

MINUTES

ROCKWALL HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, June 18, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

100 Lake Meadows Dr. - Rockwall, TX 75087

1. Call Public Meeting to Order / Declare a Quorum

Vice Chair Sevier called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. Present were Vice Chair Teresa Sevier and Board Members Rick Crowley, Maryann Hall, and Carla Wise. Also present were RHA Executive Director Aurora Bueno, Rockwall City Councilmember Tim McCallum, Rockwall City Manager Mary Smith, and Rockwall Director of Administrative Services David Sweet. RHA's legal counsel, Lea Ream attended via telephone. Chairman Matthew Neyland was absent from the meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Attendees stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Open Forum / Public Comment

No one was present or came forth for public comments.

4. Consent Agenda Items

- a. Discuss / act on approval of minutes from the May 16, 2024 board meeting

Board Member Hall moved to accept the minutes. Board Member Wise seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously (4 ayes with Neyland being absent).

5. Discuss / act on Rockwall Housing Authority's Official Business, Programs and Related Reports, including:

- a. Hear update regarding maintenance of RHA facilities

Mr. Sweet from City of Rockwall updated the board on this agenda item. He shared that Lakepointe Church has a vendor (Cambridge Construction) who will begin replacing the deck this Thursday. The playground for Throckmorton has been delivered, and city Parks Department staff will be scheduling the installation. Regarding the residential unit at 46 Storrs - mold and asbestos remediation efforts have been ongoing, with the total project estimating to take about two weeks to complete. During this time, Lakepointe Church will be paying for the resident's hotel stay at the local Residence Inn while his unit is being repaired and work is being completed. His belongings are being treated very carefully by staff, and he was also provided assistance in moving some of his belongings to/from his temporary hotel stay location. The city fire department came through and did fire inspections at RHA buildings and in RHA residential units. In doing so, every single smoke detector (64 of them) was replaced. As part of the fire inspection, a list of concerns was developed (i.e. fire lane striping, elevator phone, fire extinguishers, key boxes, clearance in front of electrical panels, storage under the stairs, etc.). Indication was given that some things on the fire inspection report are of larger concern than other things; however, work is ongoing to address concerns. Regarding ongoing work on air conditioning units at RHA buildings

and within RHA units – most of the plenums (a box that connects to the HVAC system) have been removed, and ongoing cleanup work is anticipated to take place in most of the apartments. Also, roof damage occurred at RHA units located on Emma Jane (specifically 207 and 207 Emma Jane will have roofs replaced (which will be covered by TML insurance) during the May 28 severe weather storm event (which was primarily characterized by very high winds). A significant number of trees were damaged during the storm, resulting in a lot of tree removal and associated cleanup efforts at RHA units (i.e. in and around the Boydston area). Three very large trees will have to entirely be removed, and the contractor will get to them as soon as possible. Indication was given that some existing contractors / vendors have been being utilized (i.e. ones that have assisted RHA in the past); however, some additional vendors have also begun to be called upon to assist with various things (i.e. vendors/contractors that the City of Rockwall has vetted and established relationships with over time – ones that are known by the City of Rockwall to be reliable, licensed, and have a good track record of doing good work for the City).

The board took no action as a result of this update.

b. Hear update from Executive Director regarding management of RHA

Ms. Bueno shared that some vegetation has been removed. Also, the back deck at the main RHA building (on Storrs) will soon be redone (by Lakepointe Church). Today, the board will be finalizing the five year plan and approving it. Also, annual Section 8 recertification efforts are ongoing, and Ms. Bueno is diligently working to bring all units / facilities up-to-date and in compliance. The public housing portion is ok at 95%, but the Section 8 ones are still being brought up-to-date. A resident recently passed away, so that unit plus one additional unit will soon be available. Also, three Section 8 units are available. Letters have been being sent out to those that have been on the RHA waiting list for a long time; however, some of the letters end up getting returned. She shared that the former Executive Director was not handling the waiting list in an equitable, complaint manner. So, she is working hard to get the list cleaned up and get into compliance related to its accuracy and management as far as administration of the list as residential units become available. Indication was given that the only 'preference' that can be given is if someone on the waiting list is already a Rockwall resident. Ms. Bueno further explained that right now the files regarding the waiting list are so old, and the files are so incredibly incomplete that it has been challenging to make sense of the records and get the list in good condition. Ms. Bueno shared that in her past role at the Mesquite (Housing Authority), everything was done and kept electronically, so the ability to keep up with things was far better / easier. She assured she is working to get documents and files in order here at the RHA at this time.

Councilmember McCallum asked questions regarding Section 8 vouchers and how they work. He gave indication that some years ago, he did some research on those vouchers and essentially learned some concerning things about Section 8 vouchers from Rockwall not being accepted in other cities. He had been doing this research because he was looking for a place for his mother to potentially live. At that time, indication was given that those other cities did not accept vouchers from Rockwall because "the relationship with the Rockwall Housing Authority" was not good / was not a positive one. Ms. Bueno indicated that she will reach out and being trying to introduce herself and establish good relationships and a good rapport with the other cities related to Section 8 vouchers. Mr. McCallum shared that his strong preference is that RHA's Section 8 vouchers be utilized here, within our own city (in Rockwall). He did acknowledge that he looked into these matters a while back (several years ago), so things may currently be a little bit different.

Ms. Bueno shared that she is working to upgrade the software and migrate it to the cloud. Indication was given that, with the new software, resident payments may eventually be able to be accepted electronically (an ACH debit). Mrs. Smith shared that this is very doable, and the RHA will work with the City to get this option established. Mrs. Smith indicated that accepting checks for payment is far less expensive, as credit card processing fees are quite hefty. However, she recognizes that electronic payments do provide convenience for those needing to pay their rent.

Ms. Bueno shared that Eagle Scouts want to paint addresses at RHA units, so she will soon be working with them on that project.

Board Member Crowley asked if all a/c units were being looked at when Honea Air was recently brought in to look at the air conditioners. Mr. Sweet shared that we are still working with Honea Air. It seems there was a new staff member from Honea Air that was sent out, and the communication was not great with him. So, Mr. Sweet has been working with others at Honea Air to clarify things regarding air conditioning units. In general, efforts related to air conditioning units are ongoing. Ms. Bueno indicated that several residents have been coming in and commenting that their a/c units are working a lot better, and the residents have expressed appreciation in this regard.

Ms. Bueno shared that the auditors were on site last week, and the audit process is ongoing.

Regarding bathroom showers, Board Member Wise acknowledged that changing all of the residential units' bathtubs into showers is on the five-year plan; however, she hopes those efforts will be a high priority. Indication was given that there are a lot of plumbing related concerns that will make these efforts very, very challenging and likely quite expensive.

c. Hear update regarding RHA financials

The auditors have been here, and it – relatively speaking – is a small audit. Results are due by the end of June and have to be submitted to the Feds in D.C. She is still working with Charles Schwab on updating account information from Tony Rios' (former RHA Executive Director) and former RHA Board Members to Mary Smith and current RHA board members so that the account may be closed. She has switched things over to QuickBooks online, so she is now able to see all financials real time. Board Member Crowley wants to ensure that operating monies are sufficient. Mrs. Smith shared that she has not looked at the amounts in the last couple of weeks; however, she assured Crowley that the financials are fine. She plans to bring forth a formal, quarterly financial report at next month's board meeting.

Board Member Crowley shared that the past Executive Director has often shared that plumbing related costs have been quite expensive over the years. He wonders if the RHA Board can look into plumbing related projects that could possibly be funded with public funds (i.e. through grants perhaps). Ms. Bueno share that, yes, funding is available for large projects. The project(s) would have to be presented for consideration, and the funding agency would either accept and fund the project or reject it. This is a possibility. Councilmember McCallum shared that the past executive director brought a piece of led pipe to a meeting some time ago as a visual representation of how bad the plumbing is in RHA facilities/units.

d. Review and approve RHA's five-year action plan

Board Member Crowley moved to approve the RHA's five-year action plan as was discussed at the last board meeting. Board Member Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously (4 ayes with Neyland being absent).

e. Authorize Executive Director to execute agreement with MRI Software, LLC for upgrade/migration of Lindsey Software to Cloud Version

Board Member Hall moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute said agreement. Board Member Crowley seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (4 ayes with Neyland being absent).

Vice Chair Sevier then read the below-listed discussion items into the record before recessing the public meeting to go into Executive Session at 10:44 a.m.

6. **Executive Session:** The Board of Directors will recess the public meeting to go into Executive Session to discuss the following matters, as authorized by Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code:
- a. to deliberate the appointment, employment, and duties of RHA Executive Director (pursuant to: Personnel Matters, Consultation with Attorney)
 - b. to deliberate duties, assignments, and staffing restructure (pursuant to: Personnel Matters, Consultation with Attorney)
7. **Call public meeting back to order, and take any action as a result of Executive Session.**

Vice Chair Sevier reconvened the public meeting at 10:53. No action was taken as a result of Ex. Session.

8. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE ROCKWALL HOUSING AUTHORITY
(RHA) ON THIS 18th DAY OF JULY, 2024.



Matthew Neyland, RHA President

ATTEST:



Richard R. Crowley, RHA Secretary