

THE HRHA NEWSLETTER

News, announcements, and more from the
Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority



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Interested in subscribing? Questions?
Contact
vhill@harrisonburgha.com

Kelley Street Garden



Dinner



During July, HRHA and James Madison University collaborated again to bring our local community the Kelley Street Garden Dinner. July 22nd marks the third year that this dinner has been celebrated. It recognizes HRHA resident gardeners who have taken steps to participate in the garden and grow vegetables.

In addition to the resident gardeners, this event also recognizes the master gardeners that visit the garden twice a month to be advisors to the resident gardeners. They help pass on their gardening knowledge to our residents and dedicate their time to helping the garden succeed.

HRHA thanks our master gardeners for their dedication and commitment to the garden and the resident gardeners. HRHA would also like to thank and recognize James Madison University for being committed to sustainability and community partners for putting on the Kelley Street Garden Dinner for the third year with HRHA.

Housing Choice Voucher Updates



HUD has implemented new inspection standards to guide housing inspectors. These guidelines ensure accurate and reliable safety inspections across the board. The National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) prioritize health, safety, and function over the appearance of rental units. These standards go into effect on October 1, 2023. Landlords with rental units occupied by housing choice voucher holders will be required to adhere to these standards as mandated by HUD. The main objective of these new resident-centered standards is to ensure that residents live in safe and sanitary conditions. We welcome any questions or concerns you might have. You can reach us by emailing hcvteam@harrisonburgrha.com.



Photo Courtesy of VCDC

VCDC Mission Elevation

HRHA is excited to join VCDC's Mission Elevation class of 2024 in Cohort 6. Mission Elevation focuses on providing organizations with high-quality resources and tools, thus helping empower them to serve their communities better. This class involves participating with five other organizations to exchange thoughts, ideas, and experiences, thus helping to learn new strategies and techniques to share with their respective organizations and strengthen community connections.

Executive Director's Corner



HRHA has successfully implemented its moving to work policies and procedures, which allows us to expand tenants' self-sufficiency and housing choice. Many thanks to the residents who provided input and staff for their work on operationalizing these significant program changes.

Staff is also focused on improving community engagement through our Kelley Street Garden dinner, youth summer reading contest, and planned community partner and resident recognition banquet in the fall.

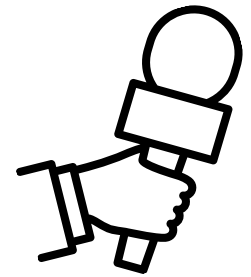
We are also working on establishing a community advisory board to improve residents' health and safety outcomes. This is a very exciting initiative, and we will be part of a statewide coalition working with the Eastern Virginia Medical School to advance these goals.

HRHA is working on updating its Annual Plan, MTW supplement, 2024 budget, and Admission and Continued Occupancy policies and procedures. These will be presented to the Board of Commissioners at the August meeting with a 45-day public comment period.

-Michael Wong

Staff Highlight: Victoria Hill

HRHA manages a variety of programs, grants, and initiatives. We serve hundreds of families through housing vouchers, programs like Family Self-Sufficiency, and city-wide campaigns. Through 2023, we plan to highlight members of the HRHA team who make this work possible.



1. What is your role in HRHA?

I am the Resident Services and Communications Coordinator for HRHA. I manage the housing authority's website and social media page. I have the wonderful opportunity to oversee the Kelley Street Garden, and I am a Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator assisting participants and coordinating FSS events and activities.

2. What is an important skill a successful professional should have?

An important skill to have is the ability to collaborate with others. Through collaboration, whether someone is developing a project or using problem-solving skills, having other team members to work with allows you to see and hear about others' points of view. This is also a vital learning opportunity to hear the perspectives of others with expertise in a specific area and learn from their experiences.

3. Do you have any goals or aspirations in your position?

In my position, I aim to help as many participants as possible reach their goals. I enjoy collaborating with my colleagues and community partners to bring knowledge and exciting learning opportunities to our local community.

4. What is one fun fact others may not know about you?

I love reading books and learning about new things. I am a speedy reader because I have read books since I was young, so I can finish a book within a day.

5. What do you wish more people in our community knew about affordable housing, our families, or the voucher program?

I hope that awareness about the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program spreads within our community. Since HRHA has become a Move to Work Agency, our FSS program has seen several positive changes. Participants in this program are given flexibility that allows them to select from pre-outlined goals under topics such as education, financial, homeownership, and work activities that help bring them closer to self-sufficiency. The goals themselves help bring others closer to self-sufficiency, but even more so, these goals are connected to cash incentives. So once a goal is completed, money is rewarded! These funds can help with immediate expenses but also help contribute towards long-term goals such as savings for a down payment on a home.



Harrisonburg Redevelopment & Housing Authority

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+ *HRHA Lineweaver & Annex*



To reach all HRHA offices, call: (540) 434-7386

Website



www.harrisonburgrha.com

Facebook



@harrisonburgrha

HRHA Board of Commissioners

HRHA is governed by a seven-member Board of Commissioners appointed by the Harrisonburg City Council. The Board establishes the Authority's policies and procedures and appoints the Executive Director.

Board of Commissioner meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00PM.

Meeting location/access will be posted prior to meetings and in line with local health guidelines.

+ Michael Wong, (Not a commissioner)

Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer

+ Kevin Coffman - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2023

+ Luciano Benjamin - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2024

+ Gil Colman - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Shonda Green - Commissioner

Term Expires: November 29, 2025

+ Kenneth Kettler - Commissioner

Term Expires: February 1, 2024

+ Amanda Leech - Commissioner

Term Expires: October 13, 2024

+ Janet E. Harvey - Commissioner

Term Expires: April 25, 2027

Upcoming Events: Back to School Bash

The start of the school season is right around the corner. As students and families prepare for the new school season, HRHA is also beginning preparations for our Back to School Bash. This event features providing backpacks filled with free school supplies for the students of our Family Self-Sufficiency participants. Stay tuned to the following HRHA newsletter to learn more!

