

REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
Elkhart Housing Authority  
May 16, 2024

The Board of Commissioners for the Housing Authority, City of Elkhart met in regular attendance at 4:30 p.m.; on Thursday, May 16, 2024.

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

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

**Staff members present:** Angelia Washington, Todd Fielder, Erik Mathavan, Amy Gonzalez, Alicia Kimble, Tiphany Travet, Terry Staner, Nekisha Roberson, Danielle Gilbert, Tasha Andrews, and Morgan Gibson-Day

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

**Audience members present:** Officer Johnson

- ❖ **Audience Concerns:** Commissioner Brown asked that audience concerns be limited to three minutes. He informed the staff that they could reach out to him after the meeting, by phone or via email after no one expressed any concerns. Angelia stated that it was inappropriate for Commissioner Brown to ask staff to contact him. Commissioner Brown stated that he had looked through a City ordinance and it is permissible. Angelia reminded Commissioner Brown that the EHA is located in the City but is not a City agency and although housing authority boards are appointed by the Mayor, housing authorities are not part of local governments. Commissioner Brown stated that the EHA is under the City as well. Both Commissioner Brown and Angelia agreed to discuss this matter later. Angelia said that she wants to be sure that the agency is following HUD guidelines. Commissioner Brown extended an invitation to staff once again asking them to contact him. Angelia reminded everyone that staff should not be contacting the board and that she will notify HUD of Commissioner Brown's actions. She requested for the record to reflect that Commissioner Brown's statements and actions alter the terms of her employment contract. Commissioner Brown said that they would speak on that too.

Officer Johnson expressed concerns about increased activity at 16 Malcolm Drive. He said that one of the occupants was arrested last week and someone is getting evicted so that may alleviate the problem. Officer Johnson stated that he did not know the tenant's name, but her last name is Washington, and she continues to have unauthorized guests coming over to her unit and they are harassing other tenants. He said that the biggest problem is with 354 Wagner. He said that they are getting a lot of calls there and that there have been many fights and some gun concerns. He said that he works the 3-11 shift, and he patrols the Washington Gardens area. He said that a lot of times it isn't the people who live there, it's the people visiting. Angelia asked Officer Johnson if this was being reported to the housing authority. The officer said that he did not know, he was just a patrol guy.

Officer Johnson also said he was concerned about 402 Wagner D. He said that this unit is being harassed. He said that people were coming to the door, kicking their door, and making threats. He said that they will try to patrol as much as they can, but EHA may want to issue patrols more frequently. He said the 3-11 shift sees the most action and it would be helpful to have two more patrols. Alicia asked the officer which apartment at 354 Wagner was the issue. He said the last one on the left is where people tend to congregate and run when the police pull up. He said the other side of the horseshoe, the third apartment, has a lot of people there who do not live there. He informed everyone that the rules for trespassing had changed. He said that he would need a representative from housing to meet him in person and tell him whether to trespass on the individual and if they are banned forever. Angelia said

that she received clarification from Chief Milanese and Capt. Moore that the EHA would be able to provide this information over the phone. Officer Johnson stated that he did not know who to contact. Angelia stated that she sent all the staff's contact information to Chief Milanese, Capt. Moore, and Officer Hamlin. Commissioner Smole asked if there was a pattern he was seeing. He said that everyone is in the 14-24 age group. He said his shift would benefit the most from extra patrols. He further stated that activities typically start around rush hour (5:00). He said with the open carry law, he cannot walk up to someone with a gun unless he receives a call about the person doing something with that gun. Angelia said that we would follow up with these tenants and put them on notice that there is a concern about their units and see where the investigations lead us.

Alicia stated that she has had tenant conferences with Ms. Washington and they've completed a special inspection of her unit and other eviction notices have been served due to their behavior. She said that they will be calling Ms. Washington again to do a special inspection due to Officer Johnson's concerns about multiple people being in her unit and they will be addressing the concern that Ms. Washington is subleasing. She said when she and the property manager inspected the unit, everything looked fine and there did not appear to be unauthorized guests, but they will check again. Commissioner Brown asked Alicia if she had a date for Ms. Washington's tenant conference. Alicia said no, not yet. Officer Johnson reiterated that other people are definitely staying in the unit. Alicia explained that she must give residents 48 hours' notice before inspecting a unit. Angelia stated that we also must do our due diligence by thoroughly investigating criminal reports and could possibly move to evict immediately due to the seriousness of the activities. Attorney Snow said that it depends on the issue. He said when you get into more violent criminal activity or drug trafficking activity, those protections for the tenants start to decrease. He further stated that with a pattern of certain events, we need to let things accumulate a little more.

#### ❖ **Approval of Minutes**

##### **Exhibit A — Approval of Meeting Minutes — April 18, 2024, Regular Meeting**

All commissioners present voted to approve the April 18, 2024, meeting minutes.

#### ❖ **Approval of Vouchers**

##### **Exhibit B — Approval of Vouchers — April 18, 2024**

All commissioners present voted to approve the April 18, 2024, vouchers.

#### ❖ **Executive Director's Report**

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

- **Human Resources:** Angelia reported 2 new hires, NeKisha Roberson, Asset Manager, and James Barcus, Exterminator, and 2 ended employments, Brian Malone and Philip Lightner.

- **Comprehensive Improvements:**

**Scattered Sites:** No work during this time.

**Riverside Terrace:** Edward J. White completed the installation and optimization of one of the two first-floor rooftop HVAC units.

**Washington Gardens:** ServPro completed the removal of the flooring from the two floors of the 334A Chapman Ave burn unit. Angelia informed Commissioner Smole that this unit has been offline for about 450 days now. She said that housing authorities have up to three years for casualty loss vacancies. Commissioner Billings asked Angelia if we were going to continue to waste money fixing units at Washington Gardens when she thought that we were not going to make any more

repairs. Angelia stated that we must maintain our units although it was agreed that we will not recapitalize Washington Gardens.

**Waterfall High-Rise:** No work at this time.

**Rosedale High-Rise:** No work during this time.

**COCC:** No work during this time.

- **Housing Choice Voucher Program:** Angelia reported for the month of April, 56 Annual Certifications were completed, 58 Interim Certifications Completed, 3 Unit transfers, 3 New Admissions and Absorbed Incoming Portabilities, 6 End of Participations, 22 Applications Remaining in Process, 682 Lease Ups on the last day of April and 92% Lease-Up Percentage. Commissioner Smole asked about the lease up percentage and whether or not things were getting better or worse. Amy stated that voucher holders needing larger units is a problem. She said one- and two-bedroom units are not as bad but it is difficult to find three, four and five bedroom units in this area that are available.
- **Family Self Sufficiency Programs:** Angelia reported the Family Self Sufficiency program is currently serving 53 participants of which 33 participants are currently employed, 5 participants are attending college, 4 participants are disabled or unable to work. 16 participants are currently earning escrow, \$6,487 earned in escrow funds in April, and \$149,190.35 total current escrow balance. Angelia stated that she has been speaking with Amy about making the graduations more celebratory, and HCV is looking into that. She said that HUD prohibits housing authorities from spending money on celebratory events, but they will try to make something happen if not every quarter then every 6 months or so.
- **Public Housing:** Angelia reported Rosedale's Occupancy rate for the month of April is 91%, Washington Gardens Occupancy rate for the month of April is 92%, Waterfall Occupancy rate for the month of April is 92%, Scattered-Sites Occupancy rate for the month of April is 94% and Riverside's Occupancy rate for the month of April is 99%. Angelia went on to say Public Housing's overall Occupancy rate for the month of April is 98%. She also stated that public housing received 90 applications, mailed 0 orientation letters, processed 31 applications, approved 15 applications, denied - application, and no applications were withdrawn. We received 6 homeless applications, and 0 application(s) were approved and waiting for an available unit. Angelia reported there were 10 new admissions and 13 move-outs in April. Alicia said that the vacancies have decreased to 32 since she submitted the public housing report. She said that they have move-ins scheduled for today and tomorrow and they have pre-occs and move-ins scheduled for next week. She said that her team is constantly calling applicants to get them in. She also stated that she has a lot of homeless applications and she now has a contact person at the Faith Mission. She said that intake has encountered barriers with the sheriff's office. She said that some applicants have been denied due to the applicant's name and social security number not matching on the sheriff department's reports which EHA has made the sheriff's department aware of. Alicia further stated that there is some lag time in the sheriff department's turnaround of criminal reports that the EHA requests several times per week. Angelia said that the new intake specialist's attention to detail is paying off and she is thankful for the new team members. Commissioner Smole asked if HUD was understanding about our occupancy rate being below 96% knowing that we have a plan in place. Angelia said yes and that she is in regular communication with HUD.
- **Maintenance:** Angelia reported that 13 move-outs were received and 8 were completed, 1 emergency request received and completed, 352 tenant requests received and 340 were completed; and there were 43 annual inspections received and 23 completed, totaling 372 completed work orders.

Angelia informed the board that she has been communicating with the EHA's State Financial Analyst and the Indianapolis HUD Field Office Portfolio Manager to inform them about what is going on with our financial reports that are due for submission at the end of the month. She said that she had requested an extension.

- **Financials and Write-Offs:** Terry Staner read Jessica Brittain's financial report for the month of April, Rosedale high-rise earned \$25,819.00 in Revenue and \$21,437.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Rosedale high-rise had \$52,911.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Rosedale high-rise had a loss for the month of April in the amount of \$(5,655.00). The previous past due rent was \$5,625.00, and the current past due rent is \$4,312.00. The decrease in past due rent is \$1,313.00.

Jessica reported for the month of April, Washington Gardens earned \$6,557.00 in Revenue and \$95,260.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Washington Gardens had \$120,608.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Washington Gardens had a loss for the month of April in the amount of \$18,791.76. The previous past due rent was \$17,129.00 and the current past due rent is 16,470.00. The decrease in past due rent is \$659.00.

Jessica reported for the month of April, Waterfall high-rise earned \$32,701.00 in Revenue and \$28,615.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Waterfall high-rise had \$93,890.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Waterfall high-rise had a loss for the month of March in the amount of \$(32,574.00). The previous past due rent was \$11,841.00 and the current past due rent is \$5,704.00. The decrease in past due rent is \$6,137.00.

Jessica reported for the month of April, Scattered Sites earned \$2,547.00 in Revenue and \$37,817.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Scattered Sites had \$53,870.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Scattered Sites had a loss for the month of April in the amount of \$13,506.00. The previous past due rent was \$8,207.00 and the current past due rent is \$4,451.00. The decrease in past due rent is \$3,756.00.

Jessica reported for the month of April, Riverside high-rise earned \$27,653.00 in Revenue and \$30,701.00 in Operating Subsidy Revenue. Jessica went on to say Riverside high-rise had \$64,435.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported Riverside high-rise had a loss for the month of April in the amount of \$(6,081.00). The previous past due rent was \$1,701.00, and the current past due rent is \$617.00. The decrease in past due rent is \$1,084.00.

Jessica reported for the month of April, COCC earned \$167,799.00 in Revenue. Jessica went on to say the COCC had \$117,764.00 in Expense without depreciation. Jessica reported the COCC had a profit for the month of April in the amount of \$50,035.00.

Jessica reported HCV had a profit for the month of April, in the amount of \$11,937.00. The net position YTD is \$11,937.00.

❖ **Old Business:**

- **Cleared Audit Finding**

Angelia stated that the EHA finally received a clearing for the audit finding that we received from public housing for failure to do recertifications. She said that she sent HUD our plan and she does not anticipate having that finding again.

- **Riverside Patio Door**

Angelia stated that Commissioner Brown was asking about the patio door at Riverside. She stated that the lock was replaced.

- **Community Rooms WI-FI**

Angelia stated that the EHA's IT specialist went and checked the WI-FI and it was working. Commissioner Billings said that the IT specialist said that the TV isn't internet-ready but it is. She said that it is not connected to the WI-FI due to a weak signal. She said that the signal is so weak that it doesn't show up on the WI-FI list on your phone. Angelia asked Commissioner Billings if she'd reported this to her. She said yes, she sent an email. Angelia asked Cynthia if she told Tasha about it. She said no. Angelia reminded Commissioner Billings to contact Tasha or Alicia with issues at her building. Angelia stated that she would speak with Cordell and provide an update next month.

- ❖ **New Business:**

- **Staff Training**

Commissioner Robinson stated that she received Angelia's email, and she answered all her questions with great detail. She said that she looked closer at the financials, and she saw the budget for staff training there. She just wanted to know if there was a cap on staff training at some point, voluntary training versus required training. Commissioner Smole asked if different positions at the agency require more training. Angelia stated that HUD proposed a change to housing regulations back in 2016 and we didn't know when the changes would truly be implemented. She said that HUD has finally set an implementation date of January 1, 2025. She said that the changes are federally mandated so staff who must comply with the new requirements must be trained in how to do so. She said that the EHA will issue a spending moratorium at some point during this budget year if needed, but she had spoken with Jessica and there is no budget concerns right now. She reminded the board that HUD allows housing authorities to revise their budgets six months after the start of their fiscal year which would be October for EHA.

- **National NAHRO**

Angelia informed the board that because of her position on the Indiana State NAHRO board, she was nominated for the National NAHRO board to serve in the same capacity in professional development on the national level. She said that if she is elected, she would need to attend the three annual NAHRO conferences. She said that it would be beneficial for her to have first-hand knowledge of proposed Congressional changes to public housing and have a voice at the table during initial discussions. Commissioner Smole asked how much extra time this would require. Angelia stated that she thinks that each conference is 3-4 days. She said that the meetings may be virtual also. Commissioner Robinson asked who would cover the expenses for the conferences. Angelia said that the EHA would cover the expenses. She informed the board that she would let them know if she was selected. She said she does not think the new board is seated until the next fiscal year or the beginning of the federal fiscal year, which is October 1. Commissioner Robinson stated that this ties in with her initial question because if a person is away at training, people do not have access to them. She asked if trainings will take away from the job. Angelia said that she didn't think access to her would be a problem because she has been accessible and responding to concerns as normal while attending conferences. She further stated that department heads do a good job managing their own areas and that the last time she was away at training, she received calls from city council members, the mayor, and program participants whom she responded to in a timely manner.

- **Resolution 24:08 – A Resolution Approving Electronic Certification Submission Relative to the Management Assessment for Public Housing Agencies**

Amy stated that HUD issues them a score based on information that was sent to PIC. She said this score labels them a troubled housing authority, standard, or a high-performing housing authority. She said that they have completed that certification and it just needs to be signed off on by the board. All commissioners present voted to approve resolution 24:08.

- **Resolution 24:09 – A Resolution to Award the Contract for the Fire Alarm Panel Upgrade at Waterfall High Rise**

Erik stated that last year we were awarded 1.5 million as a part of the fiscal year 2022 Hazards grant and we have 3 major initiatives, replacement of the sprinkler heads at Riverside, upgrading the fire panel at Waterfall, and the actual installation of the fire sprinkler system. He said that this resolution is to award the contract for the fire panel upgrade at Waterfall which will go to Schwartz Electric for \$242,600 which includes a \$10,000 contingency. He said that Schwartz was not the lowest bidder. He said with their bidding process he uses the brand Seimens as the basis for the design which is common in four out of 5 properties. He said that Schwartz came in second as the lowest bidder and Pemberton was first but they use a Potter brand which is one of the alternatives, it is also a lesser-known brand. He said for \$44,000 more, he felt it would be best for the EHA to go with the Siemens brand. He said it would help out the maintenance guys in the long run and help to keep our costs down. Angelia stated that we do not have to go with the lowest bidder, they just need to be reasonably priced and responsible. Commissioner Robinson asked about the contracts always including a \$10,000 contingency and whether or not we ever get that money back. Erik stated that they get that money back about 90 percent of the time. All commissioners present voted to approve resolution 24:09.


- ❖ **Handouts: Affordable Housing Case Studies**

Angelia stated that she spoke with Levon Johnson from the Chamber of Commerce on May 10 and they are in continued talks about Washington Gardens' redevelopment. She said she and Levon met with Fred Bonci who was involved with the Notre Dame design Charrette and Fred discussed the redevelopment projects he has been involved with across the country. She informed the commissioners that the booklets she provided to them contained information about those projects. She said that one was the Hill District in Pittsburg Pennsylvania. She said that she and Levon discussed putting a team together and going to visit Pittsburg or North Carolina to see these redevelopment efforts in person. She informed the commissioners that there is money in the budget if someone would like to attend. She said that the ECHC board still needs to meet and discuss the EHA's instrumentality which is the Elkhart Community Housing Corporation. She said that we have several vacant lots and several developed properties. She suggested meeting next month after the June board meeting. She said she could send out an invite to see if the commissioners would be available. She said that we still need affordable housing in the community and that the instrumentality can be used to help with that effort.

- ❖ **Adjournment**

Commissioner Willie Brown without any objections declared the May 16, 2024, Board of Commissioners' meeting adjourned at 5:22 P.M.

  
Willie Brown, Commissioner  
June 20, 2024

  
Angelia Washington, Executive Director  
June 20, 2024