

REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
Elkhart Housing Authority  
October 19, 2023

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, October 19, 2023.

**Board Members present:** Willie Brown, Tonda Hines, Dan Boecher, Kristen Smole, Helenia Robinson, and Synthia Billings

**Board Members present via dial-in:** None

**Staff members present:** Angelia Washington, Clarence Jones, Todd Fielder, Erik Mathavan, Amy Gonzalez, Jessica Brittain, Teri Ivory, Eva Coleman, Samantha Caretti, Tasha Andrews, Tiphany Travet, Cynthia Snowden, and Morgan Gibson-Day

**Harris Law Firm Attorney present:** Jewell Harris (Via computer dial-in)

**Audience members present:** Dennis Runner, Sharon LeCount

- ❖ **Audience Concerns:** Dennis Runner, a Riverside resident stated that since May of 2023, he has been subjected to continuous harassment by a few of the other residents at Riverside. He further stated that on numerous occasions he has been threatened with bodily harm. He stated that he was chased into the park by another resident who was throwing food at him, and he said that residents have yelled through his first-floor window from outside. Mr. Runner stated that he does not initiate a conversation with these residents, but they continue to harass him. Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Runner if he had any names for these residents. Attorney Harris asked Mr. Runner to provide the names to the executive director privately. Angelia informed the commissioners that Mr. Runner was formerly a member of the resident council, she said that residents started a petition to have Mr. Runner removed from the resident council. She stated that we try to encourage the residents to get along in a neighborly matter but there have been several incidents where we have had to issue lease violations to residents on both sides. She said, unfortunately, this has been an ongoing issue, she said that she hopes that the new resident council guide can help bring the neighbors together and resolve some of these concerns. Commissioner Brown asked if there were any reports on file documenting these other incidents. Angelia said yes. Clarence Jones stated that he spoke to Mr. Runner this morning and informed him that they are following up on his concerns and they will be reviewing camera footage.

Sharon LeCount, who is a Riverside resident, stated that we have a lot of geese and goose poop on the property and some dogs like to ingest it. She stated that Mr. Runner was running the geese off with a little light and some residents accused him of trying to burn the geese's eyes out and burn holes in their feet. She said that this is when the harassment started, and it has only escalated since then.

❖ **Approval of Minutes**

**Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — September 21, 2023, Regular Meeting**

All commissioners present voted to approve the September 21, 2023, meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

**Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — September 21, 2023**

All commissioners present voted to approve the September 21, 2023, vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

**Exhibit C — Executive Director's Report**

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported 1 new hire, Jasmine White, (Recertification Specialist), and 3 ends of employment, Amanda Smith (Custodian), Brock Phillips (General Maintenance Technician), and Michelle Thomas (Homeownership Coordinator).
- **Comprehensive Improvements:**
  - Scattered Sites:** The turf installer for the Banneker Heights playground addressed a few minor action items that came out of the final inspection.

**Riverside Terrace:** No work during this time.

**Washington Gardens:** ServPro continued rehabilitation work of the 334-A Chapman Ave burn unit. Erik provided the commissioners with an update, he stated that they hope to complete the work in this unit by the end of the year.

**Waterfall High-Rise:** Yoder & Son Fencing commenced work to replace the fence along the perimeter of the Waterfall High Rise property.

**Rosedale High-Rise:** Johnson Controls completed the upgrade of the Rosedale High Rise fire alarm panel and integrated the elevator smoke detectors, heat sensors and pull stations located throughout the building. The large elevator passed the State Inspection and was placed into active service.

**COCC:** No work during this time.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of September, 59 Annual Certifications were completed, 56 Interim Certifications Completed, 2 Unit transfers, 12 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 4 End of Participations, 15 Applications Remaining in Process, 713 Lease Ups on the last day of September and 97% Lease-Up Percentage.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 64 participants of which 40 participants are currently employed, 2 participants are enrolled in GED/HSE education programs, 7 participants are attending college, 2 participants are enrolled in job training programs, 7 participants are disabled or unable to work. 22 participants are currently earning escrow, \$6,759 earned in escrow funds in September, and \$147,835.40 total current escrow balance.

Commissioner Robinson asked if there was a certain time limit for FSS participants. Amy stated that FSS participants can be in the program for up to 5 years and that can be extended up to 8 years depending on when their annual falls. Commissioner Robinson asked if there were a limited number of spots in the FSS program. Amy stated that since we have one coordinator, we can serve up to 75 participants. She said that 50 is a great balance so that they can work on the participants' goals. Angelia asked Amy when participants were told that they no longer qualify for the program. Amy stated that most of their disabled participants are only on the program so that they can use their homeownership voucher and since they just hired a new homeownership coordinator, those participants will transfer over into that program. Commissioner Robinson asked Amy if a person is disabled long term, how would this program look for someone moving into a homeownership program and still be able to be self-sufficient. Amy stated that with the FSS program, a disabled person can't or won't go to work, but they want to own a home and would still receive assistance meaning we would help them pay a portion of their mortgage instead of a portion of their rent. Amy said that this would make them more self-sufficient in their own home. Amy further stated that HUD's definition of self-sufficiency differs from our definition.

- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of September is 97%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of September is 95%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of September is 99%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of September is 97% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of September is 99%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of September is 97.5%. She also stated that public housing received 159 applications, mailed 280 orientation letters, processed 137 applications, approved 15 applications, denied 3 applications, and 10 applications were withdrawn. We received 50 homeless applications, and 5 application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 8 new admissions and 9 move-outs in September.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 9 move-outs were received and 7 were completed, 4 emergency requests received and completed, 278 tenant requests received and 275 were completed; and there were 47 annual inspections received and 47 completed, totaling 333 completed work orders.
- **Financials and Write-Offs:** Jessica Brittain reported for the month of September, Rosedale high-rise earned \$25,718.00 in Revenue and \$22,072.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Rosedale high-rise had \$48,319.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Rosedale high-rise had a loss for the month of September in the amount of \$(529.00). The previous past due rent was \$6,515.00, and the current past due rent is \$8,599.00. The increase in past due rent is \$(2,084.00).

Jessica reported for the month of September, Washington Gardens earned \$17,108.00 in Revenue and \$89,981.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Washington Gardens had \$116,001.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Washington Gardens had a loss for the month of September in the amount of \$(8,912.00). The previous past due rent was \$36,563.00 and the current past due rent is 35,046.00. The decrease in past due rent is \$1,517.00.

Jessica reported for the month of September, Waterfall high-rise earned \$34,596.00 in Revenue and \$27,669.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Waterfall high-rise had \$50,946.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Waterfall high-rise had a profit for the month of September in the amount of \$11,319.00. The previous past due rent is \$7,195.00 and the current past due rent is \$11,270.00. The increase in past due rent is \$(4,075.00).

Jessica reported for the month of September, Scattered Sites earned \$17,795.00 in Revenue and \$37,327.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Scattered Sites had \$47,035.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Scattered Sites had a profit for the month of September in the amount of \$8,087.00. The previous past due rent was \$23,329.00 and the current past due rent is \$23,508.00. The increase in past due rent is \$(179.00).

Jessica reported for the month of September, Riverside high-rise earned \$34,403.00 in Revenue and \$30,547.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Riverside high-rise had \$48,570.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Riverside high-rise had a profit for the month of September in the amount of \$18,380.00. The previous past due rent is \$(737.00), and the current past due rent is \$(1,113.00). The decrease in past due rent is \$376.00.

Jessica reported for the month of September, COCC earned \$166,175.00 in Revenue. Jessica went on to say the COCC had \$135,090.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported the COCC had a profit for the month of September in the amount of \$31,085.00.

Jessica reported HCV had a profit for the month of September, in the amount of \$48,174.00. The net position YTD is \$261,379.00.

Commissioner Boecher asked Jessica about the write-offs and how a tenant would be behind in the amount of \$4,928. Jessica explained that this resident had a rescinded payment agreement. She said that sometimes when a person has their rent adjusted from unreported income, they can have a balance. Angelia stated that sometimes it takes a while to find out about the unreported income and we then have to back-charge the tenant.

❖ **Old Business:**

• **Elkhart Thrive**

Angelia informed the board that she, Willie, and Tonda met with Maryann Cusato from Notre Dame School of Architecture and Fred Mossey, an urban planner from the listening sessions that they'd had. She stated that the renderings that are in the board packet are the result of the listening sessions with Elkhart Thrive. She said that those sessions resulted in discussions to restore Benham West which would include Washington Gardens and Rosedale High Rise back to a more community-connected neighborhood as opposed to the landlocked community that we have now. She said that this development will possibly be able to create 250 additional housing units and it would also include a community center within the development. Angelia stated that she sent the renderings to HUD to get some feedback from them. She asked the board how she should move forward. She said that she spoke to the developer, and he would like to meet with her and his team around the first week in November to gather information.

Commissioner Hines stated that she supports this idea, and she thinks that it will complement the investment that the City has put in. Commissioner Brown stated that he thought the meeting was great and Fred took his time explaining everything and he is 100% on board. He said the City is looking forward to the changes and the EHA definitely should be a part of it. Commissioner Smole stated that she has worked closely with Maryann on the bigger project, and she has been very impressed with the community involvement. She said the team was very intentional in the way that they viewed Washington Gardens, and they did 3-4 different renderings asking each other why this would or wouldn't work. She further stated that she believes there is a lot of buy-in from stakeholders to help make this work. Angelia said that she thinks this will restore some healing, especially with citizens who used to live in that area. She said that having the voices of the people that this will directly impact at the table is important and federally mandated. Commissioner Billings shared her concern about increasing the number of public housing units in the same amount of space. Angelia stated that the public housing units depicted in the renderings are no more than 3 stories high. Commissioner Robinson stated that from an educational standpoint, if all those families went into the same building even if the space looks better, that could be an issue. Commissioner Smole responded to Commissioner Robinson and stated that Washington Gardens would potentially have mixed-income properties surrounding it and the hope is to utilize some of the other vacant lots in the areas around Washington Gardens. She further stated that they are adding density and not just the lower income levels. She said she hopes that will offset the problem. All of the commissioners agreed that the local schools need to be a part of the conversation. Commissioner Robinson stated that the amount of space needs to be considered per person/family. She said that no one wants to feel like they don't have any personal space. Angelia stated that we cannot engage in overcrowding. Commissioner Robinson further stated that even if we stack on top of the existing development, we still have the same amount of usable space for work and play and with the additional families, each family will have less space.

Commissioner Boecher asked Angelia if she sent the renderings to Bruce at HUD. Angelia said yes, she sent the renderings to Bruce and Jennifer, who is our portfolio manager. She said that moving forward on this project will entail meeting with the Indianapolis HUD Field office and urban planners. Angelia asked the board if she should wait to make any capital improvements

in Washington Gardens while they plan the redevelopment. The commissioners all agreed to wait to make any capital improvements.

❖ **New Business:**

• **HCV High Performance**

Angelia informed the board that our HCV program was recognized as a high-performing program thanks to Amy and her staff. She said that SEMAP is the scoring report card for HCV programs under HUD. She stated that our HCV department scored the top score under each scoring indicator under each category.

• **Hazards Grant**

Angelia thanked Erik for his work on the competitive Hazards grant. She said that the grant is for \$1,536,244.00 and it was awarded to the EHA for Riverside and Waterfall. She said that we are replacing the fire sprinklers at Riverside, and we are retrofitting the fire sprinklers at Waterfall to eliminate the risk of any fire damage, and damage to property or life.

• **Resolution 23:13 -- A Resolution to Award the Contract for Replacement of HVAC Roof Top Units for Riverside High Rise and Boiler for Waterfall High Rise**

Angelia reminded the commissioners that there has been an ongoing problem at Riverside with heating concerns and the boiler at Waterfall. She said that both projects were bid as a single project. All commissioners present voted to approve resolution 23:13.

• **Cordell's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Angelia stated that Cordell Price, our IT Specialist is celebrating 40 years with the agency on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. She informed the commissioners that the staff will be celebrating Cordell tomorrow at Golden Corral at 11:30 if they would like to attend. She further stated that she will close the agency at 11:00.


• **Executive Session**

The commissioners decided to schedule an executive session to finalize Angelia's contract on November 1<sup>st</sup> at 4:30. Attorney Harris stated that he would email a current draft to everyone before the meeting.

❖ **Handouts: None**

❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Willie Brown without any objections declared the October 19, 2023, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:37 P.M.

  
Willie Brown, Commissioner  
November 16, 2023

  
Angelia Washington, Executive Director