

MINUTES OF THE READING HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Regular Meeting of the Reading Housing Authority for the month of April was held at William W. Willis Center for Administration, 400 Hancock Boulevard, Reading, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, April 23, 2013.

Members of the staff attending were as follows: Mr. Daniel F. Luckey, Executive Director; Mr. Ronald J. Fioravanti, Deputy Executive Director; Mr. David C. Talarico, Maintenance Superintendent; Mrs. Audrey L. Wenrich, Administrative Assistant; Ms. Sherryann I. Fonseca, Comptroller; Mr. George F. Eisenhauer, Purchasing Agent; Ms. Gloria J. Guard, Property Manager; Mr. Josh K. Smith, Property Manager; Mrs. Leonilda Feliciano, Resident Selection Supervisor; Mrs. Carolyn K. Bower, Section 8 Coordinator; Mrs. Stacey J. Keppen, Social Services Director; Mr. Frederick H. Prutzman, Building Construction Inspector; Mrs. Marilyn Guzman, Clerk Typist 2; Ms. Janice M. Eickhoff, Clerk Typist 3; Attorney Ed Stock, Solicitor for the Authority, and Mr. Valdis Lacis, Reading Eagle Reporter, were also present.

Mr. Belinski, Chairman, called the regular meeting to order and upon roll call those present and absent was as follows:

- Present: Mr. Steven E. Belinski
 Mrs. Rebecca Acosta
 Mr. Eligio C. Colon, Jr.
- Absent: Mrs. Lillie L. Mathies
 Mr. Nelson A. DeLeon

The Chairman announced that no one had signed the register to speak at the Board Meeting.

A motion was made by Mrs. Acosta and second by Mr. Colon approving the minutes of the regular monthly meeting and annual meeting held March 26, 2013. The motion was carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Mrs. Acosta and second by Mr. Colon approving the bills as submitted by Ms. Fonseca for the period of March 1, 2013 to March 31, 2013. The motion was carried unanimously.

The following balances in bank and on account were reported for the month of March 2013.

Fund	Cash or Checking	Investments	Escrow	Total
W-66 General	\$4,421,307.50	\$3,540,986.14	\$310,117.80	\$ 8,272,411.44
P-4628 General	201,907.21	99,000.00	0.00	300,907.21
P-15 General	202,287.56	1,284,232.41	77,248.82	1,563,768.79
Payroll	0.00	180,993.88	(180,993.88)	0.00
River Oak Apts.	7,212.60	0.00	42,834.46	50,047.06
Total	\$4,832,714.87	\$5,105,212.43	\$249,207.20	\$10,187,134.50

A motion was made by Mrs. Acosta and second by Mr. Colon that the Treasurer's Report be accepted and filed. The motion was carried unanimously.

The Executive Director submitted the following report:

COMPREHENSIVE GRANT PROJECTS

222–2013 CAPITAL FUND – This is in the Agency Plan and is now at HUD for review and approval. Preliminary indications from HUD show it should be approved soon. Then we await the amount of the Capital Fund from them and then we must revise the budget to reflect the actual Capital Fund amount.

Given the tight fiscal climate we do not expect as high amount as we have received in the past. This will more than likely reduce the number of work items we will be able to do over the coming year. In any case, we will await the actual number.

RIVER OAK APARTMENTS – The occupancy rate at River Oak is good. There are about 14 people on the waiting list for a unit so we should be able to rent the unassigned units when they have been readied for occupancy.

We hope to complete some kitchens this year as we have about 12 or so remaining to be completed and would like to get them all done before the end of next year or sooner.

While we would like to replace the windows, we are finding the replacement of the carpets is becoming a big issue and one we will be looking at very closely in the coming year as funding becomes available. I have addressed this in the Youth Build section.

SHELTER CARE PLUS PROGRAM – RHA was notified our Fiscal Year 2012 Shelter Plus Care grant was selected for funding in the amount of \$253,872. The Shelter Plus Care grant was originally funded in 2007 and is a part of the local Continuum of Care program. The Continuum of Care program is overseen by the Berks Coalition to End Homelessness and the Section 8 Vouchers are provided to individuals who are chronically homeless, have mental and or substance abuse disorders and are receiving treatment for these problems. The Shelter Plus Care Vouchers in conjunction with the treatment to prevent future episodes of Homelessness.

We are pleased we were selected to continue this program as it has been extremely successful in helping a population that is at great risk for homelessness to maintain permanent housing. At RHA, the Shelter Plus Care program has been especially successful as demonstrated by our limited turnover of participants, treatment programs and high leasing rate is the reason we were awarded another round of funding.

NSP/ARTIST HOUSING – There has been no change in the status of this program as yet, though, there has been discussion that some of the housing for the NSP program can be used for artist housing in some way. This will be an ongoing program.

When selecting “artists” for the rental housing in the NSP program near the Goggleworks, RHA received criteria for selecting potential artists, which was used in Peekskill, NY. Please note the tenants for this program who are moving into these units will be at 50% of median income. From what we have heard, most if not all artists, fall into this income category. So it should not be difficult to fill these units.

SYLVANIA HOMES ANNUALIZED OCCUPANCY RATE %

2008				2009				2010				2011				2012				2013			
Dec	Mar	June	Sept	Dec	Mar																		
94.0	93.8	94.9	96.2	97.8	97.8	96.9	97	96.6	96.6	96.9	97.3	97.2	97.0	97.1	97.5	97.7	97.7	96.6	96.2	95.6	95.5		

Sylvania is 95.5% leased up and is doing well in this area.

SECTION 8 ANNUALIZED UTILIZATION (%) RATE

2008			2009			2010			2011			2012			2013						
Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept	Dec	Mar																
96	95.7	94.2	94.4	96.2	98.1	98.2	99.5	97.9	95.8	94.5	93.2	92.1	90.3	90.0	88.3	88.2	89.2	90.6	91.2	90.8	89.2

The leasing rate for the last quarter is 89.2%. Current HUD funding practice does not and will not allow 100% utilization of the vouchers and funding and is especially difficult when we do not know what the funding will be for this program.

PUBLIC HOUSING ANNUALIZED OCCUPANCY RATE (%)

2008			2009			2010			2011			2012			2013							
Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept	Dec	Mar																	
98.3	98.4	98.4	98.4	98.4	98.5	98.6	98.7	98.8	98.8	98.8	98.8	98.9	98.8	98.7	98.5	98.6	98.8	98.8	98.7	98.4	98.7	98.6

The annualized vacancy rate for the last quarter shows a good leasing rate and translates into vacancy rate of 1.4% for RHA. This continues to be a decent occupancy rate. We continue to monitor our progress in this area and work towards improving the leasing rate, while everyone strives to attain 100% leasing rate, it is difficult to attain.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE (ANNUALIZED QUARTERLY) – PUBLIC HOUSING

2008				2009				2010				2011				2012							
Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept	Dec	Mar	Jun	Sept
2.5	1.8	1.7	1.9	2.3	2.10	2.3	2.5	3	3	2.90	2.80	3	2.6	3.2	3.5	3.1	2.6	3.4	2.7	3.4	4.2		

Staff is working hard to reduce these amounts in hopes to get them to a more reasonable level. However, the increases are due to our finding discrepancies between what the residents claim they are earning and what is on their tax returns. I have put this on the agenda for discussion.

NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROGRAM (NSP) – The City of Reading is the lead agency and RHA and Our City Reading Inc., (OCR) are partners in this project. Currently, 201 North 3rd Street, 331 Elm Street and another unit at 460 Centre Avenue are in the mix for units owned by RHA for the NSP program. We have filled all of the three units at 460 Centre Avenue with tenants at or below 50% of median income. They have started rehabilitating 201 N. 3rd.

RENTAL ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATION (RAD) – Out of the 60,000 units HUD was interested in having participate in this program, only 11,000 units were submitted and approved nationwide. This represents just 18% of the number of units HUD wanted in the program. It fell far short and perhaps it is related to the flaws in the program funding.

There are some attractive issues for participating in this program; the major one supposedly is not being under the public housing regulations. The most unattractive issue is the lack of or uncertainty of funding and other related issues. We have not and do not plan to apply at this time. We will monitor how this program works for some agencies over the long run.

I will keep you posted on any new developments in this program.

YOUTHBUILD – This program is moving along slowly as they are in the midst of training the participants before they actually begin working on the construction projects. There has been a bit of a change in the work the Youth Build participants will do in that we will be having them install ceramic tile in the bathrooms at Oakbrook as the current flooring (which is sheet vinyl) is shrinking and this will provide longer lasting flooring.

However, they are now working and installing ceramic tile in the bathrooms which we hope will alleviate most if not all of our maintenance concerns in the units. For the most part they

are not moving very quickly, but expect them to pick up speed when they gain experience in installing ceramic tiles.

I will keep the Board posted on the status of this program as they occur. Please remember this is a three year program.

NAHRO AWARDS FOR 2013 – RHA has submitted new award submissions to NAHRO for 2013 as we feel we have done projects which are unique and beneficial to our residents and worth submitting. Awards submitted were for the Cogeneration plant and new camera system.

We hope we are successful in our submissions for this year.

Vacant Unit Report for the Current Month

	Units Scheduled To Be Leased	Unit Accepted By Eligible Applicant	Unit Scheduled Transfer	Unassigned Units	Total Vacant Units
Glenside	2	0	1	1	4
Hensler	1	0	1	0	2
Oakbrook	1	1	2	1	5
Franklin	0	0	0	0	0
Kennedy	3	1	1	1	5
Rhodes	2	0	1	0	3
Eisenhower	0	0	0	1	1
Hubert	0	0	0	0	0
Total Conventional					
Public Housing	9	2	6	3	20
Scattered Sites	0	0	0	2	2
Sylvania Homes	0	0	0	1	1
River Oak	0	0	0	4	4
NSP Units	0	0	0	0	0
Total	9	2	6	10	27

Our current occupancy rate is high at 98.76% for Public Housing and is a very good occupancy overall. The leasing rate for all of our units we own (a total of 1810) comes to 98.76%. Of the 27 vacant units, 9 are scheduled to be leased, 2 have been accepted by applicants, 6 are transfers and 10 remaining units are unassigned.

Please note the transfer units are units, which in most cases the occupants are either over-housed or under-housed and need to be moved to a more appropriate size unit. In some cases, there may be other factors whereby a unit transfer is appropriate and done on a case-by-case basis. But also means, we are creating another vacant unit and will now have to rehabilitate the unit and fill it. As I mentioned before, these unit transfers are required to ensure people are in the correct size units and are not over or under housed.

We are in the midst of transferring people into the two vacant scattered site units with people who have expressed interest in the past in becoming homeowners. However, because of various issues such as income and employment they were unable to attain a mortgage. We will work with these two families so that some time in the future they will become homeowners and we will then be able to sell these units. In the meantime they will now become occupied and will be taken off the vacant unit listing.

DEVELOPMENT WAITING LIST STATUS

Bedroom Size	P/H	Contacting	Waiting Period	Sylvania	River Oak
Studio	237	05/11	12-24 months	N/A	N/A
One Bedroom-Family/Elderly	289	05/11	12-24 months	13	N/A
Two Bedroom Family	200	05/11	12-24 months	12	5
Three Bedroom Family	250	07/08	36-42 months	8	10
Four Bedroom Family	28	05/11	12-24 months	6	N/A
Five Bedroom Family	16	06/12	12 months	N/A	N/A
Total	1020			39	15

The waiting list is still fairly long and we do not anticipate opening the waiting list any time soon for Public Housing in the near future. However, with Sylvania and River Oak we may open up the waiting list on an as needed basis.

RHA PAINTING PROGRAM FOR OCCUPIED UNITS – We continue the painting program and hope funding cuts do not affect our efforts. We want to make sure each and every unit was and is painted at least once every ten years. To date, this program is going well.

ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAM WITH HONEYWELL – This project is nearing completion and are generally pleased with the progress they are making on this project. There have been some issues which we are working with Honeywell on resolving.

At this time we are still working on resolving the issues with the cameras which while they are up and running, Honeywell has not completed them to our satisfaction. Therefore, we are monitoring the remaining installation to make sure we have everything we were promised.

RHA CENTRAL OFFICE FUNDS – I have had discussions with various people regarding these funds as it will be important in the coming years to invest these funds in programs and projects which will benefit not only the Agency, but the City as well. I should note these funds are “de-federalized” and hence HUD is supposedly not able to regulate how and what a Housing Authority can do or use this money for. I also plan to research this to see if other agencies will be looking at measures to use these funds.

Technically, these funds are as I noted “de-federalized”, but as we have found out HUD seems to ignore this and it would be best if we use these funds for a project in the City that will possibly make money and benefit the City at the same time. In any case, it is my belief that if we do not do something of this nature, HUD will find a way to encourage a Housing Authority to use these funds for operations just as they have with our reserves.

It is the Board’s decision, but I highly recommend RHA do something whereby these funds are involved in or a part of a project that will benefit the City in its renaissance. I do not wish to lose these funds like we did with the reserves, which we had accumulated over a period of time, as we now have a reserve of central office funds.

To date, there has been no change in this.

ISLANDS IN FRONT OF OAKBROOK – The islands outside of our offices and Oakbrook Homes are now cut and maintained by the City of Reading and there are times these have issues. Given this, we have had discussion with Mr. Charles Jones, Director of Public Works, regarding possibly taking over (with the agreement of the City and of course the Board) the maintenance of these properties and perhaps in the long run, the City could provide us with ownership of these properties as they are somewhat of a gateway to Oakbrook. By taking over maintenance and/or ownership, we will ensure they are managed and maintained as well as our developments and will give us some control. Currently Masano and Berks Catholic maintain the ones in close relation to their properties.

We are still waiting to hear from Mr. Jones regarding this matter.

COGENERATION PLANT – We have not heard anything on the recent filming UGI undertook at the Glenside Co-generation plant. We recently had some issues with the equipment and are in the midst of resolving this with all of the parties involved.

I will keep you advised of any developments in this area.

RHODES AND EISENHOWER – A while ago, there were issues with the side walls at Rhodes and Eisenhower and repaired them. It has now come to our attention, the front and possibly the back walls are having the same issues which need to be addressed as soon as possible. It seems the brick veneer walls were either not installed correctly or over time have been slowly separating from the concrete structure, which may be related to age and weather.

Given this situation, we are having a structural engineer review and develop specifications for the work that needs to be done to correct this situation. I will keep you advised of any developments in this area.

PARK PLACE ON PENN STREET PROJECT- I plan to begin an advertising program soon after the announcement of the start of the new hotel project. I believe this will create an energy from which we can build on to help us market these units

A motion was made by Mr. Colon and second by Mrs. Acosta to accept the report of the Executive Director. The motion was carried unanimously.

The following Resolution was read and considered:

RESOLUTION NO. 5672

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE TERMS AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT WITH AFFORDABLE PEST CONTROL USA, LLC, FOR PEST CONTROL SERVICES FOR ALL DEVELOPMENTS AND SCATTERED SITES.

BE IT RESOLVED AND IT HEREBY IS RESOLVED by the Reading Housing Authority:

1. THAT the terms of the contract with the Affordable Pest Control USA, LLC, [Temple, PA] for pest control services for all developments and scattered sites, are hereby approved, the said Contract to be in substantially the following form:

CONTRACT ON FILE IN THE COMPTROLLER’S OFFICE.

2. The said Contract in the amount of \$28,173.00 is the lowest acceptable bid as reviewed and approved by the Solicitor.

3. The Reading Housing Authority has the option to renew.

4. This Resolution shall be effective April 23, 2013.

Mrs. Acosta introduced and moved the adoption of the Resolution as read, and which motion was second by Mr. Colon and upon roll call the Ayes and Nays were as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Eligio C. Colon, Jr.
Mrs. Rebecca Acosta
Mr. Steven E. Belinski

Nays: None

The Chairman thereupon declared the said motion carried and the said Resolution adopted.

The following Resolution was read and considered:

RESOLUTION NO. 5673

RESOLUTION APPROVING TRAVEL TO SCOTTSDALE, AZ,
TO ATTEND THE 2013 HONEYWELL USERS GROUP (HUG) SYMPOSIUM
TO BE HELD JUNE 9 – JUNE 13, 2013.

BE IT RESOLVED AND IT HEREBY IS RESOLVED by the Reading Housing Authority:

1. THAT approval be given to Daniel F. Luckey, David C. Talarico, and Frederick H. Prutzman for travel to Scottsdale, AZ, to attend the 2013 Honeywell Users Group (HUG) Symposium to be held June 9 – June 13, 2013.

2. THIS Resolution shall be effective April 23, 2013.

Mr. Colon introduced and moved the adoption of the Resolution as read, and which motion was second by Mrs. Acosta and upon roll call the Ayes and Nays were as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Eligio C. Colon, Jr.
Mrs. Rebecca Acosta
Mr. Steven E. Belinski

Nays: None

The Chairman thereupon declared the said motion carried and the said Resolution adopted.

The following Resolution was read and considered:

RESOLUTION NO. 5674

RESOLUTION APPROVING TRAVEL TO HERSHEY, PA,
TO ATTEND A PESTICIDE RECERTIFICATION COURSE
TO BE HELD JUNE 4 – JUNE 5, 2013.

BE IT RESOLVED AND IT HEREBY IS RESOLVED by the Reading Housing Authority:

1. THAT approval be given to William Lockhart for travel to Hershey, PA, to attend a Pesticide Recertification Course to be held June 4 – June 5, 2013.

2. THIS Resolution shall be effective April 23, 2013.

Mrs. Acosta introduced and moved the adoption of the Resolution as read, and which motion was second by Mr. Colon and upon roll call the Ayes and Nays were as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Eligio C. Colon, Jr.
Mrs. Rebecca Acosta
Mr. Steven E. Belinski

Nays: None

The Chairman thereupon declared the said motion carried and the said Resolution adopted.

The following Resolution was read and considered:

RESOLUTION NO. 5675

RESOLUTION APPROVING TRAVEL TO DENVER, CO,
TO ATTEND NAHRO'S 2013 SUMMER CONFERENCE
TO BE HELD JULY 18-20, 2013.

BE IT RESOLVED AND IT HEREBY IS RESOLVED by the Reading Housing Authority:

1. THAT approval be given to Rebecca Acosta for travel to Denver, CO, to attend NAHRO's 2013 Summer Conference to be held July 18-20, 2013.

2. THIS Resolution shall be effective April 23, 2013.

Mr. Colon introduced and moved the adoption of the Resolution as read, and which motion was second by Mrs. Acosta and upon roll call the Ayes and Nays were as follows:

Ayes: Mr. Eligio C. Colon, Jr.
Mrs. Rebecca Acosta
Mr. Steven E. Belinski

Nays: None

The Chairman thereupon declared the said motion carried and the said Resolution adopted.

There being no further business to come before the Commissioners, a motion was made by Mrs. Acosta and second by Mr. Colon to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Reading Housing Authority is scheduled to be held at William W. Willis Center for Administration, 400 Hancock Boulevard, Reading, Pennsylvania, on Tuesday, May 28, 2013.

Recording Secretary