

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Elkhart Housing Authority
September 15, 2022

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, September 15, 2022, in person and via Conference call.

Board Members present: Kristen Smole, Lefate Owens, Helenia Robinson and Synthia Billings

Board Members present via dial-in: Dan Boecher, and Margaret Owens

Staff members present: Angelia Washington, Jessica Brittain, Clarence Jones, Equilla Smith, Erik Mathavan, and Morgan Gibson

Harris Law Firm Attorney present: Nick Snow

Audience members present: None

❖ **Audience Concerns:** None

❖ **Approval of Minutes**

Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — August 18, 2022, Regular Meeting

All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the August 18, 2022, regular meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — August 18, 2022

All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the August 18, 2022, vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

Exhibit C — Executive Director's Report

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported 2 new hires, Susan Barlow, (Bookkeeper), and Shawn Watson, (General Maintenance Tech) and 3 ends of employment, Rex Ferguson, (General Maintenance Tech), Javen Dye, (Groundskeeper), and Brian Hochstetler, (General Maintenance Tech).

- **Comprehensive Improvements:**

Scattered Sites: ServPro continued work on 1307 Moffat Lane burn unit with a target completion date of late October pending timely delivery of the new windows.

Griffen commenced work on the HVAC Replacement Phase 2 project starting with the duct cleaning. HVAC equipment install is to transpire during the entire month of September with a completion date of the second week of October.

Riverside Terrace: Rosedale High Rise and Riverside Terrace parking pavement project bid process is complete as of Thursday August 18. Although several contractors showed interest during the pre-bid process, only Reith-Riley submitted a bid. However, the low base bid of \$300,983.00 which includes a \$10,000 contingency allowance, is \$79,000 below the independent cost estimate.

Washington Gardens: No work during this time.

Waterfall High-Rise: No work during this time

Rosedale High-Rise: ServPro continued work on burn unit #608 with a target completion date of early to late October pending timely delivery of the new window.

Rosedale High Rise and Riverside Terrace parking pavement project bid process is complete as of Thursday August 18. Although several contractors showed interest during the pre-bid process, only Reith-Riley submitted a bid. However, the low base bid of \$300,983.00 which includes a \$10,000 contingency allowance, is \$79,000 below the independent cost estimate.

COCC: No work during this time.

Commissioner Boecher asked Angelia for an update on the playground replacement at Scattered Sites. Angelia stated that work has not started yet. Erik stated that we are still waiting on the final contract from Forum Architects, he said it is unlikely that work will begin before next year.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of August, 49 Annual Certifications were completed, 86 Interim Certifications Completed, 2 Unit transfers, 8 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 6 End of Participations, 87 Applications Remaining in Process, 646 Lease Ups on the last day of July and 87% Lease-Up Percentage.

Angelia informed the board the HUD has issued implemental vouchers to area where there is demonstrated need among extremely low income (ELI) and very low income (VLI) renter households. She reported that the Elkhart Housing Authority received 7 additional vouchers. She further stated that we have a total of 6 Foster Youth Initiative (FYI) vouchers and 3 of those have been issued. Commissioner Boecher asked how many HCV voucher holders are currently looking for housing. Amy stated that we have 103 as of August 31st.

- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 59 participants of which 30 participants are currently employed, 2 participants are enrolled in GED/HSE education programs, 7 participants are attending college, 5 participants are enrolled in job training programs, 9 participants are disabled or unable to work. 9 participants are currently earning escrow, \$8,758 earned in escrow funds in August, and \$108,951.48 total current escrow balance.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of August is 98.02%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of August is 98.45%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of August is 98.41%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of August is 96.94% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of July is 98.00%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of August is 97.96%. She also stated that public housing received 142 applications, mailed 24 orientation letters, were processing 73 applications, approved 16 applications, denied 20 applications, and 30 applications were withdrawn. We received 6 homeless applications, and 0 application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 8 new admissions and 11 move-outs in July.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 11 move-outs were received and 5 was completed, 6 emergency requests received and completed, 406 tenant requests received and 396 completed; and there were 39 annual inspections received and 15 completed, totaling 422 completed work orders.

Commissioner Smole asked how we were coming along with hiring maintenance staff. Angelia informed Commissioner Smole that we are still interviewing.

- **Financials and Write-Offs:** Jessica Brittain announced for the month of August, Rosedale high-rise earned \$30,345.00 in Revenue and \$18,051.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Rosedale high-rise had \$45,799.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Rosedale high-rise had a loss for the month of August in the amount of \$23,766.00. The previous past due rent was \$840, and the current past due rent is \$1,604.14. The increase in past due rent is \$764.14.

Jessica announced for the month of August, Washington Gardens earned \$22,132.00 in Revenue and \$86,565.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Washington Gardens had \$72,863.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Washington Gardens had a profit for the month of August in the amount of \$35,833.00. The previous past due rent is \$10,547 and the current past due rent is \$21,386. The increase in past due rent is \$10,929.00.

Jessica announced for the month of August, Waterfall high-rise earned \$32,074.00 in Revenue and \$22,980.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Waterfall high-rise had \$65,628.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Waterfall high-rise had a loss for the month of August in the amount of \$10,574.00. The previous past due rent is \$12,537 and the current past due rent is \$12,780. The increase in past due rent is \$243.00.

Jessica announced for the month of August, Scattered Sites earned \$15,655.00 in Revenue and \$42,003.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Scattered Sites had \$65,533.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Scattered Sites had a loss for the month of August in the amount of \$4,875.00. The previous past due rent was \$8,647 and the current past due rent is \$10,822. The increase in past due rent is \$2,175.00.

Jessica announced for the month of August, Riverside high-rise earned \$33,630.00 in Revenue and \$22,986.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Riverside high-rise had \$61,081.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Riverside high-rise had a loss for the month of August in the amount of \$4,465.00. The previous past due rent is \$3119, and the current past due rent is \$655. The decrease in past due rent is \$2,464.00.

Jessica announced for the month of August, COCC earned \$121,297.00 in Revenue. Jessica went on to say the COCC had \$116,094.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported the COCC had a profit for the month of August in the amount of \$5,203.00.

Jessica announced HCV had a loss for the month of July, in the amount of \$23.34. The net position YTD is \$5,120.00.

❖ **Old Business:**

- **Board Training**

Angelia asked the commissioners if they had any feedback regarding the board training, they attended a couple of weeks ago. Commissioner Boecher stated that the presenter was very good, the unit turnover discussion was interesting, and the annual audit was something the presenter was very clear on. He stated that she recommended that we refresh our auditor. Commissioner Boecher asked when the process of selecting an auditor would start. Jessica stated that we send RFPs every year in the fall. She further stated that we are looking into joining a housing agency marketplace to post all our RFPs nationally. She said she hopes that draws more bids from other places. Margaret agreed that the presenter was very good.

- **REAC**

Angelia informed the commissioners that we had REAC inspections at Washington Gardens this month and we have increased our score by nearly 20 points above our last score in 2020. She said early on in her position she had to submit monthly corrective action reports for Washington Gardens to HUD and she is pleased to say that she and her staff have exceeded

those corrective action goals. She said she hopes to improve the scores even more and ultimately become a high-performing housing authority. Commissioner Boecher stated that the information that was presented was a lot to decipher. He asked Angelia about Washington Gardens receiving a score of 75. Angelia said that it scored 75 C * which means that REAC identified at least one health and safety issue and we corrected it immediately. Commissioner Boecher stated that he saw something in the report concerning bed bugs and he wasn't sure if this refers to one unit or multiple units. Angelia stated that we do have an ongoing concern with bed bugs, but we have a contract with Orkin, and they come out and treat those units until the problem has been abated.

❖ **New Business:**

• **Physical Needs Assessments and Annual Plan**

Angelia informed the commissioners that all resolutions that come before them other than policy are based on the comprehensive physical needs assessment that were conducted last year. She further stated that the physical needs assessments identify areas of concern that were included in our approved annual plan. She stated as we move through the year, we present resolutions to make sure we have all of the annual plan work items completed before the end of the fiscal year. She said that the Scattered Sites playground was an immediate concern, and the parking lot pavements on today's agenda are also areas of immediate concern.

• **Elkhart Career Center**

Angelia stated that since we've had difficulty getting maintenance employees, she asked Human Resources to reach out to the Elkhart Area Career Center. She stated that we have been able to initiate a relationship with them and we will be providing 5 internships for their building trade students. She said we will be working to get them trained and hopefully they will come work for us after they graduate high school. She said that we haven't finalized the memorandum of understanding yet, but she wanted to let the board know that it is an option we are exploring right now. Commissioner Smole stated that this is a great way to think outside the box. Commissioner Robinson asked Angelia if these would be paid internships. Angelia stated yes.

• **Resolution 22:11-A Resolution Adopting Changes to the Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan**

Amy stated that when a person applies for HCV, they normally asked for three proofs of address so that we can give them the residency preference. She stated that she wants to change that to just an Elkhart I.D. because most can't provide any other proof and they are going to the bottom of the waiting list. She stated that HUD only allows them to collect rent from a participant and not damages that would go to a landlord, so part of the clause in the admin plan is no longer relevant. All commissioners present and via conference call voted unanimously to approve resolution 22:11.

• **Resolution 22:12- A Resolution Adopting Changes to the Family Self Sufficiency Program Action Plan**

Amy stated that congress reauthorized the rule for the FSS program, and they made a lot of changes. She said that they sent out an example action plan to every housing authority so that they can redo their action plan and submit it by the end of this month. She stated that we used their example to redo our action plan and this resolution is to adopt the current action plan. All commissioners present and via conference call voted unanimously to approve resolution 22:12.

• **Resolution 22:13 -A Resolution Amending the Voucher Payment Standard**

Amy stated that this is something we do yearly when HUD releases the new market rents. She said that based on the new market rents; we will be increasing to 110% of fair market rent. She said we have observed a spike in both rent and utilities. She said that this increase will help

participants secure a unit to live in. Commissioner Lefate Owens asked how much that amounted to monetarily. Amy stated that for a 1 bedroom it would be \$847, for a 2 bedroom it would be \$1,084, 3 bedroom \$1,387, 4 bedroom \$1,457, and for a 5 bedroom \$1,675. She stated that this is how much we will pay for utilities and rent. All commissioners present and via conference call voted unanimously to approve resolution 22:13.

- **Resolution 22:14 – A Resolution to Award the Contract for Parking Pavement Replacement for Riverside Terrace and Rosedale High Rise**

Angelia stated that this resolution is an immediate concern identified by the physical needs assessment. She said that the parking lots are in terrible condition, and they need to be repaved. Commissioner Lefate Owens asked how many contractor bids we received. Angelia stated just one, Reith-Riley. All commissioners present and via conference call voted unanimously to approve resolution 22:14.

- **Resolution 22:15 – A Resolution to Approve the Project-based Vouchers policy of the Housing Authority City of Elkhart**

Angelia stated that Commissioner Boecher contacted her wanting her to explore the possibility of issuing project-based vouchers. She stated that she has also been contacted by several housing development firms. She said she thinks it's a great idea because it gives our Housing Choice Voucher holders more options for housing. She stated they will receive better resident services and it also helps to deconcentrate poverty. All commissioners present and via conference call voted unanimously to approve resolution 22:15.

- **Attorney Comments:**

Attorney Nick Snow presented forms that will be used in eviction proceedings to the EHA. He stated that there was some language missing on the old forms and we want to make sure that we are following HUD guidelines in terms of the amount of time we give people on a lease termination, but also make it clear that they have an opportunity for a grievance. Mr. Snow also presented a memo and a draft of a policy. He said the memo and policy draft are concerning remote participation in public meetings. He informed everyone that the Open-Door law in Indiana governs how we conduct meetings and has specific provisions for participating remotely. He explained that the purpose of the Open-Door law is to meet in person and conduct your business publicly as much as possible. He said if the Elkhart Housing Authority is not in compliance with this law, the agency is at risk of having actions reversed. He stated that there are limits on how frequently you can appear in a remote meeting, provisions about the ways meeting participants must be seen and heard, and about how votes are recorded. He stated that these provisions are outlined in the memo. He suggested that everyone read the policy and include it on next month's board meeting agenda as an action plan. Mr. Snow further explained that the commissioners would need to appear on screen as well as be heard and their votes must be recorded individually. The minutes must also reflect who voted in-person and who voted remotely.

❖ **Handouts:** None

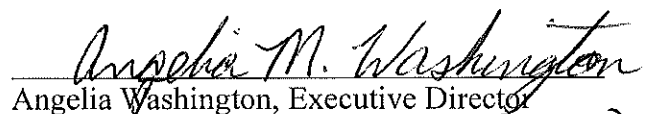
❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Dan Boecher without any objections, declared the September 15, 2022, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:12 P.M.



Dan Boecher, Commissioner

October 20, 2022 11-17-22



Angelia Washington, Executive Director

11-17-22