

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Elkhart Housing Authority
November 21, 2024

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, November 21, 2024.

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

Board Members present via dial-in: None.

Staff members present: Angelia Washington, Kenny Clark, Erik Mathavan, Amy Gonzalez, Julie Stebbins, Alicia Kimble, Nekisha Roberson, Danielle Gilbert, Tiphany Trivet, 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 — October 17, 2024, Regular Meeting

All commissioners present voted to approve the October 17, 2024, meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — October, 2024

All commissioners present voted to approve the October 17, 2024, vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

Exhibit C — Executive Director's Report

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported one ended employment, Kennedy Lafayette.
- **Comprehensive Improvements:**

Scattered Sites: Griffen Heating & Plumbing commenced work on the replacement of the sanitary lines for twenty-four units from the kitchen to the main sanitary line at the Banneker Heights community.

Riverside Terrace: R. Yoder continued work on the kitchen cabinet upgrade project. Specifically, they completed the kitchen cabinet and countertop replacement on all but three units on the second floor.

Washington Gardens: No work during this time.

Waterfall High-Rise: Schwartz Electric continued work on the fire panel upgrade. Specifically, they continued to work on the conduit in the basement and commenced the installation of the new fire panel on the ground floor.

Rosedale High-Rise: No work at this time.

COCC: No work during this time.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of October, 61 Annual Certifications were completed, 53 Interim Certifications Completed, 3 Unit transfers, 7 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 10 End of Participations, 11 Applications Remaining in Process, 679 Lease Ups on the last day of October and 92% Lease-Up Percentage.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 55 participants of which 31 participants are currently employed, 4 participants are attending college, 6 participants are disabled or unable to work, 17 participants are currently earning escrow, \$5,969 earned in escrow funds in October, and \$167,265.80 total current escrow balance. Angelia informed the board that the EHA has applied for additional funding to hire another coordinator so that we can help more people become self-sufficient. She said that we are waiting to hear back on the grant application. Commissioner Boecher asked if HUD provided grant funding for things like this. Angelia said yes.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of October is 96%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of October is 96%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of October is 99%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of October is 98% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of October is 98%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of October is 97%. She also stated that public housing received 173 applications, mailed 75 orientation letters, processed 32 applications, approved 24 applications, denied 6 applications, and 9 applications were withdrawn. We received 5 homeless applications, and 22 application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 15 new admissions and 13 move-outs in October.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 13 move-outs were received and eight were completed, nine emergency requests were received and completed, 671 tenant requests were received and 661 were completed; and there were 44 annual inspections received and 30 completed, totaling 704 completed work orders.
- **Financials and Write-Offs:**

Rick asked the board if they had an opportunity to look over the financial summary that was sent in the board packet. Commissioner Boecher stated that they had. Rick said that we are looking at the September financials compared to October just to see the change and where things are. He said that there was a decrease in cash and investments in the amount of \$200,000. He said if you combine profit and loss on operations there was a loss between two months of \$179,000. He said that the changes that he just mentioned are in the last section for October 2024. Rick said that he thinks the next thing is to look at this even deeper to see what areas are leading into this and what we can do in response. He said that the summary provides an overview snapshot of where things are at on profit and loss, reserves, and cash. He said that the EHA is in a strong financial position overall. He said that he would meet with the finance committee in December to look at things even closer. Rick stated that on the next page that he provided, he is looking for trends. He said for the year-to-date for October for the current fiscal year, he compared it to 2019-2023. He said that the COVID period had an effect on the price of things, and the availability of contractors played into those numbers. He said that there was a larger profit during 2019-2020 then it started to decrease afterwards. He said that the middle section is October 31, 2024, year to date, he said as he was looking at those years, he was looking for something that stood out to him like an expense category that changed and might have contributed to the decrease in profit. He said that maintenance and operations was an area that stuck out to him which is in the bottom section. He said that maintenance contracted services have several lines that make up that section, and there is a subtotal for maintenance contracts within the last section. He said that you can see between fiscal years how that number has gone up. He said that he zoned in on

maintenance materials and contracted services. Commissioner Boecher stated that this is helpful from an expense standpoint, but he is interested in seeing the revenue and operating subsidy. Commissioner Boecher further stated that he would like a fuller comparison of revenue from 2021- 2024. Rick said that he will prepare something similar to this summary for December just for revenue. Commissioner Boecher said that it is helpful to look at maintenance and operations and noted that two years ago our maintenance and benefits were down \$85,000, so we have had to contract more due to lack of maintenance staff. He said that you can see the trend, and inflation accounts for some of it, but the picture is still incomplete.

❖ **Old Business:**

• **Public Waitlist Demographics**

Angelia reported that as of November 19, there were 2,034 applicants for a one-bedroom unit, 1,295 for a two-bedroom unit, 691 for a three-bedroom unit, 393 for a four-bedroom unit and 114 on the waitlist for a five-bedroom unit. She said she would like to have a conversation soon about possibly closing the portions of the wait list.

• **Elkhart Police Department Interlocal Agreement**

Angelia informed the board that the EPD asked to meet with her next week to discuss the interlocal agreement and hopefully have it finalized by December's board meeting.

❖ **New Business:**

• **Maintenance Wages**

Angelia stated that due to concerns about the contracted maintenance labor financial deficits and a question about EHA's maintenance wages, she included EHA's 2021 maintenance salary study and EHA's current maintenance staff's wages in their board packet for review. She reported that she anticipates receiving the 2024 maintenance salary study from Nelrod, a public housing industry leader, in about two weeks. She further stated that even though the maintenance staff's wages increased considerably since the 2021 study was done because the board approved a 6% pay increase for maintenance wages in 2022 due to inflation and the need to attract maintenance staff, she wants to ensure that EHA's maintenance wages are comparable to other housing authorities at this time. Commissioner Boecher asked if we were getting close to the average pay rate for this area. Angelia said that we won't know until we get the salary study back in two weeks. Teri said that the EHA supplies Nelrod with our organizational chart and job descriptions that they use in addition to other data that they collect about other local agencies like ours. Angelia asked Teri to speak about the challenges she has had attracting maintenance staff. Teri said that many applicants do not show up for interviews. She also said that many individuals do not have a driver's license, or they carry SR-22 insurance. Teri said that she continues to pull individuals in for interviews weekly but even this week there were three to four no-shows. Angelia stated that another challenge has been attracting skilled laborers. Kenny said that it is nearly impossible to attract maintenance staff at our current pay rate. Commissioner Brown asked Teri where we were advertising. Teri stated that she primarily advertises on Indeed. She said that we still use Indiana Career Connect but she has not been seeing a lot of traffic there. She said that we also advertise in the South Bend Tribune and The Elkhart Truth newspapers, but she is not seeing much traffic there although the EHA pays thousands of dollars for ads.

Commissioner Billings asked Teri if she had tried working with Work One. Teri said that she has participated in their job fairs. She also said that she and Todd have worked with the Career Center. She said that many individuals' background screens took them out of the running for any position at the EHA. Commissioner Smole asked about the Goodwill Excel Center. Teri said that she currently works with Goodwill and we have hired individuals from

Goodwill. Teri stated that she will be meeting with SCSED which is an employment program for people 55 and older. Angelia also informed the board that they will be seeing payment vouchers for Tradesmen International, which is a temporary maintenance labor agency. Angelia said that they have only been able to provide one employee at this time.

- **Resolution 24:20- A Resolution Adopting Changes to the HCV Administration Plan**

Amy stated that starting in December, HUD will require all HCV units to have sealed battery smoke detectors. She stated that the combination smoke/carbon monoxide detectors used to have a distinct sound to determine which one was the carbon monoxide detector when you tested them, but the newer ones are much harder to differentiate. She further stated that the new combo cannot be tested with anything other than a finger and some of the HCV units have 10ft ceilings making it impossible to test them physically. Amy said that HCV created a form that the landlord fills out before inspections to inform HCV of if the smoke detectors are operational and if it is a combo or regular smoke detector. She said that the admin plan has been updated to reflect these changes. All commissioners present voted to approve resolution 24:20.

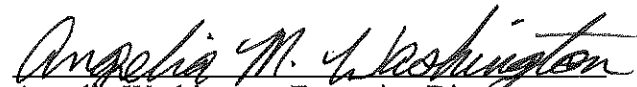
Angelia reminded the board that due to the NSPIRE inspections, the EHA had several maintenance issues that had to be abated in 24 hours, 30, 60, and 90 days, so many of the maintenance work orders were driven by the NSPIRE inspections that entailed all hands-on-deck including our in force and contracted laborers.

- ❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Willie Brown without any objections declared the November 21, 2024, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:11 P.M.



Kristen Smole, Commissioner
December 19, 2024



Angelia Washington, Executive Director
December 19, 2024