



# Fitchburg Housing Authority

## Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, March 23, 2022 Daniels Heights Community Room, Fitchburg, MA

A Regular Meeting of the Fitchburg Housing Authority was called to order by Chair, Linda Byrne at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, March 23, 2022, in the Daniels Heights Community Room at 1 Daniels Heights Street in the City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

### **Present:**

FHA Board Members:  
Linda Byrne, Chair  
Adam Goodwin, Vice Chair  
David Rousseau, Treasurer (Arrived at 9:05am)  
David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer  
Mary Giannetti, Member

### **Absent:**

Mary Giannetti, Member

### FHA Staff:

Douglas Bushman, Executive Director  
Kim Hergert, Finance/HR Director  
Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant / Bookkeeper

Erica Shorts, Director of Elderly Housing  
Elizabeth Resto, Assistant Manager of Elderly Housing  
Felix Velazquez, Family Resident Service Coordinator  
Bill MacDonald, Maintenance Foreman, Family  
Marc Cunningham, Assistant Foreman, Elderly  
Yaya Villar, Maintenance, Elderly  
Yajaira Aldrich, Director of Customer & Application Services (Arrived at 9:15am)  
Sol Toro, Administrative Clerk II, Customer & Application Services (Arrived at 9:15am)  
Genesis Ruiz, Director of Family Housing (Arrived at 9:15am)  
Norma Letamendi, Assistant Manager of Family Housing (Arrived at 9:15am)

Mayor, Stephen L. DiNatale (Arrived at 9:07am)  
Derrick Cruz, City Council of Fitchburg, Ward 6  
Danielle Ray, reporter of Sentinel and Enterprise (Arrived at 9:15am)

### FHA Tenants:

Daniels Heights- Janice Spellane, Gillian Abbott, Bette Vanocur, Maureen McNamara, Michael Aiesi, Bonnie Richard  
Canton Valley- Kathy Derry, President of Canton Valley TA

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

#### **1. Motion to Open Meeting**

Chair, Linda Byrne opened the meeting at 8:35am

**Move: David Basilio**

**Second: Adam Goodwin**

**All in favor**

#### **2. Motion to Open Public Comments.**

**Move: Adam Goodwin**

**Second: David Basilio**

**All in favor**

Katy Derry, Canton Valley President of Tenant Association, was pleased that a trouble resident in Canton Valley community was now evicted, also said that Trash problem was solved. Douglas Bushman, Executive Director, Kathy is a key person for the construction project, and there will be a weekly based meeting for Canton Valley Construction soon. Bette Vanocur, Daniels Heights Tenant, claimed that there are too many cars in parking lot, hallway is not cleaned, and the yard/sidewalk is too icy. The Executive Director stated that he has talked to Maintenance about hallway cleanness, but Yaya, Maintenance Elderly, reported that the hallway was not dirty. Gillian Abbott, Daniels Heights Tenant, stated that people in DH apartment should clean own hallways. The Executive Director stated that it was not obligation to do for residents. Bonnie Richard, DH Tenant, claimed that somebody takes her parking spot every day. The Executive Director replied people come in the night to take up parking spot. Also stated the FHA got \$700,000 funds to improve parking & sidewalk at DH. Erica Shorts, Director of Elderly Housing, stated that a letter regarding visitors, staff parking at street was sent to DH tenants. Bette

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Vanocur, DH Tenant, asked if we can add the gate for dog activities. The Executive Director suggested Daniels Heights form a Tenant Association. Linda Byrne, the Chair, also recommended TA was organized. Kathy Derry of Canton Valley Tenant Association will help the organizing the TA. The Executive Director stated that any complains or problems with the FHA employee should go to the process the FHA has or address to the Executive Director. Janice Spellane, DH tenant, addressed that Yaya, Maintenance for Elderly is a great job. She also said that a problem for the Unit 3 with Fire Department, requested flower plant in the yard., and ADA units' concerns. Erica Shorts, Director of Elderly Housing addressed that she has been taken care of Automatic Laundry issues.

3. **Motion to Approve Minutes of Regular Session Meeting held on February 23, 2022**  
**Move: David Basilio**                      **Second Adam Goodwin**                      **All in favor**

4. **Motion to Approve Minutes of Executive Session Meeting held on February 23, 2022**  
**Move: Adam Goodwin**                      **Second David Basilio**                      **All in favor**

5. **Motion to Approve FHA Payables for February-March FY 2022 (Attachment A)**  
**Move: David Basilio**                      **Second: David Rousseau**                      **All in favor**

The Executive Director explained that Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director was not able to attend the Board meeting due to a car accident at Green Acres. The other car hit with Andy's card at over 50 mph. Genesis Ruiz, Director of Family Housing claimed it is a big problem that cars cut through Green Acres at high speed.

6. **Motion of Appreciation to Yajaira Aldrich, Director of Customer & Application Services**  
**Move: David Basilio**                      **Second: Adam Goodwin**                      **All in favor**

Yajaira Aldrich, Director of Customer & Application Services was recognized by Mayor Stephen L. DiNatale as her great customer services with Sol Toro, Administrative clerk.

7. **Annual & 2022-2026 CIP Submitted**

8. **Revised FHA Organizational Chart (Attachment B)**

9. **MA NAHRO Annual Convention**

10. **FHA Permanent Labor Advisory Committee-Review of FHA Personnel Policy Handbook & Labor/Union Negotiations (Attachment C)**

11. **Site Visit for 28 Taft Street, 24 Forest Street & 174 Milk Street** will be taken place following the March Board Meeting.

12. **Motion to Approve Updated Maintenance Wage Rate Changes for Local 2034 (Attachment D & E)**  
**Move: David Basilio**                      **Second: Adam Goodwin**                      **All in favor**

13. **ARPA funds -Approved**

14. **Fitchburg Affordable Housing Coalition**

15. **Audits** -Nothing to report this time.

16. **FHA Helps Fitchburg Fire Victims** -on Wed March 9<sup>th</sup>.  
City Council Derrick Cruz visited at FHA's booth. 2 Fitchburg Fire Victims applied for housing.

17. **DHCD Public Housing Notice 2022-05 (Attachments F)**  
DHCD has released guidance regarding tenants of LHA's who are also serve on the housing authority board.

18. **Annual NHARO-MA, NERC-NAHRO Scholarships & HAI Scholarships (Attachment G)**  
3 scholarships available.

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19. **COVID-19 Corner** -Mask Order is gone.

20. **Vacancy & HAFIS Report (Attachment H)**

The Executive Director updated that the Vacancy rate for March 1<sup>st</sup>, decreased from 49 units to 42 units. FHA will get to 21 days to turn around, but it may take a while due to water problem at Green Acres. It would affect vacancy rate.

21. **Smoke & Fire Detectors-Working in the policies.**

Fire Prevention Training at Elderly Housing were done.

22. **Additional Funds for Wallace Towers-Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts**

Tess MacLean, RSC-Elderly is seeking additional funds for Wallace Towers 1<sup>st</sup> Floor project.

23. **Local ARPA Committee Recommendation to Move Grants to Next Level**

**(Attachment N & O)** The Executive Director updated that FHA would get \$125,000 for WT project and \$275,000 for GA project hopefully. On March 1<sup>st</sup>, the full member of City Council will discuss about the Final selection.

24. **Maintenance Staffing** – The Maintenance Foreman for Elderly Al DiMarzio will be retiring on July 13, 2022, after working 29 ½ years in FHA.

25. **Notice Regarding Unregistered MV at Daniel Heights (Attachment I)-**

FHA sent a letter to Daniels Heights to address issues with unregistered motor vehicle on March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022. There is a planned CIP parking expansion and sidewalk project that has an assigned FHA number.

**Resident Services**

26. **Happy Birthday Events, Poetry Event**

27. **Congregate Housing**

David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer, asked who are watching the Summit. The Executive Director answered Tess is watching them.

28. **Meeting to Discuss Wallace Tower MODPHASE FISH 097132 Construction Project**

The Executive Director stated that there was a meeting with the Wallace Tower Tenant Association on Tuesday, March 15, 2022 to discuss about the Wallace Tower MODPHASE project (Exterior, Interior and ASHP) Also, the FHA has suggested to WT Tenant Association to form a building Committee made up of tenants and FHA staff to coordinate communication and other issues There is also a possibility that DHACD would authorize a temporary paid (\$20.00 per hour) employee to work with the construction firm, FHA and the tenants.

29. **Motion to Approve Friends of Wallace Tenant Association Funds \$732.00 (Attachment J)**

**Move:** David Basilio

**Second:** David Rousseau

**All in favor**

30. **Meeting to Discuss Canton Valley CSI FISH 097124 Construction Project**

The Executive Director thanked Kathy Derry, President of Canton Valley TA and Felix Velazquez, Family Resident Service Coordinator for organizing the meeting. The Communication is a key. Grant is \$625,000. Final Total cost is \$3.8 million.

31. **Mediation Services March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 Wallace Tower- (Attachment K)**

Free meditation services offer to all of Worcester County by Family Service of Central Massachusetts (FSCM). The Executive Director thanked Tess MacLean, Resident Service Coordinator for coordinating this service.

**Update on Disposition Status (Proceeds)**

The Proceeds from Real Property Disposition will be used for revitalizing Mechanic St.

**Construction Reports**

There will be \$10 Million Close-out this year.

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**32. Massachusetts ARPA Funds for DHCD Public Housing**

DHCD has announced that they will be sending additional Formula Funds to all LHA which they can use toward their approved CIP, and they have created new special award grant categories such as

- Fire Alarms and Fire Pumps
- Replace Federal Pacific Panels
- Elevator Repairs
- Accessible Unit Conversions666

**33. Pause on Motion for Substantial Completion FISH 097076 Green Acres Basement Project**

The Executive Director explained that Architect is not bringing up issues that Bill MacDonald, Foreman, is bringing up Apartment have water continuously in basement, mold complaints. The Bleach will be big purchases. 33 Units with waster in basement. David Basilio asked if FHA Maintenance are trained for mold removal. The Executive Director stated he will talk with Foreman about Mold Issue.

**34. Evaluation Completed for Constructor FISH097124 CSI Project (Canton Valley) (Attachment L)** Homer Construction Inc. was completed on Evaluation process.

**35. FISH097127 AUI** – The Scope and design has been finalized and now the submission review has been approved.

**36. FISH097147 Green Acres ASHP (Attachment M)**

Another Boiler Failure was happened, Force Account Application was submitted, still waiting for the reply from DHCD.

**37. FISH097153 Green Acres** -Administrative Building site has not been approved yet.

**38. FISH097156 Creative Place Making** -Should begin soon.

**39. Motion to Approve Lowest Response Bid Result: FISH097164-Fourth Floor Office (Attachment N)**

**Move: David Rousseau**

**Second: David Basilio**

**All in favor**

The Project was rebid with opening held on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 with one bid submitted by Seney Inc, owned by Mr. Stephen Seney. The bid was for \$45,970.00 which is within budget and well below the early submitted bid of almost \$100,000.00. The Motion if approved authorized the FHA to enter into a contract with Seney provided that the architect can verify the contractor references indicate they can perform the contract requirements within the time allowed.

**40. FISH097161 -76 Mechanic Street Rehab Project**-Need funds

**41. FISH097165 ASHP Wallace Towers**-DHCD concluded the current firm Bargmann H+A can continue with an additional contract.

**42. 174 Milk Street**

The meeting was held on Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 with Richard Alvord and Karen A Hulette, Energy Director from MOC.

**43. Motion to Adjourn (10:17 am)**

**Move David Basilio**

**Second: David Rousseau**

**All in favor**

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