

The PHA Experience

Issue 46

A Community Newspaper For and About Residents

April 2021

Claim Your Place in Line

Thousands of Philadelphians are now receiving COVID-19 shots daily with the recent opening of the FEMA Coronavirus vaccine site at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. As the number of daily vaccinations increases, the city has begun easing COVID-19 restrictions on dining, sporting events, movie theaters, and other venues. Vaccination appointments are only being offered right now to Philadelphians in the 1a group - health care workers at a high-risk for COVID-19 exposure - and the 1b group, which includes those 65 years or older, people with high-risk medical conditions, those who live in congregate settings, first responders and essential workers in public transit, child care, food service, and other jobs.

If you haven't done so already, visit <https://covid-vaccine-interest.phila.gov>

to fill out the form indicating your interest in getting the vaccine. This form allows the Philadelphia Health Department to assess each individual's status and schedule an appointment at the appropriate time. If you cannot complete the online form, call the Health Department at (215) 685-5488 or email covid@phila.gov.

The City is offering walk-up slots to residents eligible under phase 1b who

bring proof of residency that they live in one of the following underserved zip codes: 19104, 19131, 19139, 19142, 19143, 19151, 19153, 19122, 19132, 19133, 19134, 19140, 19116, 19120, 19124, 19135, 19136, 19138, 19141, 19144, 19149, and 19152

Moreover, in recent weeks, faculty and fully trained nursing student volunteers from Temple University's College of Public Health and the School of Pharmacy have participated in clinics set up to vaccinate residents at PHA's senior living locations. The collaboration is multipronged, with broad participation from several Temple schools and academic disciplines. Additionally, Resident Council leaders from PHA communities have worked alongside the healthcare teams. They have hosted tables to sign up residents for the vaccine and gone door to door to hand out materials ahead of the event. The healthcare professionals, PHA staff, and resident leaders are working closely to address vaccine hesitancy and provide an opportunity for people to ask questions and express concerns. Temple then follows up with community members to evaluate experiences, ask about side effects, and foster second dose compliance.

"We are the agents that put the needle

in the arm, but what makes this successful is the collaboration with the residents of the community," says Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs and Interprofessional Education Susan VonNessen-Scanlin. "Service to the community is central to the College of Public Health's mission, and we feel so honored to be able to partner with PHA, be welcomed into our local communities, and be part of the solution to ending this pandemic."

These vaccine clinics are part of Temple University Health System's community effort, but the holistic strategies are part of an ongoing effort to deliver culturally relevant care to each community.

"We are grateful to Temple for the resources invested in our PHA communities," said Kelvin A. Jeremiah, president, and CEO of the Philadelphia Housing Authority. "The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare inequities in the healthcare system. Working alongside its residents, PHA and Temple are developing and delivering strategies for culturally competent healthcare that center on a community's unique needs. If we work together, we can create a system that makes residents and healthcare workers partners in improving health outcomes and identifying effective strategies."



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The New War on Poverty is Coming: Are We Ready?

A year into this global pandemic, America is beginning to undergo a transformation that very well could lift

millions of people out of poverty.

With the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill, President Joe Biden has launched a crusade to end poverty and invest in lower-income Americans. A large share of the money approved by Congress in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 will benefit the lowest-income households in the form of child tax credits, direct checks, and expansion of the earned income tax credit.

According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, the package will give most U.S. households in the bottom 60 percent of wage earners an average of \$3,450 extra cash. Some independent groups estimate the bill's provisions and measures could reduce the poverty rate by a third and reduce the share of children in poverty by more than one-half.

This certainly is good news for Philadelphia, where disinvestment has resulted in blight, stubborn generational barriers and a dilapidated housing stock.

Communities that historically have had to battle for each dollar are about to receive an unprecedented infusion of cash, and it will give the children a better start in life.

Know that PHA stands ready to assist so residents can be prepared as the landscape changes and new opportunities arrive.

Here are just a few ways we stand ready to help:

PHA is hosting vaccination clinics at its housing communities, beginning with senior living developments.

Currently, the City is vaccinating frontline workers and those over 65 years of age, along with those with severe health conditions.

Faculty and fully trained nursing student volunteers from Temple University's College of Public Health and the School of Pharmacy have participated in clinics as part of a new initiative that seeks to deliver culturally appropriate care to PHA Communities and give residents a say.

The collaboration is multi-pronged, with broad participation from several Temple schools and academic disciplines. Additionally, Resident Council leaders from PHA communities have worked alongside the healthcare teams. They have hosted tables to sign up residents for the vaccine and gone door to door to hand out materials ahead of the event.

Thanks to everyone who has been working to extend vaccine access across the City.

Second, we have a wide range of career training opportunities available right now through the Vaux Workforce Center. Career credentials can put residents on a path to a job that pays full benefits and a good wage. New employment opportunities are being discussed now in Washington. We will keep you posted the employment landscape.

As May 17 grows near, the PHA staff will be sending out information and newsletters that connect residents with vital resources: help with tax preparations, sites on which to check the status of stimulus funds, and instructions for setting up a repayment plan for those behind on their rent. PHA's Eviction Moratorium ended on March 15, so talk to your property manager today.

Finally as the government begins to distribute millions in funds, the Federal Trade Commission is warning Americans to beware of scammers who are considering new ways to trick people out of their money.

The resource lists you receive from PHA contain the names and contact information for reliable vendors. Be wary of people or groups who call in coming weeks with unsolicited offers for help.

Protect yourself from theft by remembering these things:

The government will not ask you to pay anything upfront to get stimulus money.

The government will not call, text, email, or message you on social media to ask for your Social Security, bank account, or credit card number. Anyone who does is a scammer.

Anyone who tells you to pay by a wire transfer, gift card, or cryptocurrency is a scammer.

If you spot one of these scams, please contact the Federal Trade Commission at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud).

So when it is your turn, take your COVID-19 shot.

As the doors to the middle-class open wider, know that PHA is here to help.

KELVIN A. JEREMIAH
President & CEO



Crews Working Overtime To Handle Maintenance Backlog

The PHA maintenance teams service and support a range of housing communities, each with their own special needs.

On an average day, about 384 service orders are completed each business day throughout the PHA. Of the 95,376 service orders received over the last 12 months, more than 8,000 of them were emergency based orders that were all completed within 24 hours.

This year, as the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded, health and safety protocols put in place by the City of Philadelphia and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania significantly altered the way the maintenance teams operate.

When the City locked down, the agency did not perform routine maintenance or inspect vacant apartments for two months; only emergency maintenance issues were handled during the time staff and city residents were asked to stay at home.

Since it was not addressing routine maintenance repairs, and new work orders were being called in every day, the number of open service orders climbed to unprecedented levels in 2020. However, since maintenance workers returned to full duty in May, they have managed to reduce the number of open service orders from over 17,000 to 4,600. The agency responded quickly to the maintenance backlog by reviewing and changing current practices.

First, it reorganized staff to make additional workers available to handle the service requests.

Then, the \$1.9 million in additional Cares Act funds received by the PHA was directed toward the maintenance contracts including roofing repairs and replacements, concrete replacement, electrical upgrades, mechanical repairs, and tree removal.

Additionally, the agency added new flexibility in governance to provide a quicker response. It increased limits on existing contracts, and expedited new contracts so as to better accommodate and assign maintenance service orders.

So far, the crews have been able to complete over 600 roofing service orders, about 500 concrete service orders and a variety of Mechanical, Electrical, Parging, and Tree removal work.

This turned out to be beneficial not just for PHA but also for some of the small contractors who were struggling during the COVID closure.

The safety of its residents and apartment communities remains PHA's top priority as the COVID-19 virus continues to surge. All PHA workers have been given personal protective equipment, which limits the spread of the virus and helps everyone stay safe. In addition to assigning more staff to handle maintenance service orders, employees have worked overtime in a coordinated effort to complete demand-driven maintenance repairs.

If you have a maintenance issue to report, call 215-684-8920. If you have an afterhours maintenance emergency, please call 215-684-1911.



Repayment Agreements

If you have fallen behind on your rent, you may be eligible to enter into a repayment agreement with PHA.

Under this agreement, residents make a down payment on the outstanding balance, and then pay the regular monthly rent along with a portion of the past due balance each month.

Repayment agreements can extend up to six months.

By entering into an agreement and honoring the terms, PHA residents can avoid late fees and legal action for non-payment of rent. If you are interested, please contact your property manager or reach out to PublicHousing.Answers@pha.phila.gov.



PHA residents work the frontlines to promote community health

Angela Sutton is working to promote healthy communities.

As a community health worker, she is on the frontlines of the campaign to expand quality, equitable health care to neighborhoods across the City. “When I found out that I would be helping people in the community, I knew I had a jump on board,” Ms. Sutton says. “You have to work your purpose.”

Her strong bonds with people in the community offer a glimpse into the health challenges and obstacles that

her neighbors face each day. These cultural insights are valuable to providers like Temple Health, which is developing strategies for delivering holistic healthcare that centers on a community’s own unique experiences. These strategies serve to foster trust and closer connections.

Ms. Sutton is employed by PHA Cares, a program that Temple University and Temple Health are spearheading to foster deeper relationships with the communities they serve. Temple is

providing the community outreach workers with up-to-date information on a range of critical health topics including how, when, and where to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

The Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University’s (LKSOM) Center for Urban Bioethics and Temple University’s Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative (LNPWI) are partnering with the PHA and the Temple Center for Population Health on the program, which was designed to respond to challenges of COVID-19, which has disproportionately affected communities of color.

Ms. Sutton’s role, however, extends beyond COVID-19 education. She is there to help people through other health issues as well and she has a team of professionals at Temple Health standing behind her. Sometimes, individuals may need assistance getting the services that can support recovery from illness: for instance, getting the right nutritious foods, scheduling trips to medical appointments, developing a budget, and finding someone to listen.

Each time she is assigned a client, Ms. Sutton conducts a needs assessment before determining her next steps. She has worked to get service animals, helped people fill out applications for social services and resources, helped people get their prescriptions delivered, and more. People sometimes are skeptical when they hear she has been assigned to help them.

“In the beginning about 80 percent are resistant,” she said. “People have failed them before. People are not always trustworthy. When they get to see that I am trying to make things happen that brings a lot of trust. They are more willing to open up and even to hope again. it is my job to make sure my patients are secure.”

PHA residents will be the primary beneficiaries of PHA Cares, which has hired four residents from public

housing or the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program to conduct the health education outreach efforts.

“This is such an important initiative, especially now with so many of us wondering where and how to get the COVID-19 vaccine,” said Kelvin A. Jeremiah, president, and CEO of the Philadelphia Housing Authority. “I want to thank Temple for its powerful leadership on health education strategies, and for its recognition that the people within a community make very effective health outreach workers. Our residents’ understanding of their neighbors’ daily lives and challenges can elevate efforts to fight COVID-19 and other diseases.”

The health workers hired by PHA Cares – eight in all – will engage in educational campaigns and outreach at PHA communities including:

- Group and individual health promotion and education around COVID-19, e.g. signs and symptoms, infection and transmission, and prevention strategies.
- Posting COVID-19 health and safety signage at PHA housing development sites.
- Presenting PHA/HCV residents with proven strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in families and in the community, e.g. appropriate use of masks, effective hand washing, social distancing, etc.
- Advising PHA/HCV residents when and where to get tested for COVID-19.
- Identifying concerns of PHA/HCV residents regarding COVID-19 related topics such as barriers to self-isolation or quarantine.
- Coordinating contact tracing efforts of the City of Philadelphia’s Department of Health.



Temple University and Temple Health are hiring PHA residents to serve as community health workers in the field. Among other duties, the health workers will distribute information on COVID-19 testing and explain when and where residents can get the vaccine. Pictured from left to right are Tamara Cobb, Patrice Simmons and Angela Sutton.

Sharswood Tower Wins NAHRO Award of Excellence

Sharswood Tower has won a prestigious Award of Excellence from the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO), an organization of affordable housing and community development professionals and industry partners.

The award recognizes outstanding innovation and achievement in housing and community development programs nationwide.

“The Philadelphia Housing Authority transformed a dilapidated senior high rise into a building that now complies current life safety and accessibility codes while providing a fresh modern look,” said NAHRO Senior Vice President Patricia Wells.

Sharswood Tower, a mid-century low-income senior apartment high-rise, was seriously dilapidated, inefficiently laid out, and did not meet current requirements for energy efficiency, life safety, and accessibility.

The modernization effort employed selective demolition, and installed new electrical, mechanical and sprinkler systems, along with insulation and windows. The building now complies with current life safety and energy codes and meets industry standards.

PHA reconfigured the units with new kitchens and bathrooms to meet accessibility codes and provide a fresh, modern look. It expanded the community room and common laundries and upgraded the outdoor patio. A new walking park creates a space for residents to exercise and get fresh air.

“Congratulations, Philadelphia, on your achievement,” Wells said in a video announcing the award.



And the Winners? PHA and You

Two of the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) communities for older adults - Nellie Reynolds Garden and Gladys B. Jacobs Manor have captured coveted Best of Apartment Living Awards from the Pennsylvania Apartment Association (PAA).

Nellie Gardens and Gladys B. Jacobs won gold awards for overall community excellence; Sharswood Tower and Plymouth Hall received platinum awards for overall excellence while Sharswood took home a gold award for maintenance care as well. In the award for overall excellence, communities are judged based upon the community's overall appearance and amenities. In the

maintenance category, the community's overall level of care is evaluated during a scheduled tour of common areas and a vacant-ready apartment.

“We greatly appreciate it when our colleagues in the leased housing industry recognize the work that PHA is doing to create quality, affordable housing throughout Philadelphia,” said President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. “PHA holds its property management team to a high standard. We want our developments to improve the communities where our developments are located. These awards are a great inspiration to all PHA employees to continue the hard work that's necessary to achieve excellence.”



A holiday season like no other

The holiday season in 2020 was almost unrecognizable. At Gladys B. Jacobs Manor, a single chair sat by the beautifully decorated Christmas tree in the community room.

Residents came, sat a spell, and chatted while socially distancing with friends. Afterward, they went back to their apartment with boxed holiday meal in hand. No holiday carols, no tree lighting ceremonies and no dancing as in past years.

A surge in COVID -19 infections changed the way PHA and Philadelphia celebrated the holidays. Resident council leaders worked alongside PHA staff to ensure everyone stayed connected while following health and safety guidelines.

For Thanksgiving, the PHA gave away 1,600 turkeys to residents who were selected by lottery.

Daily Dove Care, a home healthcare agency, and Unity in the Community, a non-profit organization dedicated to improving South Philadelphia, donated Thanksgiving boxes with turkeys along with the fixings to 300 families at Bartram Village. Philly Flavors FM Radio Station distributed 50 turkeys to families at Richard Allen Homes.

“We want to make sure that our resident population

during the holidays that we appreciate them, and we are thinking about them and their families,” said Zachary McNeil.

Additionally, residents at the 18 senior locations picked up boxed lunches during at a grab and go event. They came down to the community room to pick up boxed lunches and a bag of goodies including veggies, fruit, calendars, masks, and more.

While PHA helped to spread holiday joy by providing toys to PHA youth, it also teamed up with the Philadelphia 76ers, and Giant Food Stores for the annual “Holiday Hoopla” event, providing gifts to 150 children at Bartram Village and other properties. Each of these children received three gifts after writing a letter to Santa.

For 15 youths from Bartram Village, it was a day to remember. Each received, along with music and the signing hoopla, a personalized 76ers jersey, draft-day signing hat, and age-appropriate holiday toys.

As each signee entered the balloon-filled room at Bartram Village Community Center, Franklin, the 76ers mascot, greeted each individually amid the cheers of a handful of socially distanced Sixers and PHA staff.



New services and greater conveniences - Welcome to 2021!

With the help of the new Public Housing Customer Service Portal, PHA residents have been able to complete their business more quickly—avoiding unsafe lines and long wait times.

Important tasks such as paying rent, updating family information, submitting documents, and reviewing an account history currently can be handled by accessing the portal through the PHA homepage at www.pha.phila.gov.

Residents in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program also have had access to this new, state-of-the-art technology through the new Owner and Client Customer Service Portal, which has simplified tasks and made it easier for clients to access their accounts.

In April 2020, HCV introduced My Housing, an Online Recertification Portal, which allow clients to complete their required recertification with a smartphone, tablet or computer. Individuals can also complete a recertification by appointment at the PHA's Headquarters by visiting the PHA OneStop kiosk, which will be available to the public when PHA buildings reopen.

As for now, the Online Recertification Portal provides HCV clients several benefits:

- Secure submission of personal information.
- Access, view status, and input recertification information 24

hours/7 days a week.

- Uploading required documents.
- Messaging their PHA representative with any questions.

Additionally, the Leased Housing Portal makes it easier for tenants in HCV to communicate with the PHA staff, make requests, access important forms, view their HCV household information and obtain the status on an open request by using their smartphone, computer, or tablet.

They also can:

- message and submit documents to a PHA representative
- request income changes
- update household information
- request a transfer to a new unit
- view and print rent addendums
- view and request inspections

In the months ahead, new services are being added to make it even easier for Public Housing and HCV residents to manage their accounts.

Starting in early spring, Public Housing residents who need to report a loss of income or change in family composition will be able to do so completely online. Just visit the PHA Homepage (www.pha.phila.gov) and follow this path (Housing>Public Housing>Interim Recertifications); then

select the link “Public Housing Online Interim Recertification Request” and enter the information.

When the agency's site management offices and headquarters reopen, residents will have access to new user-friendly kiosks stationed at various PHA sites. Residents can pay rent, check out free training and career programs, and locate organizations that can have resources to provide the documentation they need to complete their applications.

The kiosks will allow residents to handle multiple tasks at one location: Residents can take photos of supporting documents and attach them to the forms before submission. They can also use the kiosk to print required documentation such as benefit letters and income reports, which are needed for recertification. For those participating in the Housing Choice Vouchers program, the kiosks can be used to update HCV allocation, provide access to the recertification portal or the landlord portal, and enable them to check out unit-based voucher listings.

PHA designed these kiosks to connect residents with new opportunities and a range of support services. The kiosks connect residents to the Job Bank, popular job training programs, upcoming PHA resident workshops and activities, and a host of resources including the Social Security Administration, Community Legal Services, LIHEAP, HUD, Family Court, and child support and collection services.



BOARD RESOLUTION UPDATES

APRIL 2020

Resolution 12085 – authorized PHA to submit to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”) a disposition application for a property at 1507 Brown St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

Resolution 12086 – approved the Fifth Amendment to PHA’s Moving to Work (“MTW” Agreement with HUD, to clarify that MTW agencies may waive third party entity regulations pertaining to inspections of PBV and HCV tenant-based units

Resolution 12087 – approved PHA’s Act 130 annual report, pursuant to the Pennsylvania Housing Authorities Law, for Fiscal Year 2020.

Resolution 12088 – approved a transfer of assistance under the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program (“RAD”) for forty-nine (49) units and a one million five hundred thousand dollar (\$1,500,000.00) loan to the HELP Philadelphia VI development, for an adaptive reuse of the former Reynolds School, which will contain fifty-five (55) units.

Resolution 12089 – authorized PHA activities in connection with the creation of a mixed-use retail development in the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood and a capital expenditure in support thereof, in an amount not to exceed twenty-five million dollars (\$25,000,000.00).

Resolution 12090 – authorized PHA to contract with Solid Waste Services, Inc. for solid waste removal services, with the total amount to be expended under the contract not to exceed two million six hundred eighty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,687,500.00).

Resolution 12091 – authorized PHA to contract with On Demand Services, LLC and Big Brother Little Brother Enterprises, LLC, for moving and relocation services, in an amount not to exceed six hundred sixty-six thousand dollars (\$666,000.00).

Resolutions 12092 and 12093 – authorized PHA to execute renewal Collective Bargaining Agreements with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (“AFSCME”, District Council, for both Local 2187 and for 2186 (respectively, in terms of the numbering of the resolutions).

MAY 2020

Resolution 12094 – approved the election of Lynette Brown-Sow as Chair of the Board, Herbert Wetzel as Vice-Chair and the following Board-appointed officers: Laurence Redican as Secretary, Celeste Fields as Treasurer, Andrea Bowman as Assistant Secretary, and Nnena Ukwu as Assistant Treasurer..

Resolution 12059 – approved to establish the schedule for regularly-scheduled public meetings of the PHA Board of Commissioners through May of 2021, as required under the amended By-Laws of the Board, as well as under the Sunshine Act, 65 Pa.C.S.A. §§ 701-716

Resolution 12096 - approved the Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Reports for the committees of Risk Management and Audit, as well as the standing Board committees of Finance, Policy & Planning, and Resident Services, pursuant to their respective resolutions or charters, for the period from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

Resolution 12097 - authorized the negotiation and execution of the ground lease, as well as related contracts with the developer, Hunt Development Group, LLC, or affiliate, and documents necessary to develop, finance, construct, and operate the Development, and to provide a financing commitment in an amount of up to four million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$4,700,000.00

Resolution 12098 - authorized PHA, to negotiate, finalize, and submit various documents to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for approval and undertake other required actions in order to: 1) award a five hundred thousand dollar (\$500,000.00) long term loan of MTW funds for capital expenses to both the Rafael Porrata-Doria senior development (30 units) and to the Mamie Nichols development (33 units, of which 20 will be public housing units), which development includes family units and units with a preference for veterans with special needs; 2) award an ACC operating subsidy for the Rafael Porrata-Doria development; and 3) change the February 2020 designation of Mamie Nichols from a Mixed Finance - Operating

Subsidy Only to a Mixed Finance Operating Subsidy and Capital transaction.

JUNE 2020

Resolution 12099 – attached in Appendix 1, was presented by Lopa Kolluri, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Development and Operating Officer, to authorize PHA to enter into an agreement with the City of Philadelphia for the establishment of a Shared Space Housing Pilot Program, utilizing twenty-five (25) vacant and uninhabitable scattered sites to be leased to formerly homeless, youth aging out of foster care, and other hard-to-serve populations. Vice Chair Wetzel, as Chair of the Policy and Planning Committee to which the resolution was sent for committee review, moved for its adoption. The motion was seconded and, following discussion and there being no public comment (for which opportunity was provided, as it was for all the resolutions, pursuant to the protocols regarding comments for virtual meetings), the motion was unanimously approved, by roll call.

Resolution 12100 – attached in Appendix 1, was presented by Jennifer Ragen, Director of Policy, to approve the submission of PHA’s Moving to Work (“MTW”) Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2020 (“MTW Annual Report”) to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”), Vice Chair Wetzel, as Chair of the Policy and Planning Committee to which the resolution was sent for committee review, moved for its adoption. The motion was seconded and, there being no discussion other than Vice-Chair Wetzel noting that the committee recommended adoption, it was unanimously approved, by roll call

Resolution 12101 – attached in Appendix 1, was presented by Wendi Barish -Senior Deputy General Counsel, to authorize PHA to execute a renewal Collective Bargaining Agreement between PHA and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, District Council 33, Local 934, which represents several clerical classifications, Housing Choice Voucher housing/building inspectors, and warehouse workers. The three-year agreement will cover the period from April 1, 2019, through March 31, 2022. Commissioner Callahan, as Chair of the Finance Committee, which reviewed the resolution prior to its presentation to the Board, moved for its approval. Following a second and there being no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved, by roll call.

JULY 2020

Resolution 12102 – authorized PHA to modify existing contracts with three companies for concrete repair services: Ocean Construction, LLC; Milestone Construction Management, Inc.; and Mayfield Site Contractors, Inc., to increase the aggregate amount by three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000.00), to two million three hundred thousand dollars (\$2,300,000.00).

Resolution 12103 – authorized re-appointment of Francis McLaughlin to the Audit Committee, for a two-year term, as recommended by the Audit Committee. Commissioner Purnell as Chair of the Audit Committee, which reviewed the resolution prior to its presentation to the Board, moved for its approval.

Resolution 12104 – authorized PHA to contract with Kleinfelder, Inc.; Duffield Associates, Inc.; Batta Environmental Associates, Inc.; Brownfield Redevelopment Solutions, Inc.; AECOM Technical Services, Inc.; ARKF, Inc.; Sci-Tek Consultants, Inc.; Brinkerhoff Environmental Services, Inc.; TAC Environmental Corp.; REPSG, Inc.; and Terraphase Engineering for the provision of Environmental Engineering Consultant Services, in a total aggregate amount not to exceed seven million five hundred thousand dollars (\$7,500,000.00).

Resolution 12105 – authorized PHA to contract with DocuVault Delaware Valley, LLC for the provision of Moving, Storage, and Record Retention Services, in a total amount not to exceed two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000.00).

Resolution 12106 – authorized PHA to authorize a contract with NEPC, LLC for defined contribution plan consultant services in a total amount not to exceed five hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$550,000.00).

Resolution 12107 – authorized PHA to authorize a contract with NEPC, LLC for defined benefit

plan consultant services, in a total amount not to exceed one million seventy-five thousand dollars (\$1,075,000.00). Commissioner Callahan, as Chair of the Finance Committee, which reviewed the resolution prior to its presentation to the Board, moved for its approval. After a second, Commissioner Callahan stated that the Finance Committee recommended approval. There being no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved, by roll call.

SEPTEMBER 2020

Resolution 12108 – approved appointment of Commissioner Camarda to a two-year term, pursuant to the Audit Committee charter.

Resolution 12109 – authorized PHA to conclude a policy of insurance for Workers’ Compensation and Employer’s Liability Insurance coverage with Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, so as to continue to provide the necessary workers’ compensation and employer’s liability insurance coverage as required by law, in a maximum amount not to exceed thirteen million one hundred seventy-four thousand four hundred forty-seven dollars (\$13,174,447.00).

Resolution 12110 – authorized PHA to contract with Temple University to provide Community Health Worker career training to PHA’s residents and employment opportunities, to serve PHA residents who have been impacted by COVID-19, with the total amount to be expended not to exceed one million six hundred fifty-nine thousand eight hundred twenty dollars (\$1,659,820.00).

Resolution 12111 – authorized PHA to contract for the provision of congregate meal services to elderly and disabled PHA residents, as funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”), which grant PHA has received for over the past fifteen (15) years. The contracts would be with Foodarama Caterers, Inc.; Victoria’s Kitchen; and Joshua’s Catering, for up to five (5) years and with the total maximum aggregate amount to be expended under the contracts not to exceed two hundred fifty two thousand one hundred fifty dollars (\$252,150.00).

Resolution 12112 – authorized PHA to enter into a task order contract with Dale Corporation for construction management services for Blumberg Phase 4A - Demolition, Infrastructure and New Construction of 58 Enterprise Green Community Certified, Rental Assistance Demonstration Units and Community Building, in an amount not to exceed twenty six million two hundred seven thousand seven hundred twenty eight dollars (\$26,207,728.00).

Resolution 12113 – authorized PHA to adopt an amendment to the PHA Defined Contribution Retirement Savings Plan that will provide employees to access needed funds in the event they or a household member has experienced an adverse financial impact due to the COVID- 19 pandemic, as authorized in Section 2202 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”).

OCTOBER 2020

Resolution 12114 – approved adopting the comprehensive Annual Financial Report of the Philadelphia Housing Authority for the Fiscal Year ending March 31, 2020

Resolution 12115 – approved authorizing PHA to contract for the provision of meal services, primarily for resident events or emergencies, with Panache Catering, Philadelphia Catering Company, and Victoria’s Kitchen, in a total not to exceed amount of six hundred twenty-five thousand dollars (\$625,000.00).

Resolution 12116 – approved authorizing PHA to award eight project based vouchers for affordable rental housing to Nueva Esperanza for its mixed use new construction Amor Development Project at 4615-21 N. 5th St. in North Philadelphia, which will also include approximately

five thousand (5,000) square feet of ground floor commercial space.

Resolution 12117 – approved authorizing PHA to undertake all necessary actions related to the development of new affordable senior housing (seventy eight units) and a community center as part of the Susquehanna Development, including to negotiate and execute a development agreement with the Developer and/or its affiliate; acquire parcels from the Philadelphia LandBank; negotiate, execute and enter into all related contracts and documents necessary or appropriate to develop, finance, construct, and operate the Development, including the RAD conversion, as detailed in the resolution, and provide a financing commitment up to an amount of six million five hundred thousand dollars (\$6,500,000.00).

Resolution 12118 – approved authorizing PHA to contract with Ocean Construction, LLC; Milestone Construction Management, Inc. ; Mayfield Site Contractors, Inc.; Creativescape, Inc. ; DMPAG, Inc., LLC; Olivieri & Associates, Inc.; G & B Construction Group, Inc.; and Premier Building Restoration , Inc. for concrete repair services, in a total amount not to exceed ten million dollars (\$10,000,000.00).

Resolution 12119 – approved authorizing PHA to enter into contracts with Cenova, Inc. ; Creativescape, Inc.; and DMPAG LLC for snow removal services at various PHA administrative sites, in a total contract amount not to exceed two million eight hundred forty-seven thousand nine hundred fifty-three dollars (\$2,847,953.00).

Resolution 12120 – approved authorizing PHA to enter into contracts with Batta Environmental Associates, Inc. ; USA Environmental Management, Inc.; Brinkerhoff Environmental Services; and Compliance Consultants, Inc. for asbestos and indoor air quality monitoring and soil testing, for the health and safety of its residents and employees, in a total amount not to exceed seven hundred eighteen thousand eight hundred ninety-two dollars (\$718, 892.00).

Resolution 12121 – approved authorizing PHA to lease the former Norris Community Center, at 1915 N. 11th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122, which is currently unused since there is a new community center, to Temple University for community based programming. The programing will include workforce and training programs, offered in conjunction with the Temple University’s Lenfest North Philadelphia Workforce Initiative, to provide resources to PHA and Norris community residents

Resolution 12122 – approved authorizing the creation of a limited housing opportunities program that would allow for a special preference, for a combined total of twenty-five (25) vouchers and/or public housing opportunities, to be provided to homeless individuals due to the COVID-19 crisis. PHA would enter into an MOU with one or more service providers to refer individuals or families

to PHA for placement. All placements must occur before December 31, 2020.

NOVEMBER 2020

Resolution 12123 – approved authorizing PHA to undertake actions related to completing the conversion of forty-three (43) of the forty-eight (48) units in Queens Row Apartments, from public housing to project-based vouchers under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (“RAD”) program, including providing funding in an amount not to exceed three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000.00) for a replacement reserve deposit.

Resolution 12124 – approved authorizing PHA to undertake actions related to completing the conversion of fifty-five (55) units at Queen Lane Apartments from public housing to project-based vouchers under the RAD program, including providing funding in an amount not to exceed eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000.00) for transaction expenses.

Resolution 12125 – approved authorizing PHA to undertake actions related to completing the conversion of fifty-one (51) units at Norris Apartments from public housing to project-based vouchers under the RAD program, including providing funding for transaction expenses, in an amount not to exceed eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000.00), as well as replacement reserve expenses, in an amount not to exceed one million seven hundred ten thousand dollars (\$1,710,000.00).

DECEMBER 2020

Resolution 12126 – approved authorizing PHA to submit its MTW Annual plan for fiscal year 2022, including RAD significant amendments, to HUD and to undertake all actions to obtain HUD approval and implement the plan.

Resolution 12127 – approved authorizing PHA to submit a proposed amendment to its MTW Annual Plan (“Plan”) for fiscal year 2021 to HUD and to undertake all actions to obtain HUD approval and implement the plan, as amended.

Resolution 12128 – approved authorizing contracts for roofing related services with Clark Roofing Company, Milestone Construction Management, Inc., and Memis Roofing, LLC.

Resolution 12129 – approved authorizing a contract for elevator inspection services with CG Global Management solutions, LLC.

Resolution 12130 – approved authorizing acquisition of the partnership interest of the limited partner investor in Mt. Olivet, LP and Tasker Phase I, LP.

Resolution 12131 – approved authorizing the disposition of up to fourteen (14) properties.

Resolution 12132 – approved authorizing the execution of a renewal collective bargaining agreement with the fraternal order of housing police.

2021

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING AUTHORITY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

The third Thursday of every month at 3:00 pm

April 15 | May 20 | June 17 | July 15

To learn about PHA Covid-19 Board Meeting Protocols visit bit.ly/PHAvirtual

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IT'S VACCINATION TIME



IT'S VACCINATION TIME



IT'S VACCINATION TIME



IT'S VACCINATION TIME



FSS Program sets PHA residents on the path to financial freedom

As the COVID-19 pandemic struck, Keisha English found herself standing on solid financial ground. What's more, she achieved this goal without sacrificing a lot of the things her family needed.

In 2015, Ms. English joined the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Program, which seeks to help PHA residents bring home more money. The program is designed so that when families' incomes increase, the portion of that extra income that would have otherwise gone to rent instead goes into an interest-bearing escrow account.

Participants meet with a coach and advisor to set contract goals and discuss progress, as well as unforeseen obstacles and challenges. If they reach their goals within five years, FSS members are granted access to all the funds in the escrow account to be used however they see fit. Some PHA residents have used the money to go to college. Others used it to make big purchases such as a car or a home.

While enrolled in FSS, Ms. English attended financial counseling sessions regularly, and learned how to boost and maintain her credit score. With a new support network in place, she moved up at her place of employment and increased her income.

Her hard work and commitment to financial freedom has paid off: Ms. English saved a total of \$33,066 in her escrow account, which she plans to use to purchase her own home.

In January, 2021, FSS program at the PHA marked

a major milestone by honoring 39 residents who have graduated from the program, which is free and available to tenants in subsidized housing.

Ms. English and two fellow graduates, Tifani Ross and Bernice Campbell, each had a chance to share their amazing achievements stories with PHA Commissioners, staff and other virtual meetings.

"This is an incredible model that has allowed our current FSS participants (approximately 500 PHA and HCV residents) to collectively save \$1.3 million in their escrow accounts," said Makeeda Holley, Vice President, Resident Programs and Partnerships for PHA. "Additionally, more than half of the participants have increased their credit score on average by 58 points."

The PHA's FSS program is on track to become the largest in the country over the next year. It is powered by our two partners, Compass Working Capital (Compass) and Clarifi, a consumer credit counseling service, and seeks to serve 2,000 families by 2022. The program has enrolled 505 residents, more than doubling its enrollment in the past two years. On average, a FSS client saves \$7,800 from their rent payments, Clarifi reports.

This is the program for PHA residents interested in:

- Increasing their income
- Establishing and maintaining good credit
- Accessing quality financial products
- Building assets

To apply, call Clarifi's FSS hotline at 267-546-1153.



In January 2021, PHA and Clarifi honored 339 residents who have graduated from the FSS program since the partnership began, including Jacqueline Reynolds (pictured above). Ms. Reynolds reached her goal of becoming a homeowner in October 2020. During her time in the program, she increased her income and credit score, completed housing counseling, and built over \$8,000 in escrow, which she used for a (See attached file: Reynolds 1 PHoto for FSS story.jpg) downpayment on her home.

“It’s a long road, and it’s not an easy road, but you keep striving. Once you get to where you need to be, it’s worth it. The feeling of owning a home is great - knowing that I’m not paying somebody rent anymore, but paying my own mortgage.” – Jacqueline Reynolds

Build a career in the drone industry

Companies like Amazon are using drones to deliver packages to millions of customers. The use of drone is growing across many industries .

Drones already are used to help businesses and institutions work smarter. For example, a drone might be used to fly over a roof to assess storm damages. Police departments are using them to encourage and enforce social distancing guidelines. At long-term healthcare facilities, they help locate wandering patients with dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

Each day reveals new career possibilities.

Philadelphia OIC is working to demystify drones and to make available the increasing number of job opportunities that exist with drone technology. The non-profit, which offers a variety of workforce programs in conjunction with the PHA, seeks to prepare students for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The pre-apprenticeship drone technology training program is one of the many tuition free programs it offers.

In the program, participants learn to fly drones and prepare for the Federal Aviation Administration's Part 107 certification test for small UAVs. They also learn

how to market these newly acquired skills to employers.

Philadelphia OIC's smart energy technical training program, which will be offered at PHA Workforce Center for the first time beginning Feb. 1, 2021, is another example of how drones are changing work as we know it. Drones complement solar panel installation as they are used to gauge roof integrity to mitigate risks associated with the job.

Coupling the smart energy training with the drone technology training exponentially increases the marketability, skills and income potential of our job-seekers. Once they receive their FAA certification, graduates of the eight-week drone training program increased their income potential to \$200-\$300 an hour.

For information, contact PHA's Workforce Center at Vaux for an additional details and instructions on how to proceed. To contact PHA regarding opportunities for job training, homeownership, or educational programs contact us:

Email: vaux@pha.phila.gov

Text: 215-617-5462

Phone: 215-684-8926



Where to go to get the job you want

The PHA Workforce Center at the Vaux Community Center is your one-stop-shop to explore job training, placement opportunities, homeownership services, education programs and other initiatives that support residents' upward mobility.

Classes that are currently recruiting:

- Temple University's Online GED program
- Philadelphia OIC-HiSET (GED) program
- Philadelphia OIC- Hospitality Job Training Programs
- Philadelphia OIC- BankWorks Job Training Program
- Philadelphia OIC- Smart Energy Technician Job Training Program.... NEW PROGRAM-Starts February 1st
- District 1199c Training Fund-Nursing Aide (Starts March 2021)...NEW PROGRAM
- Philabundance Culinary Arts Job Training Program....NEW PROGRAM Starts March 8th

Careerlink sponsored WIOA Job training programs...Start date to be in the Winter of 2021

- Bookkeeping
- IT Training: Network Technician
- Carpentry
- CDL-Truck Driving Part A and B
- HVAC
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Plumbing Nursing Aide Training
- Building Maintenance
- Medical Billing
- Residential and Commercial Electricity Business Administration
- Pharmacy Technician
- Dialysis Technician (NEW!!!)

To contact PHA regarding opportunities for job training, homeownership, or educational programs contact us:
Email: vaux@pha.phila.gov
Text: 215-617-5462
Phone: 215-684-8926



BECOME A PHILLYSEEDS SCHOLAR

Apply now for the 2021 PhillySEEDS Scholarship

The PhillySEEDS Annual Scholars Program assists PHA residents that are beginning or continuing their education at a college, university or trade school.

These scholarships are awarded every year prior to the start of the Fall Semester.

How to apply:

- Complete the 2021 Scholarship application
- Be a high school graduate with cumulative GPA of 2.5 or above or have GED Diploma
- Submit an official transcript
- Write a 500 to 750 word essay
- Submit two letters of recommendation

Application Due

Tuesday, June 15, 2021 – 5pm

Mail or drop off by hand

PhillySEEDS Scholarship Committee
2300 W Master Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121
(Entrance on 24th Street side)

email

Marco.Ferreira@pha.phila.gov

Download the 2021 Scholarship Application: www.phillyseeds.org



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We are accepting applications for
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- BankWork\$
- Culinary Arts
- Drone Technology
- High School Equivalency (HSET)
- Hospitality & Tourism
- OIC Workforce Academy
(Alternative Public High School 16-21 years of age)
- Re-Entry Services
- Smart Energy Technical Training



Opening
opportunities
for all

Program Requirements:

- 18 years of age and older
- HS Diploma or Equivalent
- Valid State ID
- Successful completion of entrance exam
- Additional prerequisites may be required per program

Supportive Services Include:

- Job Placement Assistance
- Transportation Assistance
- Digital & Financial Literacy
- Referrals to public assistance programs
- Additional services available based on SNAP eligibility

**To apply visit: philaoic.org/apply
or email: admissions@philaoic.org**

The keys to a better financial future

Anita McDaniel's husband wanted her to purchase her own home so she would have long-term financial security. She reached that goal at 85 years of age; and then lost her husband shortly after they moved in.

"Throughout the years, we would go to workshops but around 2017, I went to workshop and decided to purchase," Mrs. McDaniel said. "My husband was sick but he encouraged me to move forward so that I would not be relocated."

The Philadelphia Housing Authority's Opening Doors to Affordable Homeownership Program is helping to turn long-time renters like McDaniel into homeowners. Every new homeowner goes through the homeownership readiness process, where they learn budgeting skills to help them save \$2,000; complete credit counseling to obtain at least a 620 middle credit score, and learn about the homeownership process through housing counseling classes. They also received one-on-one assistance with a licensed mortgage professional to receive a pre-approval letter from a lender or bank. Seventy-two PHA residents, including McDaniel, managed to complete the program this year, and a few more still are in the pipeline. In the last 10 years, over 500 of

the people served by PHA have finished the program since it began.

"We have steadily increased the number of subsidized families who are ready to become homebuyers," said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. "There are plenty of affordable neighborhoods in Philadelphia, even in the wake of renewed investment in some parts of the city, and our residents are taking advantage of those opportunities aided by low interest rates. These former PHA renters now have an asset that's a centerpiece to building wealth. Congratulations to them for seizing the opportunity to find economic mobility and achieving the American dream!"

The most difficult part of the process was making up her mind to buy the home, according to McDaniel. "I had been a tenant for 38 years," she said. "But ultimately I decided to buy . . . PHA provided some money for down payment and closing cost," she added.

Her advice to those who seek a more stable financial future? "Go head and try it. Don't wait," she said. For more information, call 215-684-8926 and visit vaux@pha.phila.gov



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Are You Ready to be a
Homeowner?

*You could qualify for
down payment, closing costs,
or monthly mortgage assistance.*

To make an appointment call

215.684.8926

Or visit us at

**Vaux Big Picture High School
2400 Master Street
Philadelphia, PA 19121**



New PHAPD Chief To Focus On Training, Community Engagement

Antoinette Eberhart, the new police chief for PHAPD, wants to more fully engage the community in public safety efforts.

She also pledges as much training as possible for the officers, focusing on de-escalation, cultural diversity and competency, and behavioral health. “The safety and security of our residents is PHAPD’s primary concern. Our purpose every day is to protect the residents and their quality of life,” Chief Eberhart said.

PHAPD officers must have the necessary resources while on duty if they are to perform at their best, says Eberhart.

“Our officers are trained and supplied with the tools they need to deal with any issues they encounter when responding to calls,” she said.

Eberhart brings hands-on experience a community-oriented approach to this position. She previously served as PHAPD’s Deputy Chief for two years and brings almost 30 years of local law enforcement experience to the position. She previously served as PHAPD’s deputy chief.

She spent more than two decades with the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD), where she worked her way through the ranks to become a lieutenant. She also held positions within the PPD’s Training Bureau and Internal Affairs. Prior to the PPD, she worked as an officer at one of the city’s correctional

facilities.

“Chief Eberhart brings a strong work ethic and level of experience in community engagement and training that will greatly benefit the officers under her command and the residents we serve,” said PHA President and CEO Kelvin A. Jeremiah. “She makes every resident’s concern a priority and maintains open communication with both resident leaders and the PPD, efforts that keep her finger on the pulse of our communities at all times.”

PHAPD meets with residents monthly throughout its developments to conduct roundtable discussions, and also attends special community meetings centered on specific issues. Through these in-person conversations, Eberhart and her officers gather information directly from residents to inform how PHAPD can best address any issues and identify resources and tools that might be needed.

PHAPD also meets regularly with the PPD and provides updates that allow both agencies to better serve the communities.

“We’re constantly working with the PPD to recognize ways we can keep our communities safer,” said Eberhart. “We work with them to help reduce the shootings that are happening across the city. Together, we work to reduce crime in our city.”



Take a few steps, and make a few friends

Even during the Covid-19 pandemic, PHA’s 18 locations for older adults continue to offer ways to have fun and remain connected with friends and neighbors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During February and March, residents will find a number of workshops to attend. Among those already planned for PHA developments: card making to commemorate, for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, African mask making for Black History month, jewelry making and more.

Check with resident leaders for details, as dates and activities vary among senior housing locations.

Holmecrest Homes, Revonne Watson, president

of the resident council, and her slate of council leaders, have arranged a number of activities in recent months that allow individuals to social distance as they get together.

Volunteers recently wrapped presents to hand out at the grab and go holiday luncheon in December. They made beautiful greeting cards, and jewelry – all while practicing social distancing. The cards were given out to residents throughout the building to spread holiday cheer.

“Get out and exercise your mind and your brain,” Watson advised. “We are encouraging everyone to come out and get together. We social distance and limit the number of people in a room.”



Do You Have Questions About the COVID-19 Vaccine?

There are a lot of questions about the new COVID-19 vaccine. To help, we have collected a list of the most frequently asked questions from people about to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Don't see your question listed? Visit www.phila.gov/covid-19 for more FAQs and updates about the vaccine.

How does the COVID-19 vaccine work?

The COVID-19 vaccine is a medicine that helps your immune system fight the COVID-19 virus. It comes in the form of two injections.

1. The first injection primes your immune system, helping it recognize the virus.
2. The second injection strengthens your immune response. After receiving both injections, the vaccine will greatly reduce your chances of getting sick.

Are you injecting the virus?

No. The COVID-19 vaccine contains incomplete pieces of the COVID-19 virus. None of the COVID-19 vaccines contain live COVID-19 virus cells.

Is a COVID-19 vaccine necessary?

We strongly recommend getting vaccinated. The vaccine decreases your chances of catching the COVID-19 virus. It also reduces the spread of the virus, and helps keep your family, neighbors, and friends safe.

Has the vaccine been tested?

Yes. The vaccine has been tested in large clinical trials of 43,000 and 30,000 volunteers. It gets approved by an Emergency Use Authorization, and is monitored during trials and after approval and in widespread use.

Do I still need to wear a mask and social distance after getting vaccinated?

Yes. We must continue to try and stop the spread of the virus. Please continue wearing a mask and social distancing until most people have the vaccine.

Can I get COVID-19 after getting vaccinated?

The COVID-19 vaccine greatly reduces your chances of getting sick. But, we won't know how long immunity lasts until we have more data. Please continue wearing a mask and social distancing after receiving the vaccine.

What is the vaccine efficacy rate?

Large clinical trials show the both Pfizer and Moderna vaccine's efficacy rate is approximately 95%.

Can children receive the vaccine?

No. The current COVID-19 vaccines are only available to those 16 years and older.

Will my medication interact with the vaccine?

No. There are no known drug interactions with the COVID-19 vaccine.

What are the potential side-effects?

Short-term side effects include a sore arm, headache, fatigue, chills, and fever. These side effects are signals that your immune system is working.





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