

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Elkhart Housing Authority
July 18, 2024

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, July 18, 2024.

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

Board Members present via dial-in: None.

Staff members present: Angelia Washington, Todd Fielder, Erik Mathavan, Alicia Kimble, Tasha Andrews, Tiphany Trivet, Cynthia Snowden, Danielle Gilbert, Cordell Price, Teri Ivory, and Morgan Gibson-Day

Harris Law Firm Attorney present: Tramel Raggs

Audience members present: Adrian Riley, Grace Brubaker, Barbara Smock, and Sue Grice

- ❖ **Audience Concerns:** Riverside Resident Council member Barbara Smock stated that there was an altercation at her building and the police were called. She said that Signal Security sat in the office during the altercation and did not come out until after the person left. Angelia asked what day this happened. Ms. Smock stated it happened on Monday, July 15. Tasha stated that she has not had time to review the cameras yet. Angelia informed Ms. Smock that they would look into this. She said that Cordell is our security liaison and will share that information with the security company.

Ms. Smock also expressed concern about the overhead lights being out in the circle at Riverside. Todd said that he reported the outages to the city because they are city poles. He said that they had it scheduled but he has no idea when they will show up to replace the lights. Angelia asked Todd when he contacted them. He said that he contacted them after security sent an email informing him that the lights were out sometime within the week. Angelia asked Todd to let her know if she did not hear from them by tomorrow. Commissioner Smole suggested listing the outages on the 311 app. She said that it will be time-tracked, and it makes things move a bit faster.

Ms. Smock's final concern was about people randomly twisting apartment door handles at night. Angelia said that having the dates and times will help us look at the surveillance cameras so we can see who let the person into the building and address the person ourselves. She thanked Ms. Smock and informed her that she could always call to report any issues that she is having or if there are any security concerns she can email her immediately if she is still in the building.

Sue Grice, Riverside Resident Council asked why security was not walking the floors or saying anything to smokers. She said that none of them feel secure anymore. Angelia asked Ms. Grice if she had reported her concerns to management. She said no, no one is ever available. Ms. Grice further stated that the security we had before was better. Angelia asked Ms. Grice to report her concerns and give the new security company a chance. She also informed Ms. Grice that she had her email as well and she can email her whenever she has concerns.

- ❖ **Approval of Minutes**

Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — June 20, 2024, Regular Meeting

All commissioners present voted to approve the June 20, 2024, meeting minutes.

- ❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — June 20, 2024

All commissioners present voted to approve the June 20, 2024, vouchers.

❖ **Executive Director's Report**

Exhibit C — Executive Director's Report

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported one new hire, Kevin Coomes, General Maintenance Technician, and two ended employment, John Colvin, and Samantha Carretti.

- **Comprehensive Improvements:**
Scattered Sites: No work during this time.

Riverside Terrace: Koorsen ordered and received an additional and final batch of new replacement sprinkler heads that Koorsen continued to install on the third floor. Forum and M&E design performed their final inspection of the two HVAC units added onto the first-floor rooftop.

Washington Gardens: ServPro continued work on the 334A Chapman Ave burn unit. Specifically, they completed the installation of the flooring tile, electrical, baseboard trim, and painting of the interior unit including the doors, and are approximately 90% complete with the bathroom.

Waterfall High-Rise: Schwartz Electric commenced work on the fire panel upgrade project starting with the installation of the electrical conduit in the common areas of the building.

Rosedale High-Rise: No work during this time.

COCC: No work during this time.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of June, 52 Annual Certifications were completed, 60 Interim Certifications Completed, 0 Unit transfers, two New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, seven End of Participations, 25 Applications Remaining in Process, 685 Lease Ups on the last day of April and 93% Lease-Up Percentage.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 53 participants of which 32 participants are currently employed, three participants are attending college, 46 participants are disabled or unable to work, 17 participants are currently earning escrow, \$6,976 earned in escrow funds in June, and \$161,672.35 total current escrow balance.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of June is 96%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of June is 93%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of June is 97%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of June is 95% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of June is 97%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of June is 95%. She also stated that public housing received 67 applications, mailed zero orientation letters, processed 36 applications, approved 12 applications, denied three applications and 28 applications were withdrawn. We received no homeless applications, and 17 application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 12 new admissions and 13 move-outs in June.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 13 move-outs were received and seven were completed, five emergency requests were received and completed, 493 tenant requests were received and 486 were completed; and there were 40 annual inspections received and 30 completed, totaling 528 completed work orders.

- **Financials and Write-Offs:** The EHA is still working on the financials with Julie and the fee accountant.

❖ **Old Business:**

- **Finance**

Angelia stated that following Jessica's departure, we are working with the fee accountant, who is working on our last-minute request to submit our year-end unaudited financials to HUD by the extended deadline of July 30. She said that we have hired Julie Stebbins as our new finance director who is in training. She said that the fee accountant will be meeting with Julie on Tuesday, and she is still in the process of being signed up for the bank accounts and other access. Commissioner Smole asked if there was anything that we were out of compliance with HUD on or if it would be beneficial to consider working with someone locally with the fee accountant to get us back to normal. Angelia said that we are not out of compliance with HUD, but she understands and appreciates that it is the board's responsibility to closely monitor our financials. She said that she's contacted the South Bend Housing Authority and the Mishawaka Housing Authority to see if they could provide some assistance during the interim, but they were both too busy. She said that she contacted Fort Wayne Housing Authority, and they said that they will provide any help that we need. She said that she hopes to connect them with Julie as soon as possible. Commissioner Smole asked Attorney Raggs for recommendations. Attorney Raggs stated that even though we've been without a finance director for a couple of months, it would take much more than that to become out of compliance with HUD. He further stated that there was one housing authority that lost their finance director back in September and they just hired a new one in May and that did not make HUD come in and take over the agency. He said that reaching out to Fort Wayne for help was a great idea.

❖ **New Business:**

- **Lease-Up Plan**

Angelia said that due to the board's concern with the occupancy rate at the last board meeting, she has created a lease-up plan, that is included in this month's board packet. Commissioner Smole said that the only thing that she would consider would be finding someone on the outside to help execute the plan so that staff can still focus on what they need to do. She said she worries about how long it could take to split the duties between their normal duties and a new initiative. Angelia said that she appreciates the suggestion, because staff are all really busy and the auditor will be on-site on August 1 and 2 and our NSPIRE inspections are at the end of the month. She said that she believes that there are local agencies that can help with this so that the staff can focus on all of the things that they normally do. Commissioner Brown asked if applicants frequently turn down Washington Gardens. Angelia stated yes, and lately, some social media posts have contributed to the issue. She said there have been video recorded fights in Washington Gardens. Commissioner Brown asked how the new security company was working out. Alicia said that she has not had any issues with Signal Security.

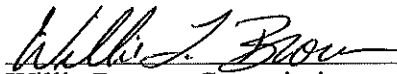
- **PHAS Score**

Angelia reported that we have received our official scores from HUD, and we have been designated as a standard performing housing authority, we will continue to strive for high-performer status. She said our physical score was 32 out of the maximum score of 40, we received the maximum points for our financial score, we received 22 out of 25 for management and we received the maximum score of 10 for our capital funds. Morgan passed out a handout that explained the breakdown of how the score is determined. Angelia said on page three of "Understanding the PHAS Report", it gives recommendations for improvement. She said that staff have been following

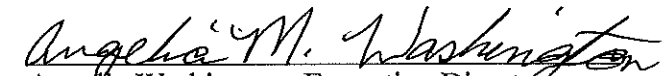
recommendations for the most part, they just need to tighten up in some areas. She also said recommendations for management improvement can be found on page four. She said that she has also discussed improving rent collection efforts with staff, which would benefit us in many ways. Commissioner Smole asked for examples of why we only received a 32 out of 40 on building conditions. Todd said that we were dinged for some broken outlets, he said that a zip tie on an exterior valve was broken, and there was a concern with a window egress. He said that there is a security screen there but there is also a door near the window to exit from. Todd said that the inspector advised that there could not be a security screen there. He said that the scores also fluctuate based on the subjectivity of the inspector.

❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Willie Brown without any objections declared the July 18, 2024, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:06 P.M.



Willie Brown, Commissioner
August 29, 2024



Angela Washington, Executive Director
August 29, 2024