

MINUTES APRIL 19, 2022

GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION

The regular meeting of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission was held on April 19, 2022 in the community room of Campau Commons at 821 Division South, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Vice President called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

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

Absent: None

The Vice President declared a quorum present.

Also attending: Executive Director Lindsey Reames, Director of Asset Management Felicia Clay, Computer Network Systems Administrator Jay Connor, Business Intelligence Analyst Jose Capeles. Attending remotely was Mario Leon of LINC UP.

The Vice President designated the Executive Director Chair for the purpose of election of officers.

The Chair announced that nominations for the office of President and Vice President were in order.

Commissioner Zylstra, supported by Commissioner Bernier, placed the name of Commissioner Steimle-App in nomination for the office of President.

Commissioner Zylstra, supported by Commissioner Bernier, moved that the nomination be closed and that a ballot be cast.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: Miles

The Chair declared the motion carried and Commissioner Steimle-App was elected President.

Commissioner Steimle-App, supported by Commissioner Bernier, placed the name of Commissioner Zylstra in nomination for the office of Vice President.

Commissioner Steimle-App, supported by Commissioner Bernier, moved that the nomination be closed and that a unanimous ballot be cast.

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

Nays: None

The Chair declared the motion carried and Commissioner Steimle-App was elected President and Commissioner Zylstra was elected Vice President.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Mario Leon commented that he knows someone who recently went through the GRHC Homeownership Program and thinks it is a great program. He also commented that he continues to get feedback from people in the community that phone calls to employees are not being returned.

**MINUTES:**

Commissioner Zylstra, supported by Commissioner Bernier, moved to approve the Minutes of the Public Hearing of March 15, 2022.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

Commissioner Zylstra, supported by Commissioner Bernier, moved to approve the Minutes of the regular meeting of March 15, 2022.

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

The President declared the motion carried.

**RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS:**

1. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving the financial statements for period ending March 31, 2022.

22-01 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Approve Operating Statement of Income and Expenditures**

**WHEREAS**, the Operating Statement of Income and Expenditures for the period ended **March 31, 2022** has been prepared for and submitted to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the Housing Commission has reviewed the Statements; and

**WHEREAS**, the Housing Commission, in its review, has determined that the expenditures are necessary in 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 for the period ended **March 31, 2022** are in all respects approved.

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

Ayes: Bernier, Miles, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: None

Abstentions: Alexander

The President declared the motion carried.

2. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving conflict of interest policy.

22-02 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Approve a Conflict of Interest Policy**

**WHEREAS**, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) currently does not have a Conflict of Interest Policy; and

**WHEREAS**, it is good practice to establish a standard of conduct to protect the financial well-being, reputation and legal obligations of the housing commission and to reflect expected values and behaviors to ensure independent and impartial decisions with the highest levels of integrity, fairness, openness, responsibility and accountability; and

**WHEREAS**, there currently exist some Federal, State and local requirements for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest; and

**WHEREAS**, several examples of policies from other housing agencies, state and local governments and regulatory agencies were reviewed and considered by a GRHC working group when developing this policy; and

**WHEREAS**, the conflict of interest policy applies to all housing commission employees, board members, and programs administered by GRHC;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION** to approve a Conflict of Interest Policy to ensure the financial well-being, reputation and legal obligations of the housing commission that reflects expected values and behaviors to ensure independent and impartial decisions with the highest levels of integrity, fairness, openness, responsibility and

accountability and complies with Federal, State, and other local requirements for determining conflicts and applying standards of procedures.

Commissioner Zylstra, supported by Commissioner Bernier, 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 a non-disclosure agreement for Leonard Terrace.

22-03 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Approve the Execution of a Non-Disclosure Agreement**

**to Explore the Sale of Leonard Terrace**

**WHEREAS**, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) has been approached by Lincoln Avenue Capital who is interested in purchasing Leonard Terrace; and

**WHEREAS**, Lincoln Capital is interested in expanding its affordable housing inventory and currently has a presence in 15 states with 110 properties and over 17,000 units with an approach of investing in thriving communities delivering both financial and social returns; and

**WHEREAS**, Lincoln Capital does not purchase and flip properties but rather purchases and enhances committing to long term affordability; and

**WHEREAS**, there may be an opportunity for GRHC to continue to manage the property after sale and use proceeds for other affordable housing opportunities to expand the supply of affordable units in the Grand Rapids area; and

**WHEREAS**, proceeding with a non-disclosure agreement as the next step does not commit GRHC or Leonard Terrace Housing Corporation to a purchase agreement on the property, but rather allows sharing of information to determine terms of a potential sale; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION** to approve the Executive Director to enter into a non-disclosure agreement with Lincoln Capital to share information (HAP contract, rent roll, capital needs, etc.) so that Lincoln Capital can determine a purchase price and other terms of a sale that will be presented to the Board for additional consideration and to determine next steps.

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

Ayes: Alexander, Bernier, Steimle-App, Zylstra

Nays: Miles

The President declared the motion carried.

4. The President presented the Commission with a copy of the resolution approving Admin Plan changes for targeted funding.

22-04 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution to Amend Specified Categories of Targeted Funding in the  
Administrative Plan (4-III B)**

**WHEREAS**, HUD has awarded the Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) funding for specified categories of families on its waiting list and must use this funding only to assist families within the specified categories; and

**WHEREAS**, in order to assist families within these targeted funding categories, the GRHC may skip families on the waiting list that do not qualify within the targeted funding categories, and within each specific category of families, the order in which such families are assisted is determined according to the policies provided in Section 4-II.C, Selection Methods; and

**WHEREAS**, staff is recommending amending the policy to include two additional categories for targeted funding recently funded to GRHC from HUD—Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) and Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHV).

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION** to approve the recommended changes to Section 4—II B, HCV Funding Sources, to the Grand Rapids Housing Commission Administrative Plan.

Commissioner Zylstra, supported by Commissioner Bernier, 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 purchase of MyHousing modules from Emphasys.

22-05 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution for Procurement of MyHousing Modules from Emphasys**

**WHEREAS**, Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) employs the use of the Elite software solely sourced by its manufacturer, Emphasys, to provide nearly all of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) needs of GRHC, which includes the management, communication, tracking and

reporting for HCV, LIPH, Financials, Operations, Work Order tracking, Family Self-Sufficiency, Participants, Landlords and Wait List Applicants; and

**WHEREAS**, the current software solution (Cognito Forms) to manage applicant and participant updates does not integrate with the Elite software suite requiring a manual data entry point for each of the changes submitted online via the Cognito Forms website, resulting in a customer support issue; and

**WHEREAS**, GRHC is striving to elevate customer satisfaction in all areas including communication via the use of online self-service tools that integrate directly with the Elite software and provide the following benefits

- Streamlined application process allowing applicants to view their current status and update their application information directly without duplication of information or work by the GRHC employees
- Participants can make real-time to changes to their demographic information with a single approval from GRHC staff for changes to be made permanent
- Direct Communication with assigned coordinators for questions, appointment scheduling for Recertifications
- Electronic submission of paperwork and documentation to assigned coordinators eliminating the risk of delays due to unprocessed or lost documents
- Streamlined Annual Recertification Process for families and coordinators
- Reduced GRHC staff time answering questions, searching for communications and manually entering information
- Increased data integrity of applicants and participants



- Stabilized Overall Operating costs through reduction of wasted mailings to old addresses and staff workloads; and

**WHEREAS**, GRHC desires approval to proceed with the procurement of the addition

MyHousing integration modules for the Elite PHA ERP system;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF**

**THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION** that the Executive Director is authorized

to complete the procurement of the MyHousing modules needed in the amount of \$20,656 per

year for 3 years and consulting required for implementation in the amount of 17,400, and to

execute a 3-year contract in the total amount of \$79,368.

Commissioner Zylstra supported by Commissioner Bernier, 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 1 GB internet for Data Center and Antoine Court.

22-06 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution for Procurement of 1GB Internet at the Data Center and  
Antoine Court**

**WHEREAS**, Grand Rapids Housing Commission (GRHC) currently maintains internet connectivity to each of the sites under its management for the purposes of connecting to the Data Center to allow secure connection to the suite of applications required to conduct business on a daily basis; and

**WHEREAS**, the current office space at 1420 Fuller Ave has been out grown by staff and has required relocation of staff to the offices at Campau Commons, Creston Plaza Community Center (soon to be The Bobbie Butler Community Center); and

**WHEREAS**, GRHC has invested in Replication of the Storage Area Network (all data stored on GRHC computers) from the Data Center to Antoine Court computer room utilizing their secured internet connections; and

**WHEREAS**, GRHC has identified the aforementioned points have outlined the need to upgrade the internet connections at the Data Center and Antoine Court to 1GB in order to properly maintain the connection speeds required to allow for Replication to occur correctly between the two sites and business as usual computing for employees located at the sites; and

**WHEREAS**, several initial quotes have provided a footprint of the 3 and 5 year costs for installation and monthly services, staff is securing one additional quote to ensure the best competitive price; and

**WHEREAS**, GRHC desires approval to proceed with the procurement of the 1GB internet connections for the Data Center and Antoine Court in the amount not to exceed \$156,000 over 5 years.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION** that the Executive Director is authorized to complete the procurement of the 1GB internet connections needed and to execute a contract in an amount not to exceed \$156,000 over 5 years.

Commissioner Zylstra, supported by Commissioner Bernier, 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 security surveillance upgrade for Ransom.

22-07 The following resolution was introduced and considered:

**Resolution for Procurement of Security Surveillance NVR Upgrade  
for Ransom Tower**

**WHEREAS**, Ransom Tower provides housing for elderly population qualifying for “Section 8” services; and

**WHEREAS**, it is important to properly surveil the premises and provide reliable video footage of all individuals and activities and therefore maintain the integrity of the surveillance recordings as is of the utmost priority should it ever need to be provided as evidence; and

**WHEREAS**, the current security surveillance system was procured and installed in early 2019 and since its provisioning has required constant and continuous support to ensure the cameras are online, connected to the Network Video Recording (NVR) appliance and recording footage from each of its 80 cameras as the NVR would lose connection and recording configurations resulting in lost historical video of incidents that need to be investigated or used as evidence; and

**WHEREAS**, an initial quote has provided a footprint of the hardware and labor needed to install and provide a properly sized enterprise NVR needed to maintain a functional system free of the ongoing expense of support and loss of critical surveillance footage, staff will secure at least two additional quotes to ensure a competitive price; and

**WHEREAS**, GRHC desires approval to proceed with final quotes and to procure a new security surveillance NVR for Ransom Tower in order to ensure resident safety;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE GRAND RAPIDS HOUSING COMMISSION** that the Executive Director is authorized to complete the procurement of the products needed for a new security surveillance system at Ransom Tower and to execute a contract in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.

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

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

Nays: None

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

1. The Executive Director presented the Board with a copy of the Vacancy Report for March 2022.

Adams Park	13
Campau Commons	4
Scattered Site I-V	0
<b>Public Hsg. Total</b>	<b>17</b>
Antoine	0
Creston Plaza	0
Hope Community	1
Leonard Terrace	0
Mt. Mercy	3
Ransom Tower	2

Sheldon Apts.	1
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>24</b>

2. The Executive Director presented the Board with a copy of the Section 8 Status Report for March 2022 which shows a 95.0% utilization rate.

3. The Executive Director presented the Board with a copy of the Personnel Report for April 2022.

4. The Executive Director presented the Board with some new dashboard reports to better illustrate the financial reports that are presented to the Board monthly. The Executive Director asked the Board if they would like to see these dashboard reports monthly and the more detailed reports less frequently. The consensus of the Board was that seeing the more detailed financial reports quarterly would be sufficient with the dashboards being done monthly.

5. The Executive Director informed the Board that there was a tremendous response for camp scholarship opportunities from GRHC families, especially for the overnight camp.

6. The Executive Director presented the Board with information about the proposed HUD budget for FY2023.

7. The Executive Director informed the Board about upcoming staff travel and training opportunities.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, it was moved by Commissioner Miles, supported by Commissioner Zylstra to adjourn.

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

Nays: None

The President declared the meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Lindsey S. Reames

Executive Director