

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
February 21, 2024
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



February 21, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rosalie Remarais, Chairperson
Florine Cummings, Resident Commissioner, Vice Chair
Robert Davis, Commissioner
Shanai Lee, Commissioner
Kabutey Ocansey, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Diana Colon
Robert Croston
Natasha Dicks
Pierre Dorancy
Cynthia Herriott
Kimberly Huffman
Joyce Kinsey
Daniel Long
Loretha J.
McCullough
Evhen Tupis
Harolda Wilcox

OTHERS PRESENT

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

Commissioner Rosalie Remarais called the February 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

There was no public comment.

2. Approval of Minutes: January 25, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Ocansey moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve the January 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Ocansey voted yes, the motion passed four to zero.

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

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



Mr. Burr

to recognize Staff across the Authority who continue to go above and beyond to ensure our quality services are performed and resident and participant needs are taken care of especially during this long-lasting pandemic! They really continue to do a remarkable job day in and day out!

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

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

Mr. Burr wanted to continue to recognize the extra efforts of staff involved in community projects. Partners Ending Homelessness, RMAPI Housing Working Group which will focus on our community's full housing system, Closing the Gaps Six City Cohort, Jordan Health Community Engagement Committee, Boy Scouts, City FEC Program Initiative, Connected Communities Housing Committee, Guardian Ad Litem Program, Private Sector Rental Market Study Working Group, Eviction Response Team, Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning and Benefits Cliff Project are a few that are in the works. I really appreciate their efforts in representing RHA on critical projects in our community and their extra efforts are commendable.

Mr. Burr share that the Development projects are moving forward with Federal St-SS construction/demo well under way! Dan will have pictures with his report. We are scheduled to have the first residents moving back to some of the scattered site homes as soon as HCR approves. We are exceeding our MWBE and Section 3 goals nicely. Parliament-Fairfield construction under way with good progress being made. 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 and are awaiting HCR to announce their awards for 2024 which will probably be in April. We continue to meet internally on Phase II and Edgemere will be presenting some concepts at our March 13 Project Planning meeting.

Glenwood is moving along with a concept plan submitted to HCR and other funding sources applied for and we had a call with HCR last week 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 will be in late March. Big kudos to Harolda and her team for assisting residents and preparing and training on tax credit compliance, Bob, and his team for assisting wherever and with the contractors and Dan for representing RHA in the field and at the table!! They are truly doing great work!

Mr. Burr 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 are meeting with many state legislators advocating on the importance of budget line items that support upstate NY PHA's. We continue to push for more ERAP funds for upstate PHA's as we all have significant arrears, capital improvement and gap funding for upstate PHA's. We are lining up additional meetings with more legislators.

Mr. Burr gave an update on the RMAPI Steering Committee. RMAPI publicly announced that Pulitzer Prize-winning author Matthew Desmond (*Profit in the American City, Evicted, Poverty by America*) will visit Rochester on **March 6** for a community conversation and book signing. This promises to be an inspirational event that will educate, engage, and inspire our community to act against poverty. The event will be held from 4-6 pm at Innovation Square, 140 South Clinton Ave. I wish I could make the event and see/hear Matthew Desmond in person but will be on vacation. However, 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 he was able to attend RMAPI's Community Update on 2/5/24. It was enlightening to see the impact and achievements in 2023. It was interesting to learn that RMAPI is the only antipoverty initiative still in operation in NYS! Attached to my report is the 2024 Policy Agenda.

Mr. Burr shared that he participated in the NYS Attorney General and Enterprises spotlight on innovative housing initiative programs, lift up lessons learned, and explore opportunities to further support New York's vulnerable communities in the years ahead in Albany on 1/24/23. The event showcased a lot of work that Enterprise and NYS have funded and supported including the NYSPOP grant we were awarded. Bill Simmons, ED of Syracuse Housing Authority, spoke and highlighted some of the work RHA has done and is doing.

Mr. Burr gave an update on 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.

Mr. Burr shared that Continuing Resolution in effect now will expire on March 1, 2024. We hope our elected officials will approve robust funding for HUD and our programs and we continue to advocate.

HUD Releases 2023 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report

On December 15, HUD Released part one of their Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR), which revealed a 12% increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night compared to 2022.

According to HUD, this is the highest number of people reported to be experiencing homelessness on a single night since 2007 when reporting began. The Point-in-Time (PIT) count, as it is referred to, provides an estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness within various populations.

The report, which is conducted every year, provides a glimpse into the number of individuals in shelters, temporary housing, and in unsheltered settings. More than 650,000 people were found to be experiencing homelessness on a single night in January 2023. Six in ten people experienced homelessness in shelters while the remaining experienced unsheltered homelessness.

Demographics of Homelessness in 2023

In 2023, the report shows that people who identify as Black or Indigenous continue to be overrepresented among the population experiencing homelessness. Of the total number of those experiencing homelessness in the U.S., 37% identified as Black, African American, or African. Additionally, those who identified as Indigenous had the largest percentage increase in sheltered homelessness by 18% or 1,631 more people.

Of the total number of those estimated to be experiencing homelessness, 72% experienced homelessness in households without children. More than 34,700 unaccompanied youth under the age of 25 were found to be experiencing homelessness as well, which is a 15% increase from 2022. Veterans experiencing homelessness saw a 7% increase raising the total to 35,574 in 2023.

Homelessness by State

Increases of homelessness were found in 41 states and the District of Columbia with decreases found in only just 9 states within the past year. By percentage, states with the largest increase of homelessness from 2022 to 2023 were New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, and Colorado. However, this is not fully reflective of longer-term change increases by percentage nor numbers that show decreases at certain points in time in previous years.

Continuums of Care (CoC)

According to data received from 381 CoCs, more than 52% of all people experiencing homelessness in the United States were located in the top 50 largest cities. This is 50,277 more people than in 2022 — a 17% increase. While this may be the most notable increase, homelessness increased across all geographic categories in 2023.

The rise in homelessness also meant a rise in bed inventory. Between 2022 to 2023, bed inventory increased for those currently experiencing homelessness by 7% and for those formerly experiencing homelessness by 6%. This inventory increased across all rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, and other permanent housing programs.

Veterans

According to estimates, more than 35,000 veterans were found to be experiencing homelessness on a single night in January of 2023. This accounts for approximately 7% of adults experiencing homelessness in the U.S. Of this total amount, 98% were found to be experiencing homelessness individually rather than part of a larger household.

While the total number of homelessness has decreased by 52% since 2009, there was a slight increase between 2022 and 2023 by 7% (2,445 more veterans).

For the full report, please see [here](#).

Mr. Burr reported that RHA's 13 Permanent Supportive Housing grant applications were funded 100% with increases coinciding with increased Fair Market Rents (FMR).

b. Board Action Requests

- i. 1117 Hudson/Ridge Tower Fire Restoration Project - Authorized the Executive Director to award a contract to Fleetwood Construction Services in the amount of \$138,600.00 – Capital Projects

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

- ii. Procurement Policy Update - Authorized the Executive Director to approve and the implementation of the proposed revisions to the RHA Procurement Policy – Finance.

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

- iii. Pest Solutions – Authorized the Executive Director to approve a onetime payment to Town and Country in the amount of 81,344.43 – Public Housing.

Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to approve the action item Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Ocansey, and Commissioner Cummings voted yes. The motion passed six 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	Maintenance Laborer	Maintenance	March 4, 2024
New Hire	Maintenance Laborer	Maintenance	March 4, 2024
New Hire	Maintenance Laborer	Maintenance	March 4, 2024
New Hire	Sr. HR Consultant	Human Resources	March 4, 2024

Employee Promotions:

In recognition of outstanding performance and commitment to RHA, the following employees were promoted:

Previous Position	New Position	Department	Effective Date
Clerk II	Administrative Assistant	Human Resources	February 19, 2024

Transfers:

Previous Position	New Position	Department	Effective Date
Director of Public Housing	Director of Compliance	Compliance	February 19, 2024

Note:

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

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
44*	55	19	28	9	24	22	92%

- 62 Open Positions.
- ** Declined reason:
 - 1 due to pay.
 - 1 Remained with current employer.
 - 1 - Rescission due to an unfavorable background check

Career Fair

- February 15th (2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.): Downtown Job Fair (MCC, Monroe County, Rochester Works, Charter Champions of Rochester).
- March 7th (10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.): Union Apprenticeship & Career Fair (City of Rochester, Rochester City School District).

Staffing Plan:

- Temp Staffing Firms Purchase Orders created.
 - Intro meetings completed, and
 - Candidate sourcing and interviews in progress.

Performance:

- 2022 Performance Bonus Process near completion
- 2023 Performance Evaluation Cycle: Preparation is underway.

Employee Engagement Initiatives:

- Continue to prioritize the employee experience, focusing on creating a positive and engaging work environment.
 - Lobby Hours,
 - Flexible Work Hours, and
 - Voicemail Greeting Standardization.

HR Compliance:

- NYS Department of Labor
 - Workers' Compensation Workplace Safety & Loss Prevention Consultation, and
 - Workplace Violence Incident Report Review.

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.
- Martin Luther King Jr.: The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shared information via email regarding the cultural holiday that celebrates Martin Luther King Jr's life and contributions to the civil rights movement and the progress he made toward racial equality in America.
- National Transit Equity Day: Hector, Beth and Marilyn attended the Regional Transit Service (RTS) celebration of National Transit Equity Day honoring Rosa Parks on February 2, 2024.
- Black History Month: The Black History Month Celebration will be held on Thursday, February 29, 2024, from 12:30 pm – 2:00 pm at 675 West Main Street, Tom McHugh Training Room. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee selected Vice Chair, Commissioner Cummings for an interview to share her experiences and need to be a part of the systematic change.

Compliance

- **Fraud Investigations:**
 - **Leasing Operations** Repayment Agreement payments total YTD as of January 2024, \$1,941.00 collected (with a total of \$1,941 collected in January 2024) A total of \$624,785.86 has been collected to date.
 - **Public Housing** Repayment agreement totals YTD for vacated arrears and collection loss as of January 2024, with \$683.86 collected (with a total of \$683.86 collected in January 2024). A total of \$67,504.20 was collected to date.
- **Termination Hearings:**
 - **Leasing Operations** – 8 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 0 Upheld; 0 No Show, 0 Overturned, 1 Reinstated, 6 Adjourned, 1 Withdrawn; 0 Pending Hearing Decision.
 - **Public Housing** – 1 Participant Hearings Scheduled: 0 Upheld; 0 No Show, 0 Overturned, 1 Reinstated (one-year probationary lease), 0 Adjourned; 0 Withdrawn.

Operations

○ **Case Management**

- Program Violation Referrals Outstanding – 1,426 (Previously 1,437)– which is a total to date since 2015. Due to staffing shortages, program violation referrals will be temporarily on hold. Compliance is working with HR to fill the positions.

○ **Rochester Housing Charities (RHC) – Commissioner Florine Cummings and Deputy Executive Director, Cynthia Herriott serves as RHA’s ex-officio representative on the RHC Board of Directors.**

- Both attend monthly board meetings.
- Board member recruitment for RHC is ongoing and staff are working on Board training.
- The DED will work with the ED to schedule a retreat with both the Rochester Housing Authority and Rochester Housing Charities once Board members are in place.
- RHC’s draft audit and budget have been provided to the board representatives.

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

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

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

- Public Safety works with the Rochester Police Department to develop strategies to address crime trends.
- 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. By doing so, we aim to enhance the overall security and ensure a safe environment for our residents and employees. 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 received positive feedback from Glenwood Gardens residents regarding the new security services that are being provided.

○ **Training** – I coordinated with HUD Office of Inspector General (OIG) to provide Housing policy Training for employees on December 8, 2023. A hybrid format will be utilized.

6. Finance

Kimberly Huffman

Ms. Huffman reported the monthly Finance Report, the actual vs. budgeted figures, and variances for December 2023, 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

- January 30: Owner (Compliance & Security) and Key Stakeholders (Public Housing) attended on-site system orientation meeting on January 30. Camera angels were approved and instruction for requesting video extraction was provided.
- TBD: Owner to receive hands-on system administration training.
- TBD: Final acceptance will occur upon RHA’s receipt of final systems documentation.

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

- Responding vendors have been asked to provide additional information to clarify statements made in their proposals. Awaiting outcome and review.

RFP: Tenmast Upgrade/Replacement

- Vendors that responded to the RFP are being interviewed. The final vendor interview originally scheduled for January 29, 2024, was postponed until February 14, 2024.
- Next step: Based on the summary of post-interview rankings, determine which vendor(s) will be asked to participate in more in-depth demonstrations.

Resident Computer Labs & Resident Council President Computers

- Shortly, all computers will be collected and updated with the latest software, then redeployed at a ratio of 1 computer to 50 housing units, plus 1 computer for each Resident Council President. There will be a period of time when no computers will be on-site.
- Internet circuits at five sites will be upgraded to more modern services to assure stability.
- Resident Council Presidents will be assigned Microsoft 365 accounts and training.

Resident Internet Initiative (NYS ConnectALL program)

- Last fall, RHA registered its desire to participate in this program. It is maturing slowly.
- NYS intends to provide “open Internet” to our buildings at no CapEx or OpEx expense.

- Residents may then subscribe to that service “at will”, at TBD sub-commercial rates.
- Also (loosely related): RHA is still exploring the possibility of providing Internet as part of housing, but much work still needs to be done. Consider this item to be very early in that process.

8. Public Housing Report

Harolda Wilcox

Public Housing Activities:

- On January 23, 2024, we had the second Annual Plan meeting. On this occasion, other than the regular key staff members, residents’ council members were invited/present. Like in the past years, the annual process and key information needed was thoroughly explained to everyone present.
- On January 24, 2024, we met with the attorneys at Harris Beach to discuss the court process and go over key information needed for court. During this meeting we were able to come up with a working plan for court proceedings.
- The Fair Housing training took place on January 25, 2024, for all the administrative staff. This training was presented by Jaime M. Cain, ESQ. and these are some of the topics that were thoroughly discussed:
 - The Fair Housing Act
 - History of The Fair Housing Act
 - What type of Housing is included?
 - Who must Comply with The Fair Act
 - Owner Liabilities
 - What is prohibited in the sale & Rental of housing?
 - Application and Screening
 - Classes protected under FHA.
 - The National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA)
 - DOJ Highlight of Cases/other case highlights of 2022
 - NYS Human Rights Law
 - Local Executive Law
 - The 3 categories of discrimination
 - The use of testers in Fair Housing
 - Low-income housing tax credits program.

Public Housing terminations status:

There are 33 residents with the Attorney’s office that is being processed for court. The following is the statistical breakdown:

6 are holdovers.

27 are for non-payments – there are 21 that are from the Family/Scattered Sites with 7 of those being families that have 11 minors in the household that are at risk.

Public Housing Matters:

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

RENT ARREARS

- RHA Public Housing department Received \$0.00 in EPPI2.0 monies for December 2023.
- RHA Public Housing department Received \$.00 in PPI2.0 monies for January 2024.
- As of January 2024, the total delinquent rent amount owed \$845,516.30, which is an increase of \$68,625.55 from the month of December.
 - 0 to 30 days - \$205,251.67
 - 31 to 60 days - \$10,110.11
 - 61 to 90 days - \$129,203.16
 - Over 90 days -- \$769,782.86
- Friendly reminder that RHA arrears are larger due to not taking partial payments from residents. This is due to the residents not paying their rent in full, which is not per RHA. policies. Also, there are residents who have not paid their rent in two-plus years. These residents are in the process of court proceedings.
- RHA is sending all partial payment back to the resident with a letter of explanation as to why RHA is not accepting their payment.
- 3 - 30-day notices were sent to the City Marshal in December.
- Repayment agreements are offered in extreme circumstances due to the
- We are still collaborating with residents to address arrears in lieu of court proceedings.
- As of January, RHA has entered into 121 repayment agreements year to date totaling \$214,231.94.

As of January 31, 2024, the following is an update of the Public Housing zones repayment agreements:

- North– three residents are currently in lease termination status and six residents are in delinquent status.
- South – One resident is currently in lease termination status and two are in delinquent status.
- Central– 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 delinquent status.
- Parkside
 - 3 Units Ready to Lease
 - 2 Offers
 - 2 scheduled to be leased up.

- Parkside Arrears
 - \$ 51,943.56 outstanding rent
 - \$ 6,649.00 0-30days
 - \$ 135.00 31-60 days
 - \$ 4,685.00 61-90 days
 - \$ 40,474.00 over 90 days

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

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: 2/5/24 and 2/19/24.
- KT 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 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.
- Glenwood – only 504 units are available, but we do not have any approved applicants that are in need of those units at this time. We did canvas the 1-bedroom wait list for any applicants in need of a 504/Wheelchair unit and have only 1 applicant that responded to the canvas.
 - *UPDATE: On 1/8/24, APC canvased the 1 bedroom wait list for applicants that are 50+ years old and have an interest in residing in our hi-rise communities. We will continue canvasing the 1-bedroom wait list until end of March 2024 and/or until we have enough applicants that have been approved to reside in those units (DTE/DTW/KT and HRT).
 - As of 1/30/24 – no updates to report.

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.

Current Department Operation Status:

- As of January 17, 2024, APC Housing Specialists are focusing on offering units. APC Housing Specialists are assisting the Central Zone on all unit viewings and will 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: 3, Conducted: 2,
 - Lease-Ups: 1
 - Sheila (Bilingual):
 - Scheduled Unit Viewings: 7, Conducted: 5,
 - 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 1/30/24:
 - Currently being screened - 28 applications*
 - Studio/1-bedrooms- 21
 - 2+ bedrooms – 7
 - Currently going thru intake (w/Intake Specialists): 59 applications
 - *studio/1-bedroom – 20 applications
 - *2+ bedrooms – 39 applications

Renovation projects

- **Fed/Scattered Site** –
 - As of 10/5/23 – All residents, except for the Section 32 resident and resident requiring a 504 unit, have received a final relocation unit offer, per the Relocation Plan.
 - As of 1/30/24 - no 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 – no updates.
- **Luther Circle** -all residents have been assigned a unit to relocate to. APC is waiting on transfer paperwork/preferences from Property Manager and residents to officially add them to wait list and extend offer according to transfer policy and relocation plan.
- APC is currently extending offers to residents with construction project start dates of 1/2024. All other residents with earlier construction project start dates have been extended a unit offer. Most of those residents have accepted their relocation unit and are either waiting for their stipend to move or moving date by moving company.
 - 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

Robert Croston

1. Vacant Unit Report

- The Maintenance Department continues to work on keeping up with the high number of vacant units. This is preparations for more resident to relocate during the projects at Fairfield Village and Parliament Arms.

2. Site Beautification

- We are still looking at finding some new wall coverings for the lobbies at DTE and DTW with direction from Public Housing. To try and update the looks of the buildings when you first walk in for a better first impression. At this point we are exploring all of our options to get the most for our money.

3. Preparing for NSPIRE Inspection

- As we get into the winter season the maintenance department will be concentration on weather related issues and snow removal at out sites.
- 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. They have set up inspections for a number of RHA sites. Bay/Casper, Holland, Gantt and Parkside in the Central Zone, Parliament Arms, Hudson Ridge Tower, and Seneca Manor in the North Zone. DTE, DTW, Kennedy Tower and Jonathan Child in the South Zone. We are making preparation now to be ready when they show up.

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, there are 391 active applicants on the Housing Choice Voucher Waiting List.

3. Leasing Operations' voucher and funding utilization goal is between 95% to 98%. We are currently at 83.46% utilization of vouchers and 99.62% utilization of funds. Leasing Operations Department will consult with HUD to develop 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 will continue to issue vouchers, increase outreach to landlords and improve communication for participants on available resources during the housing search process.
4. The monthly inspection goal has been 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 932 inspections in January 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 and the phone line is (585) 697-6210. Leasing Operations staff have sent out sixteen (16) batches of letters of interest to qualifying families with recertifications from May 2023 through August 2024 were randomly selected and provided with program information. As of 02/07/2024, two hundred thirty-four (234) families have enrolled in the program of which one hundred nineteen (119) were randomly selected for mobility services (CMRS). Four (4) applicant families from the HCV Waiting List have enrolled and two (2) 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

HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers

As of 02/08/2024, 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 02/08/2024, 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

- 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.
 - Project approved by City Council at February council meeting. Agreement 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 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. 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.

- **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.

- **Homeownership**
 - Ms. Lopez Espino closed on her home Rochester Zip code 14605 on December 22, 2023. (Buy the Block)
 - We have three families with an anticipated closing and thirty-seven families who have been approved for financing and are searching for homes.

12. Resident Relations Report

Melissa Berrien

Community Rooms Resident Rental – Harolda drafted the MOU and submitted to the Executive team for review.

Resident IT needs – Evhen presented the plan for changing out the Resident Council office computers and Resident computer labs.

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

Commissioner's report – Commissioner Cummings discussed councils needing additional officers to work with resident services. Discussion around the fire alarm system and how they work in the high rises. Discussion around the use of the resident van for resident activities and charging the driver fee to tenant participation funds.

Executive Overview – Tenants on Patrol (TOP) –Executive Director Burr discussed development projects, reminded presidents of the opportunity and importance of participating in 5-year plan and next steps for TOP.

Conference attendance – Resident services presented the schedule of conferences and discussed the approval process.

Family Activities –

1. College Fair in partnership with the Rochester Education Foundation (REF) 11/16
 - Tileesia following up with attendees for scholarship application interest.
2. **Presenter – Jacqueline Brinkley, Baden Street** – Ms. Brinkley presented Baden Street programming available for residents with an emphasis on the senior program at the Vienna Street community room and afterschool program at Baden Street.

13. Planning Committee Report

Daniel R. Long

- The Planning Committee meeting was held on 2/07/2024. There were no follow-up items from the previous meeting.
- There is one action item (Bond Street Abatement Project)
- 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 80% with abatement and demo completed and re-installations progressing.
 2. Unit 910 University Tower Fire Restoration – project is at 95% with restoration work having wrapped up and closing underway.
 3. Bronson Court Phase II project has begun construction. Porch foundations are going in and exterior work commencing despite the winter weather.
- We are under contract with Bureau Veritas to undertake the PNA work on the CNI target sites, and they provided a draft report which we have reviewed and provided further supporting information for their office to review.
- Our MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report was presented and will continue to be updated each month and we continue to work on percentages of possible funds allocated/obligated.
- As we move forward with our development projects, there will be regular reporting on status of MWBE goals. We have a neutral third party that will be monitoring and ensuring compliance.

- The status of our current CFP Budgets as of September 12th are: 501.20 is 100% Obligated and 60% Expended and 501.21 is 100% Obligated and 54% Expended and 501.22 is 71% Obligated and 4% Expended. With the latest projects and upcoming bid openings at the start of March, we expect to meet all our deadlines. We expect to start obligating the 501.23 grant as soon as spring 2024.
- 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 window and mechanical system installations.
- Our meetings for Parliament / Fairfield have shifted to construction/ site meetings. Walkthroughs 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. Fairfield buildings are being vacated and work is progressing on multiple buildings.
- Fernwood Development was reviewed during our HCR Technical Assistance meeting and revisions have been made to address concerns HCR had over zoning and environment items and we are awaiting final determination for the Phase 1 portion.
- 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 Davis: no comment.

Commissioner Ocansey: no comment.

Commissioner Lee: I do want to say thank you to the staff especially Melissa and Shawn and Diana. This past week I was able to hold a lunch and learn series here for to promote the Ready School Finder and I just want to say thank you. We had a, what I would consider to be an excellent showing. The staff members folks were engaged and very much interested, and I do see a strong intersection between housing and education. And I just want to say thank you for allowing me to buy your staff lunch and listen to me, Thank you.

Commissioner Rubin: I will quote a sentence of Michelin, always thank you to staff continue to do great things and we're we got a lot done. I'm very enthralled to be part of RHA as always but see the progress I've only been here what a year and a half and it's it seems we're doing tremendous things and it's. I'm looking forward to this spring where we could be out and about and see some of the things that we're doing. Really looking forward to we're going, and we will need a tour #3 of the RHA site.

Commissioner Cummings: Thanks to the staff for their commitment and their hard work.

Commissioner Remarais: Thank you to the staff, Super excited. I have been umm asked to join for another five years. For some reason I thought it was 4 but 5 sounds like a long time but I am happy to do so. I'm hoping and praying Every day I wake up and I have a little prayer time and I pray that Shawn stays with me for those extra five years, every morning where we go, I pray for my family and for Shawn to stay with me. But again, thank you to all the staff when I appreciate all the work and the board could not be any prouder. I know, we do have a lot, a lot of work ahead of time ahead of us. And we're hoping 2024 is just going to be an amazing year.

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.

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. March Regular Board Meeting

The March Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Monday, March 25, 2024, at 12:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn S. Burr", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board, Executive Director