

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
January 29, 2025
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



January 29, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

Rosalie Remarais, Commissioner Board Chair
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
Robert Croston
Natasha Dicks
Julie Fox
Cynthia Herriott
Danielle Huertas
Kimberly Huffman
Joyce Kinsey
Celeste Langston
Daniel Long
Loretha J.
McCullough
Denisse Ramos
Peggy Robinson
Mariam Machuca-
Rodriguez
Marylin Morales

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Todd Bullard, RHA Legal Counsel
Shannon Munier, Tipping Point
Communications

Commissioner Rosalie Remarais called the January 2025 Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting to order at 12:06 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 -

Ms. Coleman, Mr. Barbosa, Mr. Ramos, Mr. Dorrothy, Mr. Rankin, Mr. Hollis, Mr. Hart and Mr. Greem attend the January Board Meeting to share some concerns.

2. Approval of Minutes: December 18, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to approve the December 2024 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, and Commissioner Lee voted yes. The motion passed six to zero.

3. Director's Report and Board Approval Requests

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

CONTINUE

- Mr. Burr ***CONTINUE*** 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 these trying times! They really continue to do a remarkable job day in and day out!
- Mr. Burr wanted to continue to recognize the efforts of HR, Wellness Committee and Diversity & Inclusion Committee for continue to work facilitating staff functions.
- Mr. Burr participated in meetings with various community organizations.
- Mr. Burr shared our Community Choice Demonstration RHA Team continues to work with families to transition out of the program.
- Mr. Burr wanted to continue to recognize the extra efforts of staff involved in community projects.
- Mr. Burr shared that the Development projects are moving forward with more residents moving back into their homes! Dan will continue to show progress pictures with his report. We are exceeding our MWBE and Section 3 goals nicely in both projects, with exception of WBE which does continue to increase. Parliament-Fairfield construction is well under way with good progress being made also. Residents are moving back to their renovated units. Public housing staff continue to meet 1:1 with the residents who are moving to address their needs. We did receive almost \$4.5 million in NYS HHAP funding for our Fernwood project and have submitted our 9% LIHTC application to HCR! Fingers crossed! We continue to meet internally on Fernwood Phase II working on design concepts. We did submit an application for environmental grant funding to help with site cleanup. Glenwood is moving along also with a concept plan

submitted to HCR and other funding sources applied for. 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 that we are preparing an application for an affordable housing development with a neighborhood service center on the vacant site on East Main and Laura Streets.
- Mr. Burr shared an update from NYSPHADA Update
- 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.
- Mr. Burr shared that the creation of the Annual Plan process has begun. We met internally with staff on 12/12 and the Resident Advisory Board on 1/9.
- Mr. Burr shared that our SEMAP score appeal will be submitted to HUD by the deadline.
- Mr. Burr shared information about HUD Publishes Proposed Rule Changing Public Housing Assessment System.

b. Board Action Requests

- i. Rochester Police Department/City of Rochester- Authorized the Executive Director to approve to add additional fund of \$4,016.50 to pay the final invoice – Capital Project

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

- ii. Renewal of Directors and officers Insurance policies - Authorize the Executive Director to renewal of insurance policy for the period 1/31/25 to 1/31/26 with AIG in the amount of \$59,000.00 – Finance

Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Ocansey seconded the motion to approve the action item. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner

Remarais, and Commissioner Ocansey voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

- iii. Ratification – Security Services – Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to AP Security and Security in the amount of \$1,119,941.00 – Compliance.

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

- iv. Floor Planking – was tabled it will be presented at a later date.

- v. Painting of Vacant Units – Maintenance

- a. Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to Catherine's Remodeling in the amount of \$100,000.00 – Maintenance

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

- b. Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to Sekulas Painting Remodeling in the amount of \$100,000.00 – Maintenance

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

- c. Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract to Pinckney Contracting Remodeling in the amount of \$100,000.00 – Maintenance

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

- vi. FY 2025 1st Quarter Vacated Arrears Write-off – Authorized the Executive Director to approve the write-off of the FY 2025 1st Quarter Vacated Arrears in the amount of \$103,828.78– Finance

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

- vii. General Labor Legal Counsel – Authorized the Executive Director approve an additional amount of \$25,383.52 to pay an additional invoice for Harris Beach PLLC.

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

- viii. General Labor Legal Counsel – Authorized the Executive Director to renew (2 renewal of 4) the contract with Harris Beach PLLC in the amount of \$150,000.00 – Compliance

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

- ix. Landlord Tenant Matters Legal – Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract John Nacca, Esq. in the amount of \$100,000.00 – Compliance

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

- x. Communications Services contract – was tabled it will be presented at a later date.

- xi. General Labor Legal Counsel – Authorized the Executive Director to award the contract with 4 possible renewals to Harris Beach PLLC in the amount of \$100,000.00 – Compliance

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

- xii. Temporary Employment Services – Authorized the Executive to renew the contract, (1st renewal of 4) in the amount of \$75,000.00 – Human Resources

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

4. Human Resource Report

Loretha J. McCullough

Ms. McCullough reported on RHA's Strategic Plan, and that HR is focused on key activities such as building organizational capacity through hiring and promotions and creating a positive culture.

She then reported on the recruitment, new hire, promotions, transfers, and separations. She then reviewed our recruitment strategies and results.

Ms. McCullough then reported on employee performance, engagement initiatives and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities.

5. Compliance, Inclusion, and Diversity Officer's Report

Cynthia Herriott

Ms. Herriott reported on the following activities and progress:

- Inclusion Activities
- Compliance Matters
- Department Operations

6. Finance

Kimberly Huffman

Ms. Huffman presented the monthly Finance Report. She was not able to report on the October - November 2024 actual vs. budgeted figures, income and expenses, and variances for COCC, Public Housing, Section 8, and RAD due to the end FY processes.

7. Information Technology Report

Shawn Burr

Mr. Burr reported on the following:

- Resident Computer Lab upgrades
- Resident Internet Initiative (NYS ConnectALL program)
- Staff Development & Upgrade Preparation

8. Public Housing Report

Shawn Burr

Mr. Burr presented the following:

- Public Housing Activities
 - HUD PH Occupancy Monthly Meeting
 - Town and Country Extermination Monthly Meeting
 - Path Stone/Providence Housing/Family Services of Rochester Monthly Meeting
 - PH management staff and CVR weekly meetings
 - Annual Plan Kick off meeting with RAB and key staff members.
- Public Housing Matters:
 - The PH Team continues to do an excellent job of keeping things moving despite being short- staffed and many continue to work overtime to help with the workload.
- Rent Arrears – the rent arrears statistics were presented.
- Application Processing Center: Waiting List Management:
 - Wait List Purge
 - Current Department Operation Status
 - Unit Offers
 - Occupancy Rate

9. Maintenance Report

Robert Croston

Mr. Croston presented monthly updates on the following:

- Vacant Unit Report
- Site Beautification
- Work Orders

10. Leasing Operations Report (Section 8)

Danielle Huertas

Ms. Huertas presented on the following:

- Leasing Operations Matters:
 1. All applicants on RHA's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Waiting List from 2019 have been canvassed for prequalification. The intake team is currently assisting 31 applicants, of which all were provided moving papers and 9 submitted RFTA's. The 2024 HCV application process closed on Friday, June 14, 2024, at 4:00 PM, with 9,909 pre-applications through the extended deadline, of which 4,000 were selected. A pull of 250 applicants was complete. Of those, 103 have completed their submission for background processing. 44 background checks have successfully cleared for scheduling the eligibility briefing and voucher issuance. The remainder continue to work on their submission for eligibility.
 2. Leasing Operations' voucher and funding utilization goal is between 95% to 98%. We are currently at 82.30% utilization of vouchers and 107.46% utilization of funds.
 3. The monthly inspection goal has been 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 561 inspections in November 2024.
- HUD Community Choice Demonstration (formerly Mobility Demonstration)
 - The mobility Choice Demonstration will end 2/28/2025. RHA will continue to work with The Housing Council at PathStone, to provide services to the families and landlords that enrolled in the program.
- HUD Emergency Housing Vouchers
- Additional Mainstream Voucher Awards
- Staff Training

11. Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Report

Melissa Berrien

Ms. Berrien reported on the following:

- Participant Highlights: We have 179 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program. Some of the achievements our participants demonstrated are:
- Section 3 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.
 - RMAPI Housing Subcommittee Update
 - ABC's Benefits Project Policy Review, December 2, 2024
 - Inner Loop North Community Advisory Committee, November 6, 2024
 - Closing the Gaps
 - City of Rochester - Rochester Housing Stability Fund Board
- Homeownership Program Update

12. Resident Relations Committee Report

Melissa Berrien

Ms. Berrien reported on the following:

- Resident Councils Email set up
- Resident Councils
- Commissioner's report
- Executive Update
- Family Activities
- Senior Activities

13. Planning Committee Report

Daniel R. Long

Mr. Long reported on the following:

- The Planning Committee Meeting Follow up items.
 - There are three action items.
 - Current Project Status
 - CNI PNA Update
 - Our MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report
- The status of our current CFP Budgets as of September 12th are: 501.20 is 100% Obligated and 68% Expended and 501.21 is 100% Obligated and 98% Expended and 501.22 is 100% Obligated and 31% Expended. We are wrapping up obligating the 501.23 grant at 87% obligation by this month with Bond Street Renovations, 1-3 Thomas Street, Johnathan Childs Facade, and the ABC projects at Danforth.
- We then discussed our A/E status report, and no issues were present.
- Project Planning

13. Interagency Relations Committee

Commissioner Rubin

Commissioner Rubin presented his monthly update.

****full reports are available upon request****

14. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Rubin: Thank you, everybody,

Commissioner Waters: Thank you for the great work everybody is completing.

Commissioner Ocansey: Thank you to all the staff looking forward to 2025 at RHA.

Commissioner Davis: Thank you to all the staff

Commissioner Cummings: Thanked the staff and their hard work and their commitment to the residents and participants.

Commissioner Remarais: Echoed the same sentiments as the previous Commissioners stated. She thanked everyone for their hard work.

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to go into Executive Session for a legal and personnel matter. Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded a motion to go into Executive Session at 1:45 pm Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Ocansey voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

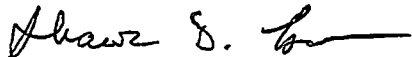
Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end Executive Session at 2:34 pm; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Ocansey seconded, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Water, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Lee, voted yes. The motion was passed, seven to zero.

Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end the Regular Board Meeting; Commissioner Rubin moved, and Commissioner Ocansey seconded the motion to end the Regular Board Meeting at 2:35 pm. Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Water, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Cummings and Commissioner Lee, voted yes. The motion was passed, seven to zero.

15. February Regular Board Meeting

The February Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 12:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board, Executive Director