

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
- OPEN SESSION -
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD ON MARCH 20, 2012

The members of the Springfield Housing Authority met in Open Session at the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 18 Saab Court, Springfield, Massachusetts at 4:30 PM on March 20, 2012.

A copy of the Notice of Meeting, pursuant to Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Certificate as to Service of the Notice, was ordered spread upon the minutes of the meeting and filed for records.

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts Laws, as amended, that a Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Housing Authority will be held at 4:30 PM on Tuesday, February 21, 2012 in the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 18 Saab Court, Springfield, MA 01104.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
/s/William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director
February 16, 2012

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, William H. Abrashkin, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on March 16, 2012 I filed in the manner provided by Section 23B, Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, with the Clerk of the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, a Notice of Meeting of which the foregoing is a true and correct copy.

Attest:



William H. Abrashkin/Executive Director/
Secretary to the Board

Chairman Babcock called the meeting to order at 4:37 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Timothy Babcock
Raymond Warren
Eugenia Choiniere
Willie Thomas

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

William Abrashkin
Michael Bailey
John Barbriere, City of Springfield; Police Department
Michelle Booth
Sean Cahillane (arrived at 4:40 PM)
Jose Claudio, New North Citizen's Council
Mike Cutone, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; State Police
Nicole Contois
Joseph D'Ascoli
Lieutenant Domnarski, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; State
Police
Kathryn Hardy
John Healy (arrived at 4:38 PM)
Wallace Kisiel (arrived at 5:20 PM)
Rosa Lebron
Mary Ellen Lowney
Isabel Serrazina
Sean Sullivan, City of Springfield; Police Department

The Board reviewed the minutes of February 21, 2012. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of February 21, 2012.

The Board reviewed the minutes of March 5, 2012. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of March 5, 2012.

John Healy entered the Conference Room at 4:38 PM and Sean Cahillane entered the Conference Room at 4:40 PM.

Lieutenant Domnarski and Officer Sullivan made a presentation to the Board with regards to "SpotShotter" technology that is currently being used by the Springfield Police Department. It was explained that this technology is currently installed in all city police cruisers and its purpose is to detect all high impulse sounds, such as gunshots and other explosive type

noises, which registers to the police car. Officer Sullivan indicated that calls to 911 are often delayed by five minutes and this technology allows officers to respond to such events more promptly. The equipment that is used to register impulse sounds are installed on buildings throughout the city, including private residences, and can cover an area of up to three miles. Officer Sullivan stated that the energy cost to the property owner is approximately \$2.00 a year. Officer Sullivan provided the Board with a report of arrests that have occurred since 2009 as a result of the SpotShotter system. He also provided a visual aid of various locations throughout the city hi-lighting where a large number of high impact sounds have registered, which included several of the SHA's properties. He additionally noted very few 911 calls were made from several of the high volume sites, including Marble Street. Officer Sullivan reported that the cost of administering this technology is approximately \$50,000.00 annually for a one square mile radius, and the cost decreases for each mile covered.

Mr. Claudio addressed the Board stating that the New North Citizen Council ["NNCC"], in conjunction with the South End Safety Initiative ["SESI"] is approaching other property owner in the area to seek financial assistance in the range of \$10-\$12,000.00 a year. He stated that currently, both organizations are beseeching that the police department install equipment on properties located from Armory Street to the Chicopee line in the North End. Ms. Booth indicated that as part of the SESI, the SHA sites being considered are Riverview Apartments, Stephen J. Collins Tri Towers, John L. Sullivan Apartments, Morgan Manor, and Scattered Sites located in the North End and Brightwood neighborhoods. Mr. Claudio stated that this technology is also one the state police are considering as a tool.

Chairman Babcock inquired as to other cities or towns in the country that are currently using this technology and what is being asked of the SHA today. Officer Sullivan reported that some cities that he is aware of include Washington, D.C., Hartford, and New Haven. Mr. Claudio stated that the NNCC, together with the SESI is making an appeal to the SHA to allow that this technology be installed on properties owned by the SHA and as selected by the City of Springfield Police Department and to make a monetary commitment in support of this effort of \$10-\$12,000.00 a year for three years. Chairman Babcock requested that staff work together with NNCC, SESI and the City of Springfield Police Department to formulate an agreement and recommendation to the Board for consideration. Mr. Claudio stated that if the SHA is agreeable to such a proposal, that he

would like to see the installation of this technology begin in May 2012.

John Barbieri, Jose Claudio, Mike Cutone, Lieutenant Domnarski, Rosa Lebron, and Sean Sullivan left the Conference Room at 5:16 PM.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to award a contract for the interior repairs at Pine-Renee and Central Apartments resulting from tornado damage. Three bids were received, with only a difference of \$23,400.00 between the low and high bidder. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To award a contract to N.L. Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$337,600.00 to do interior repairs at Pine-Renee and Central Apartments, utilizing funds from insurance money received from 2011's tornado damage and to appoint Executive Director, William H. Abrashkin as the contracting officer authorizing him to execute the contract.

Joseph D'Ascoli and John Healy left the Conference Room at 5:18 PM.

Wallace Kisiel entered the Conference Room at 5:20 PM.

The Board reviewed a recommendation regarding the issuance of two debit cards and cancelling the SHA credit card. Mr. Bailey informed the Board that at times, the SHA's credit card has reached its maximum credit limit and due to the billing cycle, some purchases were unable to be made until such time the bill is paid in full. He indicated that many of the purchases being made on the credit card are for the I.T. department, and in an effort to alleviate the burden of overextending the credit card, he was proposing that the Director of I.T. be issued a debit card with a dollar limit of \$5,000.00 and the Purchasing Manager be issued a debit card in the amount of \$20,000.00. He was also recommending that the debit card be used in place of the credit card and as such, the credit account would be closed. The Board expressed concern with regards to authorizing a debit card to be issued in the amount proposed and further concerns that such a large number of purchases would need to be paid with either a credit card and/or debit card when there is a procurement policy and purchase system in place. Further concern voiced was with regards to quality control on the use of the card and how it would be safe-guarded from possible misuse or mishandling. The

Board expressed that it would like a recommendation be made with conditions which would identify how the debit cards would be secured from misuse and upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To table the matter before the Board with regards to issuing debit cards to the Purchasing Manager and Director of I.T.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation for the purchase of four 2012 Chevrolet Silverado pickup trucks with the trade-in of six trucks currently in the SHA fleet of vehicles. It was noted that only three vendors submitted bids. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To award a contract to Bertera Chevrolet for the purchase of four (4) 2012 Chevrolet Silverado pickup trucks in the amount of \$123,780.44, trading in six (6) used SHA trucks with a trade-in value of \$47,300.00 (VIN#'s 2GCEC19X131312923; 1GCEC14X68Z264650; 1GCDC4X88Z264780; 1GCEC4X95Z312346; 1BGJC34U22F195260; 1GCEC14X68Z264096) for a total contract award amount of \$76,480.44.

The Board reviewed materials regarding a contract award recommendation for Independent Audit Services. It was noted that a total of eight proposals were received and that upon consideration of the proposals, the evaluation committee found the firm of Yeager & Boyd to be most advantageous. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To award a three year contract, pending availability of funding for years two and three, to Yeager & Boyd for Independent Public Audit Services in the amount of \$42,900.00 for FYE 2012; \$43,758.00 for FYE 2013; and \$44,633.00 for FYE 2014.

Commissioner Warren left the Conference Room at 5:43 PM and returned at 5:45 PM.

The Board reviewed materials relative to the Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant, inclusive of a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Springfield and the SHA, a planning grant certification and the SHA's Code of Conduct for the grant

application. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Choiniere, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the FY2011 Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Springfield and authorize Execution of Required Certifications and Agreements.

The Board reviewed a recommendation to execute a contract with the City of Springfield Police Department for continued supplemental police services for the upcoming year. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the execution of a one-year contract for supplemental police services, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.00, for a period commencing on April 1, 2012 and ending on March 31, 2013.

The Board reviewed materials relative to a write-off of public housing authority tenant accounts receivable for FYE 2012, for a total write-off of \$75,652.79. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adopt Resolution No. 9546, whereas the Springfield Housing Authority Board of Commissioners wishes to approve the write-off of \$75,652.79 in vacated Tenant Account Receivables for FYE2012.

The Board reviewed materials related to service agreements with Comcast of Massachusetts II, Inc. for the installation, maintenance and operation of broadband communication systems on the SHA's public housing properties. Ms. Booth expressed that Comcast has been granted an exclusive franchise by the City of Springfield to construct and operate a cable communication system in the city. She also indicated that Comcast would be providing a number of courtesy accounts for SHA properties that were identified to be: Robinson Gardens Community Room; Reed Village Community Room; Marble Apartments Community Room; Riverview Apartments Training Center; Sullivan Apartments Neighborhood Network Center; Forest Park Community Room; Moxon Apartments Community Room/District Office; Tri-Towers Community Room; Duggan Park Community Room; and Gentile Resident Services Office. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To authorize the execution of service agreements with Comcast of Massachusetts II, Inc. for the installation, maintenance and operation of a broadband communication system at the Springfield Housing Authority's multi-dwelling unit public housing properties.

Michael Bailey left the Conference Room at 5:58 PM.

The Board considered a request to fund in part the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative program to be held at Robinson Gardens and Sullivan Apartments this summer. Judge Abrashkin informed the Board that the Regional Employment Board is filing applications for grant funding as well, but has asked that it's partner agencies also fund in part the programming. He indicated the request is for \$10,000.00 for each site and the funding would be derived from the COCC for Robinson Gardens and from the AMP for Sullivan Apartments. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the expenditure of \$20,000.00 in support of Regional Employment Board's grant application to Funder Collaborative for Reading Success and the TRS/Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative; in the amount of \$10,000.00 for Robinson Gardens to be funded by the SHA's COCC and \$10,000.00 for Sullivan Apartments to be funded by restitution funds.

Judge Abrashkin provided an update to the Board with regards to the federalization project, indicating that Reed Village has been scheduled for its REAC physical inspection that is scheduled for April 24. He also reported that staff is currently working on an agreement with DHCD to repay the funds that were fronted for the construction work of the 50 project based voucher units at Reed Village, which is approximately \$933,000.00. Judge Abrashkin stated that DHCD has indicated they are agreeable to establishing an installment payment plan over the course of the next one to three years. The Board requested that once the agreement has been reached, it be brought back to the Board for approval and vote.

Judge Abrashkin reminded the Board that the second Talk/Read/Succeed! tour is scheduled for Friday, March 23rd at noon. He stated that the first event yielded only about twelve participants but that this time around the number of participants has increased substantially.

Judge Abrashkin also reminded the Board of three upcoming events: the HUD visit on April 2 to tour the South End in conjunction with the Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant award; the press event scheduled for April 3 at Robinson Gardens to announce DHCD funding for the federalization of Robinson Gardens; and the editorial board meeting he had with The Republican last week which should result in some press in the upcoming Sunday paper.

The Board agreed to table the presentation of Rental Assistance reports until next month as Mr. D'Ascoli was unavailable to present them.

The Board reviewed and accepted the Financial Accounts Payable report for February 2012.

The Board reviewed and accepted the Executive Communications and Community Relations Activity Report for the period December 2011 through February 2012.

The Board reviewed and accepted the Management Occupancy, Waiting List and Public Safety Reports for February 2012.

Commissioner Warren indicated he would like to bring to the attention of the Board some concerns expressed by Commissioner Choiniere with regards to the matter of young disabled individuals residing at Jennie Lane. He indicated that there would be no need to get involved in a detailed discussion at this time but requested that at a meeting in the near future, a report is made to the Board regarding mixed populations in the SHA's site and specifically at Jennie Lane for further discussion at that time.

Chairman Babcock indicated that the Board of Commissioner's would enter into Executive Session and that it would not be returning to Open Session. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was by a roll call vote (Babcock - Aye, Warren - Aye, Choiniere - Aye, Thomas - Aye) unanimously

VOTED: To enter into Executive Session for the purpose of considering the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property and to not reconvene in Open Session.

There being no further business to come before the members of the Springfield Housing Authority, upon a motion made by

Commissioner Thomas, seconded by Commissioner Choiniere, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the Open Session of a Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 6:49 PM.

ATTEST:

Tim Babcock
Timothy Babcock, Chairman

William H. Abrashkin
William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director