MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
READING HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
October 28, 2025 – 5:00 PM

The Reading Housing Authority Board of Commissioners held a Workshop and Commissioners Meeting on Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at the William W. Willis Center for Administration, 400 Hancock Boulevard, Reading, PA.

WORKSHOP MEETING

Board Chairwoman Lorena Keely opened the meeting with staff recognitions, including the introduction of new hire Christaline Santiago, who recently joined RHA as a ROSS Service Coordinator and will be formally introduced to the Board at the December 9, 2025, meeting. Chairwoman Keely also presented certificates to Resident Service Coordinators Cheryl Lewis, Elsa Beretta, and Yadira Chavez in recognition of their successful completion of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's training programs and annual housing conference. As of 2025, each coordinator has earned PHFA Certifications in Elder and Family Service Coordination after completing more than 20 Continuing Education Units through California University of Pennsylvania and/or PennWest University, with training focused on eviction prevention, effective communication, diversity and inclusion, resident engagement, and collaboration with property management.

Guest Presentation

Mr. Allan Kitchen, Rubino & Company, provided an update on the recent audit, noting that the process went smoothly and concluded earlier than last year, finishing at the end of October. He explained that the audit consists of a financial statement audit and separate audits of internal control and compliance, resulting in two reports, one under Government Auditing Standards and one under the Uniform Guidance for single audit requirements. The financial statements were fairly presented, representing the highest level of reporting. Under Government Auditing Standards, auditors must issue a report on internal control and compliance; Rubino reported no internal control issues, no significant deficiencies, no material weaknesses, and no compliance findings—an unmodified report at the highest level. For the major federal programs audited this year—the Public Housing Operating Fund and the Economic Development and Initiative Grant—there were no compliance issues and no internal control concerns. All three audit reports were unmodified and reflect the highest level of reporting available under single audit requirements.

President's Report

Stacey Keppen, President and CEO, updated the Board on the impacts of the government shutdown on RHA. Two scheduled NSPIRE inspections were canceled, and there were minor disruptions to access in HUD's Line of Credit Controls System (LOCCS). Ms. Keppen explained that RHA is fully positioned to issue November Section 8 payments, with only a small $20,000 delay in mainstream voucher funding, which can be covered and is expected to be reimbursed. There are no concerns regarding payment of bills or payroll.

RHA also submitted its annual operating subsidy request to HUD, with no reduction anticipated for 2026. Jon Runkle, Director of Administration, reviewed fiscal-year-to-date budget trends, noting stronger-than-projected rental income, appropriate salary allocations, and rising utility costs—particularly electricity in December—but confirmed RHA remains on target to meet year-end budget expectations. Planning is underway for both the fiscal year and the new calendar year.

Danielle Hoffer, Third Party Administrator, reported on employee benefit planning, previewing the upcoming presentation to staff which will include representatives from RKL, BEON, United Way, and Delaware Valley Health Trust. The health plan remains unchanged aside from minor co-pay increases, with no cost increase to employees. Dental benefits improve with no deductible and orthodontic coverage, increasing employee cost by only $0.71; vision remains unchanged. Updates were also provided on flexible spending, voluntary benefits, basic life, and disability insurance (unchanged), and pension/457 plan details.

Ms. Keppen provided an overview of the key items in her President's Report. She noted that, as reported last month, the Applications Report continues to reflect statistical changes related to the ongoing Yardi software implementation. This transition, combined with an unprecedented number of move-outs and unit transfers, has contributed to the unusually high number of vacancies. Each resident transfer into a more appropriately sized unit generates an additional vacancy, and the temporary freeze on certain actions during implementation further impacted vacancy levels. Josh Smith, Programs, added that slight changes were seen this month in one-bedroom mixed-occupancy units, as well as in two- and four-bedroom units, and that leasing activity is expected to increase significantly once the Yardi transition is complete.

Under Rental Income Statistics, Ms. Keppen reported that a substantial portion—$20,000 of the $32,000 listed as "Amounts to be Discharged"—is attributed to unreported income, indicating that residents are not consistently reporting income changes to the Property Management Office.

In the Property Management section, Ms. Keppen advised that the Yardi transition will continue to affect operations over the next month. A resident communication is being prepared to announce changes to the rent payment process. RHA will eventually discontinue the use of lockbox payments, transitioning instead to a new online portal and the option for in-person money order payments through the Walk-In Payment System (WIPS). When RHA will no longer accept checks, staff will work closely with residents to ensure a smooth transition and prevent residents from facing adverse actions due to implementation challenges.

Ms. Keppen highlighted that the Facilities Department completed twenty unit turnovers during the month, noting that this required significant coordination to keep pace with vacancy demands. She also thanked Steve Notario for his work in securing the best possible electric and gas rates for the upcoming year.

Additionally, RHA received $13,500 through the HARIE 2025 Safety Improvements Grant, which will be used to complete upgrades to the center-city elevator cameras.

Ms. Keppen invited questions from the Board.

Ms. Keely inquired whether the large amount of unreported income was an anomaly or an emerging trend. Josh Smith explained that this issue commonly arises when residents report income only at annual recertification and, due to the absence of a comprehensive database at initial leasing, income cannot always be fully verified at move-in.

Ms. Keely also asked about the percentage of residents paying by check versus online. Ms. Keppen responded that approximately 100 residents pay by check, 500 by money order, and 1,000 through the online payment system.

Finally, Ms. Keely asked whether the significant increase in electric costs had been anticipated. Steve Notario confirmed that, based on last summer's PUC meeting, the increase was expected and will affect all consumers.

Ms. Keely then reviewed the board resolutions scheduled for presentation at tonight's meeting.

Regarding **Resolution 6590**, Dave Talarico, Vice-President & Director of Facilities, explained that this project involves the remaining six buildings at River Oak. A few years ago, two buildings underwent exterior renovations, including new windows, siding, and gutters. This resolution authorizes the design work for the remaining buildings, with an estimated cost between $1.2 and $1.4 million.

For **Resolution 6591**, Mr. Talarico reported that the original $1.9 million grant awarded to Opportunity House will be partially used—approximately $200,000—to complete the fit-out of 30,000 square feet. The remaining funds will support the purchase of a generator to power both the Neighborhood Resource Center and the Family Service Center in the event of an outage, as well as improvements to the Learning Center area, including a playground expansion, pavilion, restrooms, new equipment, and new surfacing.

In discussing **Resolution 6592**, Mr. Talarico noted that the proposal includes two components covering both public housing and affordable units. He stated that RHA's signage has not been rebranded for some time, and the project includes refreshing existing structures, replacing worn elements, and updating branding across various sites.

Addressing **Resolution 6593**, Rory Ulrich, Maintenance Superintendent, reported that several HVAC systems—particularly those located in Center City—are outdated and require frequent temporary repairs. The resolution proposes comprehensive upgrades to address escalating maintenance costs and improve system reliability.

For **Resolution 6594**, Mr. Ulrich explained that electrical service at Sylvania Homes currently operates through overhead lines, requiring frequent replacement of crossarms and repairs due to weather-related damage. The proposal recommends relocating the electrical service underground and modernizing the system to reduce outages and ongoing maintenance.

Mr. Talarico added that the River Oak and Sylvania projects are not federally funded, and the signage work also applies to these sites. With approval of these contracts, the department will have six projects to initiate, three of which could begin within the next three weeks.

Resolution 6595 was presented with no additional comment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None.

COMMISSIONERS' MEETING

Ms. Keely then called the REGULAR MEETING to order and upon roll call those present and absent were as follows:

Commissioners Present: Chairwoman Lorena P. Keely
Vice-Chairwoman Myra Maldonado
Commissioner Ineavelle Ruiz
Commissioner Maria Delgado

Commissioners Absent: None

RHA Staff Present: Stacey Keppen, President & CEO
Mya Hornberger, Communications Manager, Recording Secretary
David C. Talarico, Vice President & Director of Facilities
Josh K. Smith, Director of Programs
Jonathan P. Runkle, Director of Administration
Rory Ulrich, Maintenance Superintendent
Gregg Snook, Maintenance Officer
Theresa A. Reustle, Comptroller, Secretary-Treasurer
Steve Notario, Administrative Officer
Anders Smith, Information Technology Manager
Yasaira Modesto, Property Manager, North Campus
Nydia Runkle, Property Manager, South Campus
Grisel Saez, Property Manager, Center City Campus
Tom Stianche, Voucher Programs Manager
Jack Knockstead, Resident Services Manager
Gregory Zawilla, Neighborhood Safety & Engagement Coordinator
Matt Smith, Maintenance Foreman, North Campus
Dave Oley, Maintenance Foreman, South Campus
Derek DeLong, Maintenance Foreman, Center City Campus
Tad Geisler, Inspection Manager, Center City Campus

Edwin Stock, Solicitor, Legal Staff
Bill Clemmons, Project Manager, Foundation Housing & Services, Inc.
Raquel Cedeno, Customer Service Specialist
Cheryl Lewis, Resident Services Coordinator
Yadira Chavez, Resident Services Coordinator
Maria Elsa Berreta-Saad, Resident Services Coordinator

RHA Staff Absent: Leonilda Feliciano, Applications Manager

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS: None.

APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES

Regular Meeting – September 23, 2025

MOTION TO APPROVE: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado
SECOND: Commissioner Ruiz

DISCUSSION: None.

COMMUNICATIONS: None

APPROVAL OF THE SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT

MOTION TO APPROVE: Commissioner Ruiz
SECOND: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado

DISCUSSION: None.

APPROVAL OF THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

MOTION TO APPROVE: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado
SECOND: Commissioner Ruiz

DISCUSSION: None.

RESOLUTIONS AND BOARD ACTION

RESOLUTION NO. 6590: Approving the Terms and Authorizing the Execution of a Contract with Kautter & Kelley Architects for River Oak Apartments-Phase III Exterior Renovations

MOTION TO APPROVE: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado
SECOND: Commissioner Delgado

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTES IN FAVOR: Keely, Maldonado, Delgado, and Ruiz.
VOTES AGAINST: None

RESOLUTION NO. 6591: Approving the Terms and Authorizing the Execution of a Contract with Hammel Associates Architects, LLC for Oakbrook Homes Center for Early Education (Patton Avenue Learning Center)

MOTION TO APPROVE: Commissioner Ruiz
SECOND: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTES IN FAVOR: Keely, Maldonado, Delgado, and Ruiz.
VOTES AGAINST: None

RESOLUTION NO. 6592: Approving the Terms and Authorizing the Execution of a Contract with Wallace & Watson Associates, PC for Exterior Signage Replacement & Upgrades at Various RHA Properties

MOTION TO APPROVE: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado
SECOND: Commissioner Delgado

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTES IN FAVOR: Keely, Maldonado, Delgado, and Ruiz.
VOTES AGAINST: None

Resolution NO. 6593: Approving the Terms and Authorizing the Execution of a Contract with Systems Design Engineering, Inc. for HVAC Upgrades at Various RHA Properties

MOTION TO APPROVE: Commissioner Delgado
SECOND: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTES IN FAVOR: Keely, Maldonado, Delgado, and Ruiz.
VOTES AGAINST: None

RESOLUTION NO. 6594: Approving the Terms and Authorizing the Execution of a Contract with Barry Isett & Associates, Inc. for the Exterior Electrical Replacement & Upgrades at Sylvania Homes

MOTION TO APPROVE: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado
SECOND: Commissioner Delgado

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTES IN FAVOR: Keely, Maldonado, Delgado, and Ruiz.
VOTES AGAINST: None

RESOLUTION NO. 6595: To Accept the Audit Report of Basic Financial Statements & Supplementary Information for Fiscal Year End March 31, 2025, as Prepared by Rubino & Company, Chartered of Bethesda, MD

MOTION TO APPROVE: Commissioner Delgado
SECOND: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado

DISCUSSION: None.

VOTES IN FAVOR: Keely, Maldonado, Delgado, and Ruiz
VOTES AGAINST: None

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Vice-Chairwoman Maldonado
SECOND: Commissioner Ruiz

Mya M. Hornberger

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By:
Mya M. Hornberger
Communications Manager
Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary