

**REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Elkhart Housing Authority
July 15, 2021**

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, July 15, 2021, in person and via Conference call.

Board Members present: Kristen Smole, JeNeve Adams, Helenia Robinson, Lefate Owens, and Margaret Owens

Staff members present: Angelia Washington, Amy Gonzalez, Clarence Jones, Todd Fielder, Mitch Craven, Jessica Brittain, Charlotte Pettis, and Morgan Gibson

Audience members present: Tonda Hines

❖ **Audience Concerns:** None

❖ **Approval of Minutes**

Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — June 17, 2021, Regular Meeting

Commissioner Lefate Owens motioned to approve the minutes from the June 17, 2021, regular meeting. Commissioner JeNeve Adams seconded the motion. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the June 17, 2021, regular meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — June 17, 2021

Commissioner Adams motioned to approve the vouchers for June 17, 2021, Commissioner Margaret Owens seconded the motion. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the June 17, 2021, vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

Exhibit C — Executive Director's Report

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported 3 new hires, Randle Green, (Custodian), Sheila Shavers, (Part-time Float), and Adrienne Brauch, (Maintenance Clerk), and 3 ends of employment, Anthony McNeary, Randall Green, and Charmaine Scales.
- **Comprehensive Improvements:**
 - Scattered Sites:** Bids for the final phase of the bathroom renovations were received in late June. Milestone Construction was the lowest bidder, at \$181,350. Work is expected to begin in early October and be completed within 60 days.

Riverside Terrace: No work, at this time.

Washington Gardens: The playground renovation plans are complete and have been published for public bid.

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.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of June, 60 Annual Certifications were completed, 69 Interim Certifications Completed, 4 Unit transfers, 7 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 6 End of Participations, 121 Applications Remaining in Process, 669 Lease Ups on the last day of June and 92% Lease-Up Percentage.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 64 participants in which 33 participants are currently employed, 4 participants are enrolled in GED/HSE education programs, 11 participants are attending college, 3 participants are enrolled in job training programs, 16 participants are disabled or unable to work. 13 participants are currently earning escrow, \$3,328 earned in escrow funds in June, and \$100,637 total current escrow balance.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of June is 98.04%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of June is 92.93%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of June is 94.49%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of June is 97.96 and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of June is 95.24%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of June is 95.09%. She also stated that public housing received 132 applications, mailed 120 orientation letters, were processing 42 applications, approved 16 applications, denied six applications, withdrew 67 applications. We received 18 homeless applications and 0 application(s) was approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 12 new admissions and 13 move-outs in June.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 13 move-outs were received and 10 were completed, 13 emergency requests received and completed, 317 tenant requests received and 309 completed; and there were 45 annual inspections received and 36 completed, totaling 368 completed work orders.
- **Financials and Write-Offs:** Jessica Brittain announced for the month of June, Rosedale high-rise earned \$28,962.47 in Revenue and \$16,592.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Rosedale high-rise had \$33,626.48 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Rosedale high-rise had a profit for the month of June in the amount of \$11,927.99. The overall view for the year, Rosedale earned \$85,539.63 in Revenue and the expenses were \$74,625.32. The net position YTD is \$10,914.31.

Jessica announced for the month of June, Washington Gardens earned \$15,564.67 in Revenue and \$72,097.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Washington Gardens had \$70,906.18 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Washington Gardens had a profit for the month of June in the amount of \$16,755.49. The overall view for the year, Washington Gardens earned \$88,968.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$75,759.00. The net position YTD is \$13,209.00.

Jessica announced for the month of June, Waterfall high-rise earned \$31,808.83 in Revenue and \$21,982.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Waterfall high-rise had \$33,252.38 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Waterfall high-rise had a profit for the month of June in the amount of \$15,482.52. The overall view for the year, Waterfall earned \$98,36 in Revenue and the expenses were \$82,881.68. The net position YTD is \$15,482.52.

Jessica announced for the month of June, Scattered Sites earned \$18,941.73 in Revenue and \$35,134.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Scattered Sites had \$29,767.31 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Scattered Sites had a profit for the month of June in the amount of \$24,308.42. The net position year to date is \$21,502.90.

Jessica announced for the month of June, Riverside high-rise earned \$35,388.23 in Revenue and \$22,425.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Riverside high-rise had \$40,559.51 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Riverside high-rise had a profit for the month of June in the amount of \$17,245.72. The overall view for the year, Riverside earned 106,368.55 in Revenue and the expenses were \$83,559.76. The net position YTD is \$22,808.79.

Jessica announced for the month of June, COCC earned \$89,408.93 in Revenue. Jessica went on to say the COCC had \$115,892.04 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported the COCC had a profit for the month of June in the amount of (\$26,483.11). The overall view for the year, COCC earned \$185,274.07 and the expenses were \$260,234.59. The net position YTD is (\$74,960.52).

Jessica announced HCV had a profit for the month of June, in the amount of \$21,698.45. The net position YTD is \$43,378.48.

Commissioner Smole stated the past due rents had been on a downward trend and this month they are up again. She asked Jessica why. Jessica stated the numbers have been fluctuating. She stated she prepared a comparison report for Commissioner Boecher for him to review upon his return.

◆ Old Business:

- **Fair Housing Claim**

Angelia announced the fair housing claim that was discussed at last month's Board meeting has been tabled until the Human Relations Commission meeting on July 22. She stated we were asked to provide additional information and they have also asked the claimant to provide additional information. She stated she will provide further updates at next month's Board meeting. Commissioner Smole asked Angelia to give some background information on the case for the commissioners who were not present at last month's meeting. Angelia stated when she was asked to assume the Interim Executive Director position, there were several Fair Housing files on Terry Walker's desk. She stated they appeared to be reasonable, so she settled those according to Fair Housing's conciliation recommendations. She stated this claimant was involved in a fistfight with another resident. Both residents were called in for hearings, and eviction proceedings were filed for both. One of the resident's cases were dismissed due to the court's COVID concerns. Angelia stated we did not evict the resident who filed the claim. However, there was another incident that occurred while they were still residing there, and they moved out voluntarily. Angelia further explained that the resident is accusing the BHA of structurally evicting them due to colorism. The conciliation that the Human Relations Commission requested was to pay the claimant \$10,000 and allow them to move back in. Angelia stated our Washington Gardens vacancies are high because applicants are turning them down due to safety concerns. Angelia said that she sought legal counsel because the claim of discrimination is untrue, and we are trying to ensure residents are adhering to the lease and not committing violent acts.

- **Rent Eviction Moratorium**

Angelia stated the rent moratorium has been extended a few times and it is scheduled to end July 31st. She stated she had staff hand deliver notices to residents informing them that the rent moratorium is going to end and if they have not taken advantage of the rental assistance to them or entered into repayment agreements, the Housing Authority will move to evict effective July 31st. Commissioner Smole asked Angelia how many people are up for eviction. Angelia stated we have at least 100 people with payment arrangements. Jessica stated residents will be taken to court in batches of 5 at a time. She also stated that residents with the largest past due balances will be taken to court first.

- **Ongoing Affordable Housing Discussions with City of Elkhart**

Angelia announced our discussions have been ongoing and we were able to partner with a community reinvestment officer from Centier Bank that will work with us to provide financial and investment guidance. She stated this person will attend the meeting with the City of Elkhart on August 10. She further stated that the community reinvestment has worked with many housing authorities in the past and will provide expert guidance as we move forward with these discussions. She stated anyone who would like to attend the August 10 meeting please let her or Morgan know. She informed the Board that the community reinvestment partner is Yolanda Davis. Angelia asked the Commissioners if anyone wanted to attend the meeting on August 10th. Commissioner Smole stated she, and Dan Boecher would be there. Angelia asked if anyone would like to attend, please let her know before the date.

- ◆ **New Business:**

- **4-H Fair**

Angelia stated staff will be working the fair this month. She stated a different staff member will work each day of the fair. She asked if anyone was at the fair to please feel free to visit our booth. She stated we want to get our name out there as far as our programs and employment opportunities. Commissioner Lefate Owens asked if we had enough staff to man the booth. Angelia responded yes; two employees will work the booth each a day.

- **Resolution 21:10- A Resolution to Award the Contract for Bathroom Remodel Phase VI Scattered Sites**

Angelia stated this is the sixth and final phase of the bathroom renovations for Scattered Sites. She stated we are asking for approval of the contract so that the final phase can be completed. She stated all the bathrooms have been remodeled in the first five stages. Commissioner Adams motioned to approve a resolution to award the contract for bathroom remodel phase IV Scattered Sites and Commissioner Lefate Owens seconded. All commissioners present unanimously voted to approve resolution 21:10.

- **Resolution 21:11- A Resolution to Revise Housing Authority City of Elkhart Holiday Closings**

Angelia stated the EHA has 14 paid holidays unless it is an election year, which has 16 paid holidays. She stated congress just enacted into law June 19, 2021, Juneteenth, a federal holiday. She stated that would increase EHA's paid holidays to 15 a year and 17 on election years. She stated this resolution is to ask the Board to remove the two election holidays because the EHA is no longer a polling place. She stated there are centralized polling places in the city and the housing authority needs to be open to see to the needs of the public. Commissioner Adams motioned to approve a resolution to revise Housing Authority City of Elkhart holiday closings and Commissioner Margaret Owens seconded. All commissioners present unanimously voted to approve resolution 21:11.

- **Mission Statement**

Angelia stated the Elkhart Housing Authority's mission statement has been the same for at least the past 20 years or so. She stated our mission statement speaks to our basic service of housing poor people, but should we revise the overall mission the current Board has for the agency or if we need to develop a new mission statement. She stated the mission statement is being presented to the Board for consideration and can possibly be discussed later. She stated she hoped to plan a commissioner's retreat to discuss a new vision for the housing authority, how we should move forward, and if this current mission still speaks to the purpose of the EHA. She stated she has included the EHA's current mission statement in the Board packet for review and to possibly discuss at a later date. Commissioner Adams stated if we revise the mission statement, we need to come together to discuss it. She suggested changing the vision statement and keeping the mission statement considering it currently falls in line with HUD's mission statement. Angelia stated she will schedule a retreat as soon as possible in the future.

- **City of Elkhart Housing Authority By-Laws**

Angelia stated she does not think the EHA's by-laws have ever been revised or updated since the inception of the Elkhart Housing Authority. She asked if the Board would like to create a by-law committee because our current by-laws have not served the agency well. She stated she could present a sample set of by-laws from another housing authority. Commissioner Lefate Owens stated it is time for them to be updated. Commissioner Smole stated she agrees it is time, but she feels like having a committee would be best. Commissioner Adams also agrees and stated we should send out copies of the outdated by-laws for everyone to review, look at by-laws from other housing authorities, and put together a by-law revision committee, and present it to the Board. Commissioner Margaret Owens also agreed with Commissioner Adams. Angelia asked if we should choose the committee now or table this discussion for a later date. Commissioner Smole stated she would like to have the by-laws first. The commissioners agreed that this would work best. Angelia stated she would send the by-laws to everyone.

At the closing of the Board meeting, Commissioner Lefate Owens made a statement. He stated since we have opened up our security cameras to the Elkhart Police Department, have we had any push back from any of the tenants. Angelia stated no and she just ordered signs to post so that everyone knows that property is under security surveillance. He asked about any action taken by the Elkhart Police Department since the installation of the cameras. Angelia responded there have been a couple of IT connection snafus so there are still some things to be worked out. She stated that the EHA's partnership with the Elkhart Police Department has resulted in improved communication and ability to obtain more substantial reports from them. Angelia reminded the Board that we should not speak about things that are not on the agenda since it is a public meeting and had the public been aware of specific discussion items, they may have wanted to be present at the meeting. She asked that anything Board members want to add to the agenda be submitted in writing to her prior to the next before the Board meeting. Commissioner Lefate Owens explained he believes the partnership should be monitored because tenant's civil rights could be violated, and the police could potentially spy on people. He stated after some time has gone by and the police have some actions, we need to make sure our residents aren't being discriminated against since the police can see a lot more now. Angelia responded that as a person of color who comes from a civil service family, she understands his concern and, there is a need for a delicate balance. She further stated that we are mandated by HUD to provide a safe living environment for our residents. Angelia asked Commissioner Lefate Owens if he would like this topic to be added to the agenda next month. He stated yes.


- ◆ **Handouts**

- NAHRO Monitor – June 15, 2021, & June 30, 2021

- PHADA Advocate – June 23, 2021, & July 7, 2021

◆ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Kristen Smole, without any objections, declared the July 15, 2021, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:16 P.M.



Dan Boecher, Commissioner
August 19, 2021



Angelia Washington, Executive Director