



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, March 31, 2021 C. J. Durkin 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 8:30 AM on Wednesday, March 31, 2021. The FHA Board met remotely and physically in the C. J. Durkin Community Room in the City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts. The public was invited to listen to the meeting via phone and in person.

Present:

FHA Board Members:
Linda Byrne, Chair
David Rousseau, Treasurer
David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer
Adam Goodwin, Member (Remote)

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 (Remote)
Christy Mylott, Covid Coordinator & Resident Service Coordinator in Family
Marc Cunningham, Durkin Maintenance
Officer Rouleau, Fitchburg Police Department (Remote)
Kathy, President, CV Tenant Association
Janice, DH resident (Caller-Remote)
Jose Lopez, New Director of Facilities (Left at 9:08am)
Norma Letamendi, New Assistant Manager of Family Housing (Left at 9:08am)
Sol Toro, Temporary New Resident Coordinator (Left at 9:08am)

Absent:

Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair

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

1. Motion to Open Meeting

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

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau

All in favor

2. Motion to Open Public Comments-No Public Comments. -No Public Comments

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau

All in favor

3. Motion to Approve Minutes of Meeting held on February 26, 2021.

Move: David Rousseau

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

4. Motion to Approve FHA Payables for February -March FY 2021 (Attachment A)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau

All in favor

5. Motion to Clarify Executive Director's Contract (Attachment B)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau

All in favor

The Board voted the Motion to clarify Executive Director's Contract as follows:

- A) Executive Director's new term is **three (3) years from the Effective Date January 1, 2021 ending on December 31, 2023**, which is the last day of the Authority's fiscal year.
- B) Executive Director's Salary is **\$128,297.00**, and his hours expected to work is **37.5 hours per week**.
- C) Changed Benefits selection to "**In accordance with attached personnel policy**" on Contract page 1.
- D) Corrected the State share amount of salary is **69%** and the State Share Salary is **\$85,337.21** on Contract page 1.

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6. Emergency Motion to Approve FHA's Errors and Omissions insurance for the Board and Executive Director up to \$10,000.

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

Douglas Bushman, the Executive Director addressed that the FHA currently does not have an insurance for Errors and Omissions. Kim Hergert, Director of Finance/HR will contact Sarah O'Leary, Esq., DHCD's Risk Assessment officer to find out if the insurance covers the Executive Director and the Board Members. The motion voted to make a contract Errors and Omissions insurance for the Executive Director and the Board as well as FHA employees.

7. FY2021 FHA Budget-waiting for DHCD's review and approval

8. Personnel Policy

The Executive Director updated that he would get a City's HR policies and procedures from Susan Davis, HR for the City of Fitchburg and restart updating the FHA policy. 70% of the Draft has been done. The Executive Director will present the Draft at May Board meeting and the Board will vote at the June meeting.

9. Bylaws-The Board will review to discuss in Spring.

David Rousseau, Treasurer requested to review the Bylaws as a whole. Linda Byrne, the Chair requested the Special Board meeting with only Bylaw review needs to be held in April.

10. Motion to Approve MA DOL Wage Rates (Attachment C)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

The Executive Director explained that on an annual basis every March the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development, Department of Labor Standards Issues updated wage rates for all local housing authority maintenance employees. However, the FHA's Collective Bargaining Agreement with Local 2034 authorizes a minimum of two (2) % annual increase to correspond with the DOL's wage rate job classification. For April 2021, all FHA maintenance employees will receive a flat 2% hourly wage increase. The Executive Director thanked Marc Cunningham and Bill MacDonald, Union Rep. and Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director for negotiating this agreement. Marc expressed his appreciation for the Board to raise 2% and addressed that the FHA has had an incredibly good management and operation since 2019.

11. Motion to Approve Amendment 21 to CFA 5001(\$884,547.00) (Attachment D)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

The Executive Director announced that DHCD was granting the FHA an additional \$884,547.00 for our FY2024 Formula Funding award plus reimbursable asbestos removal costs related to the Wallace ModPhase exterior work (FISH 097131).

- FY2024 Formula Funding award \$671,547.00
- FISH097131 public Compliance Reserve award-asbestos removal related to ModPhase exterior work \$213,000.00.

12. Motion to Approve BID Submitted by Robert J. Lemay of 16 Prospect St. to DHCD

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

The Executive Director updated that the FHA held a bid on March 10th, 2021 for the disposal of 16 Prospect Street. Five (5) bids were submitted with one of them being an Option A. (Attachment G) And the Option A was disqualified due to non-responsive to the bid requirements. (Attachment H) The highest bid submitted with all the required documentation was from Mr. Robert J. Lemay in the amount of \$200,000.00. The Motion will authorize the FHA to move forward with the sale. The bid documents have been submitted to DHCD for review and approval to move forward with the disposition of the real property. Also, the Executive Director has submitted a formal request to Mr. McPartland requesting that the sale proceeds remain with the FHA due to the FHA's 689 program's NEGATIVE reserve situation.

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13. Review-Discussion of Public Safety Matters with FPD

Andy Skoog, the Deputy Director reported that there was no major activity, also talked about updated trespass notices. Officer Rouleau, Fitchburg Police Department stated that the sex offender list was provided.

14. COVID-19 Updates

Douglas Bushman, the Executive Director reported that on March 12, 2021 the FHA hosted its first vaccine clinic (170 people vaccinated) at the C.J. Durkin and thanked Christy Mylott, the FHA COVID Coordinator and Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant, Erica Shorts, Director of Elderly Housing, Yajaira Aldrich, Director of Customer Service and Frances Nolivos, Resident Service Coordinator for organizing the event and the FHA maintenance staff, Al Dimarzio, Marc Cunningham, Bill MacDonald, and Scott Stewart. Second Vaccine clinic will be scheduled on Monday April 5th. The FHA Office will reopen to the General Public on Tuesday April 6th, and resume Work Orders and Inspections on Monday April 5th.

The Executive Director also explained legal opinions from Morgan Brown & Joy regarding Mandatory Vaccinations & Disclosures of Vaccine Information. (Attachment E)

15. Staff Promotions, and New Staff Position Funded by Fish 097076

The Executive Director recognized two FHA employees who have recently been promoted as follows:

- Jose Lopez, new Director of Facilities
- Norma Letamendi, new Assistant Manager of Family Housing

Also introduced New Staff Hire Position Funded by FISH 097076 which is to assist with tenant communications with the Green Acre Basement project DHCD authorized a tenant representative:

- Solo Toro, Temporary Resident Coordinator

16. Public Housing Eviction Cases

The Deputy Director updated case numbers for the 30day Notice and 14day Notice. Christy Mylott reached out to the tenant at Canton Valley who was involved with a serious issue. Also, explained the moratorium on evictions will apply for only those who submit the CDC form and qualify for the requirement due to COVID related issue.

17. Vacancy & HAFIS Reports (Attachment F-Vacancy Report)

The Deputy Director updated that the vacancy rate for March 1st, increased from 32 units to 33 and the vacant unit days increased from 8,169 to 8, 868. Of the 33 vacancies, 4 units are Ready to Occupy (RTO), 15 units are off-line for asbestos, 3 units are off-line for handicapped remodel, leaving only 11 needing rehabs. DHCD confirmed that they will be removing \$9,889.00 in vacancy fees from quarter ending September 30, 2020, December 31, 2020, and March 31, 2021.

18. 689 Programs-Our Father's House (76 Mechanic Street)

The Executive Director stated that the FHA could not locate the contract with OFH. The 689-program contract is a four-party contract (the FHA, DHCD, Department of Mental Health (DMH) and OFH). DHCD is aware of the incident happened at OFH recently, and suggested the FHA make a month-to-month contract instead of 5 year-Contract. The FHA will start a discussion with OFH, DHCD and DMH. The rent has not changed since 2002. Kim Hergert, Director of Finance/HR explained the rent history of 689 Programs. The Executive Director will create only 689 portfolio report page with provider's name.

19. FHA & Summit

The Executive Director thanked Andrew Skoog, Erica Shorts and Frances Nolivos for working with Summit on the implementation of the agreement.

20. Motion to Approve LUK & FHA Public Safety Youth Violence Prevention Grant

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

The Executive Director thanked Christy Mylott and Yoko Ishii for preparing and organizing for submission of this grant. He also wanted to thank Mary Giannetti for informing the FHA of this grant. Teaming up with LUK allows for a greater synergy as both entities can collaborate to offer quality programming with attention to the grant's priorities to engage youth and families to stop generational domestic disputes and violence. (Attachment I)

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21. The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts Activation Fund

The Executive Director stated that Christy, Yoko and himself are preparing for the Activation Fund Grant. The Consultation meeting will be held on April 6. Thanked Mary Giannetti, Vice Chair for informing the FHA about this grant opportunity. (Attachment J)

22. CDBG Application/Related to FISH097153 Green Acres Renovation Project: City of Fitchburg CDBG Application Approved.

23. Motion to Approve Funds for both the Canton Valley & C.J. Durkin Tenant Association:

As allowed by DHCD funds can be allocated to tenant associations for state family and elderly housing. The founding formula is 6 dollars per unit. The funds can be used for general tenant activities such as lunches, entertainment, equipment purchasing and recreation. The funds must be deposited in a tenant association-controlled account and not in an individual tenant's banking account. At the end of the fiscal year the tenant association must produce an accounting of the funds and provide the necessary backup documentation to the FHA for auditing.

- **Motion to Approve Funds for Canton Valley Tenant Association \$500.00**

(Attachment K)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

Kathy, President of Canton Valley TA thanked the Board and the FHA staff for TV and Cable in the CV Community Room.

- **Motion to Approve Funds for C.J. Durkin Tenant Association \$750.00**

(Attachment L)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

24. Construction Updates

- **FISH097076 Basement Project**-Resident Coordinator hired, requested windows, & Plants, also on every Wednesday the construction meeting is held.
- **FISH097127 ADA Units** -Almost finalized for the design.
- **FISH097129 Replace Roof Maintenance Shop**- Re-BID
- **WT Exterior FISH097131** -The Contract was signed -Light on the balcony is requested.
- **FISH097153**-The Architect ICON has signed the Contract.
- **WT ModPhase FISH097132 (Attachment M)** -Modification of First Floor Plans were presented to the Board. Currently Option 2 and Option 3 are being considered but Option 3 has an additional estimated \$250,000 cost which the FHA believe is justified if Wallace is to be an aging in place community. The Executive Director asked Erica Shorts, the Director of Elderly Housing to arrange a meeting with Wallace Tower TA officer to discuss the Option 3 plan.
- **MOC Utility Grant for Daniel Heights**-Project completed
- **New MOC Grant FISH 097136**- MOC is providing new heating system for both 24 Forest and 28 Taft St (GAS). Thank you for MOC and Jose Lopez for working with MOC.
- **Milk Street Roof Replacement** -coming soon.

25. Motion to close out HUD Grants (Attachment N)

Move: David Basilio

Second: David Rousseau All in favor

26. Motion to Adjourn . (Meeting adjourned at 10:15am)

Move: David Rousseau

Second: David Basilio All in favor

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