



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, August 19 2020 Canton Valley Community Room, Fitchburg, MA

Pursuant to Massachusetts Governor Baker's Executive Order issued on March 12th, 2020 in response to the declared Covid-19 State of Emergency epidemic and per the guidelines set by DHCD's Public Housing Notice 2020-11, and 2020-16, a Regular Meeting of the Fitchburg Housing Authority was called to order by Chairperson, Linda Byrne at 10:00 AM on Wednesday, August 19 2020. The FHA Board met remotely and physically in the Canton Valley Community Room in the City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts. The public was invited to listen to the meeting via phone.

Present:

FHA Board Members:

Linda Byrne, Chair

David Rousseau, Treasurer

David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer

FHA Staff:

Douglas Bushman, Executive Director

Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director

Kim Hergert, Finance Director

Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant / Bookkeeper

Genesis Ruiz, Director of Family Housing

Doug Carpenter, Green Acres Maintenance Foreman

Nathan Walker & Nick Fortin- FHA Intern (In at 10:30am, Left at 10:50am)

FPD-Officer Bourne

Tracey, Cheryl, Jean – Green Acres Tenant

Absent: Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair

Adam Goodwin, Member

Quorum: Yes (Quorum Requirement: Three FHA Board Members)

1. Motion to Open Meeting

Chairperson, Linda Byrne opened the meeting at 10:00am.

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

2. Motion to Open Public Comments

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

Tracey, Green Acre tenant, claimed that she is not happy about the Green Acres Tenant Association Election Process. The Board, Douglas Bushman and tenants had a lot of discussion about the Green Acres Tenant Association election matter. Executive Director explained the FHA will assist and make sure all GA tenants are aware of the Election Process, one tenant (Jean) who remotely joined the meeting claimed that she cannot hear the meeting. The FHA staff will send the Minutes later to her. Tracey suggested that a robocall should be sent for the Board meeting because she was not aware when the Board Meeting was held. Andrew Skoog explained that the Meeting notice was post at the City of Fitchburg, FHA community Room, hallway, offices and also on the FHA Website. Douglas Bushman added that Youth (6 years to 17 years old) Fitness Activity will be held on this Sat for Section 8 participants and Green Acres residents.

3. Motion to Close Public Comments

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

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4. **Motion to Approve Minutes of Meeting held on July 29th, 2020**
Move: David Rousseau **Second: David Basilio** **All in favor**

5. **Motion to Approve Executive Session Minutes of Meeting held on July 29th, 2020**
Move: David Rousseau **Second: David Basilio** **All in favor**

6. **Review and Modifications of FHA Personnel Policy** -still reviewing

7. **Motion to Approve FHA Payables for July-August FY 2020**
Move: David Rousseau **Second: David Basilio** **All in favor**

8. **Motion to Approve July Financials FY 2020.**
Move: David Basilio **Second: David Rousseau** **All in favor**

9. **COVID 19 Updates, Budget, & Event**

Douglas Bushman updated that the FHA has resumed the seven day a week disinfecting due to the recent COVID Isolation case at the Durkin apartments. Professional disinfecting has been done twice. He also stated the CARES Act and other COVID Funds total \$75,653.00. On July 29 2020 DHCD has issued Public Housing Notice #2020-17 and authorized Housing Authority to Re-open & Resume Public Housing Inspections, unit construction and work orders. The new system began on Monday August 17th. Also, he updated the Resident Service Coordinators Christy Mylott and Frances Nolivovs to combat the social isolation problem during COVID-19. RSC organized a couple events (Cookie & Lemonade event at Daniels Heights co-hosted by the Highlands, Ice-Cream Social event, and Cotton Candy & Popcorn Social Event at Green Acres). David Rousseau had a concern about those who didn't wear masks when they enter the apartments. Executive Director answered the Board of Health is the only one able to make this mandatory. David Rousseau asked the Police Officer to speak to tenants to have people wear a mask or may get fined. Fitchburg Police Dept. Officer Bourne commented that BOH has the authority to order and it is more a supervisory decision for this issue.

10. **Motion to Revise FHA By-Laws (Adopted May 17th, 1995 and Revised March 21st, 2012) to Change Dates of the FHA Board Meeting:**

The Executive Director explained that this Motion will amend the Bylaw and would change the day of the monthly meeting to the last Thursday of each month with time established at 08:30am. However, the suggested Bylaw change would also confirm the power of the FHA Board to make changes in the monthly meeting schedule as required. The Executive Director noted that the FHA staff could not locate a signed copy of the Bylaws. The Board may want to consider a review of the Bylaws at this time for additional updates from 2012. This motion also authorizes the Executive Director to start to revise the By Laws. Linda Byrne, Chair noted Mary G was ok to move to the last Thursday. He will ask Legal advice from Attorney Dresco or, if he is not able to, he could recommend another attorney who is very familiar with the Open Meeting Law and By-Laws.

A) **Motion to change the Dates of the FHA Board Meeting to the last Thursday of the Month.**

Move: David Basilio **Second: David Rousseau** **All in favor**

B) **Motion to revise By-Laws with attorney who is familiar with the By Laws/Open Meeting Laws. (Estimated cost will be \$2500-\$3000.)**

Move: David Basilio **Second: David Rousseau** **All in favor**

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11. **Record Destruction Updates**-Two Interns will work on this project in two weeks.
12. **Blueprints & Architectural & Technical Drawing Organizing**. -Jose Lopes will work on this.
13. **DHCD Annual & Capital Improvement Plan**.
Hold Public Hearing to review Annual and CIP Plans: Monday September 21th. at 11am
→ (Correction: 10am because this schedule has been already posted to the public 40 days prior).
NEXT BOARD MEETING will be held on September 21th at 10am at Durkin Community Room.
14. **The New Green Acres**: Green Acres is past the beginning stages of its beautification. Fitchburg Police patrol was increased for safety. We had a quiet summer. Children played in Green Acres. Christy Mylott and Frances Nolivos have great resources for a Domestic Violence Packet and great relationship with FPD.
15. **Vacancy & HAFIS Report**:
 Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director, updated the Vacancy Report. As of August 1, the vacancy is decreased from 31 units to 30 units. And the vacant unit days increased from 5,708 to 5,827. However, of the 30 vacancies, 6 are Ready to Occupy (RTO) units, 14 are asbestos off-line units leaving only 10 needing rehab. Douglas Bushman added that Erica Shorts, Director of Elderly Housing, and Genesis Ruiz, Director of Family Housing, have been trained in HAFIS reporting. It is expected that by January 2021 they will fully be responsible for HAFIS reporting for vacancies. Also, The Board discussed other vacancy issues, Wallace Towers Asbestos Offline Units, and the relocation procedure.
16. **DHCD Self-Sufficiency Program Grant Submission-Submitted on July 17, 2020**
 -Still waiting
17. **Updates: Security Camera at CJ Durkin –Progress.**
18. **Update on Sale of 16 Prospect & 132 Pleasant Street**
 Douglas Bushman, Executive Director updated about the sale of the two properties, the FHA issued a Request for Quotes for real estate services. The first bid opening is September 16th.
19. **Green Acres Tenant Association Formation and Election**
 The tenants of Green Acres formed a preliminary tenant association in the beginning of 2020, now they are in the process of holding formal elections. FHA staff will assist them in this process.
20. **Congregate Housing Management**
 After a review of the operation of the FHA Congregate Housing Program an agreement has been made with Montachusett Home Care Corporation for them to discontinue such services as of September 1, 2020. We had a great meeting with SUMMIT about managing the Congregate Housing.
21. **Resident Service Coordinator Handbook with protocol. - _ Almost Completed**
22. **Resident Service Coordinator Data Tracking System –Completed**
 Two RSC, one is for Elderly and one is for Family and third one will begin as an economic development coordinator. Total 3 Resident Service Coordinator will work in the FHA.
23. **Construction Overview**
 CIP-new system will be presented next month.
24. **Motion to Approve Formation of Construction Advisory Committee**

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

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The Executive Director explained that the construction advisory committee shall NOT constitute a quorum of the FHA Board nor shall it have deliberative powers as defined and it cannot make decisions reserved for the full FHA Board and /or those falling under the authority of the Executive Director but can only provide suggestions and recommendations to the full FHA Board and to the Executive Director. The stable members would be ideal for the advisory committee. The composition of the advisory Committee is up to the Board. After the discussions Linda Byrne and David Basilio will be on the Advisory Committee.

DHCD has awarded the FHA four grants totaling over twenty million dollars as follows;
 FISH097124 –Canton Valley Comprehensive Sustainability Initiative
 FISH097131+097132-Wallace Tower MOD-Phase Project
 FISH097153-Green Acres Gateway Improvement Project
 FISH097156-C.J. Durkin Creative Place Making Program

25. Motion to Approve Amendment 19 to CFA5001 for \$8,532,594.00.

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

26. Funding Money letter for Green Acres

Also, the Executive Director noted a more formal award notice would be forthcoming.

- New Community Building and Offices at Green Acres family development
- Conversion of 8 units to full accessibility, including accessible paths
- Exterior Lighting & Security Cameras
- Envelop upgrade and window replacement for selected building

DHCD also noted serval contingencies before final funding could be approved as below;

- \$100K HOME Funds (From the City)
- \$725K in various philanthropic commitments (Mostly from Garden Remedy)
- \$150K waived city permits (From the City/City Council)
- \$50K HUD funds

Andy Skoog, Deputy Director added that the Garden Remedy this quarter may not approve any funding request due to Covid-19 and shutting down their operations.

27. Wallace Tower MOD Phase Designer selection

David Basilio suggested that Maintenance Foreman join in the Advisory Committee.

28. Motion to Approve Change Orders I and II : FISH 097136 Conversion from DHCD to HUD

Housing: 24 Forest & 28 Taft St.

Move David Rousseau Second: David Basilio All in favor

29. Green Acres Basement Project FISH097076-BID due day is August 26th.

30. Motion to Allow the FHA Board to Enter Executive Session at 11:42 am

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

31. Motion to Allow the FHA Board to End Executive Session at 11:50 am

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

32. Motion to Adjourn Meeting adjourned at 11:51am

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

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