

Dec 01 2023 3:56 pm



Fitchburg Housing Authority

Minutes of FHA Regular Board Meeting, October 18, 2023 C. J. Durkin Community Room, 50 Day Street, Fitchburg, MA

A Regular Meeting of the Fitchburg Housing Authority was called to order by Chair Linda Byrne at 8:30 AM on Wednesday, October 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 Basilio, Assistant Treasurer
Thomas Hughes, Member

Absent:

FHA Board Members:
David Rousseau, Treasurer

FHA Staff:

Douglas M. Bushman, Executive Director, FHA Board Secretary
Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director
Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant
Genesis Ruiz, Director of Public & Community Housing
Norma Letamendi, Assistant Director of Public & Community Housing
Sandra Perez, Leasing Clerk, Public & Community Housing
Bruce Budrick, Director of Maintenance & Facilities
Gary Geneau, Foreman, Family Housing Maintenance

Samantha Squailia, Councilor at Large, City of Fitchburg
Joel Arnold, FHA's CIP Consultant, CyberSense (at 9:30am)

FHA Tenants:

Daniels Heights -Janice Spellane
C. J. Durkin- Sandra Reynolds, Holly Progin, Kathy Leighton

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

1. Motion to Open Meeting

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

Move: Thomas Hughes

Second: David Basilio All in favor

2. Motion to Open Public Comments.

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio All in favor

Before the public comments, Douglas Bushman, Executive Director, reported about MAHAMS Annual meeting and had a conversation with EOLHC officials regarding money received from MOC and about Daniels Heights Site work and paving project. The Chair introduced and welcomed Samantha Squailia, Councilor at Large, City of Fitchburg at the meeting.

No Public Comments.

3. Motion to Approve Minutes of Regular Session Meeting held on September 20, 2023

Move: David Basilio

Second: Thomas Hughes All in favor

4. Motion to Approve Minutes of Executive Session Meeting held on September 20, 2023

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio All in favor

5. Motion to Approve FHA Payables for September-October FY 23 (Attachment A)

Move: David Basilio

Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

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- 6. Motion to Approve Financials for January-September FY 23 (Attachment B)**
Move: Adam Goodwin Second: Thomas Hughes All in favor
The Chair asked how the FHA achieved 47.57% reserves. The Executive Director explained how the FHA got money by our achievement based on PMR & AUP audit and appreciated for Andrew Skoog, Deputy Director, Kim Hergert, Director of Finance/HR, Genesis Ruiz, Director of Public & Community Housing, Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant and other staff members' efforts, also requesting legal cost, maintenance exemption, and truck purchase. All the monies came in September.
- 7. Tenant Account Receivable (TAR) Updates (Attachment C)**
The Executive Director updated about the TAR, Eviction Legal Expenses, and RAFT program.
- 8. Motion to Approve FY2023 Budget Revision (Attachment D)**
Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Basilio All in favor
- 9. EOHLC FY24 Budget Historical Increases for Public housing**
- 10. Motion to Approve Purchase & Lease of Two Maintenance Vehicles (Attachment E)**
Move: Thomas Hughes Second: David Basilio All in favor
Bruce Budrick, Director of Maintenance & Facilities, explained about the pickup truck lease and purchase, found three dealers, and red trucks are available for the FHA. Douglas Bushman, Executive Director, explained that the FY2023 Budget Revision allows to purchase one vehicle, and another vehicle will be leased.
- 11. November 2, 2023, Secretary Ed Augustus of MA EOHLC to visit the FHA (Attachment F)**
The Executive Director was excited to announce that Sec. Augustus would visit Wallace Towers on November 2, for one hour. The FHA will have an 8 key points presentation to request to the EOHLC.
- 12. Review the FHA's updated Reasonable Accommodation Policy-** still reviewing.
- 13. Motion to Approve HUD Budget FY2023 (Attachment H)**
Move: Adam Goodwin Second: Thomas Hughes All in favor
- 14. WBUR Article on the Condition of Massachusetts Funded Public Housing (Attachment I)**
The Executive Director explained the CHAMP issues related to this article. The Deputy Director added more detailed CHAMP issue.
- 15. LHA Mandatory Board Training PNH 2017-05 (Attachment J)**
The Executive Director explained the Board mandatory training to the Board. Yoko Ishii, Executive Assistant explained that she would follow up the training.
- 16. Opportunity For Hope (former Our Father's House) Management Review. (Attachment K)**
Motion to Approve Status Change.
Move: Adam Goodwin Second: David Basilio All in favor
The Executive updated the OFH management issues, he went to the presentation meeting, and had a good discussion with the city of Fitchburg on October 12. The FHA made a final change in the Bylaw. The Executive Director updated about the composition of OFH Board members: the Five voting members from the FHA Board and four non-voting members from former OFH Board members. Thomas Hughes, the FHA Board -State appointee, concerned what was the FHA board roles. The Board discussed about the FHA's board members' role on the OFH board. The Executive Director added that we could change the Bylaws in the future. Revised Bylaw was given to the FHA Board. The Board discussed major control issues on shelter.
- 17. Congratulations to the Sarjine Legros FHA-FSU 2023 Intern**
Andrew Skoog, deputy Director, stated that FHA-FSU intern Sarjine Legros accomplished her internship over the summer.

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18. Evictions and Vacancy (Attachment L)

The Deputy Director updated the eviction cases, total 27 cases so far. The FHA served 50 eviction notices and 3 forced evictions after judgment for the FHA in FY 2023. The Deputy Director also updated the Vacancy rate for October 1st, increasing 67 units. Major reason, which is 30 % of vacate is either death or transfer.

19. Union Bargaining Agreement update:

The Executive Director updated that the FHA has been waiting for the final draft and expecting for November Board meeting vote.

20. Access to Massachusetts RMV Data/Information (Attachment M)

The Executive Director thanked the Deputy Director for this data access to RMV. This would help to identify the ghost tenant on the FHA properties to prevent financial fraud and lease violation issues.

21. Resident Services, Congregates & Supportive Housing

- **Daniels Heights Cultural Event** -Marci Haneisen, Director of Resident & Community Services, and her staff, Tamara Castro, Assistant Director of RCS, and Ann Dumezil, RCS coordinator, did a great job.
- **Flu Shot Clinic at Wallace Tower and Durkin**
- **Family Self-Sufficiency Program** – The Chair asked how many FSS participants are now. The Director of RCS will update next month.

22. Introduced New Employee.

Genesis Ruiz, Director of Public & Community Housing, introduced a new Housing Clerk, Sandra Perez to the Board.

Construction Updates

23. Motion for Substantial Completion FISH 097124 CSI Comprehensive Sustainability Initiative Grant Project

Move: Adam Goodwin Second: Thomas Hughes All in favor

24. New Business (This Change Order came in after the agenda posting period, presented at the board meeting.)

Motion to Approve Change Order #003 FISH 097127 AUI project.

Move: David Basilio Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

Change Order #003 consists of Total amount of **\$79,126.05** related to first floor exploration for existing pipe locations and common kitchen related cost presented to the board due to a new business.

25. Motion to Approve FISH 097165 Wallace Tower ASHP Change Order #001 \$36,572.72 (Attachment N)

Move: David Basilio Second: Adam Goodwin All in favor

26. Motion to Discuss FISH 097153 Gateway City

The Executive Director updated the FISH097153 Community & Admin Building project, and the Bid has to go out by June 30, 2024.

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27. MAHAMS Annual Conference

The Executive Director updated that Andrew Skoog, Bruce Budrick, Marc Cunningham, and Gary Geneau attended the MAHAM Annual Conference from October 16 to October 18, 2023. And he had a conversation with EOHLIC officers about the HILLAP application regarding Daniels Heights and Wallace Tower project. The Executive Director explained and added that The Board vote was needed for the application as a new business.

New Business (This motion was presented at the board meeting.)

28. Motion to Authorize Executive Director to apply for HILLAP 2 projects-

(1) **Wallace Tower Window project related FISH 097165 Wallace Tower ASHP**

(2) **Daniels Heights sidewalk and pavement project**

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: Thomas Hughes

All in favor

The FHA held a Public Hearing for Capital Improvement Plan and Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2024 at 10am.

29. Motion to Approve EOHLIC Capital Improvement & Annual Plan (Attachment G)

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

The FHA presented the CIP-Annual Plan and the Chair let the FHA tenants speak out for the plan. Kathy Leighton, C. J. Durkin Tenant requested if the FHA would have an air source heat pump project at C. J. Durkin Apartment. Douglas Bushman, Executive Director, answered that Wallace Tower air source heat pump was a part of ModPhase and partially funded by Unitil. The FHA will find available funding or grants to apply for such a project in the future when available. However, C. J. Durkin currently has an ADA project, and creative placemaking project. Daniels Heights doesn't have a project yet. He explained that there is a HILAPP grant opportunity available for the pavement project at Daniels Heights and some funding for Wallace Tower ModPhase project that he will be applying for.

The Executive Director stated that the FHA reached out to Ben Gold, Executive Director of Leominster Housing Authority due to the recent extreme weather storm. The FHA has a draft emergency plan that was prepared by Christopher Masta, the 2022 FHA-FSU college intern. The report will be updated and will seek out guidance from Fitchburg's public safety department.

30. Motion to Adjourn (at 10:10am)

Move: Adam Goodwin

Second: David Basilio

All in favor

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