



**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY  
March 25, 2024  
675 WEST MAIN STREET  
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**

**March 25, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Rosalie Remarais, Chairperson  
Florine Cummings, Resident Commissioner, Vice Chair  
Robert Davis, Commissioner  
Shanai Lee, Commissioner  
Kabutey Ocansey, Commissioner  
Hank Ruben, Commissioner  
James Waters, Jr., Commissioner

**STAFF PRESENT**

Melissa Berrien  
Shawn Burr  
Diana Colon  
Natasha Dicks  
Pierre Dorancy  
Cynthia Herriott  
Kimberly Huffman  
Joyce Kinsey  
Daniel Long  
Loretha J.  
McCullough  
Mariam Machuca-  
Rodriguez  
Evhen Tupis  
Harold Zink

**OTHERS PRESENT**

H. Todd Bullard, RHA Legal Counsel  
Tim Cook, Tipping Point Communications

Commissioner Rosalie Remarais called the March 2024 Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting to order at 12:03 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**

Mr. J. Washington came to express some concerns. The Executive Director will respond to him at a later date.

**2. Approval of Minutes: February 21, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Ruben seconded the motion to approve the February 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Rubin, and Commissioner Ocansey voted yes, the motion passed five to zero.

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

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



Mr. Burr

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 our first few residents moving back into their homes! They were all very excited. Kudos to Straudie Bryant who prepared the gift baskets as they were amazing! Dan will have pictures with his report. We are exceeding our MWBE and Section 3 goals nicely. Parliament-Fairfield

construction under way with good progress being made also. We are excited that our residents will be soon living in more modern, energy efficient homes with more accessible units and more 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. HCR announced their awards for 2024 and Fernwood was not selected. We continue to meet internally on Phase II and Edgemere presented some concepts at our March 13 Project Planning meeting along with an overview of a potential long-term pipeline. Glenwood is moving along with a concept plan submitted to HCR and other funding sources applied for and we had a call with HCR earlier this month to answer some questions they had on the project. They concurred that it's a great project and support our efforts to preserve Public Housing, but the cost of the project is concerning. Our next resident meeting was held on 3/18 with good attendance and good questions. Big kudos to the PH 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 shared an updated from NYSPHADA Update: The Legislative Committee continues to be very busy advocating at the State level for funding for PHA's. We met with many state legislators advocating on the importance of budget line items that support upstate NY PHA's and were able to get a line item for \$150 million designated for upstate PHAs. 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. Our Spring conference is this week and RHA will be well represented with several staff attending the two-day training on NSPIRE.

Mr. Burr gave an update on the RMAPI Steering Committee. RMAPI for some of the that RHA staff attended enjoyed Pulitzer Prize-winning author Matthew Desmond (Profit in the American City, Evicted, Poverty by America) presentation on March 6 for a community conversation and book signing. I am glad we were able to support the event and 10 staff and Board members will have the opportunity to attend along with 10 of our residents/participants.

Mr. Burr shared that the executive team continues to work on updating our org chart from top to bottom and assessing our civil service class plan. We will be adding additional titles to create more advancement opportunities and fill gaps where needed. We are getting close to submitting the revised Class Plan to Civil Service.

Mr. Burr shared that on 3/19 and 3/20, I attended a HUD training along with Todd Bullard that was facilitated by the Office of Public Housing and Office of General Counsel. The training was very informative, and we both learned a few things. It was also comforting to know what we're doing properly and that there is an open line of communication with HUD.

Mr. Burr shared The President has signed the Bipartisan T-HUD Appropriations Bill and I've attached some information from PHADA for you on the details.

**b. Board Action Requests**

- i. Bond Street Development Asbestos Abatement - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to Regional Environmental Demolition in the amount of \$188,222.00 – Capital Projects

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

- ii. 158 Bartlett St. Renovation - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to Gatti Remodeling in the amount of \$221,385.00 – Capital Projects.

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

- iii. Abatement of 16 & 36 Bronson Ct – Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract Quick Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$ 50,000.00 – Capital Projects.

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

- iv. Harriett Tubman Estates- Sewer Maintenance for 22 building – Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to Arold Construction Co. Inc. in the amount of \$89,750.00 – Capital Projects.

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

- v. Collective Bargaining Agreement (ratification) – Authorized the Executive Director to sign the agreement with AFSCME Local 163-F Council 66 (AFL-CIO) – Human Resources.

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

- vi. Contract-to-Hire Employment Firms (Systems Engineer) – Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to Bay InfoTech, Frontall, and Entre in the amount of \$115,000.00 – Information Technology.

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

- vii. IT Staff Augmentation Services – Authorized the Executive Director to award a 6-month contract with Innovative Solutions in the amount of \$82,400.00 – Information Technology.

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

- viii. Lawn cutting contract for North, South and Central Zones 2024 – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with AA Blades in the amount of \$119,413.00 – Maintenance.

Commissioner Lee moved, and Commissioner Waters seconded the motion to **approve** the action item.

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

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

- ix. Lawn cutting contract for Scattered Sites and Admin Building 2024 – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with Cardinal Landscaping in the amount of \$138,340.00 – Maintenance.

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

- x. Vehicle Fleet – Authorized the Executive Director to award a one-year contract to Enterprise Fleet Management in the amount of \$210,000.00 – Maintenance.

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

- xi. Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List Preference – Authorized the Executive Director to approve and implement the proposed language in the RHA Administrative Plan – Leasing Operations.

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

#### 4. Human Resource Report

**Loretha J. McCullough**

Consistent with our RHA's Strategic Plan, the Human Resource Department is committed to "Fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment." In February 2024, HR focused on key activities such as building organizational capacity through hiring and promotions and creating a positive culture.

**Recruitment, Hires & Promotions:**

**Hires:**

Hire Type	New Position	Department	Effective Date
New Hire	Sr. Housing Specialist	Compliance	March 18, 2024
New Hire	Sr. Housing Specialist	Leasing Operations	March 18, 2024
New Hire	Stock Clerk	Purchasing	April 1, 2024
Rehire	Sr. Inspector Mechanic	Maintenance	April 1, 2024

**Employee Promotions:**

In recognition of outstanding performance and commitment to RHA, the following employees were promoted (promotion in not only title, but also pay):

Previous Position	New Position	Department	Effective Date
Clerk I	Administrative Assistant	Compliance	March 4, 2024
Clerk II	Clerk I – Confidential	Compliance	March 4, 2024
Housing Specialist	Property Manager	Public Housing	March 4, 2024

**Transfers:**

Previous Position	New Position	Department	Effective Date
N/A			

**Note:**

- Promotions and Transfers are aligned with the Human Resources Department’s overarching strategic goal of promoting an organizational culture of excellence.

	Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
<b>Type</b>	<b>Count</b>				
New Hire/Rehire	5	8			
Promotion	8	6			
Transfer	1	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>			

**Recruitment Strategies:**

Open Req.s	# Apl’s Approved by Civil Service	# Apl’s Denied by Civil Service	# Interviews Completed	# Interviews Pending	# Offers Extended	# Offers Accepted	Offer Acceptance Rate
37*	59	21	34	1	29	24	93%

- \*51 Open Positions.
- \*\* Declined reason:
  - 1 due to pay.
  - 1 Remained with current employer.
  - 1 – No call/No Show
  - 1 - Rescission due to an unfavorable background check

**Separations:**

	<b>Q4 2023</b>	<b>Q1 2024</b>	<b>Q2 2024</b>	<b>Q3 2024</b>	<b>Q4 2024</b>
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Count</b>				
Death	0	1			
Resignation	2	1			
Retirement	0	1			
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>			

**Career Fair**

- **March 7th (10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.):** Union Apprenticeship & Career Fair (City of Rochester, Rochester City School District).
  - Received a few communications regarding interest; applicants were redirected to RHA’s Employment Opportunities portal.

**Staffing Plan:**

- Candidate sourcing and interviews (via Clovity, Inc.) in progress. The table below is a status summary:

	<b>Q1 2024</b>	<b>Q2 2024</b>	<b>Q3 2024</b>
<b>Position</b>	<b>Count</b>		
Clerk II 2 LO / 2 PH	4		
Housing Specialist 1 LO / 2 PH	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>		

**Performance:**

- 2023 Performance Evaluation Cycle:
  - Expected Launch date: 3/18/2024.
  - Expected completion date: 4/12/2024.

**Employee Engagement Initiatives:**

- Continue to prioritize the employee experience, focusing on creating a positive and engaging work environment.
  - Lobby Hours: Closing for the lunch hour effective 3/18/2024,
  - Flexible Work Hours - staggered work schedule,
  - Voicemail Greeting Standardization - provided a recommended script, and
  - Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement.

**HR Compliance:**

- NYS Department of Labor
  - Ensuring RHA is adhering to HR related applicable laws and regulations.

**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.
- Lunar New Year: The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shared information via email regarding the cultural holiday that celebrates The Lunar New Year on the traditional lunisolar Chinese calendar. Marking the end of winter and the beginning of the spring season.
- The Racial Wealth Gap Learning Simulation: Natasha conducted a training with the Diversity Committee to help in the understanding of why racial equity is important to address structural inequality within our organizations and communities. This simulation incorporates a racial equity lens into our daily work, life, policies, practices, and advocacy.
- Black History Month: The Black History Month Celebration Rochester Housing Authority celebrated the beauty of the black culture and the trials and triumphs the RHA newsletter. Justin Webb song a hymnal uplifting our spirits to keep on keeping on. We fellowshipped together with amazing soul food from the Jamaican Soul restaurant. We watched the prerecorded video of Commissioner Florine Cummings and Thomas Lathrop discussing racial equity and the barriers that disproportionately hurt people of color. Commissioner Cummings shared her experience with the 1960's riots and the conditions of the Hanover Projects for the black community in the 1960's. We were all encouraged to understand that public housing is not the last stop instead a steppingstone to move up through the services provided and move out to home ownership.
- Ramadan: The month of Ramadan was acknowledged by an informational email to staff.

Compliance

- Leasing Operations Repayment Agreement payments total YTD as of February 2024, \$7,258.00 collected (with a total of \$5,317.00 collected in February 2024) A total of \$630,102.86 has been collected to date.
- Public Housing Repayment agreement totals YTD for vacated arrears and collection loss as of February 2024, with \$1,568.86 collected (with a total of \$885.00 collected in February 2024). A total of \$68,389.20 was collected to date.

- **Termination Hearings:**
  - **Leasing Operations** – 7 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 0 Upheld; 0 No Show, 0 Overturned, 0 Reinstated, 7 Adjourned, 0 Withdrawn; 0 Pending Hearing Decision.
  - **Public Housing** – 0 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 0 Upheld; 0 No Show, 0 Overturned, 0 Reinstated (one-year probationary lease), 0 Adjourned; 0 Withdrawn.

### **Operations**

- **Case Management**
  - Program Violation Referrals Outstanding – 1,430 (Previously 1,426)– 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 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*)

- 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.
  - We have recently taken a proactive step of engaging the services of two additional security companies to bolster safety measures in both Glenwood Gardens and our main office. These additional security companies will work in collaboration with our existing security team to provide comprehensive coverage and effectively address any potential security concerns.
    - We have informally received positive feedback from Glenwood Gardens residents regarding the new security services that are being provided.

6. **Finance**

**Kimberly Huffman**

Ms. Huffman reported the monthly Finance Report, the actual vs. budgeted figures, and variances for January 2024, for the COCC, Public Housing, and Section 8 income and expenses.

7. **Information Technology Report**

**Evhen Tupis**

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

- The system is functional.
- Training for the Owner (Cynthia Herriott) and their team, along with Public Housing stakeholders is pending the outcome of resolving unexpected RHA technical issues.

**RFP: Video Safety System & Electronic Access Control – Remaining Sites**

- In-person / On-site final demonstrations and evaluations are being scheduled.
- Goal: Recommendation to the Board in May.

**RFP: Tenmast WinTen2+ System Upgrade/Replacement**

- Interim evaluations based on Teams-interviews are due 3/15/24. Goal: narrow the scope to two vendors.
- Next: Two-vendor recommendation presented to Executive Team.
- Afterward: Schedule final on-site demonstrations and interviews of finalists, ASAP based on vendor availability.

**Resident Computer Labs & Resident Council President Computers**

- Internet circuits have been upgraded.
- Final computer “image” is being developed. They will be “hardened” to assure stability.
- Signage is posted to alert residents of the project status.

**Resident Internet Initiative (NYS ConnectALL program)**

- All ~300+ residential RHA properties (this includes each “scattered site”) have been submitted.
- Awaiting evaluation, award-decision, and next steps from NYS Connect ALL program.
- Note: As presented at this time, this initiative includes both service-to-the-building and service to the apartment. If approved, this will become a major RHA initiative.

**Resident Eclipse Workshops**

- Through a partnership with the Resident Services team, RHA will be running “Student Workshops” where RHA youth will make their own pinhole viewers.

**8. Public Housing Report**

**Shawn Burr**

**Public Housing Activities**

- A Collaboration Committee was created for the Public Housing Department. A group of staff members of this department have volunteered to be part of it. This was established to get ideas/input on how to collaboratively move the Public Housing Department forward by creating key strategies and ensure current processes are working. This committee meets bi-weekly.
- On February 20, 2024, we had our second Annual Plan meeting to go over assignments with RHA key staff and Resident Council Members. The timeline was also reviewed and was reiterated the importance of submitting requests on time to meet the HUD submission deadline. The Council Members present submitted their budget requests which will be part of the Plan.
- Development LIHTC (Low Income Housing Tax Credit) renewed/renovated homes project status is as follow:
  - Scattered Sites Zone One – 4 homes have been completed and residents have moved in. 2 are existing families and 2 are new applicants. RHA staff and Tipping Point were present for these move-ins. RHA staff welcomed the families to their new homes and presented them with gift baskets and gift cards. Tipping Point interviewed the families. This article was published on the RHA Facebook page.
  - Scattered Sites Zone Two – 3 residents will be moving in soon. Currently waiting for the C of O reports.
  - Scattered Sites Zone Three – Renovations have a tentative end date for the beginning of April 2024.
  - Scattered Sites Zone Four - work in progress.

**Public Housing Matters:**

- The Team continues to-do an excellent job of keeping things moving despite being short- staffed. Many are working overtime to help with the workload.
- We have received some resumes from clerical and housing specialist' applicants and some upcoming interviews.

Rent Arrears

- Public Housing Terminations status: As of March 1, 2024
  - There are 33 residents currently with the Attorney's office being processed for court. The following is the current statistical breakdown:
    - 6 are holdovers – 4 of these are scheduled to go to court on March 25, 2024.
    - 27 are for non-payments – 11 of these are being refiled, per attorney's recommendation. One of the 18 that are still being processed for court is a "skip out". For this "skip out", in order for RHA to reclaim possession of the unit we must take this resident to court, and this is because the resident has left behind most of their personal belongings inside the unit.
  - From our previous court docket, as of today:
    - We have processed 15 evictions.
    - 3 have a trial date on March 27, 2024.
    - We are refiling 7 per attorney's recommendation.
- RHA's Public Housing department Received \$ .00 in PPI2.0 monies for February 2024.
- As of February 2024, the total delinquent rent amount owed \$853,931.30, which is a decrease of \$21,052.00 from the month of January.
  - 0 to 30 days -- \$76,061.00
  - 31 to 60 days -- \$76,929.00
  - 61 to 90 days -- \$74,345.00
  - Over 90 days -- \$655,483.30
- Four 30-day notices were sent to the City Marshal in February.
- Repayment agreements are offered in extreme circumstances with the Property Manager's approval.
- We are still collaborating with residents to address arrears in lieu of court proceedings.
- As of February 2024, RHA has entered into 121 repayment agreements year to date totaling \$214,231.94.
- As of February 29, 2024, the following is an update of the Public Housing zones repayment agreements: No other updates.
  - North Zone – three residents are currently in lease termination status and six residents are in delinquent status.
  - South Zone – One resident is currently in lease termination status and two are in delinquent status.
  - Central Zone – one resident is currently in lease termination status and three residents are in delinquent status.
  - Scattered Sites – one resident is currently in lease termination status and eight are in delinquent status.

Parkside

- Vacancy
  - 5 Vacant Units
  - 3 Units Ready to Lease
  - 0 Offers

Parkside Rent Arrears

- \$ 51,943.56 outstanding rent
  - \$ 19,787.31 0-30days
  - \$ 4,745.00 31-60 days
  - \$ 120.00 61-90 days
  - \$ 41,273.00 over 90 days
- Staff are working with residents to get current with their rent.

**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 to process application.
- Next Studio Wait List Pull: 3/4/24 and 3/18/24.
- Kennedy Tower - 4th and 5th floors have been released to APC for unit offers. APC Housing Specialist is currently making offers to occupy those units.
- HRT - 11th floor – APC Housing Specialist is continuing in making offers to fill these units as well.
- Studios at DTE/DTW are still open. We are continuously pulling from the studio wait list to get those unit occupied. Most applicants, after going thru the intake process, decide not to take the unit citing the unit is too small for their belongings as for the reason they've declined the unit offer.
- Update: APC continues to canvas the 1 bedroom wait list for applicants that are 50+ years old and have an interest in residing in our hi-rise communities. APC Manager continues to monitor and assess each month the need to canvas the 1-bedroom wait list to occupy the vacant units at DTE/DTW/KT and HRT.

**Wait List Purge:**

- Update: On 1/22/24, APC initiated and is in the processing of purging its 2, 3, 4-bedroom wait lists. Applicants on the lists were mailed out a request to update their application by 2/16/24 and sent a Business Reply envelope to return the updated application to APC.
- Purge update:
  - 2-bedroom applicants – 789 applicants were sent a letter requesting to update their PH application. 139 applicants responded by the deadline.
  - 3-bedroom applicants - 982 applicants were sent a letter requesting to update their PH application. 144 applicants responded by the deadline.
  - 4-bedroom applicants – 397 applicants were sent a letter requesting to update their PH application.

- Applicants that had legal forwarding addresses, were sent a second letter to the new address. In accordance with RHA's Purge Policy, RHA must allow those families 15 business days from the date the letter was mailed to reply. Those that have not responded by the deadline will be removed from the wait list without any further notice.
  - The deadline for these to return to RHA is 3/15/24.
  - To allow for mail processing time, APC will accept mailed in updated applications that have been date stamped no later than 3/15/2024 up until the actual day of purge.

**Current Department Operation Status:**

- As of January 17, 2024, APC Housing Specialists are now responsible for all unit viewings in Central Zone and to be utilized as backups for the North, South, Scattered Sites Zones. Both Housing Specialists have been assigned to one day of the week to show unit viewings. Also, one of the Housing Specialist (Lisa C.) has been tasked to assist with lease ups as a back-up and already has done 1 lease up as of this report.
- Total Unit Viewings:
  - Lisa:
    - Scheduled Unit Viewings: 5, Conducted: 5,
    - Lease-Ups: 1
  - Sheila (Bilingual):
    - Scheduled Unit Viewings: 5, Conducted: 4,
    - Interpreter for Lease-ups: 1

**Unit Offers:**

- APC Manager and designated staff continue to extend offers to 'ready drawer' applicants to fill vacancies. We are continuously pulling applicants from the 1-bedroom and studio wait lists to make immediate offers.
- Current applications in Screening and Intake Phase as of 3/06/24:
  - Currently being screened - 23 applications
    - Studio/1-bedrooms- 14
    - 2+ bedrooms – 9
  - Currently going thru intake (w/Intake Specialists): 47 applications
    - studio/1-bedroom – 16 applications
    - 2+ bedrooms – 31 applications

**Renovation/Relocations Projects** – as of 3/6/2024 no other updates

**Fed/Scattered Site**

- As of 10/5/23 – All residents, expect for the Section 32 resident and resident requiring a 504 unit, have received a final relocation unit offer, per the Relocation Plan. As of 1/30/24 there are no other updates.

- Bond St. – As of 5/2/23 - All families have been extended an offer. All have accepted their offers except 1 resident. Property Manager is currently addressing this issue. As of 1/30/24 there are no other updates.
- Luther Circle -all residents have been assigned a unit to relocate to. APC is waiting on transfer paperwork/preferences from Property Manager and residents to officially add them to wait list and extend offer according to transfer policy and relocation plan.
- APC is currently extending offers to residents with construction project start dates of 1/2024. All other residents with earlier construction project start dates have been extended a unit offer. Most of those residents have accepted their relocation unit and are either waiting for their stipend to move or moving date by moving company. Update: Since the closing of Luther/Fairfield Village, the remaining 1 resident (excluding lease terminations), have been offered a final unit offer.
- Parliament Arms – Since the closing of Parliament Arms, the remaining 2 residents will or have been offered a final unit offer.

## **9. Maintenance Report**

**Shawn Burr**

### **1. Vacant Unit Report**

- The Maintenance Department continues to work on keeping up with the high number of vacant units. While assisting Public Housing and working with the Application Processing Center on reducing the numbers of vacant units and bring up the vacancy rate to a higher level.

### **2. Site Beautification**

- We are still looking at finding some new sources of wall coverings for the lobbies at DTE and DTW with direction from Public Housing. We are reaching out for some new companies who specialize in this type of work and materials to try and update the looks of the buildings for a better first impression.
- We will begin to gear up for the spring and will be presenting some new contracts and some for renewal to the board over the next few months to prepare for the spring and summer months.

### **3. Preparing for NSPIRE Inspection**

- RHA has received information that we will be having the new HUD inspections called NSPIRE. This is the roll out of the replacement for the old REAC inspection. This is a required HUD inspection where they grade Housing Authorities on how well we maintain our sites and units. With many changes to the inspection formula from the old REAC to the new NSPIRE. We are expecting a learning curve for both RHA and the inspectors with the change in systems. Maintenance has been utilizing available staff and using contractors to prepare all sites scheduled for inspections. We are making preparation now to be ready when

they show up for these first rounds of many inspections as HUD begins to implement the switch over to the new INSPIRE inspection system.

## 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. Updates in 2024 will reflect required and discretionary changes, including HOTMA and NSPIRE regulations.
2. Currently, all applicants on the Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List have been canvassed for prequalification.
3. Leasing Operations' voucher and funding utilization goal is between 95% to 98%. **We are currently at 82.71% utilization of vouchers and 102.35% utilization of funds.** Leasing Operations Department has scheduled a meeting with HUD to approve a Leasing Plan for 2024 to maximize utilization of vouchers and HUD funding. Leasing Operations staff continue to work overtime to issue vouchers, complete certifications and maintain utilization. In addition, we have increased our payment standards, and continue to issue vouchers, increase outreach to landlords and increase communication with participants on available resources during the housing search process.
4. The monthly inspection goal has been 780-960. **The Inspection Unit conducted 893 inspections in February 2024.**

### 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](mailto:communitychoice@rochesterhousing.org) and the phone line is (585) 697-6210. Leasing Operations staff have sent out seventeen (17) batches of letters of interest to qualifying families with recertifications from May 2023 through September 2024 were randomly selected and provided with program

information. As of 03/14/2024, two hundred fifty-seven (257) families have enrolled in the program of which one hundred thirty (130) were randomly selected for mobility services (CMRS). Seven (7) applicant families from the HCV Waiting List have enrolled and four (4) were randomly assigned to receive services. CCD families continue to search for units throughout the Opportunity Areas and eight (8) families have leased up in an Opportunity Area. Seven (7) CCD families moved into a non-Opportunity Areas; Thirty-six (36) families renewed their lease or did not move.

### **HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers**

#### **As of 03/14/2024, out of 117 EHV vouchers authorized:**

- 175 moving papers have been issued,
- 126 applicants have been housed.
- 2 applicants are searching for housing.
- 1 applicant has moving papers submitted to Contracts Unit.
- No additional 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 03/14/2024, out of 25 new Mainstream Vouchers authorized, 24** applicants have been housed and 1 family currently has moving papers submitted to RHA.

### **Training**

The Leasing Operations team will continue to provide training for staff in Calendar Year 2024 externally and in collaboration with the HR Department. Topics include:

- Trainings will continue for topics including SEMAP, HOTMA and NSPIRE
- Rent Calculations & HCV Program Management for Housing Specialists
- HCV Executive Management training for Housing Managers
- Personal and Professional Development, for all staff

## 11. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Report

Melissa Berrien

**Participant Highlights: We have 170 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:**

1. Ms. McKnight began the FSS program on September 1, 2019, with employment, credit maintenance and homeownership goals. Ms. McKnight gained employment with Monroe County and increased her income by 154%.

Ms. McKnight is a successful graduate of the FSS program and entitled to receive \$2,631.32 in escrow savings.

### Section 3

- **Participant Highlights: We have 169 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:**
  - Ms. Marte began the FSS program on February 1, 2023, with employment and homeownership goals. Ms. Marte maintained employment with Staples and closed on her home on 12/8/2023. Ms. Marte is a successful graduate of the FSS program.
  - Ms. Bess began the FSS program on March 1, 2023, with employment and homeownership goals. Ms. Bess maintained employment with Highland Hospital and closed on her home on 4/12/2023. Ms. Bess is a successful graduate of the FSS program.
- **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.
    - 2023 Stats
      1. 137 clients
      2. 344 counseling sessions
      3. \$310,000 debt reduction
      4. \$70,000 increased savings
    - FEC awarded 150K to assist RHA families, of which 30 new homeowners are eligible for a 1k grant.

- City Council approved the extension of the HO grant project through September 30<sup>th</sup> of 2023. Amendment to Executive Director and Mayor for Signature. Signed extension 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 Co-chair** – 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.
  - 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.
  - After analyzing the 7 prototypes we combined duplicative ideas into 3 prototypes: Housing Choice Hub, Certification and Housing Matching App. Meetings are scheduled with key partners to determine viability, ownership and needed resources to get to pilot phase.
  - 2024 Policy agenda presented to legislators on 2/2/24.
  - RHA, ROC the Future and RCSD meeting to prepare for technical assistance opportunity with Enterprise that will focus on building partnerships across the housing and education sectors.
  
- **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.
  - Pathstone and CCCS responded to an RFP to push the homeownership project further.
  - Exploring a partnership with credit builders alliance to offer rent reporting to RHA residents.
- **Homeownership**
    - Mr. Ayala closed on his home Rochester zip code 14608 on January 31, 2024.
    - Ms. Diaz closed on her home Rochester zip code 14613 on February 26, 2024.
    - We have seven families with an anticipated closing and thirty-one families who have been approved for financing and are searching for homes.

## **12. Resident Relations Report**

**Melissa Berrien**

**Community Rooms Resident Rental** –MOU with Executive and RHA Attorney

**Spring Newsletter** – Commissioner Cummings requested resident input; ED Burr suggested working with resident services.

**Public Housing Office hours-** Lynette is looking for insight regarding a possible change in hours when office staff will be available similar to changes at Leasing Operations.

**2024 Eclipse** – Presidents were encouraged to put on events sponsored by the Resident Councils for the upcoming eclipse. Glasses provided by RHA will be distributed at the senior sites. Evhen spoke about a collab with resident services at family sites.

**Facebook-** Melissa discussed the presidents following RHA’s Facebook page where community resources are often posted.

**Commissioner’s report** – Commissioner Davis discussed the events he’s held at Danforth West, Bingo, Cancer prevention program, yard sale and upcoming Pool tournament and acknowledged the great job Bob did with a maintenance issue.

**Executive Overview – Tenants on Patrol (TOP)** –Executive Director Burr discussed development projects, NSPIRE inspections, reminded presidents of the opportunity and importance of participating in 5-year plan, next steps for TOP and Federal Budget as it related to our Housing Authority.

**Conference attendance** – Melissa reminded presidents of conference approval process.

**Family Activities** – Melissa discussed the upcoming Strong Families events and tentatively using the Eclipse event as a kickoff.

**Senior Activities**- Melissa discussed the Senior Summer Outing and Senior Holiday Luncheon

- **Presenter – Leslie Mosman** – Ms. Mosman presented Action for a Better Community programming available for residents with an emphasis on their training and development programs.

### **13. Planning Committee Report**

**Daniel R. Long**

- The Planning Committee meeting was held on 3/13/2024. There were no follow-up items from the previous meeting.
- There are 4 action items:
  1. Bond Hamilton Abatement
  2. 158 Bartlet Street Renovations
  3. 16 & 36 Bronson Court Abatement
  4. HT Sewer Line Cleaning and Repair Work
- 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 85% with abatement and demo completed and re-installations progressing.
  2. Unit 910 University Tower Fire Restoration – project is at 98% with restoration work having wrapped up and closing underway.
  3. Bronson Court Phase II project has begun construction and is at 15% completion. Porch roof/deck framing and exterior work is commencing despite the winter weather.
  4. We anticipate a start-up of the University Tower façade upgrades this Spring. It was awarded in the Fall of 2023 and construction paused until the weather improved.
  5. 158 Curtis Street Reconstruction is proceeding. Substantial reframing of the roof and upper portion of the house and porch has been completed and new roofing installed. Work will now proceed to the interior upgrades.
- Bureau Veritas to has provided a draft PNA report on the CNI target sites which we have reviewed and provided further supporting information for their office to review and update.
- Our MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report was presented and will continue to be updated each month (approximately 30% utilization) 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 78% Obligated and 4% Expended. With the latest projects and upcoming bid openings at the start of March and April, we expect to meet all our deadlines. We expect to start obligating the 501.23 grant as soon as spring 2024 with Bond Street Renovations being a substantial portion of that grant.
- 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 prepare to move residents back into the first remodeled scattered site units this month. The multi-family buildings are progressing with siding, insulation and drywall installations as inspections allow. Our first residents have moved into the first 4 scattered site units and the second round of units is anticipated move in later in March/ early April.
- 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. Mitigation and abatement along with general demolition is ongoing at both sites. Building #4 at Parliament is progressing to foundation installation and the existing buildings are being completely renovated. Building #1 at Parliament is progressing to cabinet installation and details on the new metal roofs. Fairfield buildings are being vacated and work is progressing on multiple buildings with Buildings 1 and 1A nearing completion.
- Our Development Partner reviewed our current RAD applications and our pipeline of future development projects for the Committee.
- 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 under TDC waiver review by HUD while the A/E firm is wrapping up the revised plans and we are setting up for bids in the early Spring.
- The rest of our project pipeline was presented, and the meeting was adjourned.

#### **14. Commissioner Comments**

**Commissioner Cummings:** no comment.

**Commissioner Rubin:** Reported he is on a little committee is working along and there will be a report on the eviction project, I hope at the next meeting at least the progress report.

**Commissioner Davis:** no comment.

**Commissioner Waters:** I just want to just want to put up to the human resources department again. It's good to see that the work that you are doing and that your team is doing it, it's paying off. So, I really appreciate that what you're doing in your team. I appreciate that and then I want to put this in the back of your mind if you can staff burn out, I want to talk to you about that at some point too.

**Commissioner Ocansey:** Said to Evhen thank you for working on application funding through NYS for the internet for all residents and he gave kudos to Evhen for submitting an application and getting it out there. I would want to certainly recognize you for that effort just with a very minimal staff. So that was tremendous undertaking and that the end results I think is going to be tremendous for RHA. We get what we submitted for. So, I really wanted to recognize your efforts there and trusting the staff. Continue your good work. I Really appreciate it. Thank you.

**Commissioner Lee:** Just thank you guys while you're out of work.

**Commissioner Remarais:** And for me the same. Thank you to the staff, senior staff, we appreciate everything you do. You know it's going to keep moving forward without you to Shawn for all his help and everything, and the RHA staff. So, thank you.

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

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Ocansey seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 2:49 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Lee, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

- viii. Lawn cutting contract for North, South and Central Zones 2024 – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with AA Blades in the amount of \$119,413.00 – Maintenance.

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Ocansey seconded the motion to **approve** the action item. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Waters, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes, and Commissioner Davis vote no. The motion passed six to one.

- ix. Lawn cutting contract for Scattered Sites and Admin Building 2024 – Authorized the Executive Director to renew the contract with Cardinal Landscaping in the amount of \$138,340.00 – Maintenance.

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

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end the Regular Board Meeting; Commissioner Lee moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to end the Executive Session at 2:36 pm. Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

### **15. May Regular Board Meeting**

The May Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Monday, May 22, 2024, at 12:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,  
Secretary to the RHA Board, Executive Director