

REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
Elkhart Housing Authority  
October 17, 2024

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, October 17, 2024.

**Board Members present:** Willie Brown, Loria Mayes, Dan Boecher, Kristen Smole, and Cynthia Billings

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

**Staff members present:** Angelia Washington, Todd Fielder, Erik Mathavan, Amy Gonzalez, Julie Stebbins, Alicia Kimble, Nekisha Roberson, Stephanie McMorris, Tiphany Trivet, Teri Ivory, and Morgan Gibson-Day.

**Harris Law Firm Attorney present:** Tramel Raggs via Ascension Meeting

**Audience members present:** Adrian Riley

❖ **Audience Concerns:** None.

❖ **Approval of Minutes**

**Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — September 19, 2024, Regular Meeting**

All commissioners present voted to approve the September 19, 2024, meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

**Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — September 19, 2024**

All commissioners present voted to approve the September 19, 2024, vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

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

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported three new hires, Xavier Rosales-Ramos, Recertification Specialist, Kennedy Lafayette, Custodian, and Norman Wilson, Custodian, and one ended employment, Terri Nelson.
- **Comprehensive Improvements:**
  - Scattered Sites:** No work during this time.

**Riverside Terrace:** R. Yoder completed the kitchen upgrade on the first-floor units and commenced work on the second-floor units. Commissioner Billings stated that she and the residents at Riverside were very happy with their new kitchen cabinetry and sinks and things turned out way better than she thought. The Riverside residents made a poster board with pictures and cards for Erik to show their appreciation for the work he did, making sure that the installation process was seamless.

**Washington Gardens:** No work during this time.

**Waterfall High-Rise:** Schwartz Electric continued work on the fire panel upgrade. Specifically, they completed the installation of new conduit and speaker boxes on floors 2 through 7 and commenced work to install new conduit in the basement and install the new fire panel box.

**Rosedale High-Rise:** EJ White completed the work on the expansion tank replacement, new water heater installation, and new water heater controls.

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

Angelia informed the board that maintenance would not be turning on the heat in the high rises until we have had a continuous stretch of cold weather.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of September, 58 Annual Certifications were completed, 63 Interim Certifications Completed, 2 Unit transfers, 8 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 7 End of Participations, 39 Applications Remaining in Process, 681 Lease Ups on the last day of September and 92% Lease-Up Percentage. Commissioner Boecher asked what our targeted lease-up percentage was. Angelia said that HUD wants to be sure that we are utilizing our funds to house families, so utilization overrides lease-up.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 55 participants of which 35 participants are currently employed, 4 participants are attending college, 6 participants are disabled or unable to work, 19 participants are currently earning escrow, \$6,240 earned in escrow funds in September, and \$163,335.88 total current escrow balance.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of September is 98%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of September is 95%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of September is 96%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of September is 98% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of September is 97%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of September is 97%. She also stated that public housing received 75 applications, mailed 75 orientation letters, processed 32 applications, approved 23 applications, denied 8 applications, and 274 applications were withdrawn. We received 3 homeless applications, and 22 application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 14 new admissions and 12 move-outs in September.

Angelia stated that we still have not received the okay from HUD to take the unit offline that was hit by the car at Washington Gardens. She said that she thinks that the public housing team is doing a great job leasing up the units. She said that she hired a temporary employee who put a dent in the waitlist. Alicia stated that the temp did a lot of work. She said that there were over 1000 duplicate files that she was able to clean up. She said that there were instances where an applicant applied five times so those were merged in one file. She said that hiring the temp allowed the public housing team to focus on the occupancy rates and public housing would not be where it is now without her help. Commissioner Brown asked if he applied for public housing today, how long of a wait would he have. Angelia informed Commissioner Brown that he would have a six-month to one-year wait. Alicia said that the waitlist is continuously growing. She said that she has 5000 on the waitlist currently. Angelia said that she would like to look at closing the waitlist so that we do not give people unrealistic hope. She said that our current policy stated that if it takes more than two years to house an applicant, the EHA will close the waitlist. She said that how fast applicants are housed depends on the bedroom size. She said that public housing was not able to turn the five-bedroom units around quickly, our two- and three-bedroom units are the most sought-after. She said that families do not move out of the larger bedroom units as frequently. Commissioner Smole asked Angelia if it was possible to just close the waitlist for certain bedroom sizes. Angelia said yes.

- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 12 move-outs were received and eight were completed, nine emergency requests were received and completed, 509 tenant requests were received and 506 were completed; and there were 39 annual inspections received and 30 completed, totaling 553 completed work orders.

- **Financials and Write-Offs:**

**Receipts:** Washington Gardens and Scattered Sites continue to have negative rent revenue. This deviation is due to utility reimbursement (URPs) checks paid to tenants. Although the other three remaining AMPs are not experiencing negative revenue, but do have low dwelling rental income. Rosedale is 43K under budget, Waterfall is 38K under budget, and Riverside is \$94 under budget. For additional details see GL Account 3110.00 Dwelling Rental. During June, July, and August there were no operating subsidies. In September, an operating subsidy catchup took place to account for three months of missed draws. The total monthly draw for all Amps is \$213,828. For September \$641,484 was drawn to account for June, July, and August operating subsidies that were missed. Lastly, for September, the normal monthly draw occurred to bring the operating subsidy revenue back to the normal amount. For additional details please see GL Account Operating Subsidy.

**Expenses:** Julie further reported that for the month of September, maintenance costs will decrease because there are fewer expenses. The prior three months had higher expenses due to higher unit turnarounds and audits/inspections. Total year-to-date maintenance expense is around 40-60% of the annual budget which is optimal given September is halfway through the fiscal year (six months out of twelve months). Year-to-date utility costs are more in line with the budget. Rosedale utility costs are impacted the most due to heat. Rosedale is the only AMP with a cooling station. The other high rises do not have a cooling station. Lastly, nonroutine expenditures are higher than normal for all AMPs and HCV. The finance director will be reviewing various expenditures with Maintenance and Capital Improvements directors to determine whether they could be categorized as capital expenditures. Nonroutine expenditures fall into the following categories: Appliances, office equipment, and HVAC. Administrative expenses overall are tracked with the budget and favorable.

Angelia stated that she wants to be sure to have the finance committee meeting every month, one week before the board meeting, so that everyone can keep their eyes on the finances.

- ❖ **Old Business:**

- **NSPIRE Scores**

Angelia stated that at one of the previous board meetings, Commissioner Robinson asked about the differences in the scoring categories for the NSPIRE inspections. She said that she waited for clarification from the Indianapolis HUD field office and her counterpart had to get clarification since this is a new scoring system. She said that he reported to her that the final calculated scores on the NSPIRE inspection report are our scores. She said that those are the scores that she originally reported after our NSPIRE inspections were completed.

- **Customer Service**

Angelia stated that there was some discussion at a previous board meeting regarding our response time for resident concerns. She said that she and Alicia have had public housing staff update their voicemail greetings and let callers know when to expect a callback from them and if they have not received a callback, who they should contact.

- **Police Department Interlocal Agreement**

Angelia stated that Chief Milanese informed her that the draft was sent back to their attorney, so she is just waiting to hear back from the police department.

- ❖ **New Business:**

- **Washington Gardens Community Event**

Angelia informed the board that the EHA had their first Washington Gardens community event. She reported that the EHA partnered with the Elkhart Police Department to host the

event last Saturday. She said that the public housing team did a great job coordinating everything. She said that they wanted to host this event to let the residents know about the services that we house at 312 Wagner. She said that all of those agencies were able to attend, except for Black Expo. She said that the fire department was there with their firehouse and the Elkhart Public Library was also there distributing books. She said that she wanted residents to have an opportunity to meet these agencies that are housed at Washington Gardens, and it was also an attempt to solicit some interest in our resident council. She said that public housing did get a few names that they are going to contact.

- **Resolution 24:19 – A Resolution Amending the Voucher Payment Standard**

Amy stated that every year she has to determine what the voucher payment standard is, which is what the EHA pays for rent plus utilities. She said to figure that out, HUD releases fair markets every year but unfortunately this year the rents went down from last year. She said that she is allowed to go up to 110% of what is allowed so that would bring the amount down for next year. She said with the high rent, HCV needed to go above that, and HUD allows HCV to go up to 120% so Amy did that, and those final numbers are included in the resolution. All commissioners present voted to approve resolution 24:19.

- **Commissioner Time**

Commissioner Brown asked the commissioners if they had anything that they would like to discuss. Commissioner Smole informed everyone that she has been receiving fewer resident calls. She said that she felt like the residents just wanted to be heard and she was glad that she was able to make that happen. Angelia stated that she thinks that this correlates with the hiring of our public housing director. She said that Alicia and her team had made a difference.

Commissioner Billings stated that she recently attended training in Fort Wayne, she said that she did not think it pertained to her, she said it was more for management, but she said that she still learned a lot. Angelia apologized and said that the flyer that she received said that the training was for all leadership, including commissioners.

Commissioner Billings expressed her concern about Angelia's upcoming redevelopment tour in Cairo, Egypt. She said that she forwarded her a travel ban for that area. Angelia stated that she spoke with her travel organizer and there is going to be a contingent of national officials, and members from HUD who have said that they have no real concern about anything going on in Egypt or the U.S. Embassy. She said that she is going as a part of a group. She said that the event would not be anywhere in the areas that were banned for travel.

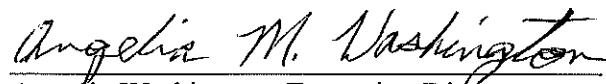
Angelia informed the commissioners that the Commissioners' Conference in Miami was budgeted for two commissioners. She said that she hoped that the board chair and the vice chair would be able to attend.

❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Willie Brown without any objections declared the October 17, 2024, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:10 P.M.

  
Willie Brown, Commissioner

November 21, 2024

  
Angelia Washington, Executive Director

November 21, 2024