

**ERIE COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY (ECHA)
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023 AT 11:30 A.M.
ERIE COUNTY CONSERVATION OFFICE
1927 WAGER ROAD
ERIE, PA 16509**

Chairperson Heasley called the Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the County of Erie to order at 11:49 a.m., with the following present:

BOARD

Sherri Heasley, Chairperson
John Downey, Vice-Chairperson
Dave Robinson, Member – By Telephone
Jennie Hagerty, Member

STAFF

Beverly Weaver, Executive Director
Jarid Pettit, Controller
Rachel Petty, Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

APPROVE MINUTES

On MOTION by Dr. Downey, seconded by Mr. Robinson, the Minutes from the October 5, 2023 Erie County Housing Authority Regular Meeting were approved. AYES: All.

On MOTION by Mr. Robinson, seconded by Dr. Downey, the Minutes from the October 31, 2023 Erie County Housing Authority Special Meeting were approved. AYES: All.

On MOTION by Dr. Downey, seconded by Ms. Hagerty, the Minutes from the October 31, 2023 Erie County Rentals Special Meeting were approved. AYES: All.

FINANCIALS

a) Tenants Charge Offs

Mr. Pettit reviewed the tenants charge offs by building and discussion was held relative to using wage garnishment for reimbursements. Mr. Pettit stated that a collection agency is used; however, not much is recouped.

On MOTION by Dr. Downey, seconded by Ms. Hagerty, the Tenants Charge Offs in the amount of \$21,664.85 were approved as submitted. AYES: All.

b) Financials

Mr. Pettit reviewed the internal financials by project for the month ending September 30, 2023 and the Yearly Income Statement Comparisons from January 1, 2023 through September 30, 2023. He noted that expenses for the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Program will be reimbursed.

On MOTION by Ms. Hagerty, seconded by Mr. Robinson, the Erie County Housing Authority Operating Budget and Income Statements were approved. AYES: All.

c) Bills

On MOTION by Dr. Downey, seconded by Ms. Hagerty, the Erie County Housing Authority Check Registers showing paid bills were approved. AYES: All.

NEW BUSINESS

a) Utility Allowance – Resolution 2023-09

Ms. Weaver reviewed the resolution showing revised Public Housing Utility Allowances and stated they would become effective March 1, 2024.

On MOTION by Mr. Robinson, seconded by Ms. Hagerty, Resolution 2023-09 was adopted approving the revised Public Housing Utility Allowances. AYES: All.

b) Updates

Ms. Weaver announced that she received an email stating the RAD Conversion has been approved and closed. She reminded the board that the RAD process started right before the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020, noting that the last 8 months have been very busy and the last few weeks exhausting, fulfilling all the requirements.

She relayed the terms of the loan and Mr. Pettit stated that refinancing is an option after 3 years if interest rates drop below 3%.

Ms. Weaver stated there will be a meeting with the consultant at the end of the month to discuss post-closing matters and she is working with Attorney Sennett, addressing abandonment wording in the new leases.

She noted that starting next week, new leases will be copied and 161 tenant signatures will be required before the end of the month. She noted further that recertification dates will remain the same.

Ms. Weaver stated that after the start of the new year, conversion of the remaining 34 units at West Court, Random Court, and Marvin J. Schick Apartments will begin. Mr. Pettit advised that they will be working with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and there will be no additional financing necessary for these conversions.

Ms. Weaver announced that she received a telephone call from Attorney Tim Sennett, that there was a problem with recording the deeds and the lease agreement between Erie County Rentals and Erie County Housing Authority. She was told that the Erie County Recorder of Deeds informed Attorney Toman that Erie County Rentals had to pay \$319,000 in transfer taxes.

Ms. Weaver stated that Attorney Sennett believes this is incorrect, based on the fact that Erie County Rentals is owned by Erie County Housing Authority; they are an Instrumentality of Erie County Housing Authority; and the Erie County Housing Authority is tax exempt.

She advised that additional recordings were being done today and if the Erie County Recorder of Deeds insists the transfer taxes be paid, then Erie County Rentals can challenge it.

Ms. Weaver informed the board that the contractor will begin installing walk-in showers at Salsbury Building after Thanksgiving.

She stated that health insurance costs are up 17.7%; however, ECHA will keep with the same plan and deductibles without passing the extra costs to employees because prices are still within the budget due to the last 10 frugal years.

Ms. Petty announced that on November 1, 2023 the 2023-2024 LIHEAP Crisis Season opened and informed the board of additional responsibilities that are required of the agencies. She answered questions and listed examples of assistance that have been provided in previous years.

STANDARD REPORTS

Ms. Weaver provided updates and answered questions relative to the vacancies, applications, delinquencies, evictions and waiting lists for each Housing Authority Development.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairperson Heasley called for an Executive Session at 12:27 p.m. and all staff members were excused except for Ms. Weaver.

RE-CONVENE

The Board re-convened at 12:50 p.m. with all members present.

On MOTION by Ms. Hagerty, seconded by Dr. Downey, 2024 Wages and Incentives were approved as discussed in Executive Session. AYES: All.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business before the Board and on MOTION by Ms. Hagerty, seconded by Dr. Downey, the Erie County Housing Authority adjourned the regular meeting at 12:51 p.m. AYES: ALL.