to keep up with the number of new vacancies. Still one of our highest numbers of the vacant unit in years with many move-outs, residents skipping out and more court dates opening for more evictions.
- **Site Beautification**
 - We will be working with Public Housing on updating the insides at some of our high raises by painting some of the lobbies and community room.
 - We have picked out a floor planking to replace the carpet in the community room. We are now going to look at what changes can be made to upgrade the guard station at the front entrance of the building. We are also looking at what can be done to upgrade the ceiling tiles in the lobby.
 - Maintenance is moving forward to start working on upgrading the inside lobby of Hudson Ridge Tower. We will be looking at painting the lobby, upgrading the flooring near the vending machines, upgrading the guard station and any other Public Housing concerns.

- **Training for Maintenance staff**
 - The Maintenance department has scheduled training for the upcoming change from REAC to NSPIRE as the new HUD system of grading Public Housing Authorities moving forward. We are trying to stay ahead of the changes by training staff early.
- **Equipment Purchase**
 - We are moving forward with the Glenwood Garden Tractor will be dropped off this month. That will complete the sale for the upgraded replacement needed at the site.
- **Changes to the Work Order Report**

The Maintenance department is making changes to the work order report. Once we have determined a system that will be breaking down the progress of work orders more efficiently, we will make the changes to the monthly report.

10. Leasing Operations Report (Section 8)

Pierre Dorancy

Leasing Operations Matters:

1. The Administrative Plan language changes have been approved. The staff is working on implementing the changes. Robocall has been used to notify participants and landlords of the changes that affect them.
2. Currently, there are 1,511 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 84.56% utilization of vouchers and 101.21% utilization of funds. Leasing Operations Department has a Leasing Plan for 2022 to fully maximize HUD funding for Housing Assistance Payments. Staff continues working overtime to issue vouchers and to maintain utilization.
4. The monthly inspection goal has been 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 771 inspections in February 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.

Since the pilot start date of October 17, 2022, the Managers implementing the program have updated the RHA website with CCD information and have sent out 2 batches of interest letters. Four hundred and five (405) qualifying families with recertifications for May, June and July 2023 were randomly selected and provided with program information. Interested families can reach out to a dedicated phone line and email

address to communicate interest in participation. The CCD phone line is (585) 697-6210 and the email address is communitychoice@rochesterhousing.org. As of 03/08/2023, twenty-one (42) families have been enrolled in the program and twelve (22) have been randomly selected for services. The first CCD families searching for units win Opportunity Areas are planning moves for this spring.

HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers

As of 02/09/2023, out of 117 EHV vouchers authorized:

- 137 moving papers have been issued,
- 98 applicants have been housed.
- 6 applicants are searching for housing.
- 1 applicant have submitted moving papers to RHA
- 10 new referrals have 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 03/09/2023, out of 25 new Mainstream Vouchers authorized, 6 applicants have been housed and 5 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:

- SEMAP.
- Rent Calculations& HCV Program Management.
- Effective Use of HUD's Two-Year Tool to maximize voucher utilization;
- Reasonable Accommodations.
- Personal and Professional Development such as effective communication.

Participant Highlights

We have 232 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:

- Ms. Nixon entered the FSS program on September 1st, 2021, with employment, credit restoration, and homeownership goals. Ms. Nixon sought and maintained employment with AJ Staffing Inc. Ms. Nixon's income increased by 32% and she is no longer receiving Section 8 assistance. Ms. Nixon is a successful graduate of the FSS program.

Section 3

- Monthly Report – no updates

Agency Collaborations

- Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) offers free financial counseling, focusing on increasing savings, reducing debt, and increasing access to safe and affordable banking products.
 - 2022 Stats
 - 93 clients
 - 286 counseling sessions
 - \$255,000 debt reduction
 - \$111,000 increased savings
 - FEC awarded 150K to assist RHA families, of which 30 new homeowners are eligible for a 1k grant.
 - City Council approved the project at the February council meeting. An 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.
- Action for a Better Community (ABC) – Benefits Cliff Project - We are participating in a community-wide initiative led by ABC to create a tool that will help individuals receiving public assistance to understand and mitigate benefit cliffs and their impacts
 - Calculator development and Pilot agency selection underway
 - Met with A
 - BC to discuss the first look at the calculator and pilot details
 - Ten families participated in the Benefits Cliff Pilot. Each Family tested the calculator and completed a brief survey related to their experience in using

- the calculator. Each participant received a \$ 35 gift card for participating in the survey.
- Wrap-up meeting to discuss future iterations of the pilot program held on 12/12/2022.
 - 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 the 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:
 - Raise Income
 - Invest in Families
 - Decriminalize Poverty
 - 4. Reform Housing.
 - Closing the Gaps 6 city cohort (Albuquerque, NM; Austin, TX; Memphis, TN; Minneapolis, MN; Rochester, NY; and St. Paul, MN) is a one-year initiative that brings together leaders from cities across the country who are committed to imagining what an anti-racist society might look like and playing an essential role in building it through the transformation of government policies, practices, and operations.
 - CTG provides up to \$167,000 per cohort city to execute your homeownership strategy and up to \$100,000 per cohort city to execute your business, starts, and growth strategy.
 - Mayor Evans has signed off on the proposed plan. We are awaiting an award letter from Living Cities to present it to the city council. 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.
 - Jordan Health Community Engagement Committee - Understanding how we as community organizations can better serve one another and our community in hopes of linking various community organizations (churches, service centers, recreation centers, and neighborhood organizations) and them having a stronger, visible presence in the community.
 - Next steps: Jordan Health Roadshow

- Wilmot Cancer Institute Faith in Community Advisory Board (FCAB) will exist to strengthen the relationship between faith-based organizations, the communities they serve, and the Wilmot Cancer Institute to address cancer health disparities that disproportionality impact specific groups.
 - Dr. Nikesha Gilmore to present the study at the December Resident Relations meeting.
 - January FCAB meeting presentation with Dr. Harris – Studying how antioxidant levels affect cancer.

- RHA has been invited to participate in the Mayor’s Financial Empowerment
 - Met with the Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) team on 10/18/2022 to discuss the vision statement, future expectations of OFE, current gaps in creating financially empowered residents, and survey questions for focus groups.
 - Met with the Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) team on 12/2/2022 to discuss past actions and determine measures of success and measures for impact on beneficiaries.
 - Reviewing draft strategic plan next meeting February 10th
 - Mayoral Press Conference and Ribbon cutting to announce Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) on 3/2/2026.

- Crisis in Housing Community Forum 3/1/23 – Councilman Kim Smith and County Legislator Rachel Barnhart brought together RHA, DHS the Continuum of Care, and community members to identify gaps in our systems and find solutions to our community’s housing needs.

Homeownership

- Ms. Williams closed on her home at 302 Rand Street on January 17th.
- We have three families with anticipated closings and thirty-one families who have been approved for financing and are searching for homes.

12. Resident Relations Report

Melissa Berrien

Resident Council Training – All resident council officers were required to attend training prior to the start of the 2023 Resident Council Office term. All officers received training on conducting meetings, making meetings inclusive, use of Tenant Participation funds, and best practices for creating and maintaining resident accounts with the exception of Glenwood. Glenwood officer training is rescheduled for March 17th, 2023.

Community Rooms Resident Rental – Harolda presented the president a draft policy for private community room events. Resident review and feedback requested.

Resident Email Communications- Commissioner Cummings requested presidents to utilize the emails set up for their councils by RHA. We discussed the benefits of using email as a communication tool. Lynette McGee is working with IT to retrain residents.

Senior Activities

- Presidents were polled for interest in the OK card program. Commissioner Cummings worked with Finance Director Huffman to determine a funding source for printing. Commissioner Cummings asks that Resident Services oversee the program. Commissioner Cummings has formed a committee of presidents and RHA staff to move the program forward.
- Outreach for Covid Boosters did not garner enough interested residents to establish a clinic. Interested residents were referred to Trillium and Vineyard Farms.
- Outreach for reinstatement of Tenant on Patrol (TOP) is underway.
- Willie Otis discussed changing the event to individual site events in lieu of a larger single event but overwhelmingly presidents responded to keep it as is. Event planning is underway.

Family Activities –

- Melissa Berrien met with Scout Liaison, Michelle Martin, and Harriet Tubman President Michelle Thomas on 1/30/2023 to discuss outreach efforts for scouting at Harriet Tubman Estates. The next meeting is scheduled for 3/28/2023.
- Strong Families planning team meeting scheduled for 3/27/2023.

13. Planning Committee Report

Shawn Burr

- Please join me in welcoming Dan Long as our new Director of Development & Capital Projects!
- The Planning Committee meeting was held on 3/8/2023. There were no follow-up items from the previous meeting.
- There were two action items presented, discussed, and agreed to move forward to the Board for approval.
- We then discussed the status of our current projects by having staff give updates and review progress pictures:
 1. Kennedy Tower Hallway Rehabilitation – the project is 99% complete and behind schedule due to COVID and material delays.
 2. Danforth Towers East & West Façade Repair – project is 82% complete and on hold until spring when weather is conducive to finish the work.
- We continue to work with our consultant team of D+B/Calogero on summarizing and categorizing the RAD Physical Conditions Assessments and Environmental testing on most all of our PH properties. This will take some time and we will be including public housing, maintenance, and finance in the process.
- There are currently four projects out to bid and we have additional projects to be submitted to Procurement.
- 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.
- The status of our current CFP Budgets as of December 31st are: 501.19 is 100% obligated and 100% expended, 501.20 is 43% Obligated and 36% Expended and

501.21 is 100% Obligated and 33% Expended. We expect to meet all our deadlines.

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. Moving the project forward in coordination with NYS HCR, NYS OTDA, HUD, and City of Roch. With closing calls every Friday and a closing date of 4/27/23! We are communicating regularly with HUD on the RAD conversion which is expected to go before the HUD loan committee next week. We continue to work with the City on the coordination between agencies as the project moves forward. Todd Bullard is also involved now from here on out with preparing necessary resolutions and representing RHA through the closing process with closing team meetings every week.
- Our other development projects in various stages were discussed with funding applications submitted and more being submitted.
- Updates were then given on our pipeline of capital projects in the planning and design stages.
- Updates were also given on the Hazard Related Grant and Section 32 progress.
- The rest of our project pipeline was presented, and the meeting was adjourned.

14. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Cummings: no comment.

Commissioner Rubin: no comment.

Commissioner Waters: no comment.

Commissioner Otis: no comment.

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 2:10 pm. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Otis, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, and Commissioner Remarais voted yes. The motion was passed, five to zero.

vi. Resolution 03.21.23-01– Authorized the Executive Director to sign the lease termination – Executive.

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

vii. Resolution 03.21.23-02– Authorized the Executive Director to sign the lease termination – Executive.

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

viii. Resolution 03.21.23-03– Authorized the Executive Director to sign the lease termination – Executive.

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

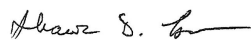
Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 3:17 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Otis, Commissioner Waters, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed five to zero.

15. March Regular Board Meeting

The February Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 22, 2023**, at 12:00 pm.

There were no further items to come before the Board, a vote to end the September Regular Meeting Business was taken, Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded a motion to end the Board Meeting at 3:17 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Otis, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Waters, and Commissioner Rubin voted yes. The motion was passed five to zero.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board,
Executive Director