



**ROCKFORD HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR FEBRUARY MEETING
Minutes**

February 27, 2014

Present:	Jerry Lumpkins, Chair Phyllis Ginestra, Vice Chair Karen Hoffman, Commissioner Ric Cervantes, Commissioner	Staff: Bridget Weeks, Executive Assistant Tim Horning, RHA Legal Counsel
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Absent: Alice Jenkins, Commissioner

The meeting was called to order at 5:12 PM.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Cervantes moved that the RHA Board of Commissioners accept the minutes from the Regular January meeting held on January 23, 2014. Commissioner Ginestra seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioners: Cervantes, Ginestra, Hoffman & Lumpkins

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED

Chairman Lumpkins introduced RHA's newly appointed board member, Karen Hoffman. Commissioner Hoffman gave a brief summary of her background and experience. Each board member welcomed Commissioner Hoffman to the board and thanked her for her presence.

CHECKS:

Commissioner Cervantes moved to place the checks from January 2014 on file for audit. Commissioner Ginestra seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioners: Cervantes, Ginestra, Hoffman & Lumpkins

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED

FINANCE, IT and HCV:

Michelle Cassaro, CFO, delivered the financial report. Public housing is currently at a loss of \$89K. This includes a \$57K loss at Blackhawk that will be covered by capital funds for operations, Park Terrace and the low rises have a \$39K loss mostly due to high utilities - this should decrease throughout the remainder of the year and come in at budget for utilities.

COCC has a current loss of \$58K which includes \$23K for a one time separation payment and \$38K for consultant fees (some monies will be reimbursed by the city) and Choice Neighborhood Implementation grant writing. We will continue working to bring it back to a net income.

HCV program has a \$24K net income and is receiving more admin fees than anticipated. We have not received any final word from HUD but we believe that there will be higher funding this year than last year.

IT expenses are high due to some large IT annuals in January. This should even out as the year progresses.

We have had a temporary promotion for Cheryl Zwanzig, Section 8 employee. She will be assisting Michelle in the absence of a director for HCV. Overall, the department is running fairly well.

There will be a landlord meeting held March 20th at RHA Central Office. Ron Clewer, CEO and Michelle will meet with landlords in an informational session. The Health Department

has been invited to speak about the Lead program. The Lead program is a partnership that we have with the county that provides an opportunity for the landlord's to apply for the program and receive \$1500. This includes a free assessment, other free services and mediation, if necessary. There will be a few different community agencies there to provide information to the landlords. We will be planning an event for the tenants in April for Fair Housing Month. The goal is to form better relationships with the landlords and tenants.

We have a proposal out for Project-based vouchers. If we can get some successful proposals we will submit an application for VASH vouchers. HUD has put out a notice that there are some VASH vouchers available for Project-based developments. We will find out in August if we actually get the vouchers.

Outlook has been a challenge for IT but we should be converting to a new Outlook on Friday, an online platform. Ifiber is still a process and we are still about 2 weeks out and hopefully by the end of the month. We did procure some disaster recovery cloud backup services to put in place as an added, more robust layer of backup in addition to our current backup with ATS and HAB.

In procurement, Kevin continues to work on the 18-month plan and working to get some e-procurement in place so that we are more accessible. We have done a lot of work on internal procedures, site related and P-card related.

Chairman Lumpkins asked if the sites are projected to stay on budget. Michelle confirmed that they are on target and doing much better this month. Expenses have leveled out and are now back on track. Commissioner Cervantes wanted to be sure that we remain aware of the change of seasons and the expense of maintaining and improving the curb appeal of the developments.

Commissioner Ginestra asked about the amount that was expected to be reimbursed by the city in the previously mentioned consultant fees. Ron confirmed that the amount is \$15K.

OPERATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Ron Clewer, Chief Executive Officer, addressed the changes made to the leadership in Resident Programs and Property Management team. Michelle Morey, Director of Operations, will now focus solely on Property Management (Public Housing). Ronelia Gruber, Resident Programs Manager, will focus on Resident Programming. Mark Valadez, Client Advocate, will work to provide guidance to the three high-rise Resident Support Specialists who are elderly and disabled advocates. The changes and the announcement of these changes took place last week by Kayla Liggett, HR Manager and Ron. Now, everyone is able to focus in their area of expertise.

On March 17th we will kick-off our version of ROWE (Results-Only Work Environment). CultureRx is the consultant that will be helping staff to understand exactly what ROWE

means. The program will be piloted by the Central Office exempt staff first. The exempt staff will be reporting out through a physical dashboard that will be mounted in the lobby with one for each property. This will allow the ability to determine where we are, performance wise, at any given time. There will be other performance measures for each department. It will be followed through with an electronic version, as well.

The Energy Performance Contract is currently before HUD for approval. It could be as early as three weeks that the approval may come. We have a \$600,000 DCEO Grant that must be expended in a year.

March 7th is our posting date for our obligation for 2012 capital. There will be some RFP responses and contract awards tonight that will be applied for 2012 capital. If we do not reach that date we will lose the money.

Ron introduced Pablo Korona, Instructor and Yanni, student, who are part of the "Making Moving Pictures" - real life experience to capturing photographs. They will be taking some photographs of the board meeting and interactions.

In Human Resources, leading up to that CultureRx, all leadership has completed their 360^o reviews. Starting next week, the 14 leaders in the company who had a 360^o will sit down and go through what Individualized Performance Plans are so that we can do our process improvement for ourselves and to make sure we are better leaders. This will lead into the change of culture that we are transitioning into.

Ron asked Michelle to give some details about RHA's relationship with the comptroller's office. RHA has started submitting our bad debt files to the State's Comptroller's Office. We have started to receive our recoveries now that tax returns have started to be filed. Upon last review, we had received roughly, \$2K. We have submitted over 300,000 files to the State. When we receive the money it will go back to the sites. This is the first year that we have done this but now that it is up and running, it will continue every year. There will be a report prepared for next month's meeting.

Ron thanked Ronelia Gruber who helped push the data sharing agreement with ComEd. ComEd has an "All Clear" program and will work with the residents regarding their utility balance with them. The residents agree to pay a heavily reduced amount with ComEd and their balance is considered settled. Everyone will not be approved to participate it is on a case by case basis.

Ron talked about the "Healthy Homes" conference that he and Bill Enriquez, HQS Inspector, attended. They discussed how to promote a more holistic healthier home concept in our community. In May, Ron will be going to a conference to speak about healthy homes and what we are doing as an agency. Also, Ron will be in DC next week for NAHRO, Legislative Summit, to discuss funding and appropriations for next year's budget.

We were invited to participate in the "World Open Forum" on housing through NAHRO and Ron's work on the NAHRO International Housing Committee.

For the work that the Housing Authority has done with the City of Rockford and the Etsy partnership, we have been short-listed and nominated through a Marketing University in Paris that awards efforts internationally, we are the only effort being recognized in the US, for place marketing and place making (reinventing our city's image) by improving our residents' lives through the Etsy platform. We are one of five cities being considered and we are the only US city.

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION #2014-11

RESOLUTION THAT THE RHA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPROVES THE CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.

Commissioner Cervantes moved that the RHA Board of Commissioners approves the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Ginestra seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioners: Cervantes, Ginestra, Hoffman & Lumpkins

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED

RESOLUTION #2014-12

RESOLUTION THAT THE RHA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPROVES A CONTRACT EXTENSION OF ONE YEAR TO ROCK RIVER DISPOSAL FOR WASTE DISPOSAL SERVICES IN THE NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$107,000.00.

Commissioner Ginestra moved that the RHA Board of Commissioners approves a contract extension of one year to Rock River Disposal for waste disposal services in the not to exceed amount of \$107,000.00. Commissioner Cervantes seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioners: Ginestra, Cervantes, Hoffman & Lumpkins

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED

RESOLUTION #2014-13

RESOLUTION THAT THE RHA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS APPROVES A MODIFICATION TO THE VALUE OF PEST CONTROL FOR BURR PEST CONTROL IN AN ANTICIPATED AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$30,000.00.

Discussion: In an effort to try alternative methods in containing the bed bug issue, Ron presented the option of purchasing a dog used specifically for detecting bed bugs (\$8,000). There would have to be a resident willing to act as the dog's owner. We will continue to research ways to address this ongoing problem as this funding will cover up to a 30-45 day time period.

Commissioner Ginestra moved that the RHA Board of Commissioners approves a modification to the value of pest control for Burr Pest Control in an anticipated amount not to exceed \$30,000.00. Commissioner Cervantes seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioners: Ginestra, Cervantes, Hoffman & Lumpkins

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED

RESOLUTION #2014-14

RESOLUTION THAT THE RHA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AWARDS A CONTRACT TO EMPIRE TODAY FOR FLOOR COVERINGS IN AN ANTICIPATED AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$74,000.00.

Commissioner Ginestra moved that the RHA Board of Commissioners awards a contract to Empire Today for floor coverings in an anticipated amount not to exceed \$74,000.00. Commissioner Cervantes seconded the motion.

Ayes: Commissioners: Ginestra, Cervantes, Hoffman & Lumpkins

Nays: None

MOTION APPROVED

INFORMATIONAL ITEM:

With the EPC contract moving forward to help us reduce our costs to help the tenants reduce theirs we are now part of the Better Buildings Challenge. This is important that we as

housing agencies partner with the Department of Energy. Our primary focus project is Park Terrace where we think we will reduce energy by 40% when we do our EPC work. We have committed to a 20% portfolio reduction and we will make it at the conclusion of our EPC contract. Jodi Stromberg, Development Manager, is leading this project.

RHA COMMISSIONERS:

Chairman Lumpkins welcomed Bishop Love of the Trinity Baptist Community Church of Crystal Lake. Bishop Love said he was very impressed by the RHA Board meeting and expressed his excitement to be of service to the Board as he learns how Rockford is growing.

The Board agreed to change the date of the March Board meeting due to conflicting schedules. The date of the next board meeting is Monday, March 24th at 5:00 PM at Central Office.

R.A.B – RESIDENT ADVISORY BOARD (FORMERLY, H.O.M.E. BOARD):

Aisha Little, President, was present. She did not have any comments for the Board.

Ron recognized the good job that Aisha is doing. The Resident Council manual is almost complete.

AUDIENCE:

None.


At 6:34 PM, Commissioner Ginestra made a motion to adjourn to go into closed. Commissioner Cervantes seconded the motion.

MOTION PREVAILED

At 6:47 PM, Commissioner Ginestra made a motion to come out of closed session

At 6:47 PM with no future business, Commissioner Ginestra made a motion to adjourn the meeting adjourn.

MOTION PREVAILED


Board Secretary
/bw


Chairman