

ROCHESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY
January 28, 2026
**675 WEST MAIN STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14611**



January 28, 2026

MEMBERS' PRESENT

Florine Cummings, Commissioner, Board Chair
Kabutey Ocansey, Commissioner, Vice Chair
Robert Davis, Commissioner
LeRoy Strickland, Commissioner
Truman Tolefree, Commissioner
James Waters, Jr., Commissioner
Patrick Cunningham, Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

Melissa Berrien
Shawn Burr
Diana Colon
Robert Croston
Natasha Dicks
Cynthia Herriott
Joyce Kinsey
Celestine Langston
Daniel Long
Loretha McCullough
Marylin Morales
Denisse Ramos
Mariam Rodriguez-Machuca
James Senger
Maria Sharp

OTHERS PRESENT

H. Todd Bullard, RHA Legal Counsel
Taville T. Francis, RHA Legal Counsel
Shannon Munier, Tipping Point Communications
Meghan Gleason, Tipping Point Communications

Commissioner Florine Cummings called the January 28, 2026, Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) Regular Board Meeting, to order at 12:07 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

There were no public comments.

2. Resident Commissioner Swearing-In

Commissioner Cunningham was sworn in.

3. Approval of Minutes: December 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Tolefree moved, and Commissioner Ocansey seconded the motion to approve the December 2025 Regular and Special Board Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

4. Director's Report and Board Approval Requests

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

CONTINUED

- Mr. Burr **CONTINUED** 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 with onboarding and training new employees! 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 that build morale and bring us all together.
- Mr. Burr shared that on a federal level, the government is operating under a Continuing Resolution which funds us until 1/30/2026. On Tuesday 1/20, Congress released the FY2026 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill. The bill is much better than the House and Senate's appropriation drafts.
- This past month, Mr. Burr participated in meetings with various community organizations.
- Mr. Burr recognized the extra efforts of staff involved in various community projects.
- Mr. Burr stated that he'd like to continue to recognize the extra efforts of staff involved in community projects. Partners Ending Homelessness, RMAPI Steering Committee and Housing Working Group which focuses on our community's full housing system, City FEC program, Closing the Gaps Six City Cohort, Jordan Health Community Engagement Committee, Boy Scouts, City FEC Program Initiative, Guardian Ad Litem Program, Private Sector Rental Market Study Working Group, Eviction Response Team, Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning, Innerloop North CAC, AMPED, GFLRPC Comprehensive Climate Action Plan Focus Group and Benefits Cliff Project are a few that are in the works. Mr. Burr expressed his appreciation for

their efforts in representing RHA on critical projects in our community and stated that their extra efforts are commendable.

- Mr. Burr shared that the development projects continue to move forward with Parliament/Fairfield nearing full occupancy. Fernwood planning is well underway with a closing date targeted for Spring 2026 due to a change in the general contractor and RHA's decision to bid the GC services out. We were informed by HCR that Glenwood Gardens RAD project is slated to close in 2027. This is a 4% tax credit deal that will redevelop the entire site and create more housing units. Holland TH's is our next RAD project and design teams are fully engaged. 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, but not without a lot of effort. Public housing staff continue to meet 1:1 with the residents who are moving back in to sign their lease and address their needs. We continue to meet internally on Fernwood Phase II also working on design concepts. Glenwood is moving along also with a revised concept plan to reduce costs that have been submitted to HCR. 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 with directors on updating our org chart from top to bottom and assessing our civil service class plan. He shared that they continue to work on the revised Class Plan with Civil Service as positions are filled and tests. HR is working with Civil Service to accomplish our goals.
- Mr. Burr shared that our SEMAP score appeal has been submitted to HUD and we are still awaiting a response.
- Mr. Burr shared NAHRO's article: *FY 2026 THUD Bill Released as Congress Weighs Action Ahead of January 30 Continuing Resolution Deadline*

b. Board Action Requests

- i. 8-I.f. Payments Under the Lease – Late Fee Policy – Authorize the Executive Director to update the ACOP Chapter 8-I.F. Payments under the Lease, Late Fees and Nonpayment – Public Housing

Commissioner Davis moved, and Commissioner Strickland seconded the motion to approve the action item. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

- ii. Chapter 9 – Failure to Recertify to Market Rent – Authorize the Executive Director to update the ACOP – Chapter 9 – Failure to Recertify Market Rent Late Fees and Nonpayment – Public Housing

Commissioner Davis moved, and Commissioner Strickland seconded the motion to approve the action item. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

- iii. Consulting Services – Authorize the Executive Director to exercise a 3-month agreement with CVR Associates, Inc. from 2/1/26 – 4/30/26 for consulting services for Public Housing, in the not to exceed amount of \$100,000 – Public Housing

Commissioner Strickland moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to approve the action item. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

- iv. A&E Proposal for 255 Hamilton St. Interior/Exterior Renovation Project – Authorize the Executive Director to award a contract to Peter L. Morse & Associates (PLMA) in the amount of \$66,840 – Capital Projects

Commissioner Ocansey moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to approve the action item. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

- v. FY 2026 1st Quarter Vacated Arrears Write-off – Authorize the Executive Director to approve the write-off in the amount of \$72,914.69 – Finance

Commissioner Tolefree moved, and Commissioner Waters seconded the motion to approve the action item. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

- vi. Renewal of Directors and Officers Insurance Policy – Authorize the Executive Director renew the yearly insurance policy with AIG for the period of 1/31/26 – 1/31/27, in the amount of \$56,050 – Finance

Commissioner Strickland moved, and Commissioner Davis seconded the motion to approve the action item. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

5. Human Resource Report

Loretha J. McCullough

Ms. McCullough reported information about 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.

Ms. McCullough shared information regarding recruitment, hires, promotions, transfers, and separations. She also reviewed our recruitment strategies and results.

Ms. McCullough's report also discussed employee performance, engagement initiatives and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities.

6. Compliance/Legal Report

Cynthia Herriott

Ms. Herriott reported on the following activities and progress:

- Inclusion Activities
- Compliance Matters
- Department Operations

7. Finance Report

Shawn Burr

In Ms. Ryan's absence, Mr. Burr presented the November 2025 actual vs. budgeted figures, income and expenses, and variances for COCC, Public Housing, Section 8, and RAD, financials.

8. Information Technology Report

Shawn Burr

Mr. Burr reported on the following:

- IT Operations
- Resident Computer Lab upgrades
- Resident Internet Initiative (NYS ConnectALL program)
- Staff Development & Upgrade Preparation
- New Projects
- System Security

9. Public Housing Report

Celeste Langston

Ms. Langston presented the following:

- Public Housing Activities:
 - A public Hearing was held on 12/12/25 to present the proposed ACOP language for Failure to recertify to Market Rent and the late fee policy. This hearing date was posted in the newspaper and on the RHA website for public view. Unfortunately, no one attended this hearing.

- Training:
 - The Public Housing team continues to provide training for staff through both internal and external resources. Topics for December include:
 - Due to the holidays, no training was scheduled for December.

- Public Housing Matters:
 - The Public Housing management team meets frequently to strategize on how to increase the PH occupancy rate. An occupancy plan was developed and submitted to HUD.
 - CVR – The following are tasks performed monthly:
 - CVR has 4 part time dedicated associates, and 1 Senior Associate assigned to the project. The following are tasks performed monthly:
 - Package and sent out all annual recertifications 90 days before the due date
 - Process all incoming US Postal/inner office mail
 - Maintain recertification email distribution and field all incoming phone calls from residents
 - Send follow-up notices via US Postal Mail to residents
 - Attend weekly meetings with property managers and internal CVR meetings about the project
 - Update and maintain CVR Tracker
 - Provide weekly status reports from the tracker to the Executive Director and Director of Public Housing
 - Review and process Annual recertifications received by residents at the following sites: Glenwood Gardens, Scattered Sites, Lexington Court, Lake Tower, Danforth Tower (East and West), Lena Gantt, Kennedy Tower, Hudson Ridge, University Tower, Bronson Court, Bay Zimmer Townhouses, Holland Townhouses, Harriett Tubman Estates, and Seneca Manor.

- Rent Arrears – the rent arrears statistics were presented.

- Application Processing Center: Waiting List Management:
 - Wait List Management
 - Current Department Operation Status
 - Unit Offers
 - Occupancy Rate
 - Current Applications in Screening and Intake Phase
 - Staffing

10. Maintenance Report

Robert Croston

Mr. Croston presented monthly updates on the following:

- Vacant Unit Report
- Site Beautification
- Training of New Staff
- 321 Lake Towers Automatic Door Opener

11. Leasing Operations Report (Section 8)

Maria Sharp

Ms. Sharp presented the following:

➤ Leasing Operations Matters:

- **Administrative Plan** – RHA held its initial meeting with Nelrod on November 18, 2025. Nelrod is responsible for incorporating all applicable HUD regulatory updates into the Administrative Plan. Upon completion of this work, RHA and Nelrod will reconvene to address the remaining plan updates. Once implementation begins, Nelrod anticipates the project will take approximately two weeks to complete.
- **Section Eight Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)** – Leasing Operations continues to actively develop strategies and timelines to ensure all SEMAP performance indicators are met.
- **Voucher Utilization** – Leasing Operations maintains a voucher and funding utilization goal of 95%–98%. The attached utilization report provides the monthly status update.
- **Inspections** –The monthly **inspection’s** goal has been 780-960 and will be reassessed for the upcoming Fiscal Year. In December 2025, the inspection Unit conducted 647 inspections. The detailed inspection report is attached for review.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)** – The PSH utilization report was updated and attached with data as of December 31, 2025.
- **HUD 2026 NOFO Update**
- **Housing Provider Engagement** – The Housing Provider Committee has completed and published its most recent housing provider newsletter, which is available on the RHA website under Landlord Resources. The Committee will continue to engage housing providers through scheduled in-person informational sessions. Attendance has increased, and feedback from providers has been positive.
- **Community Partnerships** – Leasing Operations remains committed to strengthening and expanding community partnerships. The PBV program currently spans 79 communities, and in 2026 the department aims to be more intentional in its engagement, guidance, and support efforts. Partnerships with organizations such as The Housing Council and House of Mercy will continue to be strengthened to advance shared goals.
- **All-Staff Meeting** – Leasing Operations held its first All-Staff meeting on January 23, 2026. Executive Officers and Commissioner Cummings were invited to attend. The Meeting focused on restructuring, balanced workloads, renewed expectations and ongoing support for all staff members.
- **Staff Training & Development**
- **Staff Recognition**
- **Housing Choice Voucher (HCV Waiting List)**
- **Shortfall Funding** – The Finance Department is currently developing updates related to shortfall funding. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

12. Resident Services Report

Melissa Berrien

Ms. Berrien reported on the following:

- Participant Highlights: 125 participants are 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
 - Closing the Gaps
 - City of Rochester - Rochester Housing Stability Fund Board
 - Eviction Prevention Study
- Homeownership Program Update

13. Resident Relations Committee Report

Melissa Berrien

Ms. Berrien reported on the following:

- Special Presentation
- Resident Council Reports
- Commissioner Reports
- Executive Update
- Public Housing Report
- Family Activities
- Senior Activities

14. Capital Projects Report

Daniel R. Long

Mr. Long reported on the following:

- The Planning Committee Meeting follow-up and action items.
- Current Project Status
- MWBE & Section 3 Contracts report
- The status of our current CFP's Budgets: The 501.22 is 100% obligated and 97% expended. The 501.23 grant is at 100% obligation and 84% expended. 501.24 is at 71% obligated and 11% expended.
- A/E status report (no issues were present)
- Project Planning

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

15. Commissioners' Reports

Commissioner Strickland: None

Commissioner Davis: Thanked the Staff and the new Board Members.

Commissioner Waters: Welcomed the new Commissioners again.

Commissioner Ocansey: Thanked staff in light of everything happening in Washington. Presented the idea of the Board sending a letter to delegates on behalf of RHA. Encouraged everyone to keep pushing forward.

Commissioner Tolefree: None

Commissioner Cunningham: None.

Commissioner Cummings: Thanked Staff for their commitment and due diligence.

16. Executive Session:

Board Chair Cummings requested a motion to go into Executive Session at 1:55 pm. Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Strickland seconded the motion to go into Executive Session. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

During Executive Session, the Board voted on the following resolution:

- Resolution 01.28.26.01 – Executive Office

Commissioner Tolefree moved, and Commissioner Waters seconded the motion to end the Executive Session. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

17. End Executive Session:

Board Chair Cummings requested a motion to end Executive Session at 3:05pm. Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Strickland seconded the motion to end Executive Session. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

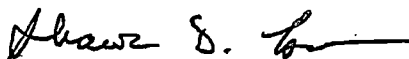
18. End Regular Board Meeting Session:

Board Chair Cummings requested a motion to end the Regular Board Meeting at 3:12pm. Commissioner Waters moved, and Commissioner Ocansey seconded. Commissioner Strickland, Commissioner Davis, Commissioner Waters, Commissioner Ocansey, Commissioner Tolefree, Commissioner Cunningham, and Commissioner Cummings, voted yes. The motion passed seven to zero.

19. March Regular Board Meeting

The March Regular Board Meeting of the Rochester Housing Authority Board is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 12:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn Burr,
Secretary to the RHA Board, Executive Director