

REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
Elkhart Housing Authority  
June 27, 2025

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart, met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m. on Friday, June 27, 2025.

**Board Members present:** Dan Boecher, Kristen Smole, Loria Mayes, Synthia Billings, and Helenia Robinson

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

**Staff members present:** Amy Gonzalez, Erik Mathavan, Todd Fielder, Julie Stebbins, Alicia Kimble, Nekisha Roberson, Tiphany Travet, Olesia Melnyk, Danielle Gilbert, Redginald Norris, Teri Ivory, and Morgan Gibson-Day.

**Harris Law Firm Attorney present:** Nick Snow

**Audience members present:** None.

❖ **Audience Concerns:** None.

❖ **Approval of Minutes**

**Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — May 15, 2025, Regular Meeting**

All commissioners present voted to approve the May 15, 2025, meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

**Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — May 15, 2025**

All commissioners present voted to approve the May 15, 2025, vouchers.

- **May Financial Report**

Erik reported the May finances in Julie's place due to her absence. Erik stated that all of the AMPs had a decrease in operating reserves. He said that the main reason is a delay in the capital funds program draw, which happens annually. He stated that once the EHA has more information on the amount of funding available for 2025, the operating advance draw can be completed. Thus, there will be a catch-up of receipts for a more favorable bottom line. Commissioner Boecher asked Erik if he knew the amount of the decrease. Erik did not have that figure handy, but he said, as far as capital funds, the EHA received \$100,000 less this year compared to last year. Erik said for Rosedale, there was a decrease in unrestricted operating reserves of \$15,822. Erik said that the reason for the decrease was \$5,492 was spent on doors, plus additional costs for bearing assembly motor, and coupler, unit turnaround costs over \$4,000. Erik said that for Washington Gardens, there was a decrease in unrestricted operating reserves of \$29,354, and the reason for the decrease was that rental revenue is negative due to utility reimbursement payments being greater than rental revenue received. Employment of an FSS Coordinator with emphasis on public housing residents will help increase rental revenue as their income increases. Erik reported that Waterfall had a decrease in operating reserves of \$24,279, and the reason for the decrease was that collection losses were high for April evictions, synonymous with evictions are unit turnover costs. Erik reported that Scattered Sites had an increase in unrestricted operating reserves of \$5,435, and the reason for the increase was good dwelling rent and fewer unit turnovers. Erik stated that for Riverside, there was a decrease in unrestricted operating reserves in the amount of \$20,618. The main reason for the decrease in the bottom line was that the gas and electricity for the main hallways are high, as gas is used to heat the main hallways, which often has an issue in colder months, which keeps the

place cold. He said that elevator costs were also higher due to the needed work on elevators in April. The utilities in April were higher based on February-March heating activity. Lastly, Erik reported that the COCC had an increase in unrestricted operating reserves of \$24,269, which is in line with the budgeted amount. He said that the majority of the revenue for COCC is what they charge the AMPs for fee-for-service maintenance work orders. Marsha added that Julie explained that the cooling costs are less than the heating costs, so we should see a decrease in those expenses in the next several months.

❖ **Department Directors' Reports:**

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

- **Human Resources:** Teri reported three new hires, Jordan Taylor, Groundskeeper, John Love, Groundskeeper, and Terrance Trotter, Asset Property Manager. Teri reported two ends of employment: Carlos Lemus and Veronica Donaldson. Marsha stated that Teri is actively recruiting, and she has six positions open. She works with Indeed as well as several other recruiting agencies. She stated that she also sent her some viable candidates from South Bend. Commissioner Billings asked Marsha if they were getting any candidates from Elkhart at all. Marsha explained to Commissioner Billings that we are competing with the RV plants when it comes to maintenance positions in terms of salary. She said that she would take a look at the salaries to potentially avoid that situation, but historically, the RV industry has paid more than we do. She said she will go over the salary study to see if there is any more that we can do. She said that they just went through the employee handbook and got rid of a lot of things that would be a deterrent for existing staff as well as people who want to come on board. She said that they will have a final copy to present to the board in July. She informed Commissioner Billings that she would send the board the Cliff Notes and an outline of the changes so the board can approve them before they are implemented.

- **Comprehensive Improvements:**

**Scattered Sites:** Exhaust Fan Replacement, Range Hood Install, and Tuckpointing of Exterior Brick. Undergoing work to compile the specs and requirements to bid out the above work in July.

**Riverside Terrace:** KCS Construction completed a successful trial run on the upgrade of the kitchen cabinet and countertops of one unit. Starting the week of June 9, KCS Construction will target 4-unit upgrades per week, with the intent of scaling up to six units per week over time.

ElectriCorpe completed five of the 11 resident unit electrical panel upgrades, as well as completed five of the 77 resident unit LED lighting upgrades scheduled for the year. ElectriCorpe to pair up with KCS Construction to complete the LED lighting replacement as each kitchen upgrade is complete.

EJ White hoisted the new air handler onto the rooftop and is working toward a June 11 "startup" date.

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

**Waterfall High-Rise:** Shambaugh & Son hit the ground running with their project to retrofit a fire sprinkler system throughout the building. They are currently working on the risers in each of the stairwells as well as basement piping and are expected to start work on the first resident floor in the upcoming two weeks.

**Rosedale High-Rise:** R Yoder is close to completing the work on the main vestibule. The new roof, storefront, fob system, and ADA door openers are installed and working with only a few minor specs items and defects to address.

**COCC:** No work during this time. Marsha informed the commissioners that they are looking to refresh the EHA boardroom for training and meetings, like board meetings. She said that this should not be a significant cost.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Chrissy reported for the month of May, 61 Annual Certifications were completed, 57 Interim Certifications were Completed, 0 Unit transfers, 1 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 7 End of Participations, 0 Applications Remaining in Process, 665 Lease Ups on the last day of May and 90% Lease-Up Percentage. **The waitlist is closed.** Marsha said that she received a letter a couple of hours ago from SEMAP, an agency that scores the HCV program, and we scored 104 out of 105, and they have been designated a high-performing program once again.
  - **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Chrissy reported that the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 55 participants of which 38 participants are currently employed, 6 participants are attending college, 5 participants are disabled or unable to work, 22 participants are currently earning escrow, \$9,134 earned in escrow funds in May, and \$171,962.25 total current escrow balance. Marsha said that although utilization is down, she does not foresee a problem with getting it back up again.
  - **Public Housing:** Alicia reported that Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of May is 97%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of May is 98%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of May is 98%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of May is 100% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of May is 99%. Alicia went on to say that Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of May is 98%. She also stated that public housing received zero applications, mailed zero orientation letters, processed zero applications, approved zero applications, denied zero applications, and zero applications were withdrawn. **The waitlist is closed.** We received no homeless applications, and no application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Alicia reported that there were 11 new admissions and ten move-outs in May.
  - **Maintenance:** Todd reported that ten move-outs were received and five were completed, nine emergency requests were received and completed, 731 tenant requests were received, and 711 were completed; and there were 44 annual inspections received and 38 were completed, totaling 763 completed work orders. Marsha said that she will be working with Todd to reduce the number of outstanding work orders and to get us caught up once we are fully staffed. She said then they can work on a plan that is sustainable if they lose a person or two.
  - **Resident Services**

Lori stated that she had been at the agency for about 4 months. She said that at Riverside, a council had been established, and she was going to try to establish one at Rosedale. Lori further stated that they are doing a cleanup at Washington Gardens on July 18. She said that there will be hot dogs and a bouncy house for the kids. Lori encouraged staff and the commissioners to attend.
- ❖ **Old Business:**
- **Annual Board Elections – All commissioners present voted to table Annual Board Elections due to the board chair's absence.**
- ❖ **New Business:**
- **Resolution 25:14 – A resolution to Award the Contract for Security Upgrades of Two Offices at Waterfall High Rise**

Erik stated that he made a strong push, but he only received one bid. He said that the funds would come from the fiscal year 2021 Emergency Safety and Security grant. He said that they received the funds in October. He explained that they would be fortifying two offices at Waterfall High Rise, and the current construction consists of eight four-foot-high glass panels for both the interior and the exterior. He said that the area is vandalized a lot, and the manager and recert specialist both wanted to feel safer. He said that they will decrease the amount of glass and put in some drywall with security mesh in between. He said that there will be less glazing, and it will have 3M Safety glass, one extra door, so that both offices have two exits, and intercom systems will be installed so they can buzz guests and tenants in. Commissioner Boecher asked if this was precipitated by a staff request. Erik stated yes, it was the property manager and the recert. Commissioner Boecher stated that he had some concerns, particularly when we have our onsite board meetings, this project is disconnected from what we are hearing from our residents. He explained that if they were sitting at Waterfall right now in front of the resident council, how would they explain this \$185,000 investment. Erik stated that in this particular grant, the funds have to be used in a certain fashion. He said he did make a couple of contract changes with our security provider. He said that we switched from Signal Security, which only gave us two officers, and we will have three with our new security company. He said that we will have one dedicated security officer at each building for 8 hours between the hours of 4-6 am. He said that this grant could only be used for cameras, and Waterfall is already adequately set up with cameras. He said that it covered door locks, and we just replaced the doors last year. Marsha added that this grant is specifically for security, and it does not take away from other capital funds that we would use to improve other things at that property.

Commissioner Smole asked if it was residents causing a security concern for staff or was it people from the outside. Erik said that he believes having a dedicated officer there will help, and our goal is to have the officer spend a lot of time at the door, and people may be required to sign in and show an ID. He said that security would also be escorting people to their cars at night. He said that we will also receive a dedicated phone line, which is something new that we are implementing. He said that each high-rise will have a direct line to security, and they will be able to call with any issues. He said that the tenant would need to emphasize if it is an emergency, and they would need to dial 911 instead. He said they would contact security for issues such as loud music, neighbors causing commotion, or if a tenant would like security to walk them to their car.

Commissioner Billings stated that she does not want to walk her guests out to their cars. She said that the tenants at Riverside had not had a meeting with their manager yet, and she would like the residents to have input on things that they need. She said that things had really improved with traffic in the building, and now her only concern is residents' guests. She agreed that they do need extra security, and it is great to be able to call them. She said that when she first moved to Riverside, guests had to sign in, but they changed it, and she cannot remember why. She said that people were not comfortable bringing their guests in because they felt they were being watched. Alicia explained to Commissioner Billings that she did not think that Erik was stating that every person would be walked to their car. She said that some tenants expressed that they did not feel safe, so that would be an option. She said that there will be check-ins where guests will need to show their ID. She said that tenants have to take responsibility for their guests and not just let them out of their unit to roam the halls. She said that if you buzz in a guest, it is your responsibility to walk them back out of the property. She said that residents' leases can be terminated if their guest does something on the property that jeopardizes the safety of someone else, so residents must take more responsibility. Alicia said that she and her staff have continued to get rid of the bad seeds, and they knew that it would lower occupancy numbers, but it did not matter but safety does matter in the moment. She informed Commissioner Billings that they had not had a meeting at Riverside yet because the new manager is still in training. Alicia further

explained that the reason for upgrading security in staff offices was due to a non-resident barricading a staff member in her office. She said if someone broke the glass, they could easily get to the staff member. Commissioner Billings stated that they have a lot of seniors at Riverside who cannot get up and go to the door. Alicia said that she understood, but there is an accountability piece, and we cannot let half the residents do it and the other half do not do it. She said if they have an aide or a caregiver, they can walk them out as well. Marsha added that lease enforcement was key because that is one of the tenants' responsibilities for receiving assistance. Commissioner Billings disagreed and stated that it was awful, and she may need to move. She informed the management team that they had other things going on at Riverside, like drugs in the elevator. She said that the residents know who the people are, and these are the people making it bad for everyone. Marsha said that this should not be viewed as a punishment; we are just trying to keep the residents safe. Commissioner Robinson asked if there were possible solutions for a bedridden tenant. She said that we need equity and that it may not always be quality. Marsha said absolutely, that would fall under reasonable accommodation. She said that the tenant would need to inform their manager or security that they cannot escort their guest out, then perhaps we can watch the cameras as the person is leaving after the tenant calls to report that the person is walking out of their unit. Commissioner Boecher informed Erik that after hearing his detailed explanation, he is ready to approve the resolution. All commissioners present agreed to approve resolution 25:14.

- **Resolution 25:15 – A Resolution Approving Interlocal Cooperation Agreement Between the Elkhart Housing Authority and The Housing Authority of South Bend**

Attorney Snow stated that for statutory compliance, there is a shared staff person; the transition consultant is being shared with another agency. He said that any time there is a situation between two entities in the state of Indiana, it has to be approved by both boards and recorded. He said that before the agreement can be put into place, they need some more information from the South Bend Housing Authority in terms of the rates that will be assessed to Elkhart for Marsha's services. Attorney Snow said that once this is complete, the board will be able to vote on it. He said he recommends tabling this resolution until next month. Marsha added that they anticipated South Bend approving their end on Tuesday, but the rates and time requirements were missing. All commissioners present agreed to table resolution 25:15 until the August board meeting.

Marsha informed the commissioners that at the next board meeting, she will be presenting a resolution to update our operating system. She said that what we have now is not very effective for the agency, so we will be moving forward with Yardi, which was a proposal that the board entertained several months ago. She said that she is waiting on a quote from Yardi for the EHA. She said that implementation will take 3-4 months, but she hopes to start the calendar year with the new operating system and transition from where we are right now. Commissioner Boecher asked if Yardi was property management software. Marsha said it is for property management, but it also includes the voucher program and finance. She said that the system we are looking at will keep everything in one database, and each entity can pull from the other. She further stated that it could also minimize the work that we need from the fee accountant. Commissioner Billings asked if South Bend used Yardi. Marsha said that the South Bend Housing Authority would also be transitioning to Yardi soon. She said that the financial reporting part is a part that could get us in a lot of trouble because we cannot really extrapolate it. She said when you massage numbers, it gives HUD pause, and we no longer want to do that.

❖ **Handouts: None**

❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Kristen Smole, without any objections, declared June 27, 2025, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:21 P.M.

  
Willie Brown, Commissioner  
July 17, 2025

  
Marsha Parham-Green, Transition Consultant  
July 17, 2025