

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Elkhart Housing Authority
September 16, 2021

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, September 16, 2021, virtually and via Conference call.

Board Members present: Kristen Smole, Dan Boecher, Lefate Owens, and Helenia Robinson,

Staff members present: Angelia Washington, Clarence Jones, Mitch Craven, Kenny Clark, Candice Folie, Jessica Brittain, Charlotte Pettis, Teri Ivory, and Morgan Gibson

Audience members present: None

❖ **Audience Concerns:** None

❖ **Approval of Minutes**

Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — August 19, 2021, Regular Meeting

Commissioner Kristen Smole motioned to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2021, regular meeting. Commissioner Helenia Robinson seconded the motion. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the August 19, 2021, regular meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — August 19, 2021

Commissioner Smole motioned to approve the vouchers for August 19, 2021, Commissioner Lefate Owens seconded the motion. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the August 19, 2021, vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

Exhibit C — Executive Director's Report

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported 2 new hires, Dreama Coleman, (Property Manager), Cynthia Brown, (Custodian).and 4 ends of employment, Linda Carlisle, Darrius Brown, Adrienne Brauch, and Ashanti James.
- **Comprehensive Improvements:**
 - Scattered Sites:** The first phase of the HVAC replacement has begun and is expected to conclude by late September. The final phase of the bathroom remodels is expected to begin and concluded during the month of October.

Riverside Terrace: The elevator modernization project is continuing as scheduled.

Washington Gardens: Material for the playground renovations have been ordered and are expected to be delivered by mid-November.

Waterfall High-Rise: No work at this time

Rosedale High-Rise: No work at this time

COCC: We are still waiting for the FFY21 Emergency Safety & Security Grant award announcement. This grant opportunity was announced on September 17, 2020, with a submission deadline of June 2, 2021. The potential award for this grant is \$250,000.

We are still waiting for the award announcement of the Housing-related Hazards Capital Fund Program grant. This application was submitted on May 12, 2021 and has a potential award of \$1,028,474. An award from this grant would allow the Housing Authority City of Elkhart to completely replace all windows in all 98 Scattered Sites units.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of August, 50 Annual Certifications were completed, 48 Interim Certifications Completed, 5 Unit transfers, 2 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 4 End of Participations, 31 Applications Remaining in Process, 649 Lease Ups on the last day of August and 89% Lease-Up Percentage.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 54 participants in which 24 participants are currently employed, 3 participants are enrolled in GED/HSE education programs, 7 participants are attending college, 3 participants are enrolled in job training programs, 9 participants are disabled or unable to work. 11 participants are currently earning escrow, \$2,203 earned in escrow funds in August, and \$103,678.75 total current escrow balance.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of August is 99.00%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of August is 98.40%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of August is 98.40%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of August is 92.80% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of August is 98.00%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of August is 97.32%. She also stated that public housing received 152 applications, mailed 180 orientation letters, were processing 126 applications, approved 16 applications, denied 4 applications, and 108 applications were withdrawn. We received 15 homeless applications and 0 application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 14 new admissions and 10 move-outs in August.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 10 move-outs were received and 6 were completed, 3 emergency requests received and completed, 285 tenant requests received and 266 completed; and there were 34 annual inspections received and 14 completed, totaling 289 completed work orders.
- **Financials and Write-Offs:** Jessica Brittain announced for the month of August, Rosedale high-rise earned \$28,897.00 in Revenue and \$16,490.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Rosedale high-rise had \$42,546.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Rosedale high-rise had a profit for the month of August in the amount of \$2,841.00. The overall view for the year, Rosedale earned \$176,649.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$176,923.00. The net position YTD is \$(274.00).

Jessica announced for the month of August, Washington Gardens earned \$11,291.00 in Revenue and 71,784.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Washington Gardens had \$61,236.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Washington Gardens had a profit for the month of August in the amount of \$21,839.00. The overall view for the year, Washington Gardens earned \$328,880.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$329,790.00. The net position YTD is \$(910.00).

Jessica announced for the month of August, Waterfall high-rise earned \$32,716.00 in Revenue and \$21,887.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Waterfall high-rise had \$30,866.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Waterfall high-rise had a profit for the month of

August in the amount of \$23,737.00. The overall view for the year, Waterfall earned \$204,695.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$166,004.00. The net position YTD is \$38,691.00.

Jessica announced for the month of August, Scattered Sites earned \$18,217.00 in Revenue and \$36,462.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Scattered Sites had \$43,562.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Scattered Sites had a profit for the month of August in the amount of \$11,117.00. The net position year to date is \$36,366.00.

Jessica announced for the month of August, Riverside high-rise earned \$36,028.00 in Revenue and \$22,328.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Riverside high-rise had \$32,427.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Riverside high-rise had a profit for the month of August in the amount of \$25,929.00. The overall view for the year, Riverside earned 220,525.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$184,714.00. The net position YTD is \$35,811.00.

Jessica announced for the month of August, COCC earned \$82,151 in Revenue. Jessica went on to say the COCC had \$114,965.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported the COCC had a loss for the month of August in the amount of (\$32,814.00). The overall view for the year, COCC earned \$418,846.00 and the expenses were \$556,259.00. The net position YTD is (\$137,413.00).

Jessica announced HCV had a profit for the month of August, in the amount of \$7,489.00. The net position YTD is \$34,159.00.

Commissioner Boecher asked Jessica if she was working on a summary of capital improvements funds that are available. He stated he is interested in having a follow-up conversation with the finance committee to understand more. He informed the rest of the commission that he would like for them to attend as well. Jessica stated she could set up a time for that discussion to take place. She stated she would have something prepared before the next Finance Committee meeting. Commissioner Boecher confirmed that it would take place in October.

❖ **Old Business:**

• **By-laws**

Angelia stated she sent a copy of the by-laws to the commissioners who did not have an available copy. She stated she did not know if the Board had a chance to consider creating a by-law committee. She further stated there has been some concern that there is no redress for Board member misconduct and several other items that need to be added to the by-laws. She stated she did not know where the Board stands on modernizing the current by-laws or creating new ones. Commissioner Boecher informed Angelia that he did briefly go through the by-laws she sent, and he thought it was thin (5-6 Pages) for an organization this size. He stated he is interested in whatever recommendations Angelia thinks they should consider. He stated he does not know if a second committee is needed to do this or if there are specific recommendations that need to be added for consideration. He stated he believes that can be done and be presented at the next Commission meeting. Angelia suggested having a meeting to discuss comprehensive improvements funding and the by-laws on the same day. She stated she would send out a couple of date options to have a discussion outside of the regular Board meeting and bring those items up at the Board meeting for a vote. Commissioner Boecher stated that sounded good to him, and the other commissioners present agreed.

Commissioner Lefate Owens had a concern about Executive Directors becoming terminally ill. He stated that we needed to make sure that our E.D. is staying healthy and having the proper screenings. He suggested adding this to the by-laws. Angelia agreed and informed Commissioner Owens that she had this conversation with former Board Chair, JeNeve Adams

and she communicated the same wishes. Commissioner Boecher stated he was unsure about adding it to the by-laws, but it should be included in the job description or at least at the annual review. Angelia suggested adding it to the employment contract. She stated she did send a copy of her employment contract to commissioners to review or make suggestions for revision.

- **Police Department Partnership**

Commissioner Lefate Owens stated this is something he wanted to make sure that we stay on top of because he is afraid of someone's civil rights being violated. He gave an example of someone who was incarcerated 16 years and was found later to be innocent. He stated every organization has bad apples and we must be extremely careful with our residents. He stated his concern was how closely we intend on monitoring what the police do with the information they gather. Angelia stated she agreed that we must protect our resident's civil rights and personal freedom. She stated the security cameras were installed long before she was Executive Director. She stated that the police could always come in and ask us for surveillance footage that may be beneficial to whatever case they are working on. She further stated that we continue to have concerns about safety and security, there recently was another shooting on Benham outside Washington Gardens. She stated to eliminate the time lapse between the shooting and the police having to get that information, they have direct access to our security cameras allowing them to pull that information on their own. Therefore, she stated the housing authority would not play a role in violating someone's civil liberties or personal freedom as far as their interaction with the police department. She stated she is unsure of what to do differently to protect our residents. Commissioner Owens stated before, we were able to control what was given to the police department but now that they have access, we do not know what evidence they are collecting, what evidence they are using, and we have no control over what they collect and use against our tenants.

Commissioner Robinson stated she understands Commissioner Owens's concerns with the police having free access. She asked Angelia if there was some type of notification, they receive from police in the event they need to pull footage from the cameras, or are you at least made aware of when they are checking the tapes. Angelia stated yes, we are in regular communication with them, but we can tighten that up as far as what information they are pulling. She further stated we can examine it more when they need to pull information. Commissioner Boecher asked Commissioner Owens if he was responding to a resident concern or if he was making a general statement. Commissioner Owens stated he was making a general statement. He stated he has been the police department's chaplain for over 20 years. He stated the paper and the news talk about criminal activity at the police department. He further stated that the police departments do underhanded things and by the time we find out about it, the criminal activity has already taken place. He informed everyone that his work as chaplain requires him to protect the police department and the community. To do that, he stated he must point out these kinds of things and watch out for people's civil rights. Angelia stated she would like to invite the police chief to our next Board meeting. She stated she realizes the delicacy of the situation being a person of color and being from a civil service family. She stated we also have residents who are calling with concerns about the shootings. She stated she would like to invite Chief Seymour to the meeting so we can discuss those concerns. Commissioner Owens expressed his interest in speaking to the police chief. Commissioner Robinson stated what if the police department had unlimited access to our homes. She stated that she tries to see it from that perspective. Angelia stated we have always given them whatever they've asked for. Commissioner Owens stated a lot of our residents are from larger cities such as Chicago or Saginaw. If they have a visitor who has a warrant for their arrest, he stated and the police spotted this individual going into one of our units and they think that person is dangerous or may be armed, they will enter the unit with a SWAT team, and there may be children inside the unit, and someone may get hurt. He further stated if anyone has ever seen a SWAT team enter a property, then you would

realize the danger for anyone living there besides the person they are looking for. Angelia stated she and her family also moved here from Chicago looking for a safe environment to live in. She stated she wants to protect residents who desire a peaceful life. She stated there are also concerned families who have children they fear may be harmed by the people committing these criminal activities. She stated this commanded further discussion and in hindsight, she believes this should have been brought to the attention of the board first. Commissioner Lefate Owens stated this topic was brought before the Board and the Board voted to have this done. He stated he voted no without having a further discussion about it, he did not want it to go through. He stated upon review of past meeting minutes, you will find a meeting occurred where the commissioners unanimously agreed to give the police access to our video surveillance. Angelia stated that people are shooting out in broad open daylight while children are out and about, there was also a murder two blocks from here. She stated it is a good idea to discuss how to best protect everyone's freedoms. Commissioner Boecher stated we are all on the same page trying our best to provide for our residents which include their safety and ensuring that they have freedom within our units. He stated he thinks it would be a good idea to have a further dialog with the police department so that we can answer questions as commissioners when the topic comes up. He stated how is this information being used and when is it being accessed. Commissioner Boecher apologized for not recalling this topic being brought up in another meeting. Commissioner Owens stated before he spoke up, he wanted to make sure that he understood what the police were allowed to do and not do or if there were any stipulations to giving them full access. Commissioner Boecher stated he would like to get this meeting on the agenda with Chief Seymour and it is not an ambush but continuing the dialog between the Elkhart Housing Authority and the Elkhart Police Department.

- **Rent Eviction Moratorium**

Angelia informed the commissioners that the Supreme Court has lifted the rent moratorium eviction mandate. She stated we have begun filling for nonpayment of rent and other charges. She stated 11 residents' cases were filed in court, but the courts are so backlogged, we are unsure when we will be able to go before the judge. She informed commissioners that we are working to reduce the aged receivables as soon as possible.

- **Physical Needs Assessment**

Angelia stated that the EHA has contracted with someone to come in and start our physical needs assessment of all our properties. She stated they will start at the end of this month, and they are expected to take two years to complete their assessments. She informed the commissioners that she hopes to have that information for them by next month's Board meeting. Commissioner Boecher asked who was doing the work for us. Mitch stated it is Bureau Veritas and they are from Maryland. Angelia explained what the physical needs assessment is to Commissioner Lefate Owens. She informed him that our physical needs assessment had not been done since 2008 and it is time for them to come in and look at all our building systems, components, common areas, and building exteriors. She stated that she asked them to make recommendations on how to better modernize our common areas at all our high rises. Commissioner Owens stated to Angelia that he understood. Commissioner Boecher asked if this was supposed to be done in a couple of weeks. Angelia explained that they would start at the end of September, and they are expected to be inspecting the properties for two weeks. She stated she expects to have the results for the Board by the end of October.

Angelia reminded everyone if they wanted to add any agenda items for upcoming Board meetings, please email them to her and Morgan by the second week of the month and they will be sure to include them in the agenda.

Commissioner Boecher acknowledged Mitch Craven and the work he has done for the housing authority. He wished him well in his future endeavors.

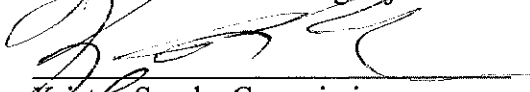
❖ **New Business:**

❖ **Handouts**

- NAHRO Monitor – August 31, 2021
- PHADA Advocate – August 18, 2021

❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Dan Boecher, without any objections, declared the September 16, 2021, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:17 P.M.



Kristen Smole, Commissioner
October 21, 2021



Angela Washington, Executive Director