

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Elkhart Housing Authority
April 15, 2021

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

Board Members present: JeNeve Adams, Dan Boecher, Kristen Smole, Helenia Robinson

Staff members present: Angelia Washington, Christine Tack, Todd Fielder, Clarence Jones, Mitch Craven, Jessica Brittain, Charmaine Scales, Teri Ivory and Morgan Gibson

Audience members present: None

❖ **Audience Concerns:** None

❖ **Approval of Minutes**

Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — March 18, 2021 Regular Meeting

Commissioner Dan Boecher motioned to approve the minutes from the March 18, 2021 regular meeting. Commissioner Kristen Smole seconded the motion. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the March 18, 2021 regular meeting minutes.

❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — March 18, 2021

Commissioner Smole motioned to approve the vouchers for March 18, 2021 Commissioner Boecher seconded the motion. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve the March 18, 2021 vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

Exhibit C — Executive Director's Report

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported 1 25-year milestone, Angelia Washington (Executive Director), 1 new hire, Kori Bunch, (Bookkeeper) and 2 ends of employment, LaShonda Perry and Terry Ellsworth.

- **Comprehensive Improvements:**

Scattered Sites: No work, at this time.

Riverside Terrace: No work, at this time.

Washington Gardens: No work, at this time

Waterfall High-Rise: The large elevator was put into service on March 9 and work immediately began on the small elevator. Project completion remains on schedule, with a projected completion date in the last week of May.

Rosedale High-Rise: Due to the recent grant award, a combination smoke and carbon monoxide detector has now been installed in each apartment and mechanical room.

COCC: We are awaiting the release of 2021 CFP funding, once received we will immediately start a new series of upgrades to our properties.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of March, 52 Annual Certifications were completed, 65 Interim Certifications Completed, 3 Unit transfers, 4 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 8 End of Participations, 25 Applications Remaining in Process, 682 Lease Ups on the last day of March and 94% Lease Up Percentage.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 60 participants in which 28 participants are currently employed, 3 participants are enrolled in GED/HSE education programs, 15 participants are attending college, 16 participants are disabled or unable to work. 12 participants are currently earning escrow, \$3,067 earned in escrow funds in March and \$94,291 total current escrow balance. 1 participant has exceeded 30% of the Families Monthly Adjusted Income for the unit size which the family qualifies and therefore has graduated from the FSS program. She receives \$731 of escrow earned while on the program and intends to save it as her emergency fund.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of March is 96.08%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of March is 94.44%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of March is 97.64%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of March is 98.98% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of March is 97.96%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of March is 95.92%. Angelia stated for the month of March, public housing received 115 applications, 77 mailed orientation letters, 22 applications are in processing status, 23 applications were approved, 4 denied applications, 32 withdrawn applications, 28 homeless applications and 0 applications were approved and waiting. Angelia reported there were 12 new admissions and 10 move-outs for the month of March.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported for the month of March, there were 10 move-outs received and 6 were completed, 5 emergency requests received and completed, 280 tenant requests received and 263 completed; and there were 43 annual inspections received and 0 completed, totaling 274 completed work orders.

Angelia stated to the Board that we are still struggling to find skilled laborers, but we are doing our best to fill positions. She further stated we will be meeting next week and possibly tapping into our reserves to increase the hourly pay rate. She stated we want to take this route to attract employees because we really need maintenance staff. Commissioner Adams posed a question about annual inspections. She asked about last month's inspections being zero and wanted to know if this month's inspections would be in addition to last month. Angelia responded yes; we do not have the manpower to complete the work that needs to be done in those units. Commissioner Adams asked if there was any outside agency, we can hire to assist us with the inspections. Angelia stated we have increased our contract with Handyman, a housing maintenance contractor. She stated they are assisting us with our maintenance repairs as much as possible. She stated we had a limited contract with Handyman, but we have increased their hours. We can have them in our units along with our maintenance staff on a more regular basis. Commissioner Boecher stated that everyone in the community is reviewing their wages so we must respond quickly. He stated every month these units are not turned over is a month we cannot put a tenant in the unit. He stated we do not have a choice; we must get these positions filled. Angelia stated factories are doing some things to attract employees like bypassing drug screens, but we are federally funded and are required to be a drug-free workplace so we must drug screen our applicants. She stated this has been a problem in the past, we were all set to hire applicants, and they fail their drug screens. She stated this is critical, that is why she just recently made the decision to put a moratorium on our nepotism policy and notified staff that we will hire relatives starting with second cousins and in-laws to try to get these positions filled. She further stated if we need to open it up more, we will do so.

- **Financials and Write Offs:** Jessica Brittain announced for the month of March, Rosedale high-rise earned \$27,861.00 in Revenue and \$12,370.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Rosedale high-rise had \$77,745.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Rosedale high-rise had a loss for the month of March in the amount of 37,514.00. The overall view for the year, Rosedale earned \$467,100.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$443,811.00. The net position YTD is \$23,289.00.

Jessica announced for the month of March, Washington Gardens earned \$11,303.00 in Revenue and \$77,692.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Washington Gardens had \$99,234.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Washington Gardens had a loss for the month of March in the amount 10,239.00. The overall view for the year, Washington Gardens earned \$1,118,128.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$1,027,295.00. The net position YTD is \$90,833.00.

Jessica announced for the month of March, Waterfall high-rise earned \$31,368.00 in Revenue and \$13,927.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Waterfall high-rise had \$65,521.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Waterfall high-rise had a loss for the month of March in the amount of 20,226.00. The overall view for the year, Waterfall earned \$500,699.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$585,820.00. The net position YTD is (\$85,121.00). Commissioner Boecher stated he knows we incurred expenses with the elevator replacement but wouldn't that be offset by the grant. Jessica explained that the grant covered the replacement and not the repairs. Commissioner Boecher stated the past due rents were trending down but have appeared to spike this month. Jessica stated she was surprised about the spike as well. She hopes with most tenants receiving stimulus checks, that number would go down next month. She stated they have also advised residents on where to get rental help. Angelia stated staff also went door to door providing information on where to get help. She stated she is unsure why some of our residents did not take advantage of the rental assistance. The rent moratorium was just lifted on March 31st. She stated we will have to see how the court reacts to our filing for evictions. They were reluctant to process some filings we submitted for criminal activity. We have had to utilize our attorney even more, so you will see those attorney fees increase starting this month, Angelia stated. Jessica stated she signed the EHA up for a program with Indiana counties. Any judgement that we have, they will withhold state taxes. Jessica stated she hopes once we get started, we will get some of those losses back from the judgements we get.

Jessica announced for the month of March, Scattered Sites earned \$16,975.00 in Revenue and \$37,784.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Scattered Sites had \$46,314.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Scattered Sites had a profit year to date of \$162,193.00.

Jessica announced for the month of March, Riverside high-rise earned \$35,907.00 in Revenue and \$15,928.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Riverside high-rise had \$56,588.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Riverside high-rise had a loss for the month of March in the amount of \$4,753.00. The overall view for the year, Riverside earned \$601,109.00 in Revenue and the expenses were \$441,192.00. The net position YTD is \$159,917.00.

Jessica announced for the month of March, COCC earned \$165,237.00 in Revenue. Jessica went on to say the COCC had \$117,344.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported the COCC had a profit for the month of March in the amount of \$47,893.00. The overall view for the year, COCC earned \$1,331,548.00 and the expenses were \$1,550,455.00. The net position YTD is (\$218,907.00).

Jessica announced HCV had a net position increase YTD in the amount of \$84,959.70.

❖ **Old Business:**

- **Developmental Opportunities**

Angelia stated the discussions regarding developmental opportunities have progressed quickly. She stated two meetings were held with the City of Elkhart offices to see how we can partner with them to get some of these new developments underway. She further stated she, Jessica, Dan, and Kristen have a meeting with a HUD representative on May 4. This meeting will be to explore our permissible use of our HUD funds.

❖ **New Business:**

- **Resolution 21:04- Resolution to add Director of Finance as Signee/Administrator to Centier Bank**

Commissioner Boecher motioned to approve the resolution to add Director of Finance as signee/administrator to Centier Bank and Commissioner Smole seconded. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve resolution 21:04.

- **Resolution 21:05- Resolution amending the HCV Utility Allowance.**

Commissioner Boecher motioned to approve the resolution amending the HCV utility allowance and Commissioner Smole seconded. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve resolution 21:05.

- **Resolution 21: 06- Resolution approving electronic certification submission relative to the management assessment for public housing agencies.**

Commissioner Smole motioned to approve the resolution approving electronic certification submission relative to the management assessment for public housing agencies and Commissioner Boecher seconded. All Commissioners present unanimously voted to approve resolution 21:06.

- **Board Members**

Commissioner Adams officially welcomed Helenia Robinson to the Housing Authority Commissioner Board. Commissioner Robinson stated she is an administrator at Roosevelt Steam Academy. She stated she has been in education for 30 years. She stated she desires to serve and help the community, to develop a partnership between the educational system and the community.

Commissioner Adams stated she is resigning from the Board of Commissioners. She stated her heart is with the EHA, but she has a very tight schedule and does not have the time to dedicate herself to the cause like she once did. Additional conversation took place and Commissioner Adams decided she would like to remain on the Board as a commissioner, but she does not want the responsibility of being the Board chairman or vice chairman. Commissioner Boecher agreed that the Board chair is a big responsibility and with his chaotic work life coming to an end, he would be happy to step up, if the Board approves. He asked Commissioner Adams if she would hold off on submitting her resignation and remain on the board without having to lead. He stated he would not want to lose her expertise and values what she brings to the Board. Commissioner Smole agreed that Commissioner Adams brings such valuable institutional knowledge, and she would hate to see her go. Conversation took place regarding the need to fill empty positions on the Board. Commissioner Adams asked Commissioners and staff to submit a name if they know anyone who would be a good fit for the Board. She stated we also need a couple of proxies, that way we are never unable to conduct business. Commissioner Adams also expressed the need for the EHA to have a relationship with a bank in the community through the Community Reinvestment Act. She

stated that perhaps Centier had someone they could send over to us. She further stated it would be great to have experts when discussing the budget. Angelia stated to Commissioner Adams that she really appreciates her decision to stay, and she believes we have a strong Board. Angelia stated that she wanted to inform the Board that moving forward, any names submitted must be Republican. Jessica asked commissioners if Centier had someone they could send over would that be a conflict of interest considering we bank with them. Commissioner Adams stated she was unsure, and we may want to consider using a different bank in the area. Angelia stated she did believe it would be a conflict under our current procurement policy.

- **Christine Tack Retirement**

Angelia stated Christine Tack will be retiring on May 14 and that Christine has been with our agency over 22 years. Angelia further stated that the HCV program has been recognized by HUD many times as a high performer under Christine's guidance. Angelia stated her leadership and expertise will be missed. Commissioner Adams wished Christine well and told her that her shoes would be hard to fill. Commissioner Boecher stated to Christine that she has been an asset and he appreciates the considerable amount of work she has put in. Christine stated she is looking forward to a slower paced life, spending more time with family and enjoying her hobbies.

- **Board Elections**

Commissioner Boecher asked if we must present a slate for all the positions. Commissioner Adams stated that we have never done that in the past because our Board is small. She stated that typically the elections take place in March. Commissioner Boecher stated that he would be more comfortable with the absent commissioners being on the call so that they would have the opportunity to vote. All commissioners present agreed with Commissioner Boecher. Commissioner Adams asked everyone to contact Commissioner Boecher or Angelia if they had any immediate issues or if any decisions needed to be made. Additional conversation took place, and it was determined that Board elections must be public and do not qualify for special meetings. Commissioner Adams stated the Board elections would have to be done at the May Board meeting. Angelia stated she has included the Code of Professional Ethics for Housing Authority Commissioners in the board packet. She stated she would like for the Board to review and sign them, and she will collect them at the next Board meeting. She further stated the Code of Professional Ethics directly correlates with the Public Housing Board of Commissioners trainings. Angelia explained this is something that has always been conducted and she would like to continue the practice.

- ❖ **Handouts**

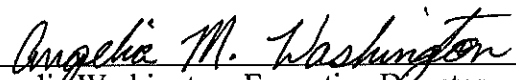
- NAHRO Monitor (March 6, 2021)
- PHADA Advocate (March 17, 2021, March 31, 2021 & April 14, 2021)
- Robert's Rules of Order

- ❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner JeNeve Adams, without any objections, declared the April 15, 2021 Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:27 P.M.



Dan Boecher, Commissioner
May 20, 2021



Angelia M. Washington, Executive Director