

MINUTES

ROCKWALL HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, February 20, 2025 – 10:00 a.m.
100 Lake Meadows Dr. - Rockwall, TX 75087

1. Call Public Meeting to Order / Declare a Quorum

Vice Chair Teresa Sevier called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Present were Vice Chair Sevier and Board Members Rick Crowley, Maryann Hall and Carla Wise. RHA Executive Director, Aurora Bueno, Rockwall City Councilmember Tim McCallum and City Secretary Kristy Teague were also present. Chairman Matthew Neyland and Rockwall City Manager Mary Smith were absent from the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Open Forum for Public Comments

No one was present / no one spoke during Open Forum.

4. Consent Agenda Items

a) Discuss / act on approval of minutes from the Feb. 20, 2025 board meeting
Board Member Crowley moved to approve the minutes. Board Member Wise seconded the motion, which passed unanimously of those present (Neyland absent).

5. 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
Aurora Bueno, Executive Director, gave an update on various topics, indicating she has been with the organization for ten months now. A utility allowance study was recently completed. She explained that some residents get a certain amount deducted from their monthly rent in order to offset and pay for the cost of their utilities (water, gas, electric). A consultant did the study, and the RHA's payouts are going up. These are Housing Assistance payments made via Section 8. She went on to share another update, indicating that RHA board members recently completed a virtual training that was very informative and helpful. She also shared that Reece Manor did have three vacancies due to (former) residents moving into nursing homes, but it is now fully occupied. She stated that all facilities managed by RHA are in fact now fully occupied. Also, eight residents have been ported in from other areas (either elsewhere in the state of Texas or from other states). RHA is administering vouchers from elsewhere and is being paid \$70 per voucher per month by other housing authorities to do so. For example, a lady from a housing authority in Virginia has moved here to Chandler's Landing into a Section 8 rental, and the RHA administers that voucher for the housing authority in Virginia.

Lengthy discussion ensued related to Section 8 public vouchers, income limits for those who qualify, as well as investors who purchase properties and lease them via vouchers. Ms. Bueno explained how Section 8 is different than “public housing.” Indication was given that Rockwall has only twenty-nine (29) vouchers. Comparatively speaking, Ms. Bueno had 900 vouchers when she first managed the housing authority in Mesquite, TX, and the number of vouchers grew over time to over 1,600. This was due to various programs there in Mesquite, such as those for veterans and for kids who age out of the system (become adult aged). She explained that there is no limit on the number of vouchers that can be imported into Rockwall (which, most all of them are managed by housing authorities, she explained). For example, Mesquite vouchers can come into Rockwall and rent Section 8 here because Rockwall is within twenty-five miles. The same is true of, for example, Dallas vouchers (because Rockwall is within the 25-mile geographical area).

Ms. Bueno went on to share that she did twenty-nine Section 8 inspections back in December. Thereafter, she sent letters to many owners/landlords letting them know of needed repairs. A lot of them were unhappy, indicating they have never ever received that type of letter before.

A long discussion then ensued pertaining to the Lake Rockwall Estates subdivision with Councilman McCallum and Board Member Crowley (former City Manager of Rockwall) giving a lot of background information on the past annexation of Lake Rockwall Estates by the City of Rockwall many years ago. They generally explained how the City did so in order to extend services to those residents and to improve the area. Mr. Crowley shared how the water supplier for that area was hugely price gouging citizens there, and they were being sorely taken advantage of. So the City of Rockwall paid a lot of money to buy the rights to serve water to those residents. This resulted in notable more affordable water service for those residents. Also, Animal Control services and other things like Building Inspections and Code Enforcement got extended to that neighborhood, and those services helped, over time, to greatly improve the area.

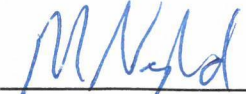
Ms. Bueno shared that Lakepointe Church is coming to do a Spring Break event on Throckmorton. There will be bounce houses and snow cones, and a fun time is expected for the neighborhood kids. Also, an event will be held at the main Lake Meadows building on March 20.

She went on to share that the RHA continues to rip out bathtubs and install showers. Also, air conditioning related issues have slowed, but there has been an increase in plumbing-related issues. Board Member Crowley observed that plumbing issues tend to cause residents a lot of trouble. He'd like to evaluate, along with Chairman Neyland, the possibility of redoing all of the plumbing in the building and seeing if it would be possible for Federal dollars to cover said costs. Regarding costs, Ms. Bueno shared that she has reduced the number of times a cleaning crew comes in (to clean common areas) from every week to bi-weekly instead. It was costing \$275 / week, so having them come half as much will help save money. The question of when a maintenance person is expected to be hired was brought up. Ms. Bueno indicated that she is unsure, but – for now – City of Rockwall maintenance staff continues to show up, assist, and be very helpful in various ways.

6. Adjournment

Board Member Wise moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:56 a.m. Board Member Hall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ROCKWALL HOUSING AUTHORITY (RHA) ON THIS 20th DAY OF MARCH, 2024.



Matthew Neyland, Chair

ATTEST:


Richard R. Crowley, Secretary