

Jun 21 2023 10:43 am



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, May 17, 2023 Canton Valley Community Room, 24 Valley St, Fitchburg, MA

A Regular Meeting of the Fitchburg Housing Authority was called to order by Chair, Linda Byrne at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, May 17, 2023, in the Canton Valley Community Room at 24 Valley 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

Absent:

FHA Board Members:
Thomas Hughes, Member

FHA Staff:

Douglas M. Bushman, Executive Director, FHA Board Secretary
Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director
Kim Hergert, Director of Finance/HR
Charline Spencer, Admin Clerk II
Norma Letamendi, Director of Elderly Housing (left at 8:59am)
Tamara Castro Camacho (left at 8:59am)
Marc Cunningham, Elderly Maintenance Foreman (Left at 9am)
Alex Cotto, Family Maintenance Foreman (left at 9am)

FHA Tenants:

Daniels Heights Tenant-Janice Spellane

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

1. Motion to Open Meeting

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

Move: David Rousseau Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

2. Motion to Open Public Comments.

Move: David Rousseau Second: David Basilio All in favor

Janice Spellane commented that it really looks nice at Canton Valley. David Rousseau noted that Daniels Heights looks wonderful too. Douglas Bushman stated that \$400,000.00 has been allocated for Daniels Heights driveway and sidewalks project. Once an architect is assigned the project can get started. Linda Byrne asked if all projects like that require an architect. Mr. Bushman responded yes unless they are less complex.

3. Motion to Close Public Comments.

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Basilio All in favor

4. Motion to Approve Minutes of Regular Session Meeting held on March 22, 2023

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Rousseau All in favor

5. Motion to Approve Minutes of Executive Session Meeting held on March 22, 2023

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Rousseau All in favor

6. Motion to Approve FHA Payables for April-May FY 23 (Attachment A)

Move: David Basilio Second: David Rousseau All in favor

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7. Motion to Approve Financials for January-February FY 23 (Attachment B)

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

Douglas Bushman, Executive Director, noted that the FHA is waiting for DHCD to approve the budget. In the meantime, Kim Hergert and Charline Spencer are doing a phenomenal job getting FISH funds. He also informed the board that Marc Cunningham and Alex Cotto did a phenomenal job preparing for the PMR. It was a great team building exercise. Thank you to both of them. Marc Cunningham also thanked Mr. Bushman for everything he's done for them. Marc also stated Alex Cotto has helped him so much and they have been working as a team. Linda Byrne noted this review has brought the organization together and it has been a team building effort.

8. Motion to Extend the Executive Director's Contract for Five (5) Years

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

David Basilio stated that the board is behind the Executive Director and supportive of what he is doing. Linda Byrne asked the board if they wanted to keep the motion for five (5) years or shorten it and they all agreed to keep it for five (5) years. She also noted the contract says his work hours are 8:00 am to 6:00 pm but he often comes to work at odd times. David Basilio said that the FHA should provide a vehicle to the Executive Director but Linda Byrne stated that DHCD has not approved that in the past.

9. Review the FHA's updated Reasonable Accommodation Policy

The Executive Director stated that Marci Haneisen, FSS Coordinator would review the policy. She will review with David Rousseau then bring it to the board. This should be available at the next board meeting.

10. File Destruction third round has been completed

Genesis Ruiz and Tamara Castro Camacho assisted with this project.

11. Evictions

The Deputy Director updated the board on the evictions and vacancies. The TAR is decreasing. Evictions are continuing. Vacancies went from 70-74. There has been a FISH project created to address the increasing vacancies. Norma is addressing the furniture on the balcony issue at Wallace Towers. Mr. Bushman noted that the balcony needs to be cleared off for the ASHP project. There is a big emphasis to get the Wallace Tower project completed so it is moving rapidly. It is a \$14 Million project involving walk in showers, kitchens, heat pumps, medical clinic, etc.

12. FSS Program

Marci did a presentation and is working to establish a PCC. She is getting families signed up and doing a fantastic job. Once she hits the goal of 25 families the FHA will do a press release. Felix Velazquez is helping her with the Spanish speaking families. The Section 8 program may start a home ownership program next year as well.

13. Cinco de Mayo and Farmer's Market

These programs have been having some success. Some people signed up for the Day Care program. David Rousseau explained that people were complaining that the farmer's market was too expensive. He tried to explain that they get the money back on their cards but they were not understanding the concept. Adam noted this is a great way to support our local programs. David mentioned there is a tree planting program that the FHA should look into for Green Acres. The Executive Director stated that Green Acres is out of the area serviced. Adam Goodwin stated that he should check again because there may be changes since he checked.

14. Motion to Approve Certificate of Final Completion For FISH 097076

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

Andrew Skoog said that DHCD asked the FHA to close this project and create a new one to address the water in the basements at Green Acres. There will be several buildings addressed in the new project. He also told the board that the clerk of the works approved work in four (4) basements that were never completed.

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15. Motion to Approve a Change Order for 097124 for Termite Damage

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Rousseau

All in favor

Doug Bushman told the board that there are 32 concrete blocks that need to be finished. The contractor will redo the sidewalks that are cracked and where tenants put their initials.

16. Construction Update-FISH 097127

The contractor cut the electric lines. They have been patched by an electrician. When the contractor installed the new plumbing pipes and tried to connect them to the existing drain pipes it was discovered that the pipes have deteriorated too much. It is potentially the entire pipe. The first option would include replacing the whole pipe which would involve relocating everyone in the whole building, including staff, temporarily. There were four (4) other options as well. The FHA is waiting for DHCD to decide how to proceed.

17. Milk Street NTP has been signed

Genesis Ruiz will get a wait list for this property and the FHA may advertise when it is ready to occupy. Overland Street was also discussed.

18. Motion to Enter to Executive Session (9:29am)

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

19. Motion to close Executive Session & Adjourn the Regular Board Meeting (10:08am)

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor