

Mar 10 2023 9:33 am



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, January 18, 2023
C. J. Durkin 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, January 18, 2023, in the C. J. Durkin Community Room at 50 Day Street in the City of Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Present:

- FHA Board Members: Linda Byrne, Chair; Adam Goodwin, Vice Chair; David Rousseau, Treasurer; David Basilio, Assistant Treasurer; Thomas Hughes, Member (Arrived at 8:45am)

Absent:

FHA Board Members:

- FHA Staff: Douglas M. Bushman, Executive Director, FHA Board Secretary; Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director; Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant / Bookkeeper; Charline Spencer, Administrative Clerk (Finance); Marc Cunningham, Elderly Maintenance Foreman; Genesis Ruiz, Director of Housing; Norma Letamendi, Director of Elderly Housing

FHA Tenants: None

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

1. Motion to Open Meeting

Chair, Linda Byrne opened the meeting at 8:30am

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

2. Motion to Open Public Comments.

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Rousseau All in favor

No public attendance.

3. Motion for Election of FHA Board of Commissioners Officers (Attachment A)

Move: David Rousseau Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

FHA Board Elected Positions & Current Officer Holders

Table with 2 columns: Position and Officer Holder. Rows include Chairperson (Linda E. Byrne), Vice Chair (Adam Goodwin), Treasurer (David Rousseau), and Assistant Treasurer (David Basilio).

Non-Elected Positions and/or Regular Members of the FHA Board

Table with 2 columns: Position and Member Name. Rows include Member (Thomas Hughes) and Secretary (Douglas M. Bushman).

4. Motion to Approve FHA Board Members Compensation Levels (Attachment B)

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

The Board voted to keep current compensation Levels which are fifty (\$50) for Chair and forty (\$40) for the other commissioners for attending meetings and signing checks.

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5. **Objectives for FY2023 (Attachment C)**-FHA's Goal FY2023 was submitted to the Board.
6. **Motion to Approve Minutes of Regular Session Meeting held on December 14, 2022**  
**Move:** Adam Goodwin                      **Second:** David Basilio      **All in favor**
7. **Motion to Approve Minutes of Executive Session Meeting held on December 14, 2022**  
**Move:** David Rousseau                      **Second:** Adam Goodwin
8. **Motion to Approve FHA Payables for December FY22-January FY 23 (Attachment D)**  
**Move:** David Rousseau                      **Second:** David Basilio      **All in favor**
9. **Pending: January-December Financials Year End & FY23 Budget**
10. **State Public Housing TAR Report (Attachment E)**  
Douglas Bushman, Executive Director updated TAR report to the Board. The Board discussed about unpaid rent issues and RAFT program. The Executive Director added unpaid rent, Legal cost increased, and a lot of staff time was used for this issue. The Chair mentioned she would contact State Auditor.
11. **Motion to Table FHA's Updated Reasonable Accommodation Policy**  
**Move:** Adam Goodwin                      **Second:** Thomas Hughes      **All in favor**  
The Board will look at the policy again.
12. **Community Coalition Meeting for ABLE for Green Acres on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**  
The Executive Director announced that Fitchburg State University will host the ABLE, A Better Life Experience exploratory meeting on Monday January 30<sup>th</sup> at 3pm at Fitchburg State University's Center for Professional Studies, 150 B Main Street.
13. **Introducing New State Housing Management**  
The Executive Director mentioned that Erica Shorts, Director of Elderly Housing, resigned with two weeks' notice. The Board thanked her and wished her best of luck at new job position. On the same day, Liz Resto resigned as well, announced Genesis Ruiz is now Temporarily Director of Housing, and Norma Letamendi is a Director of Elderly Housing, and Felix Velazquez is a Temporary Assistant Director of Elderly Housing. He is happy that Noma and Felix stepped up to the positions. The Chair encourage the other Board to look at the FHA's properties. The Board thanked her and wished her best of luck at new position.
14. **Eviction**  
Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director, explained Eviction status. 67 eviction cases filed in FY22, but 27 cases of 14-day Notice already issued in January in FY 23.
15. **Emergency Repairs to C. J. Durkin back-up Generator**  
The Executive Director updated that Generator issue will be fixed. Rental Backup Generator's cost was over \$2,000 per week.
16. **Wallace Tower & YMCA Land Issues**-Waiting for the proposal to come back to us.
17. **Vacancy & HAFIS Report (Attachment F)**  
The Deputy Director updated the vacancy report that the vacancy rate for January 1<sup>st</sup>, increased from 59 units to 61. Also, He explained the comparison of vacancy from FY 22, and Fee Assessment issue. He will dig into more of Assessment fee and discuss with DHCD.
18. **Fee Assessment** -Stated in Vacancy.
19. **FHA Permanent Labor Advisory Committee- Review of FHA Personal Policy Handbook & Labor/Union Negotiations.**  
The Board discussed the union negotiation issue.

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**20. Making Residency Count-Change in Residency Priority (Attachment G)**

The Executive Director explained the issue on the process of the Tenant selection. On October 2022, the Board approved a motion that recommended changes in how residency is prioritized in DHCD public housing. The Executive Director submitted a letter to Fitchburg’s legislative delegation (State Senator Cronin and State Representative Kushmerek.) The FHA is seeking a regulatory and/or a statutory change in how applicants are selected.

**21. Preparing for DHCD (PMR) Performance Management Review**

The Executive Director explained that in November NAHRO conference Courtney Curran, DHCD Assistant Director of the Bureau of Housing Management and the FHA’s assigned housing Management specialist Evelyn Muasya suggested that he invited Chad Howard the FHA’s assigned DHCD Facility Management Specialist. Mr. Howard visited on December 22, 2022, conducted site visit.

**22. Resident Services. Congregate & Supportive Housing**

**1) DHCD Mixed-Population Coordinator & Resident Service Coordinator Grant-Awarded (Attachment H & I)**

**2) Motion to Renew Congregate Housing Management Agreement with Fallon/Sumitt Elder Care (Attachment J)**

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

**3) Motion to Approve FHA C. J. Durkin Tenant Association Funds \$732.00 (Attachment K)**

David Rousseau, Treasurer, and President of Durkin Tenant association abstained from voting this motion.

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

**4) The Healing Center Donations for Thanksgiving and Holiday Toy Drive (Attachment L)**

The Executive Director stated that Felix Velazquez, Resident service Coordinator, Family Housing did a great job.

**5) The Grocery Style Shopping Event, Winter Clothes Event, Holiday Bingo Event**

Tess MacLean, Resident Service Coordinator, Elderly Housing, did a great job.

**23. Motion to Approve 5001 Amendment #1 CFA 1032- \$2,043,611.00 (Attachment M)**

**Move: Thomas Hughes                      Second: David Rousseau    All in favor**

**24. DHCD Formal Fund Awards (Attachment N)**

DHCD has awarded the FHA \$672,815.00 in Formula Funds for FY2026. Award amount are based on a pre-set calculation for all DHCD participating Capital Improvement Plans.

**25. Construction Updates**

- (1) **FISH 097076-Green Acres Basement Project**-The deputy Director updated that DHCD told the FHA to keep this project open.
- (2) **FISH097124-CSI Canton Valley Project**-Sidewalk, flood issue on January 6 at the Inspection. Engineer took a look at the site. With the site work , almost completed with substantial completion in March and expected to complete with final completion in May. **(Attachment O)**
- (3) **FISH 097127-Accessibility Unit Initiative Project at C. J. Durkin**  
The Executive Director updated that the FHA’s relocation plan will be finalized. The relocation will get started in February.

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**(4) FISH 097132-Wallace Tower MOD-Phase**

The Executive Director stated the DHCD miscalculated funds. The Executive Director will make sure to explain to DHCD that several large areas of the funds in addition of the MOD phase grant.

**(5) FISH 097153-Gateway Cities Revitalization-Admin Offices & Community Building**

The Executive Director is still discussing with ICON about final layout drawing.

**(6) FISH 097156 -The Executive Director updated that** on January 6, 2023, Katie E. Andruchuk, architect, of Allen & Major Associates reviewed the drawings. We anticipate that the work can commence on sometime in early summer of 2023.

**(7) FISH 097161-76 Mechanic Street Rehab project**-This project include new floors, paving, bathrooms, new kitchen, including new paint.

**(8) FISH 097165- ASHP Wallace Tower Apartment Sustainability Initiative for Resiliency (\$3,394,000.00)**

**Motion to Approve Lowest & Responsive Bid (Attachment P)**

**Move: Thomas Hughes**

**Second: Adam Goodwin**

**All in favor**

**(9) Non-FISH Construction**

**Motion to Approve 174 Milk Street BID (Attachment Q)**

**Move: Adam Goodwin**

**Second: David Basilio**

**All in favor**

The Executive Director stated that this is the third and last home to renovate with 28 Taft Street and 24 Forest Street. Due to the HUD requirement to commit all prior year funds or lose such funds, the FHA asking the Board to approve the lowest responsive bid so a contract can be executed before the month of February.

**26. The February Board Schedule Change**

**Due to the FHA Budget, and Year End Documents submission (all the Board attendance is needed) , the February Board meeting date is changed to Tuesday February 21 at 8:30am. (at Wallace Tower Community Room). The Board all agreed.**

**27. Motion to Adjourn Regular Meeting (10:10am) No Executive Session**

**Move: Thomas Hughes**

**Second: Adan Goodwin**

**All in favor**