

MINUTES

ROCKWALL HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, June 19, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.

100 Lake Meadows Dr. - Rockwall, TX 75087

1. Call Public Meeting to Order / Declare a Quorum

Chairman of the Board, Matthew Neyland called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Present were Chair Matt Neyland, Board Members Rick Crowley, Maryann Hall, Carla Wise, and D.L. Mailloux, Rockwall Mayor Tim McCallum, Rockwall City Manager Mary Smith, and Rockwall Director of Administrative Services David Sweet. Present virtually by telephone was the board's legal counsel, attorney Lea Ream.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Open Forum for Public Comments

Chairman Neyland explained that now is the time to hear public comments regarding items not listed on the agenda, and speakers as asked to limit their comments to three minutes.

Connie Steadman, RHA resident, spoke, indicating she would like to commend RHA's Executive Director, Aurora Bueno for handling problems with grace, tact and fairness. She shared that she personally, along with a whole group of residents, do actually appreciate Aurora's work. Some complain, and the ones who complain the loudest are usually the very ones breaking the rules.

Anna Lisa Clark (no address given) spoke, indicating her mother is a resident, and she herself is a healthcare professional. She believes Aurora has done a lot of good, and – among the good things done – parking improvements have been made. This is helpful for emergency vehicles needing to gain access to the facility and those in need. She thanked Aurora for helping her mom live longer.

Susan Harris, a RHA resident, shared concerns about the flag that is torn up and is on display out front of the building. She expressed that it is a disgrace.

Charlene Raulston shared that she is a ten-year+ year resident here, and there has been a lot of change, but it's all been positive change that is for the good of all residents. She shared that individuals tend to be comfortable and not like change, but change has to happen. She commended Aurora for the changes she has been making, and she commented that the back patio is great, and Aurora has done a great job.

Marie Markley spoke, sharing that she likes Aurora and that she believes Aurora is leading things in a good direction. All she has done is wonderful, and she has accomplished a lot. Life is full of changes.

She shared that this facility used to be a nice, happy place, but – unfortunately – not anymore. Now, many residents are complaining, gossiping, and not following the rules. She expressed that many like the change that are taking place and that not every resident is dissatisfied. When changes come, she shared that many residents adapt. Some may not like the changes, but may know that they are best for everyone. She is thankful to the city, the government, and HUD that helps her and others have a roof over their heads.

Nelda Plata shared that she likes changes. She thanked Aurora for the nice, peaceful patio out back of the building.

The prior speaker, Mrs. Raulston, then spoke again, sharing that visitors of residents park in the fire lane. They move cones, and they also park in the handicap parking spaces. A certain resident has a family member who does this continually, and the resident has been sent notices. However, they thumb their nose at the situation and continue to park illegally. Also, some around the facility are also smoking marijuana, both in the parking lot and also sometimes in the building.

Mrs. Markley spoke again also, this time expressing concern that many residents have family members who have keys to the building, and they come in and out at night. Many people disregard the rules. They don't sign in. They don't care about the rules. A lot of times, things happen at night, and sometimes things are taken or destroyed. She wonders if the building needs 24/7 surveillance. Some do not like to sit on the back patio. People who complain are the ones breaking the rules. She urged that more security is needed, pointing out that a brand-new water hose was recently stolen. A lot goes on after Aurora leaves in the evening / at night.

Former speaker, Mrs. Steadman shared that she personally comes down about 8:00 p.m. each night to lock the doors. She does not know how to control them being unlocked and left unlocked, but she also comes back down about 10:00-10:30 p.m. each night to ensure the front and back doors are locked before she goes to bed.

Chairman Neyland reminded those present that, during Open Forum, the board members are not supposed to respond since doing so would be a violation of the TX Open Meetings Act; however, the board members and staff are hearing and taking note of concerns that are being expressed.

Rockwall Mayor Tim McCallum introduced himself, explaining he is a former RHA Board Member, was also formerly on the city council, and now he is Mayor of Rockwall. He shared that he was a part of some of the initial changes that have transpired, and – yes – the changes that have occurred so far have been ones that have been instituted because they are in the best interest of the residents as a whole. He explained that he is passionate about the Housing Authority, and he usually attends these monthly board meetings. He reiterated what Chairman Neyland expressed about not being able to deliberate the concerns residents have expressed today during Open Forum but that he, the board members and staff have taken note of the concerns and appreciate them being shared. He shared that the board's current chairman, Matt Neyland, is leaving soon, as for personal reasons he is having to resign from the board. McCallum expressed how much Neyland has been a good asset to the board, an advocate for the residents, and how he has done a phenomenal job. He believes Aurora has been

“a breath of fresh air,” especially since things were “like pulling hair” with the former Executive Director. Mayor McCallum shared that he has appointed a replacement for Neyland’s seat on the RHA Board, and that new appointee will be at the next monthly board meeting. He thanked Chairman Neyland for all of his service to the RHA, its board and residents. Chairman Neyland briefly expressed gratitude for being able to serve, sharing that he is resigning due to life, work, kids, etc.

There being on further discussion at this time, Chairman Neyland closed Open Forum.

4. Consent Agenda Items

- a) Discuss / act on approval of minutes from the May 15, 2025 board meeting

Following clarification on one correction that was made to the minutes, Board Member Crowley moved to approve the minutes, as corrected. Chairman Neyland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously by those present (5 ayes to 0 nays).

5. Hold public hearing to receive input regarding the RHA’s 5 Year Public Housing Agency Plan (for FY 2025-2029), and take any action necessary.

(NOTE: The draft plan is available in the RHA’s office and on the website)

Executive Director of the RHA, Aurora Bueno, shared that a draft of this plan for the public to view has been on the authority’s website as well as in the office for a number of weeks now. There are currently 165 people on the public housing waiting list and sixty-four on the Section 8 waiting list. There may be merit to looking into asking for more Section 8 housing vouchers to give out. Improvements to the HVAC systems have been made as well as to the electrical systems. The process of removing bathtubs and replacing them with walk-in showers is ongoing as are efforts focused on building security (i.e. cameras). Minimum rent is currently set at \$25, but this plan proposes to raise the minimum to \$50, which is ‘the norm’ nowadays. This is related to folks who have zero income at all.

General discussion ensued related to funding, including capital funds. Aurora indicated that this work plan has to be submitted by July 18.

Rockwall City Manager Mary Smith shared that the City of Rockwall is now a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement city. So, annually it could possibly receive up to \$140,000; however, the city will first have to develop a program and then apply and submit for funding online.

Some board members expressed confusion about the numbers over the course of five years not varying within the proposed plan. Aurora explained how the Feds tell the RHA what they’ll allocate and how the numbers will change annually, including how the numbers should be reflected in the plan. She expressed that she hates to plug in a 5-10% annual escalator into the numbers if the RHA isn’t likely to get that.

Aurora went on to explain that the RHA can change some of the Public Housing over to Section 8; however, doing so requires a lot of paperwork and time investment.

RHA Board Member Maryann Hall shared that she is not used to seeing numbers stay the same within a multi-year plan either and that it is strange.

Chairman Neyland opened the public hearing to receive public comment regarding the proposed five-year plan.

Melinda Thrower (RHA resident) spoke, expressing she does not understand why all the numbers stay the same year-by-year within the draft plan. She wonders why they do not change (i.e. because of inflation) over the five-year period.

There being no other member of the public present wishing to speak at this time, Chairman Neyland then closed the public hearing.

Neyland suggested that Aurora reach out to HUD to inquire about the possibility of calculating and inserting reasonable, annual escalators within the numbers presented within the plan in order to account for inflation. For now, though, Chairman Neyland suggested that perhaps a motion be made to accept the proposed five-year plan, as presented, since they know the one-year number is accurate, per HUD. In the meantime, he asked Aurora to look into how, if at all, they can plan for annual escalators within the plan.

Board Member Crowley moved to accept the five-year plan, as presented. Board Member Hall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously of the board members (5 ayes to 0 nays).

6. Discuss / act on RHA's Official Business, Programs and Reports Related to Management of RHA including:

- a) Hear update from RHA's Executive Director regarding management of the RHA
- b) Hear update regarding RHA's financials

Executive Director Aurora Bueno shared that the RHA's Resident Advisory Board has spoken about the possibility of new security cameras as well as changing out flooring in the hallways to remove the carpet and replace it with hard material flooring. Lakepointe Church has indicated they will help with some costs and they may also provide an intern to help work in the RHA office. Aurora indicated that the work is non-stop. She is not sure how the former Executive Director watched television and / or read books all day.

Chairman Neyland indicated that he is aware of security cameras and a secure door system called "Smart Rent" being installed in a multifamily residential complex in Longview, TX. It has both upfront as well as monthly costs associated with the system. It is a nationwide company that may have interest in assisting public housing complexes with these types of systems. In part, the system tracks people who come in and out, doors automatically lock, and residents have key fobs. General discussion ensued about possible ways to address ingress/egress on an interim basis, including having keys that are "do not duplicate" type keys. Mayor McCallum suggested Medeco Keys, which are ones

that are not easily duplicated, as they may only be copied by a locksmith, and the person wanting a copy made must present proper paperwork to do so. Rockwall's Director of Administrative Services, David Sweet, briefly commented that the prior Executive Director's efforts to establish a keyless entry system at the RHA property did not work at all, and it almost burned the building down. Mrs. Smith, Rockwall City Manager, indicated that initial evaluations have been done on this topic / need, and that the costs were very expensive. It was acknowledged, though, that this topic does need to be revisited. Chairman Neyland wonders if this sort of security / building access system is something that could fall under 'capital expenses' and somehow be funded over the course of many years or if grant funds might be available to help fund it. It seems plausible that grant funds might be out there to help keep senior housing secure. Board Member Crowley stressed the importance of managing keys manually for now and having protective lock systems. Neyland shared that at the property in Longview, they did 180 units in one week as well as all building entries, and it cost \$117,000. It creates secure access points. At first, it consisted of a keypad, key fobs and actual keys, but then they found that everyone ditched their actual (physical) keys. Board Member Wise expressed the belief that keypads would not be good because the code(s) would be given out freely to everyone by everyone. Neyland expressed that the system that was installed in the property in Longview also tracks if/when a maintenance person comes into an apartment to do work. He shared that he has no personal interest in the company he has mentioned and that it may be something worth looking into by the RHA.

Aurora indicated that she will reach out to the Rockwall Police Department and ask that they do some patrols, especially on weekends and at night. She shared that some have been smoking weed, and also two men have been seen dumping something(s) on the property; however, the existing camera(s) have not been able to reveal a lot of details, and she has no idea who they are or what they've been dumping (or exactly where). She shared that she is going to arrange for a K9 dog to come do some sweeps on the property. She briefly mentioned that there was someone living in a unit on Throckmorton who had drugs there along with a 17-year-old daughter and a 12-year-old who was there with a 20-year-old guy.

Mayor McCallum shared that Rockwall resident Joe Lynch, who used to serve on the RHA Board of Directors, has expressed concern for there not being any covered area for RHA residents who are smokers to be outside smoking during inclement weather, such as times when it's raining. Mr. Lynch has indicated that he is willing to make a financial donation towards getting some sort of covering outdoors to accommodate smokers. Aurora shared that she thinks perhaps a covered pergola could work well and that perhaps Lakepointe Church might be willing to help out financially with this as well. Mayor McCallum asked Aurora to nail down possible costs, and he will get with Mr. Lynch regarding a possible donation.

Aurora shared that sometime in July, there will need to be a special RHA board meeting held with the need for at least three members of the board to attend. It is regarding a hearing that's been requested associated with a lease termination that's been issued on a property in Royse City. She explained that the resident's son had yielded a handgun and shot it off. So, that resulted in the termination;

however, the tenant has requested a hearing, and Aurora will provide all of the documents prior to the hearing.

Financials were briefly discussed, with indication being given that "MRI," with whom the RHA currently contracts to assist with financials, will be kept online on a month-to-month basis for a brief period of time until the RHA financials are moved over from Lakeside Bank to American National Bank and until the City of Rockwall takes over the financials, which should be sometime in the near future. Mrs. Smith shared that auditors are working and that an audit will likely be presented to the RHA board at its meeting next month.

The board took no action following these discussions.

7. **Executive Session:** The Rockwall Housing Authority Board will recess into executive session to discuss the following matter as authorized by chapter 551 of the Texas government code:

- a) Legal consultation regarding tenant claims raised by a tenant and/or a tenant's daughter pursuant to Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney).


At 11:03 a.m., Chairman Neyland explained that the RHA Board will be recessing the public meeting to go into Executive Session. The doors were closed, no members of the public were present, and Chairman Neyland read the above-listed discussion item into the record before recessing the meeting to go into Executive Session.

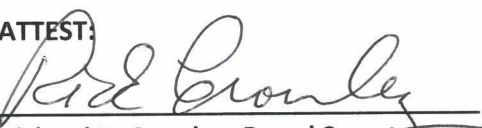
At 11:12 a.m., the RHA board ended its Executive Session discussions. Neyland briefly reconvened the public meeting.

8. Adjournment

Maryann Hall moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:12 a.m. Board Member Wise seconded the motion, which was passed by a vote of 5 ayes to 0 nays.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ROCKWALL HOUSING AUTHORITY (RHA) ON THIS 17th DAY OF JULY, 2025.


Maryann Hall, Board Chair

ATTEST:

Richard R. Crowley, Board Secretary