

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

***READING
HOUSING
AUTHORITY***

“EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY”

22 Frank D. Tanner Drive

Reading, MA 01867

(781) 944-6755

FROM THE CHAIR:

It is with great pleasure that I share with you the activities and accomplishments of the Reading Housing Authority over the past year.

The Reading Housing Authority (Authority) is authorized to administer housing programs in accordance with the Department of Housing and Community Development regulations for state-aided public housing and the Department of Housing and Urban Development/Office of Public and Indian Housing (HUD) regulations (Federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program). These programs supply the Town with a portion of its local affordable housing options. The Authority strives to assist families obtain housing that is affordable, decent, safe and sanitary.

The FY2019 state appropriation for Local Housing Authorities operating subsidies increased by 10%, 6.5 million dollars. This is the highest percentage increase in a decade. Between this substantial increase and increases in capital fund dollars over the years, Housing Authorities throughout the Commonwealth received much needed financial help to improve operations and support a strong quality of life for residents.

At the close of 2019, the Authority's programs provided state-aided affordable housing to 90 residents, and federally funded affordable housing to 116 families. The Authority grants preferences on its waiting list to applicants residing and/or working in Reading. In addition, Veterans receive a preference as well.

As always, the Authority goes beyond the bricks and mortar and assists families, elderly and handicapped persons obtain the services they may need. We work closely with the Town of Reading Elder and Human Services Department, the Pleasant Street Center, Mystic Valley Elder Services and other home care agencies to meet the needs of our elderly residents as they strive to remain independent and age in place.

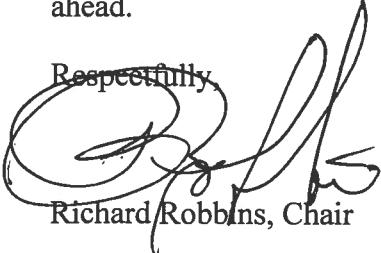
On behalf of the Board, we want to thank Executive Director, Julie Johnston and her staff for their continued dedication, commitment and service to the Reading Housing Authority. We look forward to working with them as we meet the new challenges that lie ahead.

Our community is very fortunate to have such caring and dedicated public safety personnel. The men and women of the Reading Police Department and Fire Department have our gratitude and appreciation for the many times they have responded to emergency situations for residents of the Reading Housing Authority.

We look forward to working with them and the Reading community as we meet the new challenges that lie ahead.

Respectfully,

Richard Robbins, Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Robbins". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'R' at the beginning.

ORGANIZATION:

Organized in 1963 to address the housing needs of the Town's low and moderate-income residents, the Reading Housing Authority (Authority) is "*a public body politic and corporate*" duly organized and authorized by Massachusetts General Laws (MGL), Chapter 121B, s.3. The Authority receives its funds from the State and Federal government to assist our clients with their housing needs. Although the Authority does not receive any local funding, five unpaid Reading residents compose the Board of Commissioners. The Select Board appoints four of these board members and one is the Governor's appointee. Each member serves for a 5-year term. The Board is responsible for the overall operation of the Authority. The day to day responsibility is delegated to the Executive Director.

The Board meets regularly and has scheduled their monthly meetings for the first Monday of each month. The Annual Meeting of the Board is currently scheduled for the month after the Select Board makes their annual appointment of a Board member. As of December 2019, the Board Members and their term of office are as follows:

Richard Robbins 42 Dudley Street	Chair Term expires 6/30/2020
Timothy J. Kelley 56 Sunnyside Avenue	Vice-Chair Term expires 6/30/2024
Diane L. Cohen 73 Hillcrest Avenue	State Appointee Term expires 5/03/2021
Charles L. Adams 13 Riverside Drive	Assistant Treasurer Term expires: 6/30/2022
Marie T. Hanson 14 Frank D. Tanner Drive, #7	Treasurer/State Tenant Representative Term expires: 6/30/2023
Julie M. Johnston 22 Frank Tanner Drive	Secretary and Executive Director

ADMINISTRATIVE and MAINTENANCE STAFF:

The Board contracts an Executive Director who manages the day-to-day operations of the Authority. Within State and Federal guidelines and other budgetary limits, the Executive Director hires the supporting staff necessary to achieve the goals and responsibilities of the Authority's programs.

Administration:

Julie M. Johnston	Secretary and Executive Director
Susan McLaughlin	State Housing Manager
Catherine Sutherland	Office Manager
Iris Perez-Feliciano	CHA Federal Program Coordinator for RHA

Maintenance:

Joseph Costello	Maintenance Staff Supervisor
Edward Bennett	Maintenance Staff

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AFFILIATIONS:

Jane Burns	Town of Reading, Elder & Human Services Administrator
Kerry Valle	Town of Reading, Case Manager
Alyse Warren	Town of Reading, Nurse Advocate
Kevin Bohmiller	Town of Reading, Veterans' Service Officer
Daniel J. O'Leary	Director, Mystic Valley Elder Services

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS:

Reading Cooperative Bank

AFFILIATIONS:

National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO)

Massachusetts Chapter of National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (MassNAHRO)

New England Regional Council of National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NERC/NAHRO)

Section 8 Administrators Association

North Shore Housing Executive Directors' Association (NSHEDA)

CONSULTANTS:

Accountants: Fenton, Ewald & Associates

Legal: Latham Law Offices, LLC & DHCD Legal Counsel, Lori McBride, Esq.

MAINTENANCE

The Authority is responsible for 115 individual units located on 10 different sites.

We do it all – from the beautiful paint job to the new appointments before you move into your new apartment. The maintenance staff continues to do an excellent job maintaining all Authority properties in good condition. The maintenance staff is also responsible for the daily work orders and any emergency work that needs to be done.

2019 FUNDING RECEIVED:

Each year the Authority applies for several grants or capital funding whenever available to improve our properties and better serve our residents and the community. Included in this year's awards were:

MODERNIZATION OF STATE-HOUSING FUNDS

The Reading Housing Authority was notified that the agency would be receiving \$72,115 in Formula Funding Grants for Capital Improvement Projects for fiscal year 2022 (FY22). The Authority began working on an exterior door replacement and balcony repair project in 2018 at Frank D. Tanner, Drive and completed the project in June 2019. In addition, the Authority utilized additional modernization funds to repair cement walkways at its group home located at 74 Bancroft Street as well as much needed tree removal throughout its properties.

AUDITS:

The Authority has a Single Audit of all programs by an independent auditor each year. Guyder/Hurley of Braintree, MA was engaged to perform the latest review of the Authority's programs for fiscal year end June 2019. At this time, the audit is currently underway and has not been completed. Upon its completion, copies will be disseminated accordingly.

A new compliance audit, Performance Management Review, mandated by DHCD for FYE June 2019 has been completed as of November 2019. Final reports revealed no findings as noted in the details of the report. The Authority continues to be a High Performer with its Federal Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP).

MANAGEMENT REVIEW:

The Authority has had a current Management Review done of all State programs. The Asset Managers from the State's Department of Housing and Community Development reviewed all the operations of the State programs to ensure compliance in the daily operation of the Authority's budget, occupancy, administration, maintenance, services and tenant participation. The Authority received an excellent review with minor comments.

As of September 2015, the Reading Housing Authority entered into an inter-agency agreement with Chelsea Housing Authority to administer its Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. That agreement was extended through August 31, 2020. This cost-effective measure has enabled the RHA to maintain the federal housing program with the assistance of personnel from another agency. The Reading Housing Authority continues to oversee the program and remains responsible for all reporting requirements to HUD.

STATE PROGRAMS:

The Authority currently manages three (3) programs under the State's Department of Housing and Community Development: 667 Housing (elderly/handicapped housing); 705 Housing (Family housing); 689 Housing (Special Needs Housing).

All our wait lists are open now; however, estimated wait times can be long. All information regarding our agency and the programs we administer can be found on our website at www.readinghousing.org. We encourage applicants to apply for our elderly/handicapped (667) housing by contacting the Housing Authority at (781) 944-6755 or by accessing the application on our website.

HOUSING FOR ELDERLY/HANDICAPPED PERSONS (667) effective March 1, 2019

80, one-bedroom units located at Frank D. Tanner Drive Housing Complex

Eligibility: 60 years of age or disabled

Income: 1 person - \$56,800

2 persons - \$64,900

HOUSING FOR FAMILIES (705) effective March 1, 2019

6 units Waverly and Oakland Road (6, three-bedroom units)

4 units Pleasant and Parker Street (2, two-bedroom units; 2, three-bedroom units)

Eligibility: Family of 2 or more depending on Bedroom Size

Income: 2 persons - \$64,900 6 persons - \$ 94,100

3 persons - \$73,000 7 persons - \$100,600

4 persons - \$81,100 8 persons - \$107,100

5 persons - \$87,600

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

The Authority manages 103 subsidies for persons of very low income under the Federal Section 8 program. However, the Chelsea Housing Authority is currently managing this program for the RHA through an inter-agency agreement. Currently, the RHA participates in a centralized waiting list administered by the MASSNAHRO organization. Applications for this wait list are available at the administration office building at 22 Frank D. Tanner Drive, Reading or online @ www.gosection8.com/MASSCWL. The income limits for 2019 are:

SECTION 8 RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Income limits:	1 person – \$41,500	2 persons - \$47,400
	3 persons - \$53,350	4 persons - \$59,250
	5 persons - \$64,000	6 persons - \$68,750
	7 persons - \$73,500	8 persons - \$78,250

RHA-OWNED PROPERTIES

The Authority presently owns and manages seventeen family units located in various locations throughout the Town of Reading. Four of the seventeen units were located at the condominiums of the Old Reading Schoolhouse. However, in June 2017 the RHA lost these four units due to fire. Thankfully, no one was hurt as a result of the fire but all forty (40) units were determined to be uninhabitable. Efforts are underway to rebuild and restore the units to their original condition as soon as possible. The RHA is hopeful that it will be able to retain the affordability component to all 4 units once construction is complete. The Certificate of Occupancy is anticipated to be received in February 2020.

APPLICATIONS:

*****NEW APPLICATION PROCEDURES *****

CHAMP – COMMON HOUSING APPLICATION FOR MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC-HOUSING

In August 2014, legislation as part of Chapter 235, an Act Relative to Local Housing Authorities, was passed to establish a centralized on-line wait list system for persons seeking state-aided public housing assistance. CHAMP will enable Local Housing Authorities and the Department of Community Development to manage state-aided housing applications for all situations – emergency, standard and transfer.

On April 10, 2019, the Department of Housing and Community Development launched the internet base, state-wide public housing application and centralized wait list system known as CHAMP to the public. Applicants will be able to submit and self-manage their applications through the on-line portal from a computer, smart phone, or tablet.

You may obtain a paper application at the office of the Authority, 22 Frank D. Tanner Drive, Reading, MA 01867 or by accessing it online at www.readinghousing.org.

ELDERLY/HANDICAPPED HOUSING (667)

The Authority manages 80 one-bedroom units of housing for elderly/handicapped persons at our Frank D. Tanner Drive complex in Reading. To qualify for this housing, a single person or couple must meet the eligibility guidelines and be **60 years of age or older or handicapped**. The Authority sets aside 13.5% of these units for non-elderly handicapped persons.

FAMILY HOUSING – STATE (705)

The Authority operates the State's Family Housing Program with 2 different developments. The first family housing development that was built by the Authority is located at Oakland and Waverly Roads and is called *Waverly Oaks*. There are six 3-bedroom units. Our second state family development is near the center of Town and is referred to as our *Pleasant/Parker* location. There are only four units available at this site. Our wait list is open. Approximate wait times for those presently on the list remains in excess of ten years.

SECTION 8 FEDERAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Currently the wait list for our Section 8 Program is open. We participate in the centralized wait list program administered by Mass NAHRO and Go Section 8. Applications are available at our administrative office or online at www.gosection8/MASSCWL.com

SUMMIT VILLAGE FIRST TIME HOMEBUYERS PROGRAM:

The Authority continues to oversee the maintenance of the wait list for qualified and eligible applicants for the affordable units at Summit Village through the First Time Homebuyers Program. We presently have no potential buyers on our waitlist. Interested applicants are encouraged to contact the Authority.

CONCLUSION:

The Reading Housing Authority is proud to provide this information to you. Anyone interested in obtaining information about any of our housing programs: elderly/handicapped housing, state family or the Federal Section 8 Rental Assistance Program, should contact the authority at 22 Frank D. Tanner Drive or by calling the office at (781) 944-6755.