

**ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
March 26, 2025
675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



March 26, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Diana Colon
Robert Croston
Natasha Dicks
Julie Fox
Cynthia Herriott
Danielle Huertas
Celeste Langston
Romaira Layz
Daniel Long
Loretha J. McCullough
Mariam Machuca-Rodriguez
Marylin Morales
Denisse Ramos
Peggy Robinson
Kara Ryan

OTHERS PRESENT

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

Commissioner Rosalie Remarais called the March 2025 Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting to order at 12:04 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. Walker attended the March Board Meeting to share some concerns.

2. Approval of Minutes: February 26, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Cummings moved, and Commissioner Waters seconded the motion to approve the February 2025 Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Remarais, and Commissioner Lee voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

3. Director's Report and Board Approval Requests

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

CONTINUED

- 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 these trying times! They really continue to do a remarkable job day in and day out!
- Mr. Burr continued to recognize the efforts of the HR, Wellness Committee and Diversity & Inclusion Committee teams for their nonstop effort informing, planning, and facilitating staff functions.
- Mr. Burr participated in meetings with various community organizations.
- Mr. Burr gave an update that a government shutdown was avoided, and that a Continuing Resolution was in place with 2024 funding levels.
- 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 were awarded our 9% LIHTC! We have begun working on assembling the development team with the goal of closing this coming Fall. We continue to meet internally on Fernwood Phase II working on design concepts. We continue to meet internally on Fernwood Phase II working on design concepts. 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. They are truly doing great work!

- Mr. Burr shared a 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 Annual Plan process is moving forward with the draft plan out for public comment. We met internally with staff and the Resident Advisory Board.
- Mr. Burr shared that our SEMAP score appeal will be submitted to HUD by the deadline.
- Mr. Burr shared information about HUD and the Department of Transportation's four published Build America, Buy America (BABA) updates that could impact housing and community development agencies.
 - [PIH Notice 2025-06: Build America, Buy America Implementation Guidance for the Public Housing Program,](#)
 - [CPD Notice 25-01: CPD Implementation Guidance for the Build America, Buy America Act's Buy America Preference,](#)
 - [Non-availability Waiver applicable to Domestically Assembled Solar Photovoltaics \(PV\) panels referred to as "Solar Modules" Effective as of January 10, and](#)
 - [Public Interest Waiver of the Application of Certain Domestic Preference Requirements and Policies for Transit-Oriented Development Housing Projects.](#)

b. Board Action Requests

- i. Danforth East & West – Additional Cost for NYS Funded Upgrades - Authorize the Executive Director to award additional funding to Action for a Better Community in the amount of \$75,000 – Capital Projects

Commissioner Waters 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.

- ii. Lawn Cutting Contract (North, South & Central Zones) - Authorize the Executive Director to renew the contract with AA Blades in the amount of \$53,061 (North), \$24,228 (South), and \$51,744 (Central) – Maintenance

Commissioner Lee 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.

- iii. Lawn Cutting Contract for Scattered Sites & Admin. Buildings - Authorize the Executive Director to renew the contract with Cardinal Landscaping in the amount of \$99,936 (Scattered), \$8,960 (Admin. Buildings), and \$20,000 (Scattered Site RA's, Vacant Units & Lawn Violations) – Maintenance

Commissioner Waters 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. ACOP Chapter 7-I.A. Family Consent to Release of Information Policy - Authorize the Executive Director to update the ACOP – Chapter 7-I.A. to reflect the proposed language. – Executive

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.

- v. ACOP Chapter 16-III.B. Repayment Policy - Authorize the Executive Director to update the ACOP – Chapter 16-III.B. to reflect the proposed language. – Executive

Commissioner Lee 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.

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/Legal Report

Cynthia Herriott

Ms. Herriott reported on the following activities and progress:

- Inclusion Activities
- Compliance Matters
- Department Operations

6. Finance Report

Kara Ryan

Ms. Ryan presented the monthly Finance Report. She reported on the January 2025 actual vs. budgeted figures, income and expenses, and variances for COCC, Public Housing, Section 8, and RAD.

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
- New Projects

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
 - Enriched Housing monthly meetings
 - Procurement Policies Training
 - Navigating HUD Resource Training
- 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 Management
- Current Department Operation Status
- Unit Offers
- Current Applications in Screening and Intake Phase
- Staffing

9. Maintenance Report

Robert Croston

Mr. Croston presented monthly updates on the following:

- Vacant Unit Report
- Annual Plan and Site Beautification
- Work Orders and Training of New Staff

10. Leasing Operations Report (Section 8)

Danielle Huertas

Ms. Huertas presented on the following:

- Leasing Operations Matters:
 1. The RHA Administrative Plan is currently under review to update required and discretionary changes, as required, by HOTMA and NSPIRE and other relevant HUD regulations.
 2. The 2024 HCV application process closed on Friday, June 14, 2024, at 4:00 PM, with 9,909 preapplications received through the extended deadline, of which 4,000 were selected. All applicants were notified of selection on September 12, 2024. The RHA's Housing Choice Voucher (**HCV**) **Waiting List** is currently being processed. The intake team pulled 350 applicants between September 30, 2024, and March 10, 2025. 58 families currently have moving papers and 8 submitted RFTA's. 148 have completed their submission for background processing. Of those, 70 applicants have cleared for scheduling the eligibility briefing and voucher issuance meeting.
 3. Leasing Operations' voucher and funding utilization goal is between 95% to 98%. We are currently at 82.31% utilization of vouchers and 100.93% utilization of funds.
 4. The monthly inspection goal has been 780-960. The Inspection Unit conducted 414 inspections in February 2025.
 5. HUD Community Choice Demonstration (formerly Mobility Demonstration)
 - The mobility Choice Demonstration will end 2/28/2025. RHA will continue to provide services to the families and landlords that enrolled in the program.
 6. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Utilization report is updated and attached with data.
 7. Staff Highlights
 8. Staff Training

11. Resident Services Report

Melissa Berrien

Ms. Berrien reported on the following:

- Participant Highlights: We have 175 participants currently enrolled in our FSS program.
- 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 Co-Chair Update
 - ABC's Benefits Project Policy Review, February 6, 2025
 - Community Connections, February 11th, 2025
 - 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 Presidents Reports
- Public Housing Update
- Commissioner's Report
- Executive Update
- Family Activities
- Senior Activities
- Presenter – Rochester Prep Charter School presented information on their K-12 schools and programs

13. Capital Projects Report

Daniel R. Long

Mr. Long reported on the following:

- The Planning Committee Meeting Follow up items.
 - There was one action item.
 - Current Project Status
 - Our MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report
- The status of our current CFP's Budgets: 501.20 is 100% Obligated and 97% Expended, 501.21 is 100% Obligated and 100% Expended, 501.22 is 100% Obligated and 80% Expended, 501.23 is 96% Obligated and 35% Expended and 501.24 is 0% Obligated and 0% Expended.
- 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 to all the staff.

Commissioner Ocansey: Thank you to all staff.

Commissioner Davis: Thank you to all the staff.

Commissioner Lee: Thank you to all the staff.

Commissioner Cummings: Thanked the staff and shared that on June 6th the Seniors will be having a Senior Ball. She asked that everyone put it on their calendar.

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 at 1:10 pm. Commissioner Hank moved, and Commissioner Lee seconded. Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Lee, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Ocansey voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

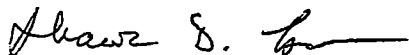
Board Chair Remarais requested a motion to end Executive Session; Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Cummings seconded the motion to end Executive Session at 2:37 pm, Commissioner Rubin, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Water, Commissioner Remarais, Commissioner Cummings, Commissioner Davis, 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 Lee moved, and Commissioner Rubin seconded the motion to end the Regular Board Meeting at 2:38 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. April Regular Board Meeting

The April Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn Burr", followed by a horizontal line.

Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board, Executive Director