



ASHEVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
165 SOUTH FRENCH BROAD AVE.
ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA 28801

Executive Progress Report to the Board of Commissioners For Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Mission: The Mission of the Housing Authority of the City of Asheville is to provide safe, quality, and affordable housing, to expand available resources, and to collaborate with the community to create opportunities for resident self-reliance and economic independence.

Purpose of this Report: This report is designed to keep the Board of Commissioners, Residents and Staff informed about the business of the HACA. It includes the monthly report for the month of **April 2024** and is shared publicly to encourage transparency in the operations of the HACA. This document will be presented monthly to the Board of Commissioners, by the President and CEO.

Urgent – Breaking News!

Fair Haven Summit development successfully closed. Working closely with HUD the HACA staff was able to get the AHAP contract in place a week in advance of the closing.

There was an incident off site near Pisgahview involving firearms. The suspect fled the store in the direction of Pisgahview. This incident typically would result in a lockdown at the office and for maintenance staff on site to be alerted. However, we were not informed of this situation. I will be requesting notification of events when they occur and this will be an item on the safety committee meeting agenda. It is our intent to develop an emergency plan for when incidents occur so that we can keep our staff informed and safe.

Internal Process Improvement

Objectives:

1. Recruit and Retain Quality Employees
2. Strengthen HACA's Financial Well-being
3. Develop Internal Control Protocols

Progress:

1. **Information Technology** – The IT department under the leadership of Adina Bianchi has completed the transition to Microsoft 365, Microsoft Teams, and SharePoint. This is a monumental achievement. This means that the HACA technology now lives on the cloud. We have decommissioned the old servers and will be working to remove the old components from the file room in HCV.



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2. Compliance and Internal Audit –

Month:	April	To Date		
Number of Claims Filed	Number of Accidents	Type of Incident	Insurance Payout/ Total Amount of Loss	Description
2	0	GC-4(vandalism, water, theft, property); VA-1		Waiting for Bio-One paid invoice on claim #0451 gas down chute. No claim started on Vehicle stolen-employee left keys in van. Tenant missing \$3000 heirloom unit staff cleaned out unit. Statements given by staff, NCH needs verbal statement from tenant. Dir was notified. Vehicle accident claim denied due to contributory negligence from both parties.

WC – Worker’s Compensation **VA** – Vehicle Accident Claim **GC** – General Claims (Fire, Property Damage, etc.) **PI** – Personal Injury (Tenant Claim)

Elaine Scott, attended the 2024 Safety Seminar in Raleigh. It was sponsored by NCHARRP. Ms. Scott is currently in discussions with NCHARRP to conduct a safety seminar here in Asheville. She is the designated staff to lead our Safety Committee which will begin holding regular meetings soon.

Human Resources

Objectives:

1. [Recruit and Retain Quality Employees](#)

Progress:

1. Hired new Accountant I – Andrea Rearte
2. Site Manager (Southside) – Theresa Brendle will start June 1, 2024
3. Hired Maintenance Mechanic – Ihor Vlasjuk
4. Information Technology Specialist – Brad Henson
5. Position Accepted – Edington Center Custodian (ft)
6. Position Accepted – Edington Center Custodian (pt)
7. 7 Youth Program Assistants
8. Terminated for Cause – 1 Maintenance Mechanic
9. Resigned – 1 Housing Support Specialist
10. Interviews Conducted – 25 (April-May)

The RFP for a new payroll processing company was posted. The responsive bid packages are now in review. It is anticipated that the new firm will be on board by this summer. Open enrollment will begin in June. Corrections and updates to practices and procedures are ongoing. Time and attendance records and practices are being corrected. Retirement and insurance records are being reconciled.



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Public Safety

Objectives:

1. Communicate more effectively and timely with City and County officials when criminal activities are taking place on the HACA communities
2. Preparing more formal memorandums to document incidents
3. Continue to pursue vehicle parking enforcement

Progress:

The HACA properties have continued to see an escalation in activity as it relates to public safety. Property Managers continue to document homeless encampments, garbage being dumped out of cans, graffiti, etc. There have been complaints regarding trespassed individuals coming on site. There has been press inquiries regarding individuals on the banned list and a public records request that was honored to provide our banned list to the press. I met with a reporter and tried to express that when a resident sees a person on site that is banned, they should call law enforcement.

It is the goal of the HACA to pursue eviction, banning individuals who are trespassing or involved in criminal activities, and communicate consistently with law enforcement to support safe communities.

Protective Services:

1. There were 4 people added to the HACA Banned list for various offences.

Community Relations

Objectives:

1. Strong Community Relations
2. Increase Community Awareness

Progress:

1. I attended the Asheville Buncombe Continuum of Care Board meeting where the new Board was confirmed. (member)
2. I attended the Homeless Initiative Advisory Committee meeting.
3. I completed the application for the Affordable Housing Advisory Commission – the appointments will take place at the June 11, 2024 Council Meeting.
4. Follow-up meeting was held with the Asheville City Manager, Assistant City Manager and other staff regarding a Choice Neighborhoods planning grant and strategy for 2025.
5. I met with the City Manager and the Assistant City Manager to discuss moving the HACA Maintenance items off of the back lot of the shop at Central.
6. I attended the Duke Energy Key Leader Update meeting (member)
7. I met with representatives from the Southside Farm
8. I attended the Buncombe County Racial Equity Committee Meeting (member)



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Resident Participation Activities and Engagement

Objectives:

1. Expand available resources for resident wellbeing (youth and adult services)
2. Provide improved services that support resident self-reliance and economic independence
3. Build better tools for communications with residents

Progress:

1. The Resident Initiatives Coordinator positions are still open and the recruitment will be ongoing.
2. Resident Services staff continue to assist the Resident Associations to identify eligible uses and effectively deliver resources and services.

I attended a resident council meeting at Hillcrest Apartments. Residents are concerned about dog feces and the pet policy enforcement, noise disturbances, and parking enforcement. We are working to address their concerns. A resident from Klondyke attended the Hillcrest meeting and raised concerns about a number of issues. I committed to attend a meeting at Klondyke and plan to attend the community clean up event at Klondyke.

Vacancy Report – April 2024

• Evictions Totals	42
Evicted - Criminal Activity	1
Evicted - Lease Violation	2
Evicted - Non-Compliance	0
Evicted - Non-Payment	39
Evicted - Drug Activity	0

When a tenant is evicted, they are locked out usually with 7 days to arrange to retrieve their personal belongings.

• Ready for Occupancy: 43

When a unit is “ready for occupancy” that means it is cleaned and the site is waiting to receive the tenant file from admissions. Currently applicants are offered one unit. If they do not accept, they are moved to the end of the list. We are examining the effect of this policy.

• Assigned File for Move-in: 2

Assigned file for Move-in means that the site has received a file for a particular unit and they are arranging for the move-in date.

• Maintenance Turn: 52

The Maintenance team utilizes a punch list to indicate what needs to be done to prepare a unit for occupancy. Depending on the severity of the unit when it is turned back over to the site when the prior tenancy is terminated. Units in this condition usually need a number of services including painting, holes repaired, windows and general scrubbing.



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Accounting Monthly Report – Tara Boestan-Smith, Controller

Financial Objectives:

1. Improve the HACA's financial operations, structure and reporting capability
2. Diversify revenue sources in order to promote financial sustainability and stability
3. Upgrade HACA's use of technology and develop a strategy for moving toward a paperless environment
4. Ensure work processes and decision-making practices are aligned to support HACA's mission

General Update –

1. In the last couple of months, we hired 1 Accountant - Accounts Payable, Andrea Rearte and 1 Payroll Accountant - Jessica Dobson. We are very excited to see Jess and Andrea apply their experience and education to help our organization and accounting department to accomplish our goals. We are still short 1 accountant which hopefully we can fulfill pretty soon.
2. We continued working with Yardi - our property and accounting system - on the CheckScan process for tenant payments, working out the irregularity.

Acknowledgements –

We are excited about our new hire for Accountant - Accounts Payable position - Andrea Rearte Her first day was May 01, 2024.

Jess Dobson, our new Payroll Accountant, was working hard to reconcile the first quarter benefits and suggested some improvements to create a streamline of reconciliation



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Resident Services Monthly Reporting - Shaunda Jackson, Director

General Update –

We commend our Resident Services team for their outstanding achievements in April. Their dedication and commitment have resulted in the enrollment of **three** new participants in the Family Self-Sufficiency program, providing crucial support and resources to individuals on their journey towards self-sufficiency. Additionally, the program's efforts have empowered **three** participants to begin escrowing, taking significant steps towards financial independence and stability. Furthermore, we celebrate the remarkable success of seven FSS participants who have graduated from the program, demonstrating the transformative impact of their hard work and determination. These accomplishments exemplify the effectiveness and dedication of our Family Self-Sufficiency team in empowering individuals and families to achieve their goals and build a brighter future.

We have **one** resident under the contract for the home purchase. The participant should be closing on the home at the end of May.

The Community Health Workers (CHWs) within our organization have continued to demonstrate exceptional dedication and commitment in their collaborative efforts with the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) and Resident Support Specialist teams. Their concerted endeavors have significantly enhanced the support services provided to our residents, particularly in areas concerning transportation assistance, periodic check-ins, and resource provision for individuals facing diverse challenges.

Our youth programs at Edington, Hillcrest, Maplecrest, and Pisgahview are gearing up for the upcoming summer program season. As we approach the summer months, we are diligently preparing a range of engaging and enriching activities designed to provide our youth with meaningful experiences and opportunities for growth. Stay tuned for more updates on the exciting activities and initiatives planned for this summer!

Acknowledgements –

In April, we assisted one HCV resident with car repairs, made possible by financing from the Dogwood HealthTrust grant for the FSS Program.

The Asheville City Council has voted to award PODS Inc. **\$67,859** for its Food Security Enhances Learning program as part of the City's Strategic Partnership Grant Program.

Key Indicators –

Meeting/Exceeding Expectations:

We have 5 residents enrolled in the Accelerate Buncombe program. They are taking several different courses, including Safe Serve, Medical Billing and Coding, Peer Support, CSL and Phlebotomy.

We are thrilled to announce Aleesha Ballard, James Howard, and Tarina Jackson as the recipients of the Employee of the Month award for their exceptional dedication and outstanding work in our PODS afterschool program. Aleesha, James, and Tarina consistently demonstrate a remarkable commitment to our children, going above and beyond to create engaging and



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enriching experiences for them each day. Their unwavering dedication and enthusiasm have not gone unnoticed, and we are incredibly grateful for their contributions to the success of our afterschool program. Please join us in congratulating Aleesha, James, and Tarina for their exemplary service and for positively impacting the lives of our children. Your hard work and dedication are truly appreciated!

Shaunda would like to extend her appreciation to Ms. Joyce, Misty, Eric, Duke, Thomas and Karolina for their invaluable support during the interview process for custodians, youth impact assistants, and community health workers.

Items of Moderate Concern:

Residents are still experiencing the impact of our HCV wait list closures and transfers. Transfers for the clients that we advocate for are difficult!

Challenges persist with the eligibility specialist. Delaying FSS Exit's. Delaying Residents in HCV the opportunity to look for apartments or missing out on apartments because of the delays in contacting landlords. FSS Clients complain about eligibility for losing items then contacting them with threatening letters about full contract rent and possible evictions for things they have turned in.

Some of our residents' recertification packets have been lost by eligibility and they are being required to resubmit another packet. This creates additional barriers for them due to the need to provide additional information and/ or requesting supportive documentation again (e.g. from SSA or their employers). Often, the RS department assists our residents with filling out their forms. Missing paperwork will prompt them to request another assistance meeting with us for the paperwork that was already completed. There is no way to track that the paper packet has been turned in.

Resident Services continues to receive inquiries from community partners about when HACA will begin taking applications.

A growing number of evictions for nonpayment has an impact on a portion of the FSS participants.

A proficient grant writer is needed to sustain ongoing funding efforts for our youth services, encompassing afterschool, summer programming and transportation. The necessity for dedicated grant writing support is paramount in ensuring the continuity and expansion of these vital initiatives. Additionally, the appointed grant writer will play a pivotal role in managing grant reports, facilitating transparency, accountability, and compliance with funding requirements. By securing the services of a skilled grant writer, we aim to fortify our capacity to secure essential resources and further advance our mission of providing impactful youth services within our communities.

Staff mentioned that the new Outlook version lacks a lot of capabilities the older version had. It makes work more difficult.



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Unexpected Anomalies/High Risk Concerns:

Staff continue to experience difficulties with the Yardi software when attempting to process FSS cases. It generates additional work and exposes escrow calculations to the possibility of inaccuracies. Cases are being retrieved for evaluation, and corrections are being made immediately upon error detection. Yardi has been presented with numerous "technical assistance tickets."

The vacancies and high turnover in the eligibility specialist position continue to pose several challenges to staff and residents, namely FSS exits, documentation loss, and inaccuracies in the information provided to residents.

Miscellaneous:

Monthly senior dinners at both the PVA and DVA sites have been scheduled for the third and fourth Thursdays of the month. These dinner gatherings provide a wonderful opportunity for our senior community members to come together, socialize, and enjoy a delicious meal in a welcoming environment.

Walk throughs for all three childcare sites have been completed as part of the RFP process.

Family Self-Sufficiency Homeownership Report – April 2024

Family Self-Sufficiency/Homeownership Report - April 2024							
Family Self-Sufficiency Program	Central AVL	Southside	West AVL	Maple Crest	North AVL	Tenant-Bas ed	Total
Current FSS Participants	8	36	28	2	35	135	244
Established FSS Accounts	6	33	17	1	25	96	178
Traditional escrow FSS Account Balances	\$23,043	\$119,446	\$31,567	\$1,358	\$93,245	\$465,120	\$733,778
Award based escrow FSS Account Balances	\$1,250.00	\$4,489.00	\$1,825.00	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	\$19,680	\$31,744
Total Distributed since 01/2017							\$1,660,788
Graduates (Since 1/2017)							162
Results and Updates this Month:	We had four new participants in April and eight new escrow accounts. We had seven graduations in April.						
Homeownership Program	Central AVL	Southside	West AVL	Maple Crest	North AVL	Tenant-Bas ed	Total
Current Homeownership Applicants	4	2	5	0	1	12	24
Completed Homebuyer Education	1	1	1	0	1	25	69
Completed All Prerequisites	0	2	1	0	1	14	18
Under Contract	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
New Homeowners (this month)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total Current Homeowners							81
Total Homeowners to date							87
Results and Updates this Month:	We had no new homeowners in April. We have 1 residenst under contract.						



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Property Management Monthly Reporting

Objective:

1. Maintain attractive, well-manicured properties/ building and quality fleet management

Central Properties-Evette Smith, Director

General Update –

Central properties are continuing with daily activities of addressing our resident's needs, unit turns, and HQS inspections.

We had our annual Spring Clean Sweep Day on April 18th at Bartlett and April 25th for Aston Tower.

Acknowledgements –

I would like to thank and commend the Central team along with the staff at Klondyke Renee, Nikita, Bobby and Rhodney for coming out and taking part in the our annual Spring Clean Sweep Day for Aston Tower and Bartlett Arms.

Key Indicators –

Meeting/Exceeding Expectations:

With the management team working steadily on rent collections we have reduced our delinquency rate and evictions for non-payment of rents. We are continuing to meet our passing goals for our monthly HQS inspections.

Items of Moderate Concern:

We are hoping to receive more files for available units in hopes of increasing our vacancy rate. With the recent shift in the weather, we have seen an increase in criminal activity on the properties APD has beefed up their presence.

Unexpected Anomalies/High Risk Concerns:

The sewer line at Bartlett stopped-up and overflowed. We had to replace the line and order a pump truck to clean up the spilled sewage. It is still a work in progress.

Something shifted in the floor at Aston Tower and damaged a significant area of tile in the lobby. We have an architect doing an assessment to find the cause and to design and work on a solution to replace the flooring.

Miscellaneous:

We are continuing the renovation of the units at Woodfin Apartments.



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North Properties-Rhodney Norman, Director

General Update –

General operations at all North properties are going well while we continue working on decreasing vacancies turnaround time.

Maintenance in the properties is slightly higher with an increased number of work calls on site. We continue working hard on vacancy turns, HQS inspections and work orders.

Acknowledgements –

I'd like to acknowledge the efforts of Management and Maintenance staff as they continue working with great customer service as well as assisting other properties in need.

Key Indicators –

Meeting/Exceeding Expectations:

We welcomed 2 families this month as we continue to meet our HQS deadline with 16 HQS inspections and 5 re-inspections.

Items of Moderate Concern:

The delay in receiving files for vacant ready units continues to be a concern with the higher than usual wait time for applicant files. The longer they stay vacant, we have a higher risk of break-ins creating more damage to the property. We have started requiring on-call maintenance staff to perform weekend checks on empty units to help mitigate.

Unexpected Anomalies/High Risk Concerns:

Hillcrest emergency transferred 2 residents internally due to a severe water leak that was not reported to staff resulting in getting insurance involved with the remediation.

Miscellaneous:

N/A



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Southside-Sheri Guyton, Director

General Update –

Housekeeping inspections have been completed for 1/3 of the property and we will complete the remaining 174 inspections by the end of May. This process has generated additional service requests for deficiencies and staff continue to work diligently while addressing the workload in a timely manner and being fiscally responsible and mindful of budget and cost.

Acknowledgements –

I'd like to commend the maintenance team at Southside under the direction of Damion Smith for keeping the service requests completed in a timely manner, turning quality apartments for new residents and transfers moving in and maintaining curb appeal with having litter free grounds while being understaffed.

Key Indicators –

Meeting/Exceeding Expectations:

We welcomed 1 new family this month. We maintained occupancy while turning 9 vacant apartments to rent ready. Once a move in file is received, we are immediately scheduling move in. We had 15 HQS inspections and 6 re-inspections. Our team worked steadily to complete the issues on deficiencies and met our deadline on receiving a favorable passing score for their efforts.

Items of Moderate Concern:

We continue to help residents secure pledges for rent in arrears, we are seeing a slight improvement in delinquent rent this month with less summary ejectments filed. We encourage communication and continue to develop positive relationships with residents. We issued 9 summary ejectments for non-payment with 8 being dismissed after receiving payment in full.

Unexpected Anomalies/High Risk Concerns:

Southside has vacant positions open. We are currently searching for a Site Manager, Maintenance Technician, and 1 Grounds staff for trash pickup. Staff continue to have dual roles until suitable staff are hired.

Miscellaneous:

We have identified our "Clean Sweep" date or May 18 from 9 am-4pm. It is our hope to get all Southside residents involved while they clean out their households inside and out of unwanted items while helping to beautify and clean the property.



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West Properties – Rhodney Norman, Director (reporting)

General Update –

Staff are working hard to be proactive in making sure that work is completed, and potential issues are addressed. Managers are completing housekeeping inspections and addressing and maintenance issues during this time.

Acknowledgements –

I'd like to acknowledge Maintenance and grounds of Deaverview and PVA for their perseverance and dedication to the work of serving the residents and the organization every day.

Key Indicators –

Meeting/Exceeding Expectations:

West properties staff continue to meet the needs of residents, be fiscally responsible and maintain HACA assets to the best of their abilities.

Items of Moderate Concern:

We have seen a slight increase in delinquent rents due to residents failing to complete their annual recertifications. Managers have been busy knocking on doors to encourage residents to get them completed.

Unexpected Anomalies/High Risk Concerns:

Deaverview has vacant positions open. We are currently searching for an Assistant site manager and maintenance. Staff continue in dual roles until the staff is hired.

Miscellaneous:

N/A