

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF RENO
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 28, 2024**

The meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Housing Authority of the City of Reno (Agency) was called to order by Chairman Aiazzi at 12pm on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, in the Agency's Boardroom.

Commissioners Present

Dave Aiazzi, Chairman
Kathleen Taylor, Commissioner
Mark Sullivan, Vice Chairman (called in)
Dejanae Solley, Commissioner

Commissioners Absent

Mayor Hillary Schieve

Staff Present

Dr. Hilary Lopez, Ph.D., Executive Director
Heidi McKendree, Deputy Executive Director
Darren Squillante, Director of HR
JD Klippenstein, Director of Development
Kristin Scott, Director of Asset Management
Jamie Newfelt, Director of Rental Assistance
Jeremy Stocking, Director of Resident Services

Staff Present (continued)

Jeff Tenenbaum, Director of Finance
Simona Parton, Senior Accountant
Colleen Montgomery-Beltran, Executive Administrative Assistant
Ryan Russell, Legal Counsel

Others Present

Meg Shae, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Northern Nevada
Katie Pace, Founder of Rebuilding Together Northern Nevada

There being a quorum present, the order of business was as follows:

- **Call to order and roll call.**

- **Introduction of guests.**

- **First Period of Public Comment.**

- David Tscheckar, Hawk View Manor resident, commented on the moving deadline.
- Nanette and Marshall Eaton and Marilyn Jo Fink, commented on Reno Avenue project's potential impact on community.

- **Approval of agenda. (For Possible Action)**

Vice Chairman Sullivan motioned to approve the agenda. Commissioner Solly seconded. Hearing no further discussion, Chairman Aiazzi called for the question. The vote was all ayes, no nays. Chairman Aiazzi declared the motion carried unanimously and the agenda approved.

- 1. Presentation on Rebuilding Together and its programs by Meg Shae, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Northern Nevada. (Discussion)**

Rebuilding Together Northern Nevada is a national organization serving homeowners who are seniors, veterans and those living with disabilities to age in place safely. The organization is largely grant funded, and works with individuals who are at 80% AMI and below to provide safe and healthy home repairs.

- 2. Approval of the minutes of the regular Board Meeting held April 23, 2024. (For Possible Action)**

Commissioner Taylor motioned to accept the meeting minutes. Commissioner Solly seconded the motion. Chairman Aiazzi called for the question. All were in favor, no nays. Chairman Aiazzi declared the motion carried.

- 3. Consent Agenda. (All consent items may be approved together with a single motion, be taken out of order, and/or be heard and discussed individually. Items will be removed and considered separately at the request of the public or Board member.) (For Possible Action)**

- a) Discussion and possible approval of the below listed donations from Board of Commissioner contingency funds.**

- Commissioner Schieve: \$1,000 to Good Shepard's Clothes Closet to support its Drop Box program, \$2,500 to Join Together Northern Nevada to support its substance abuse prevention programs, and \$6,500 to the City of Reno Housing and Neighborhood Development Department to support its emergency housing program for people in crisis.
- Commissioner Solley: \$4,000 to Black Wall Street to support its programming and \$6,000 to support RHA Resident Services programs as follows:
 - Workshop/Event Food and Supplies - \$500

- Workforce Development Graduation Celebration - \$450
 - Youth Summer Camp - \$1800
 - Emergency funds for youth needs - \$500
 - Back to School Event - \$1000
 - Dance Classes - \$1000
 - Senior Services Emergency Funds - \$750
- Commissioner Taylor: \$9,501.10 to Eddy House to support its programming.

Commissioner Taylor disclosed that she is a board member of the Eddy House and wished to recuse herself from voting on this item.

- b) Discussion and possible approval of updates to RHA signature authorities.

Vice Chairman Sullivan motioned to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. Chairman Aiazzi called for the questions. Three in favor and one abstention. The motion carried.

4. Commissioner Reports. (Discussion)

None

5. Executive Director/Secretary's Report. (Discussion)

RHA Executive Director, Dr. Hilary Lopez, referencing the full report in the packet, highlighted a few items:

- The housing waitlist closed on May 3. RHA received 5,723 applications.
- At the prior Board Meeting, RHA received approval to release an RFP to project base up to 125 VASH vouchers. Applications were reviewed and scored, and three awards were made.
- Executive Director Lopez and Deputy Executive Director McKendree are working with the City of Reno to explore potential collaborative efforts to utilize CDBG section 108 loan funds to help advance affordable housing within our community.
- RHA is also partnering with The Continuum of Care in Washoe County to develop a database of active and available housing units for households on the community queue.
- RHA is also partnering with the local jurisdictions and the Washoe County court system to explore the development of an eviction diversion program.
- Executive Director Lopez announced that RHA's Director of Development, JD Klippenstein, was appointed the new chair of the Nevada Housing Coalition's policy committee.
- Regarding Rental Assistance updates, RHA has fully extended the City of Sparks eviction prevention program funding and the contract was signed to implement the second year of funding, which will become available after July 1.

- RHA's Asset Management staff is working on generating the rent increase notices that comply with the Board's previous actions, the rent increase policy, that will become effective August 1 of this year. Those notices will be sent out the end of May to allow for the 60-day notification requirements for NRS.
- Regarding Resident Services:
 - Elderly Services staff have been participating in various events to highlight Older American Month. RHA received an additional award from Greater Nevada Credit Union to help fund Golden Groceries food pantry.
 - Start Smart Scholars Night dinner will be held on June 26 at the El Dorado to celebrate the graduating seniors. The scholarship committee is working to identify which youth will receive the \$10,000 scholarships.
 - RHA is working on a community garden at Essex Manor with the \$5,000 that was allocated by the Board in the last budget for community projects and working with urban roots to develop the garden.
- The Board will receive a full Development Department report next month as part of our quarterly schedule. To highlight a couple of activities the Board should be aware of:
 - The rehab project at Silverada Manor will begin as scheduled, but electrical issues have caused the residential rehab portion to begin later than anticipated. However, sitework will begin earlier than planned which will ensure residents will not be off site for more than 12 months.
 - RHA submitted the application to the Nevada housing division for the Hawk View project and anticipates going to state board of finance for tax exempt bond approval on June 6. RHA has been working with Brinshore to finalize the LOI and debt term sheets for the Hawk View project. They have selected Hudson Housing as the equity investor and Citi Bank as the construction and permanent debt lender. Housing to Home is working with Hawk View tenants to ensure they have the information needed for relocation.
- On April 30, RHA received notice from HUD that they completed an assessment of our MTW program and indicated that RHA is compliant with all five of the statutory requirements for the demonstration program for fiscal year 2022.
- Vice Chairman Sullivan asked for clarification on the topic of the number of people on the waitlists who were local, as mentioned in the minutes. Deputy Director McKendree told Chairman Sullivan that the number was accurate.
- Chairman Aiazzi inquired about the dumpsters that were to be placed at Hawk View. Development Director, JD Klippenstein, told him that Housing to Home is working to get those on site. Asset Management Director, Kristin Scott, added that RHA maintenance staff have been cleaning up discarded items over the weekend.
- Commissioner Taylor inquired about the different voucher types, the percentage of them being used, and what is needed to increase the usage. Director of Rental

Assistance, Jamie Newfelt, informed Commissioner Taylor that Rental Assistance has been holding some vouchers back because the residents relocating from Hawk View will lead to definite lease-ups, increasing the usage of the traditional vouchers to 91%.

- Commissioner Taylor inquired about the goal of the partnership with the COC. Deputy Executive Director McKendree explained that when the Emergency Housing Vouchers were released, it became evident that voucher holders were needing more support in finding housing units. The COC is funding the landlord and COC partners' engagement in using the database so anyone can have access to landlords and their units.
- Commissioner Taylor asked what would be needed to get AT&T to remove the utility pole at the Dick Scott site, which has been delaying the project. Executive Director Dr. Lopez informed Commissioner Taylor that a contact through Vice Chairman Sullivan had been helpful and AT&T is now on site resolving the issue.

6. Review and possible approval of changes to the RHA Board of Commissioners Bylaws. (For Possible Action)

After deliberations about the annual meeting being held in December and allowing for flexibility in when the annual meeting and board retreat can be held, and after deliberating on the process by which the By-Laws require notice of posting of the Board Meeting agendas, no changes were made to the By-Laws.

7. Discussion and possible approval of a revised Fixed Asset Threshold. (For Possible Action)

RHA's external auditor has recommended that RHA update the capitalization threshold to be better in line with the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and federal requirements so capital assets which are also known as fixed assets, refers to assets used in operations with a useful life of one year or more. Currently, RHA is using a capitalization threshold that is set at \$2,000 and this threshold has not been changed in the last 18 years. Current guidance from the GFOA, which is a professional association that provides best practice guidance to governmental agencies based on government accounting standards, recommended that government use a capitalization threshold of at least \$5,000 or more for any individual item that has a useful life of up to two years. Most governments at that time have moved to \$5,000. And more recently, there's been feedback to increase that threshold up to \$10,000. The US Office of Management and Budget which handles the procurement requirements is updating and revising their federal threshold to be \$10,000 as of October 1st, within our community, both local jurisdictions and other special districts have also recently increased up to the \$10,000 limit. RHA is proposing that to change its limit to the \$10,000 limit which would put RHA at a comparable level with industry standards. This change will be going forward, no retroactive adjustment, and would be implemented effective July 1. Anything currently categorized as a fixed asset will continue to be labeled as

such. OMB will be revising their federal thresholds at the federal level as of October 1, which aligns with their fiscal year.

After careful deliberation, Vice Chairman Sullivan motioned to approve revising the fixed asset threshold from \$2,000 to \$10,000, the new threshold for capitalization. Commissioner Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Discussion and possible approval of Sales and Services Schedule. (For Possible Action)

After Chairman Aiazzi questioned RHA's Asset Management Director about the inclusion of salary and benefits in the cost portion of the schedule relating to the maintenance staff, the Asset Management Director clarified that the cost that the Chairman was inquiring about included the current average labor rate and does not include their salaries and benefits.

Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve the Sales and Services Schedule with no changes. Commissioner Solly seconded the motion. The motion carried with all ayes, no nays.

9. Discussion and possible approval of FY2025 RHA budget. (For Possible Action)

Commissioner Solly declared a conflict and must abstain from voting on this item.

Executive Director Dr. Lopez explained that RHA must submit a board approved annual operating budget no later than the 30th of June every year. The fiscal year 25 draft budget was initially brought forward as a discussion item last month. It is being brought back this month based on that discussion and some updates to it, which could either be acted upon at this meeting or could be brought back if needed next month. It would need to be acted on then no later than June 30th. The budget is based on FY24 eight-month actual income and expenses with the remaining four months of FY 24 extrapolated. Variances between FY25 budget figures and FY24 projected actual income and expenses have been provided as well as explanations for any variances that were all over 10%. Proposed staffing changes as part of the FY 25 budget was also provided.

After Commissioner Taylor inquired about the variance between the amount budgeted for staff training and the lower actual amount for training, Executive Director Dr. Lopez explained that in the past we had two line items, travel and training, and this year we've combined them. That is making it seem more inflated, but the estimate is based on what each director felt they would need for their team to be successful in the coming year, considering staff changes and turnovers, and it may come in under that amount.

Commissioner Taylor also inquired about CloudTen, utilities expenses and maintenance, that appear to be much higher because they are lumped together, and if there should be a decrease somewhere else to balance. Deputy Executive Director McKendree pointed out

that supplies and contracting under the maintenance section show negative variances to make up for that.

Commissioner Taylor asked about the budget for consultants. Deputy Director McKendree explained that in FY 24, higher expenses for navigating consulting was due to not having a finance director yet. And Wise Consulting was our consultant for the Yardi conversion. Now we are past that.

Commissioner Taylor also requested clarification about funding of the Homeless Prevention Program item in the budget. Executive Director Dr. Lopez explained that RHA has received a grant from the State of Nevada that RHA uses to fund the Homeless Prevention Program.

Chairman Aiazzi asked for an explanation for the difference in the total bottom line between FY 24 and FY 25, what appears to be a temporary reduction in income. Deputy Executive Director McKendree explained that one reason is the way HAP is paid and MTW flexibility. What is budgeted in FY 25 includes RHA's whole annual budget authority, with none of the budget authority being funneled into HUD reserves.

Chairman Aiazzi asked for an explanation for there being a negative number under Tenant Services Charged to Tenants. RHA's Asset Management Director stated that those are services that are charged to the tenants that they're paying for over the year, showing the income from that. Finance Director, Mr. Tenenbaum, explained that that item will vary from year to year and may not always be positive. Mr. Tenenbaum also suggested the auditors recommend moving that item. That item could be considered income, but it's also the process of netting that expense.

Regarding the staff training, Vice Chairman Sullivan had questions about the number of employees receiving training and how many require travel with that training. Executive Director Dr. Lopez explained that it varies and if the training can be done via the web or locally in person, RHA would try to take advantage of that. Last year there was much training across all departments on Yardi, Inspire, HOTMA, HR training, etc.

After careful consideration by the Board members, Commissioner Taylor motioned to approve the budget. Chairman Aiazzi seconded the motion. The motion was carried with three ayes and one abstention.

10. Discussion and possible action to direct the Executive Director to submit a letter to AT&T regarding the delayed removal of a utility pole and its impact on the completion of Dick Scott Manor supportive housing project. (For Possible Action)

Executive Director Dr. Lopez suggested Item 10 be cancelled and thanked Vice Chairman Sullivan for his help with connecting RHA with AT&T to remove the pole.

Closed Session:

**11. The Board may give direction to staff in closed session regarding the position or positions to be taken or the strategy to be employed, and staff may provide the Board with an update, regarding:
(For Possible Action)**

- Per NRS 288.220(4), to discuss labor relations with RHA's management representatives, including without limitation, the position or positions to be taken or the strategy to be employed leading to the execution of a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), the upcoming expiration of the current CBA expiring June 30, 2024, potential items for negotiation in a new CBA and associated fiscal impacts. There will be no approval of the collective bargaining agreement during the course of the closed session.

Reconvene Open Session:

12. Annual Open Meeting Law Training by Ryan Russell of Allison Mackenzie. (Discussion)

Mr. Ryan Russell, on behalf of Allison MacKenzie, Esq., legal counsel for the Reno Housing Authority, gave a presentation and training on the annual Open Meeting Law.

13. Presentation on RHA's Rental Assistance Department by Jamie Newfelt, Director of Rental Assistance. (Discussion)

RHA's Director of Rental Assistance gave a presentation describing the function of the Rental Assistance department and how it serves the community.

14. Additional Items:

- a) Possible change in day/time of Board meetings (Discussion)
- b) General matters of concern to Board Members regarding matters not appearing on the agenda. (Discussion)
- c) Reports on conferences and trainings. (Discussion)
- d) Old and New Business. (Discussion)
- e) Request for Future Agenda Topics (Discussion)
- f) Schedule of next meeting. The following dates have been scheduled in advance but are subject to change at any time: Tuesday, June 25, 2024, and Tuesday, July 23, 2024.
(For Possible Action)

15. Public Comment.

- David Tscheckar, Hawk View Manor resident, gave further comment on the moving deadline for Hawk View residents.

16. Adjournment.

Chairman Aiazzi declared the meeting adjourned at 2:17pm.