



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, November 18, 2020

C. J. Durkin Community Room, Fitchburg, MA

A Regular Meeting of the Fitchburg Housing Authority was called to order by Chairperson, Linda Byrne at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 in the C. J. Durkin Community Room at 50 Day Street in the City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Present:

FHA Board Members:

Linda Byrne, Chair
Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair
David Rousseau, Treasurer
David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer
Adam Goodwin, Member

Absent: N/A

FHA Staff:

Douglas Bushman, Executive Director
Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director
Kim Hergert, Finance/HR Director
Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant / Bookkeeper
Erica Shorts, Director, Elderly Housing
Genesis Ruiz, Director, Family Housing
Christy Mylott, RSC/COVID-19 Coordinator
Yajaira Aldrich, Director, Customer Services
Marc Cunningham, Elderly Housing Maintenance, Union President

Kathy, Wilda, - Tenants

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

1. Motion to Open Meeting

Chairperson, Linda Byrne opened the meeting at 8:30am.

Move: David Rousseau Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

2. Motion to Open Public Comments

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

Wilda, Green Acres tenant addressed her concerns of change on the FHA's Complaint & Grievance policy. Douglas Bushman, Executive Director answered that now a legal firm has been reviewing the new policy. Also, the Board advised her that the claims such as Retaliation, Intimidation and Blackmail should go to DHCD, MCAD, or Police/Court. Wilda and the Board discussed her complaint/grievance case further. Linda Byrne, the Chair suggested she bring the grievance case results from the Hearing Officer to the next Board Meeting for the Board to review. Marc Cunningham spoke on behalf of the Union to compliment the Executive Director's work and Yoko Ishii, the Executive Assistant during the COVID pandemic, and showed support for Mr. Bushman's contract renewal on behalf of the maintenance union. Kathy, Durkin tenant addressed a problem that one tenant is taking up lots of parking spaces in the parking lot. Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director will check the security monitor and take care of the parking issue.

3. Motion to Approve Minutes of Meeting held on October 21st, 2020

Move: Mary Giannetti Second: David Basilio All in favor

4. Motion to Approve Minutes of Executive Meeting held on October 21st, 2020

Move: David Rousseau Second: Mary Giannetti All in favor

5. Motion to Approve FHA Payables for October-November FY 2020 (Attachment A)

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: Mary Giannetti All in favor

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6. Motion to Approve October Financials FY 2020 (Attachment B).

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

7. FY 2021 DHCD Public Housing Notice 2020-30 LHA Budget Guidelines (Attachment C)

The Executive Director stated again three significant impacts on the 2021 Budget such as Reduction of Rental Operating subsidies by 4%, Changes in Solar Net-Meter credit Savings, and Phase-out of Maintenance Budget Exemption (\$182,000 to \$81,000). Working with local maintenance union about cost savings, since the utility net meter savings would be reduced and material and supply budget would be much lower. Also reducing overtime costs, the FHA wants to preserve its 12-member maintenance crew. The Executive Director will request with Ben Stone, that DHCD pauses phasing out the Maintenance Budget Exemption.

8. Review-Discussion of Public Matters with FPD Lt. Howes

Lt. Howe didn't attend. Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director updated Durkin and GA incidents.

9. Review and Modifications of FHA Personnel Policy Handbook

The Executive Director and HR Director are still having Zoom meetings and reviewing. The Personnel policy is not easy to modify. The Draft will be provided a couple weeks prior to the December Board Meeting for review.

10. Record Destruction-Round 2

Approval for the record destruction has just come in. At the next Board Meeting the list of the destruction will be provided to the Board.

11. Blueprint & Architectural & Technical Drawing Organizing

It is an ongoing effort.

12. Review of Proposed Bylaws (Adopted May 17th, 1995 and Revised March 21st, 2021) (Attachment D)

The Executive Director suggested the Board review the changes. David Rousseau, Treasurer pointed out that it wouldn't need the repeat part, and the election part on P.15 contradicted with TA election terms on TA Bylaws. Also He expressed that the Bylaws should be operating procedures, description of election, officers' role and their responsibilities. The Executive Director explained how important it is to include the statutes if the member acts outside of the statutory guidelines. David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer, questioned if the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer are bonded. The Executive Director will look into it. Mary Giannetti questioned about Sect. 7 responsibilities. The Board discussed about the termination procedure of employees. The Executive Director suggested for the Board creating a sub-committee. Adam Goodwin, Dave Rousseau, Douglas Bushman, Andrew Skoog, and Kim Hergert were selected.

13. Audit & Management Reviews

Motion to Approve FHA Financial & HUD Audit-NO Findings Found

The Executive Director stated that revenues increased by 3.48% from FY2018 to FY2019 and funds for the repair and maintenance increased by 45.44%. Total expenses increased by 15.6% from the FY2018 and FY2019. However, the net position of the authority decreased by 5.54% from two years.

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

Motion to Approve FHA Agreed Upon Procedure

The Executive Director reported that the Auditor pointed out a concern on procurement procedures. Although he disagreed, the auditor's interpretation of the procurement rules indicates that some of the project relating to vacancy reduction should have been bid.

Move: Mary Giannetti

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

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At 9:30am- Public Hearing for HUD Five Year Plan/Capital Funding Plan was held during the Board Meeting at C. J. Durkin Community Room.

14. Public Hearing & Motion to Approve HUD Five-Year Plan (Attachment V)

The Executive Director stated that Every year local housing authorities have to update the Annual Capital Improvement Plan with HUD and every five years the Five-Year Plan. Three single family houses were federalized to HUD houses.

Move: David Rousseau Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

15. Public Hearing & Motion to Approve HUD Capital Funding Plan (Attachment W)

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

Public Hearing for HUD Five Year Plan/Capital Funding Plan was ended at 9:57am.

16. Article in AFSCME Council 93 Northern New England Newsletter (Attachment G)

The Executive Director expressed thanks to the sub-committee the recent contract negotiations between the union and the FHA management.

17. Thank you to FHA-FSU College Interns-Great Internship Program.

18. FHA Organizational Chart (Attachment H)

The Executive Director presented new FHA Organizational Chart.

19. Redevelopment of Day & Blossom Street with FSU (Attachment I)

The Executive Director had a presentation of the redevelopment plan working with City of Fitchburg and FSU on Day Street and Blossom Street.

Motion to Approve to Endorse Redevelopment Plan

Move: David Rousseau Second: David Basilio All in favor

20. COVID-19 Updates, Budget & Events:

The Executive Director updated recent COVID 19 related issues, including flu shots, Finance Director's Home Office, and the FHA Staff remote working plan. Also, mentioned the FHA closed the front office from the public due to the recent COVID surge in Fitchburg. Christy Mylott, RSC and COVID-19 Coordinator updated recent COVID cases, Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant and Christy Mylott are working on distributing cloth masks to the FHA tenants and installing HEPA air purifier with UVC light to Congregate Housing area. The ventilation fan will be installed at both of the front offices of Durkin and Wallace Tower. Also, the Board discussed that the virtual meeting option will be used for the next meeting. The public will be able to join through phone access.

21. Waiting for Response Grant Submittal to UMass Health Alliance-Clinton

22. Motion to Approve Lowest Responsive BID for Fire Alarm Services-Impact Fire

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: Mary Giannetti All in favor

23. Vacancy & HAFIS Reports (Attachment J)

Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director updated that the vacancy rate for November 1st, decreased from 30 units to 28 and the vacant unit days increased from 6518 to 6961. However, of the 30 vacancies, one is RTO units, 14 units are off-line for asbestos, 2 units are off-line for handicapped remodel, leaving only 11 needing rehabs.

24. Submittal of MANAHRO Agency Award-not received. (Attachment K)

The Deputy Director worked with the two college interns creating a fillable vacancy report. This digitized form is able to offer to the other housing authorities.

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25. DHCD Self-Sufficiency Program Grant Submission-Denied

26. Security Cameras at CJ Durkin

The Deputy Director updated that the footage was submitted to police for the recent shooting near the Durkin Apartment. Also, it has been proven to be effective and a new camera was installed on Blossom Street.

27. Update on Disposition Status of 132 Pleasant Street & 16 Prospect Street:

A. Sold -Disposal of 132 Pleasant St. for \$117,000. Received a check. (Attachment L)

After deduction of our expenses, the Executive Director made a special requested to DHCD to keep the balance of money in order to maintain the 689-Program.

B. Update on disposal of 16 Prospect St.-The Bid offers didn't meet qualification.

The Executive Director will discuss with More Than Conquerors. Then, it may be back on the market.

28. Response to Allegations of Mistreatment & Favoritism (Attachment M)

Same letter was sent by US Certified Mail because Ms. Raabe hasn't responded the first mail, phone call and email.

29. Congregate Housing Management

The Executive Director updated that the negotiation with SUMMIT has been taking a long time. The FHA anticipates having a final agreement for Board review in December 2020. The FHA has made substantial physical improvements in the Congregate Housing by our wonderful maintenance crew. After the Board Meeting, the Board was invited to tour the Congregate Housing.

30. Construction Update

- 1) **Finalization of Scope of Services for Architect Solicitation-FISH 097153 (Gateway Cities Revitalization)** –The Executive Director explained the future schedule and procedures briefly. Once the Scope of services is finalized, the FHA will follow the same process as the Wallace Tower's Design Phase did.
- 2) **Creative Place Making Grant**
- 3) **Design Phase Completed-Beginning of BID Phase- Wallace Tower MOD-Phase FISH 097131: Exterior-CBI Consulting has completed construction documents for the exterior portion of the ModPhase project. Advertise BID will be run on January 7th 2021. (Attachment N-Wallace Tower Exterior Drawing)**
- 4) **Design Phase of Wallace Tower MOD-PHASE FISH097132-At this time the FHA is awaiting the final contract execution with Bargmann Hendrie +Archetype, Inc. by DHCD.**

31. Motion to Approve Change Order #05 FISH097136 Conversion from DHCD to HUD Housing (28 Taft Street) (Attachment O)

Move: Adam Goodwin **Second:** Mary Giannetti All in favor

32. Motion to Approve Change Order #06 FISH097136 Conversion from DHCD to HUD Housing (24 Forest Street) (Attachment P)

Move: Adam Goodwin **Second:** Mary Giannetti All in favor

33. Motion to Approve Change Order #07 FISH097136 Conversion from DHCD to HUD Housing (24 Forest Street) (Attachment Q)

Move: Adam Goodwin **Second:** David Rousseau All in favor

34. FISH 097137 Boilers at Green Acres

The Executive Director explained the issues between the engineer side and DHCD briefly.

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35. **FISH 097076 Green Acres Basement Project:** Zoom meeting was conducted with Contractor about drainage and landscaping issues.
36. **FISH097122-76 Mechanic Street (689-1) Window Replacement Project (Attachment R)**
-Contract was signed.
37. **Motion to Approve Substantial and Final Completion FISH 097125-Green Acres Replacement of Electric Panels. (Attachment S)**
The Executive Director explained that the Final Completion paper work was not given however, the work has been completed. This motion would authorize the Executive Director to approve the Final Completion.
Move: David Rousseau Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor
38. **FISH 097127 Accessibility Unit Initiative:** -The drawing has just been received. The Executive Director will reach out to the City's disability commission to seek a letter of support. Also request State for the funding issue.
39. **Motion to Approve Lower Responsive BID-Canton Valley Roof Replacement Project FISH#097129 (Attachment T)**-The Executive Director explained that this motion would authorize the Chair to approve the BID after it is approved by the architect and FHA staff.
Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Rousseau All in favor
40. **Motion to Approve Lowest responsive BID-174 Milk Street Roof Replacement Project (Attachment U)** The Executive Director explained that this motion would authorize the Chair to approve the BID after it is approved by the architect and FHA staff.
Move: David Rousseau Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor
41. **FISH 097134 Overland Driveway & Sidewalk Replacement Project.**
-Construction Phase started.
42. **FISH 097146 Arlington Driveway, Retaining Wall, & Sidewalk Replacement Project**
-Construction Phase started.
43. **Motion to Approve Executive Director Contract-Douglas M. Bushman**
The Chair explained that Contract will be three years, effective on January 1, 2021 and ending on December 31, 2023. Required Hours is 37.5 hours. The Salary is determined by DHCD. Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair pointed out the unclearness on the Duties on the Riders. The Board discussed the details. Kim Hergert, Finance/HR Director will revise the Rider on p.13 as the Board requested. The Board signed the Contract. The Executive Director expressed his gratitude to the Board in the past, and stated his future aspirations in the FHA.
Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor
44. **MPHA Certificate presented by Douglas Bushman, Executive Director**

MPHA Completers are: Kim Hergert, Finance/HR Director, Erica Shorts, Director of Elderly Housing, Genesis Ruiz, Director of Family Housing, Yajaira Aldrich, Director of Customer Services, Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant
45. **Motion to Adjourn.** (Meeting adjourned at 11:10am)
Move: David Rousseau Second: David Basilio All in favor

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