

MINUTES AUGUST 19, 2025

GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION

The regular meeting of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission was held on August 19, 2025, in the Bobbie Butler Community Center at Creston Plaza, 1080 Creston Plaza Drive NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The President called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

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

Absent: Oosterman, Zylstra

The President declared a quorum present.

Also attending: Executive Director Lindsey Reames, Director of Leased Housing Shakerah McRae, Finance Manager Kris Endres, Rehabilitation and Maintenance Manager Ufoma Johnson, Director of Resident Services Felicia Clay, Asset Manager Lynn Simone, Policy and Program Planning and Implementation Manager Jose Capeles, Jianna Capeles, Lou Evans, Susan Ball, Irene Skala, Kim Figard, Daniel Sibley, Bette Wiley, Tony Lamonda, Bob Thielke, and a person who wishes to be known as Mr. H.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Bernier, supported by Commissioner Alexander, moved to approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of June 17, 2025.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Lou Evans, Irene Skala, Daniel Sibley, Tony Lamonda, Mr. H, Kim Figard, and Bette Wiley, who all reside at Ransom Tower, spoke of security concerns at Ransom Tower. They mentioned

illegal activity, weapons, threats, non-occupants coming in at night, and slow service when calls to the police are made. They requested better security cameras, a return of channel 6, and security patrols in the building.

RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS:

1. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving the financial statements for period ending June 30, 2025.

25-26 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 June 30, 2025 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 full detail report; 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 June 30, 2025 are in all respects approved.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

2. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving and adopting the Grand Rapids Housing Commission Strategic Plan.

25-27 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING
COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (“GRHC”) is committed to its mission of providing safe, affordable housing and programs that promote stability, self-sufficiency, and community well-being for residents of the City of Grand Rapids; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC recognizes the need for a clear, comprehensive, and forward-looking Strategic Plan to guide the organization’s priorities, resource allocation, and program development over the next several years; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC engaged in a thorough and inclusive planning process based, which included input from Commissioners, staff, residents, community stakeholders, and partners; and

WHEREAS, the planning process began with the establishment of a new mission, vision, statement and core values, given that GRHC previously had no current mission or values guiding its work; and

WHEREAS, the Strategic Plan outlines GRHC’s strategic objectives, goals, and measurable outcomes in the areas of partnerships, education, case management, advocacy, housing opportunities, and data analytics, and incorporates a commitment to continuous assessment and adaptation; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has reviewed the Strategic Plan and finds it to be a sound and actionable framework for advancing GRHC's mission and vision.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission hereby approves and adopts the Grand Rapids Housing Commission Strategic Plan as presented, effective immediately; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director is authorized and directed to implement the Strategic Plan, to take all necessary actions to achieve its stated objectives, and to report progress to the Board of Commissioners on a regular basis; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the Strategic Plan shall serve as a guiding document for organizational decision-making, resource allocation, and program development, with annual reviews to ensure continued relevance and responsiveness to community needs.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

3. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving Memorandum of Understanding with Senior Neighbors.

25-28 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND ADOPT THE MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION AND
SENIOR NEIGHBORS FOR THE EVICTION PREVENTION PROGRAM UTILIZING
HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS**

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (“GRHC”) is committed to advancing housing stability, preventing homelessness, and fostering partnerships that promote the well-being of vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, Senior Neighbors, a nonprofit organization serving older adults in Grand Rapids, shares the GRHC’s mission of supporting housing stability and preventing displacement; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC and Senior Neighbors have developed a collaborative Eviction Prevention Program, as detailed in the attached Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), under which the GRHC will allocate up to twenty-five (25) Housing Choice Vouchers for eligible households referred by Senior Neighbors; and

WHEREAS, the MOU outlines mutual responsibilities, eligibility criteria, data-sharing protocols, and evaluation procedures to ensure the effective administration and oversight of the Eviction Prevention Program; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners has reviewed the attached MOU and finds that the partnership aligns with the GRHC’s strategic objectives and community impact goals;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission hereby approves and adopts the Memorandum of Understanding between the Grand Rapids Housing Commission and Senior Neighbors, effective July 1, 2025, as presented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Director is authorized to execute the MOU on behalf of the GRHC, to take all necessary actions to implement the Eviction Prevention Program, and to make any non-substantive amendments to the MOU as may be necessary to carry out its intent, subject to applicable policies and procedures.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

4. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving hot water heater replacement for Sheldon Apartments.

25-29 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Award Contract for Replacing
Water Heater at Sheldon Apartments.**

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) has requested bids for the replacement of one water heater at Sheldon Apartments.

WHEREAS, bids were received from three (3) contractors as follows:

Pierson Plumbing – Replacement of Water Heater - \$13,825.00

Hurst Mechanical – Replacement of Water Heater – \$16,560.00

Seamans Mechanical – Replacement of Water Heater – \$18,786.00; and

WHEREAS, Seamans (highlighted yellow) is recommended as the most responsible and responsive respondent for replacing the Water Heater at Sheldon Apartments; and

WHEREAS, though Seamans is the highest priced in their proposal they included the cost to replace the inducer motor (part had reach life cycle). Hurst Mechanical and Pierson Plumbing did not include this price in their proposals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to execute a contract for water heater replacement at Sheldon Apartments to Seamans Mechanical in the amount of \$18,786.00.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

5. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving boiler replacement for Mount Mercy I.

25-30 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Award Contract for Replacing

Mt. Mercy I Boiler

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) requested bids for the replacement of one boiler located at Mount Mercy I.

WHEREAS, bids were received from three (3) contractors as follows:

Vander Hyde Mechanical – Replacement of Boiler - \$63,843.00

Hurst Mechanical – Replacement of Boiler - \$55,285.00

Seamans Mechanical – Replacement of Boiler - \$50,540.00; and

WHEREAS, Seamans Mechanical (highlighted in yellow) is recommended as the most responsible and responsive respondent for replacing a boiler at Mt. Mercy I Apartments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to execute a contract for boiler replacement at Mt. Mercy I Apartments to Seamans Mechanical in the amount of \$50,540.00.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

6. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving compactor replacement for Mount Mercy II.

25-31 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Award Contract for Replacing

Mt. Mercy II Trach Compactor

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) has requested bids for the replacement of the trash compactor at Mt Mercy II; and

WHEREAS, bids were received from two (2) contractors as follows:

Sebright – Compactor Replacement - \$40,466.00

Speed-Tech Equipment – Compactor Replacement - \$39,756.00; and

WHEREAS, Speed-Tech Equipment (highlighted in yellow) is recommended as the most responsible and responsive respondent for replacing the compactor at Mt. Mercy Apartments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to execute a contract for trash compactor replacement at Mt. Mercy Apartments II to Speed-Tech Equipment in the amount of \$39,756.00.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

7. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving HCV Administration Plan for FUP and FYI programs.

25-32 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Approve Amendments to Chapter 19 of the HCV

Administrative Plan for FUP and FYI Programs

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) is committed to effectively administering the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program to support vulnerable populations, including youth aging out of foster care; and

WHEREAS, HUD has issued new regulatory guidance in PIH Notice 2025-08, which requires changes to the administration of the Family Unification Program (FUP) and Foster Youth to Independence (FYI), including increasing the eligibility window to within 180 days of aging out of foster care, removing the residency preference, and increasing voucher extensions to a minimum of 90 days; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC recognizes the need to adopt these changes to improve service delivery, ensure compliance, and promote effectiveness.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION:

1. The GRHC approves the amendments to Chapter 19 of the HCV Administrative Plan to incorporate new requirements and flexibilities outlined in PIH Notice 2025-08 for the FUP and FYI programs published 04/09/2025.
2. The Executive Director or designee is authorized to take all necessary actions to ensure the timely and effective implementation of these amendments, with compliance and monitoring measures to be in place to track progress and address any challenges.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

8. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving award of Project Based Vouchers.

25-33 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Award Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs) Following
Request for Proposals (RFP) Process**

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission ("GRHC") administers the Project-Based Voucher (PBV) program in accordance with regulations issued by the U.S. Department of

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as codified in 24 CFR Part 983, which governs the selection and allocation of PBVs to developments; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC has developed and maintains an HCV Administrative Plan that outlines the policies and procedures for the implementation of the PBV program, including the criteria and process for awarding PBVs, in compliance with HUD regulations; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC recognizes the critical need to project-base vouchers as a strategy to ensure the long-term affordability of units and to expand the inventory of affordable housing in Kent and Ottawa Counties, thereby addressing the ongoing shortage of affordable housing options for low- and moderate-income families in these areas; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with HUD regulations (24 CFR § 983.51) and the GRHC HCV Administrative Plan, the GRHC issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) on July 11, 2025, inviting qualified housing developers and owners to submit proposals for the award of PBVs; and

WHEREAS, an evaluation committee selected by the GRHC scored and ranked the proposals using a pre-established scoring matrix, which ensured an impartial and fair assessment of all submissions in accordance with HUD requirements and the GRHC's established procedures; and

WHEREAS, based on the evaluation committee's scoring and recommendations, the GRHC has determined that the developments listed in the attached chart--Attachment A, meet the necessary criteria and offer the best value and impact for the community; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC received and reviewed proposals in response to the RFP, all of which were evaluated based on the criteria specified in the RFP and the HCV Administrative Plan, including but not limited to the experience and capacity of the developer, the quality of the proposed development, the provision of supportive services, and the alignment with community needs; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC received 11 proposals, which consisted of seven (7) competitive proposals, two (2) Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) amendment requests for additional vouchers, one (1) non-competitive application, and one (1) proposal in which the GRHC has a vested interest; and

WHEREAS, after review, the GRHC is awarding six (6) applications with Project-Based Vouchers (PBVs) through the competitive process, two (2) applications through the HAP amendment process, and one (1) application through the non-competitive process; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION THAT the award of Project-Based Vouchers to the developments listed in Attachment A, with the allocation of 88 PBVs through the competitive process, 30 PBVs through a HAP extension, and 2 PBVs noncompetitively, to each development as indicated, is approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director of the GRHC, or their designee, is hereby authorized to take all necessary actions to finalize and execute the necessary agreements with the selected developers, including those receiving conditional awards, and to ensure compliance with HUD regulations and the GRHC Administrative Plan.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

9. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving Human Resources Contract under Emergency Procurement.

25-34 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Approve Award of Human Resources Contract Under

Emergency Procurement

WHEREAS, the GRHC completed another annual employee survey and assessment of the state of its business operations where multiple recommendations for improved operations in the human resources area were identified;

WHEREAS, a determination was made to transition the human resources services in a different direction, and to facilitate this change, interim human resource services were necessary immediately; and,

WHEREAS, based on consultation with HUD, it was determined the GRHC was authorized to exercise provisions in accordance with Federal procurement requirements and the GRHC procurement policy for a non-competitive award due to emergency circumstances without further HUD approval if under the small purchase threshold of \$250,000.00. It was further agreed that without current and on-going human resource support, personnel related activities were risks that compromised the safe and efficient continuity of operations; and

WHEREAS, to address any risks of the safety of information and continuity of operations, immediate third-party contract services were necessary; and

WHEREAS, due to the familiarity with our organization, the GRHC contracted for emergency services with Cooper People Group for additional HR services on August 6, 2025 to reduce immediate risks, complete urgent needed services and limit the time interim emergency services will remain in effect.

WHEREAS, the emergency contract is anticipated to be completed within 180 days to include HR leadership retainer hours and talent search and placement services for a maximum contract amount not to exceed \$130,000.00.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that they acknowledge and ratify an approval of the emergency award for human resources services to Cooper People Group in a sum not to exceed \$130,000.00.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

10. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving modification of IT Wolthuis contract extension for Yardi conversion.

25-35 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Modify the IT Wolthuis Contract Extension to Include Project Management
for the Yardi Software Transition**

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) Board approved an extension to the IT Contract Services under Emergency Procurement, Resolution No. 2025-14 on May 20, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC awarded a contract to Yardi Systems for Housing Management and Accounting Software Services, Resolution No. 2025-24 on June 17, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC staff has determined that current staff capacity for adding project management for software conversion to existing assignments will impede timely conversion and impact other important priorities around management and compliance; and

WHEREAS, the Wolthuis Group has experience with project management and has offered to include this in their current contract; and

WHEREAS, the Wolthuis Group anticipates progress at GRHC with IT projects will allow a reduction in hours on site, with some cushion in the existing contract amount for the hours needed for project management through the current September 30 contract date; and

WHEREAS, staff are recommending modification to the current Wolthuis Group IT Contract Services to include project management for software conversion and to extend the contract date until the approved contract amount is expended; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC staff acknowledge the significant progress in IT maintenance and operations and understand the importance of continuity of these services to ensure continued progress including stabilization and optimization, we are currently working with HUD to explore a sole-source option for a new 12-month contract with Wolthuis Group for IT Services at the end of the current contract amendment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to modify the current contract extension under the emergency procurement contract (June 1 – September 30) to add Yardi software conversion project management in an amount not to exceed \$215,000.00.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

11. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving creation of GRHC GP, LCC and Limited Partnership Agreement with Samaritas.

25-36 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

Resolution to Approve the Creation of GRHC GP, LCC and Execution of a Limited Partnership Agreement with Samaritas

WHEREAS, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) is exploring all options for expanding affordable housing opportunities in the community; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC is frequently approached by affordable housing partners and developers to collaborate on opportunities that will further the goal of increasing affordable housing in Kent and Ottawa County; and

WHEREAS, the GRHC has received a proposal to join Samaritas as a partner on a planned 46-unit development in SE Grand Rapids that could assist with relocation of the Adams Park residents and includes the following:

- Co-owner at 10%
- \$300,000 in developer fee
- Participate in cashflow
- Long term ownership with Samaritas
- Provide 23 Project Based Vouchers as a vested partner

WHEREAS, Samaritas is a 90-year-old organization that has been developer, owner, and manager for affordable housing in Michigan for many years serving over 1000 seniors; and

WHEREAS, the project is proposed for submission in the October 1st tax credit funding round and various documents had to be completed and submitted for approval during the GRHC Board July recess, staff engaged development counsel (Rhodes McKee) for review of all documents related to this affordable housing opportunity to create the GRHC GP, LLC and execute a limited partnership agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION, that the creation of the GRHC GP, LLC and execution of a limited partnership agreement with Samaritas during the GRHC Board July recess is approved and ratified. Furthermore, the Executive Director is authorized to take necessary actions to finalize any documents necessary related to the partnership agreement and to complete the tax credit application.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App

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 July 2025. New dashboard reports will be available after the transition to Yardi.

2. The Executive Director presented the Board with a copy of the Personnel Report for August 2025.

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

4. The Executive Director updated the Board the HUD budget talks. The House, Senate, and President all have different budget numbers and negotiations are starting in order to reconcile the differences.

5. The Executive Director updated the Board on the Operating Cost Adjustment Factors (OCAF) waivers for fair value rents. HUD has indicated that The GRHC is one of a few entities that is being used for testing a new process for this but no results are available currently.

6. The Executive Director updated the Board on the Mainstream shortfall. Shortfall funding was recently received, but it was a very small amount.

7. The Executive Director updated the Board on redevelopments and acquisitions. Adams Park redevelopment will likely proceed on a smaller scale than originally planned. The Madison/Hall development acquisition is currently on hold. The Uptown and Carrier Crest developments are still possibilities that are being worked on.

8. The Executive Director shared with the Board the results of the most recent employee survey that was conducted by Cooper People Group.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Executive Director announced that Monica Steimle-App has been chosen as a finalist for the Grand Rapids Chamber Athena Leadership Award. The awards celebration will be held on October 8 and the Housing Commission will be sponsoring a table at the event.

The President declared the meeting adjourned at 7:26pm.

Lindsey S. Reames