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## **Housing Authority Board of Commissioners of the City of Michigan City, Indiana**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting  
April 18, 2024

The Regular Board Meeting of the Commissioners of the Michigan City Housing Authority was held on April 18, 2024 at 621 E. Michigan City, Indiana 46360.

Present: Robert Lonie, Chairman  
Tulani Reyna, Vice Chairperson  
Michael Vinson, Commissioner  
Stasi Benning, Commissioner  
Tramel Raggs, Attorney

MCHA Staff: Tiffany A. Dixon, Executive Director  
Angela May-Cooper, HCV Manager  
Lasherie Garmon, Public Housing Manager  
Lucy Maney, HCV Clerk

### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 3:00 PM

### **II. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Board stood for The Pledge of Allegiance

### **III. Roll Call**

Noting That a quorum of Commissioners was present, Chairman Robert Lonie called upon Executive Director Tiffany Dixon Roll call was taken and the following Commissioners were present: Robert Lonie, Tulani Reyna, Michael Vinson, Stasi Benning, and Attorney Tramel Raggs.

### **IV. Minutes 02/15/2024**

Chairman Robert Lonie called for the approval of the board minutes. Commissioner Benning had no problem just stated Vice Chair Reyna and Commissioner Vinson nodded their head, that there should be acknowledgement, its all Ayes or Nays. Attorney Raggs confirms acknowledgements are spoken so that there's no confusion. The Board voted as follows: Ayes: Stasi Benning, Michael Vinson, Tulani Reyna, Robert Lonie.

### **V. Public Comment**

Chairman Robert Lonie opened the floor for the public comment. No member of the public spoke.

## **VI. Communication**

Chairman Robert Lonie informed the board and the public that there were two requests for public records both referred over to the officer per Attorney Raggs.

## **VII. Reports**

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded to the board for a report update. Angela May-Cooper presented her report to the Board. The Board then went into discussion with Ms. May-Cooper pertaining to the HCV programs report.

Lasherie Garmon then presented her report to the Board of Commissioners. The Board then asks questions regarding the Public Housing report.

### **A. Finance Report Claim List**

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded to the board of the accounts payable report within their board packet. Tiffany A. Dixon stated Brittany Fulwider was absent, but has the list of checks. Chairman Robert Lonie discussed having a budget and kind of rushed getting the budget and had to pass it in order to get the funds that are needed for training budget, and need to see where it is at.

### **B. Maintenance Assets**

Chairman Robert Lonie asked if there is maintenance report, Tanisha M. with Michigan City Maintenance thanked the board members and Tiffany A. Dixon for her returning to work with the maintenance team. Tanisha explained Clem Mogba was absent. The main issue is the locking on the doors, where they don't stay locked, the doors, and unwanted traffic going in and out is causing a safety issue.

### **C. Director Report**

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded with the directors' report. Tiffany A. Dixon stated she didn't have anything for March, Thanked the Board for the warm welcome, the staff has been wonderful and appreciated everyone, is excited to be here and help make great changes. Tiffany A. Dixon pointed out the most important thing that needs to be done is getting the budget, get an admin plan revised on ACOP procurement and our personal plan all needs to be revised. Tiffany A. Dixon stated she started working on the admin plan and the ACOP, getting familiar with the area and has a set meeting with the chief of police to discuss the properties and building a relationship moving forward. No questions were asked

### **D. MCHA Attorney's Report**

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded with Attorney Raggs report. Attorney Tramel Raggs discussed Ms. Garmon stated one of the evictions turned over to the office were dismissed due to an agreement with the residents to enter into a repayment agreement. All outstanding with a gate updated on have been in contact with the new Executive Director Tiffany A. Dixon with excitement

time looking ahead, Attorney's office will be working with Tiffany A. Dixon on the changes she is looking to do. No questions were asked.

### **VIII. New Business**

Chairman Robert Lonie Proceeded with the Board Subcommittees, and informed Board hasn't had any subcommittees, Robert Lonie was on the nominating committee where a new executive director was found and the finance committee and needing to get back into having committees. The need of getting the committees restructured understanding the policies, approving and enacting. Would help the Board understand what is being approved where they can go over a three-person committee each one goes under a policy, HOTMA Policy, NSPIRE Policy, and Procurement Policies. There is a lot of resources available as well as a lot of training available online to understand these policies a little better, working closely with the executive director and the staff to make sure that our policies are in line with our vision and our mission. Chairman Robert Lonie brought up needing a resident services committee we don't have any sort of Resident Outreach. Commissioner Benning explained while back there was prior committees that had several committees set up and people were assigned to them. Commissioner Benning recalled she can look back into the minutes and find out what those were and maybe can revisit those to refresh our minds.

Chairman Robert Lonie knows there were some committees and Brittany had a list but didn't have any names, they weren't even committees that well they weren't committees that we were even using it was just like a default list and of course the nominating committee wasn't one of them.

Chairman Robert Lonie urged the need to work on getting the committee restructured so that we get things done.

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded to HOTMA Policy Updates, NSPIRE Policy Updates, like he said from the training, even from when HUD was here it apparent that there's holes in our policies. So, we have to do some work there whether we do it, or if we let Tiffany A. Dixon do all the work, but we got to do something because we have to be following state law and with out mission and our vision and that all of them personnel Policies and Procedures. Procurement Policies, there's like a 200-page handbook, go through it and understand what the policies are that we're trying to put into place.

Tiffany A. Dixon would have an idea having a presentation instead of sending a policy for approval to the board but to come up with an actual presentation where there are questions in discuss that could lead subcommittee. Tiffany A. Dixon wanted to clarify it's not something to send over the next day but a presentation for the Board, an idea to see what policy changes and why is it.

Commissioner Benning liked that idea.

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded to resolution for PHA services brought up policies, looking at pick errors asking Mrs. Dixon to tell the Board member about it what to add to PHA-Web.

Tiffany A. Dixon proceeded the software company PHA-Web offers pick submission services to help staff make any changes to new and current residents and HCV participant, we add them their name in our software system we have a form that we create it's called five eight it's uploaded to HUD. It's important that five eight or that family report is submitted properly to HUD when HUD does a lot of our reporting especially for C-MAP. There're about four or five indicators for C-MAP that HUD pulls from the pick system through these submissions so it's very important that the submission is accurate. When the staff upload a submission, once it's uploaded they can get an error report back so HUD doesn't always accept them. There could be things wrong with the five eight itself or the family is no longer in the program or deceased or so forth.

Tiffany A. Dixon then informed learning about the Housing Authority pick rate in HUD are actually lower than what they're supposed to be we have a submission rate for voucher program at 93.5% and for our public housing program of 94% that is under HUD's minimum of 95%. Need to be able to get all of our five eights up in the system, if it's not uploaded properly we don't get credit. I found out our PHA software offers a submission service where they will upload it for us which is fine, we can do that ourselves, but they offer that which is great and they have a corrections aspect when those errors, five eights are sent back to us there's error the staff can actually call PHA-Web to put in a tech request. The Tech will walk through the errors, doesn't sound like a lot but sometimes correcting five eight errors are a nuisance, its not always easy to get corrected. Tiffany A. Dixon really like the fact PHA-Web would walk them through that correction.

Commissioner Michael Vinson asked what errors is it? Tiffany A. Dixon agreed it could be typographical, spell check, maybe putting the social security number in wrong, it could be that the person is residing in another housing authority, the person could be deceased. There're some errors that are going that HUD going to pull back that aren't agency errors and there are some agency errors, the date is wrong, when we get an error report back from HUD after it submitted it tells you what's wrong but it doesn't necessarily tell you how to fix it. There's a lot of training that you can do for pick training but as they're working on these errors they can put in a ticket and they actually walk through that error, we would know the error before HUD tells us. Blanche Meriweather asked about the training, the dashboard will tell you what the errors are stated inside of the dashboard, but is switching to a new system. Chairman Robert Lonie discussed that pick system isn't shutting down its switching to a new system and needs everyone to make sure policies are in line.

## **IX. Unfinished Business:**

### **A. Resolution to approve and appoint Executive Director.**

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded to voted to hire the new ED but didn't actually sign the resolution make it so. Attorney Raggs informed Chairman Robert Lonie is correct, but there was a vote on the action not on the resolution. The office did draft a resolution meeting with the ED, I left

print, Attorney Raggs will go over to the office in Michigan City print it and bring back on over. Chairman Robert Lonie called to do the roll call for the vote, Attorney Raggs stated we don't need to vote, Chairman Robert Lonie said okay we just need to sign it all right.

#### B. HUD Visit Update.

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded HUD came and visited but haven't heard back from them. We are going to have to do an emergency session when we do get that notice because we have 45 days to respond.

#### C. BDO Update

Chairman Robert Lonie informed BDO was on site, they were looking at our finances and we have not heard back from them yet, although that should happen any day now. Chairman Robert Lonie asked if anyone had questions about the HUD or BDO at this time. Michael Vinson said its just a waiting game and nodded. No questions were asked.

#### D. Training

Chairman Robert Lonie brings up the training which we all just did and everyone did learn some stuff. Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded and asked the staff member if they can come up and tell the Board what they learned or what really stuck in their brain. Lasherie Garmon came up to the podium and spoke about what she learned, having the pick errors completed before the software switch and learned a little bit about the new rent calculations, enjoyed all the classes and touched on NSPIRE Policies, keeping up with all the changes, thanked the Board member to attend the trip looking forward. Chairman Robert Lonie asked if any Commissioners have anything on their training that stuck out to them, Michael Vinson stated what stuck out to him is bring critical is the NSPIRE inspection that's coming around and it looks like they've delayed due to covid, just wanting the team to let them know that there ready to go on it because there's a lot of underlying credits and being able to leap frog or skip other inspections depending on how well we do on this one and if we don't do well on your first one then you've got reaction they're going to come back in six months and re-evaluate we have to write up corrections on that and do an entire performance review on ourselves and it gets ugly the worse we do. Commissioner talked to the maintenance team they seem pretty confident that they understand what they're looking for and how to find those life death safety critical that NSPIRE inspectors are really going to be looking at. Commissioner Stasi Benning informed the only thing to say about the training is Benning was very impressed that each there were so many different sessions to choose from, one of the things that I was impressed about was that each and every session whether you attended it or not had PDFs, so even though you didn't go to it you can see everything that the session entailed.

Chairman Robert Lonie informed in training we got to be close to our budget for the year if not beyond it. There is a lot of free training available, Mrs. Dixon was showing Chairman Robert Lonie

that there's different sites that we might pay for one thing like says payroll and payroll has built-in-training Chairman Robert Lonie informed HUD has a lot of free training members can get training that doesn't cost any more money but still gets up to date on all the policies and stuff. Chairman Robert Lonie also informed HUD exchange.com there's something specifically for Commissioners that some other Boards require their Commissioners grounds for removal if you don't complete the lead, the training within, say six months, something we can ass to our bylaws Chairman Robert Lonie things any of the board have gone through it yet including just the public housing basic foundation from lead the way in the packets to just get an idea on what they can cover. Chairman Robert Lonie informed there you can log in and create your own profile and keep track of what courses that is done and a certificate is provided upon finishing the course try to keep the expenses down.

**X. Commissioner Comments (3-minute limit)**

Chairman Robert Lonie proceeded and asked if anybody else have anything to say, any Commissioner has a comment? Motion to the Floor? Attorney Raggs informed a motion to adjourn.

**XI. Adjournment**

Chairman Robert Lonie all in favor all Board members AYES, Chairman Robert Lonie stated we're adjourned, thank you