

MINUTES DECEMBER 17, 2024

GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION

The regular meeting of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission was held on December 17, 2024 in the community room of Campau Commons at 821 Division South, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The President called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Absent: None

The President declared a quorum present.

Also attending: Executive Director Lindsey Reames, Policy and Program Planning and Implementation Manager Jose Capeles, Director of Resident Services Felicia Clay, Human Resource Manager Mia Gutridge, and Jianna Capeles.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner Alexander, moved to approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of November 19, 2024.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS:

1. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving the financial statements for period ending November 30, 2024.

24-52 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Approve Financial Dashboard Reports that reflect the
Operating Statement of Income and Expenditures**

WHEREAS, the Operating Statement of Income and Expenditures for the period ended November 30, 2024 has been prepared for and reviewed by Executive Staff at the Grand Rapids Housing Commission; and

WHEREAS, this information has been prepared for the Housing Commission Board in a financial dashboard format; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Commission staff and Board, in its review, has determined that the expenditures are appropriate for the efficient and economical operation of the Housing Commission for the purpose of serving low income families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION, that the Operating Statement of Income and Expenditures as represented in the dashboards for the period ended November 30, 2024 are in all respects approved.

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner alexander, moved adoption of the foregoing resolution.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

2. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving Worker's Compensation insurance.

24-53 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Approve Worker's Compensation

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) provides worker's compensation for employees in accordance with the Workers' Disability Compensation Act and;

WHEREAS, GRHC has completed the annual evaluation of options from various providers and;

WHEREAS, GRHC has elected to continue to offer worker's compensation through Accident Fund Insurance Company of America and;

WHEREAS, the annual premium increased to \$31,293 and;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that the Executive Director is hereby authorized and approved to execute a contract to continue using Accident Fund Insurance Company of America for our worker's compensation.

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner Zylstra, moved adoption of the foregoing resolution.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

3. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving utility allowances for Kent County.

24-54 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to approve the CY 2025 Utility Allowance Schedule for Kent County

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) maintain a utility allowance schedule for all tenant-paid

utilities (except telephone), as required in 24 CFR 982.517(a); and

WHEREAS, the GRHC must maintain a utility allowance schedule for Kent County; and

WHEREAS, HUD requires that the GRHC review the utility allowances each year, and must revise its allowance for a utility category if there has been a change of 10% or more in the utility rate since the last utility rate was revised, as required in 24 CFR 982.517(c); and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the other electric rate category has increased by more than 28% per month and a revision and adoption of a new utility allowance schedule is required.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION authorizes the approval of the CY 2025 Utility Allowance Schedule, effective February 1st, 2025, for Kent County.

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner Alexander, moved adoption of the foregoing resolution.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

4. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving utility allowances for Ottawa County.

24-55 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to approve the CY 2025 Utility Allowance Schedule for Ottawa County

WHEREAS, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires that the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) maintain a utility allowance schedule for all tenant-paid utilities (except telephone), as required in 24 CFR 982.517(a); and

WHEREAS, the GRHC must maintain a utility allowance schedule for Ottawa County; and

WHEREAS, HUD requires that the GRHC review the utility allowances each year, and must revise its allowance for a utility category if there has been a change of 10% or more in the utility rate since the last utility rate was revised, as required in 24 CFR 982.517(c); and **WHEREAS**, it has been determined that the trash collection category has increased by more than 19% per month and a revision and adoption of a new utility allowance schedule is required.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION authorizes the approval of the CY 2025 Utility Allowance Schedule, effective February 1st, 2025, for Ottawa County.

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner Zylstra, moved adoption of the foregoing resolution.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

5. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving Ottawa County MOU extension.

24-56 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Approve an Extension of the Memorandum of

Understanding with the Ottawa County Housing Commission

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) expanded its jurisdiction to include the County of Ottawa, MI on December 20, 2022 (Board Resolution No. 2022-52); and **WHEREAS**, on September 19 2023, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission authorized the Executive Director to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ottawa County Housing Commission (OCH) (Board Resolution No. 2023-33) outlining areas of mutual

interest and collaboration to provide safe, affordable housing opportunities in their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, the current MOU expires on December 31, 2024 and both GRHC and OCHC wish to continue with the commitments for another year;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION the GRHC Executive Director is authorized to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ottawa County Housing Commission promoting enhanced communication and coordination for housing opportunities in Ottawa County. Furthermore, the Executive Director is authorized to execute extensions to the MOU for subsequent years through December 31, 2028.

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner Alexander, moved adoption of the foregoing resolution.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

6. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving authorization to submit PSH Grant to MSHDA.

24-57 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Approve the Submission of a Letter of Intent to Apply for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Supportive Services from the Transformation Fund (SSTF)

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is soliciting letters of intent to apply for funding through the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Supportive Services Transformation Fund (SSTF), and eligible applicants are encouraged to submit a letter of intent to apply for funding by January 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, historically, PSH programs have been under-resourced and unable to provide robust services to tenants. The important component of this program is enhancing the quality of PSH for all residents, housing stability, resident satisfaction, decreases in emergency department visits and/or inpatient stays, employee retention, sustainability planning, and improvements in technical support. Funded agencies will align with PSH Quality Standards and utilize practices consistent with Housing First, Harm Reduction, and Trauma Informed Care; and

WHEREAS, this funding will provide opportunities to:

1. Build organizational capacity to become a provider of PSH services and/or improve PSH service delivery;
2. Plan for PSH service funding sustainability and/or
3. Fund PSH programs at a level that will allow them to hire and retain highly skilled staff, align with national best practices, alleviate administrative burden, and increase capacity in serving residents in PSH; and

WHEREAS, the Permanent Supportive Housing services include, but are not limited to, navigating the process to move into PSH unit, budgeting, resident rights and responsibilities, independent living skills, conflict resolution, eviction prevention, connection to community building events and other social activities, obtaining entitlement benefits, and employment supports; and

WHEREAS, the Letter of Intent for Antoine Court plans to request funding for \$79,832, effective 03/17/2025 to provide on-site case management and Permanent Supportive Housing to assist individuals to remain stably housed and not return to homelessness; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC plans to submit a Letter of Intent as an individual agency or as part of a larger CoC initiative;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that the Board acknowledges the submission of the Letter of Intent for case management services for the PSH units at Antoine Court Apartments and authorizes the Executive Director to accept any funds awarded under this grant application submission and enter into any necessary agreements for these funds.

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner Zylstra, moved adoption of the foregoing resolution.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

7. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving retirement analysis.

24-58 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Award Contract for Review of Retirement Programs vs Social Security Option and the Creation of Individualized Employee Financial Plans

WHEREAS, The Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) “opted” not to pay into the Social Security system when it became its own employer of record separating from the City in 1990; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC has considered exploring options around “opting back in” to Social Security as requested by current employees; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC requested proposals on November 18, 2024, for the review of our current retirement programs against social security and the creation of individual employee financial plans from several financial services organizations; and

WHEREAS, responses were received from three (3) firms by the deadline of December 4, 2024 p.m.; and

WHEREAS, two (2) of the three (3) responders declined to submit proposals, but one proposal submitted by Retirement Financial Group was found to be responsive and responsible; and

WHEREAS, the proposal outlined costs for aggregate program analysis and personalized employee analysis at \$30,000 and \$35,000 respectively; and optional customization costs in an amount to be determined if necessary; and

WHEREAS, the services are anticipated to be completed in 90 to 120 days; and

WHEREAS, the results of the analysis will be used to determine next steps for Social Security considerations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to execute a contract for review of retirement programs vs the Social Security option and the creation of individualized employee financial plans in an amount not to exceed \$65,000 for the aggregate analysis and the individual analysis and an amount not to exceed an additional \$10,000 for any necessary additional customization costs.

Commissioner Alexander, supported by Commissioner Zylstra, moved adoption of the foregoing resolution.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. The Executive Director presented the Board with a copy of the Vacancy and Voucher dashboard reports for November 2024.

2. The Executive Director presented the Board with a copy of the Personnel Report for December 2024.

3. The Executive Director presented the Board with the upcoming travel and training schedule.

4. The Executive Director updated the Board on the Section 18 disposition/sale of homes. ICCF will be purchasing eight of the homes at 50% of fair market value. Of the seven homes that are currently occupied two of them are being purchased by their current occupants and the occupants of the other will be moving to other GRHC sites. Available homes will be listed by real estate with preference being given to people with low income. The Executive Director also informed the Board that the house at 716 Thomas, which is one of the houses that ICCF is purchasing, suffered \$30,000 in damages from vandalism.

5. The Executive Director updated the Board on the acquisition activities of Madison Hall Townhomes. The purchase agreement is moving forward and the target date is in early January. This is an opportunity to increase the Grand Rapids Housing Commission portfolio and to ensure that this property will remain affordable for renters.

6. The Executive Director reviewed the letter from HUD PDAS Monocchio regarding the budget situation for 2025.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Executive Director initiated a discussion on changing the location for 2025 Board of Commissioners meetings. The decision was made to that Creston Plaza would be the location for the 2025 meetings.

2. The Human Resources Manager reminded the Board that conflict of interest training is due again for all of the commissioners. A survey will be sent to determine a good time for that training to occur.

The President declared the meeting adjourned at 6:33 pm.

Lindsey S. Reames

Executive Director