

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
- OPEN SESSION -
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD ON MARCH 15, 2016

The members of the Springfield Housing Authority met in Open Session at the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress St., Springfield, Massachusetts at 4:30 PM on March 15, 2016.

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, March 15, 2016 in the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY

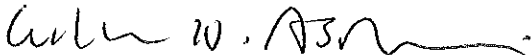
/s/William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director

March 11, 2016

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 11, 2016 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 Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:35 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Willie Thomas
Thomas Labonte
Jessica Quinonez
Angela Robles
Raymond Warren

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

William Abrashkin
Michelle Booth
Nicole Contois
Michelle Decoteau

Fidan Gousseynoff
John Healy
Mary Ellen Lowney
Wallace Kisiel
Mike Petro, Casterline & Associates
JoAnn White

The Board reviewed the Minutes of February 16, 2016. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was by a majority vote (Commissioner Warren abstained)

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of February 16, 2016.

The Board reviewed the Minutes of March 2, 2016. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of March 2, 2016.

Mike Petro presented to the Board a review of the 2017 Operating budget. He stated that the funding is expected to be at 86% and last year it was at 85.36%. He explained that a drop in utility payments is expected due to the historical data change. Mr. Petro indicated that for the FY17 the COCC will continue charging the AMPs on the same level as the prorated funding which is a great practice since it provides more opportunities for AMPs. Judge Abrashkin confirmed that this practice has been used for 4 years now. He explained how the budget is projected, based on the last 3 years data, anticipated expenses and estimates, and stated that this time the district managers were more than ever involved into the process. Mike Petro informed that on December 15, a training was conducted for the managers to give them a better idea on how to stay within the budget, make better decisions, predictions and more accurate calculations. Mr. Petro explained why some properties show cash flow of over nine hundred thousand dollars and some parts of the budget show a deficit stating that the estimated excess cash in FY16 was directly tied to the utility dollars. He expressed his appreciation for the input to the budget preparation to SHA staff and especially JoAnn White and Michele Decoteau. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9655 accepting the FY2017 Operating Budget

Mike Petro supported Commissioner Warren's description of the "status quo" budget commenting that due to lack of funding many problems the agency is facing cannot be addressed or resolved.

Mr. Petro presented to the Board information on FY16 Budget revision explaining that the revision does not involve any significant changes and is required in order to align some budget figures with the actual numbers. Answering Chairman Thomas's question he explained that the revision affected only the federal projects and there are some minor changes for COCC but state programs and Section 8 budget was not modified. As per Commissioner Warren's request JoAnn White provided explanation on the revision stating that major changes to the expenditures were related to

utility expenses. She indicated that the revised budget adjusted all the lines to create a more accurate FY16 budget. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Labonte, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9656 accepting the FY2016 Operating Budget Revision Number one.

The Executive Director Abrashkin and Chairman Thomas thanked the SHA staff for all their hard work on preparing the budget and providing such a comprehensive and yet user friendly narrative.

Mike Petro stated that items E3 through E8 have been reviewed as a part of the first item so the presented documents are formal documents and the certifications required by the DHCD to be voted on and submitted.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9657 to accept the FY2017 State Budget Request for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9658 to accept the FY2017 State Budget Request for Program 705-A.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9659 to accept the FY2017 State Budget Request for Program 689-C.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9660 to accept the FY2017 State Budget Request for Program 667-A.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9661 to accept the FY2017 State Budget Request for Program 400-1.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No 9662 to accept the FY2017 State Budget Request for Program 200-A.

Mike Petro left the Conference Room at 5:09 pm.

The Board reviewed the materials and a recommendation to award a Contract for DHCD FISCH #281110 for Zone Valve replacement at Forest Park and Carpe Diem to BG Mechanical. As per Commissioner Warren's request John Healy explained that zone valves control the flow of hot water for the heating system which is in most developments is through circulating hot water. The zone valves at Forest Park and Carpe Diem is very archaic and needs to be replaced alongside with the thermostats. He indicated that unlike new generation of zone valves, the old valves in those developments are big and hard to remove for one person. He also explained that the Contract also includes asbestos removal in the crawl space. Mr. Healy stated that two companies responded to the bid but the lower bid from Corcoran Plumbing was not accepted because they submitted wrong proposal form for another bid. John Healy indicated that the bid from BG Mechanical was \$17000 short of the estimate; it has been approved by the DHCD and the funds are available. Answering Chairman Thomas's question he confirmed that all the bids are now accepted and reviewed electronically. In response to Judge Abrashkin's question Mr. Healy indicated that the funds will come from the State Capital Program. Answering Commissioner Warren's question he confirmed that the zone valves and thermostats will be replaced in each unit at Forest Park and Carpe Diem. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez, it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a Contract to BG Mechanical Contractors Inc. in the amount of \$656,743.000, to do zone valve replacement at Forest Park/ Carpe Diem utilizing state capital improvement funds; appoint Executive Director William H. Abrashkin as the contracting officer authorizing him to execute the Contract.

The Board reviewed the materials and a recommendation to award a Contract for shades to Fridland and Brothers, Inc. John Healy explained that the Springfield Housing Authority bids on shades every two years. Usually the shades are replaced in all vacant units or, if cannot get repaired, in the occupied units. Fridland & Brothers submitted the lowest bid out of four companies responded to the proposal. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez, it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a contract to Friedland & Brothers Inc. of Cliftwood Beach, NJ, in the amount of \$51,960.50, to supply the SHA with shades utilizing funds from the operating budget of each AMP; appoint Executive Director William H. Abrashkin as the contracting officer authorizing him to execute the Contract.

The Board reviewed the materials and a recommendation to award a Contract for a fee accounting services and related fiscal management training to Casterline Associates. John Healy informed the Board that he sent the RFP to 8 companies and only two companies responded. The bid from an Alabama company came 30 minutes past the deadline and had to be rejected and sent back unopened in accordance with the law. Mr. Healy indicated that the pricing submitted by Casterline & Associates has not changed much comparing to the previous contract. He also said that the bills to the company have been steadily decreasing over past years since more work is now being done by the Accounting Department. Nicole Contois informed the Board that in FY2014 the SHA paid \$83,704.00 for Mike Petro's services, in FY2015 the expenses decreased to \$75,692.000 and for FY16 the total bills

were only for \$36,000. In response to Commissioner Labonte's question if the SHA's eventual goal is to eliminate need for this kind of services JoAnn White and William Abrashkin stated that the agency will still need to have a consultant on financial and accounting issues. Judge Abrashkin inquired why only two out of so many companies responded to the bid John Healy suggested that most accounting and financial companies are usually very busy at the time of the year when the RFP came out which can be the main reason for not getting many responses. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez, it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a three year Contract, for the period April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2019, to Casterline Associates P.C. for fee accounting services and related fiscal management training.

Nicole Contois left the Conference Room at 5:22 pm.

John Healy provided the Board with information on the 2017 Capital Improvement plan for the State portfolio. He explained how the plan is prepared and what new project was included into the 2017 plan. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Springfield Housing Authority's FY17 Capital Improvement Plan for the State Portfolio.

Nicole Contois returned to the Conference Room at 5:25 pm.

The Board reviewed the materials on awarding a Contract for building two family units at 425 Central Street. Wallace Kisiel explained to the Board that the two structures will replace 50% of the building destroyed by tornado in 2011. The first floor will be handicap accessible (which will help the SHA to meet the VCA requirements) and the units will be pretty big with over 1700 square feet space, including dining room, a living room, two bedrooms with big closets, and roll-in showers on the 1st floor. Answering Chairman Thomas's question he said that the project is expected to be completed by November of 2017. Mr. Kisiel stated that the agency had had to go through some zoning law challenges and changes but now the plan has been approved by the City and the Neighborhood Council. Mr. Kisiel stated that the design of the new structure fully aligns with the City's plan in the neighborhood where almost every house was re-built and some other major renovations are still going on in the Six Corners section which intersects with the SHA property.

Michelle Booth and William Abrashkin left the Conference Room at 5:34 pm.

Walalce Kisiel explained that the project will be done utilizing insurance funds. Commissioner Warren expressed his concern on the cost of the project. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Labonte, it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a contract to Diversified Construction Services, LLC, 100 University Drive, Amherst, MA 01002, in the amount of \$1,483,945.00, to construct two (2), two family apartments at 425 Central Street, utilizing insurance funds; appoint Executive

Director, William H. Abrashkin as the contracting officer, authorizing him to execute the contract, subject to the review and approval of the Department Of Housing And Urban Development (HUD).

Michelle Booth and William Abrashkin returned to the Conference Room at 5:45 pm. Judge Abrashkin apologized for leaving to take a call from Joe Schiff, a Consultant on Marble Street. Judge Abrashkin informed the Board that Joe Schiff got information that the HUD's Special Applications Center is preparing to deny the SHA's disposition application for Marble Street on the ground that the Springfield Housing Authority did not provide enough proof that the disposition was in interests of the tenants. Judge Abrashkin stated that the agency did provide all the documentation to demonstrate that 100% of tenants welcomed the idea of getting Section 8 vouchers and moving out of Marble Street.

Judge Abrashkin continued his Executive Director's report by providing explanation to the Board about a deal with TD Bank. He explained that a part of the deal with TD bank which was financing the transaction for 60 Congress Street was putting \$350,000 as a collateral security with the requirement that additional \$150,000 will be put in 2015. The SHA staff reached out to TD Bank asking not only to waive the \$150,000 fee but also to return those \$350,000 because the SHA has demonstrated in the last three years its liability as a borrower. TD Bank satisfied both requests but since the \$350,000 was paid out of the restitution funds the SHA had to make some arrangements to meet the HUD's requirement that the restitution funds can be spent on the building only. The SHA and TD Bank agreed to deposit those \$350,000 into newly established escrow account (instead of the collateral security), from which TD Bank will be withdrawing mortgage payments. The income from the PVPC will be deposited into a special line at COCC.

The Executive Director stated that HUD is planning to make major changes in COCC funding requiring that all COCC funds derived from federal subsidies remain federalized though it is expected that it will not be implemented for the next year and a half.

Judge Abrashkin continued his report by informing the Board about an agreement with the Institute for Community Health which will be providing the Springfield Housing with services on collecting and evaluating data for the TRS program. The executive Director explained that getting metrics is crucial when applying for grants so getting an assistance from the ICH will be a major step in this direction. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Judge Abrashkin confirmed that no official proposal has been received yet and it is expected that the Scope of Work and budget will be prepared and submitted for approval within a month.

The Executive Director continued his report by explaining to the Board what measures will be undertaken by him in order to renew Commissioner Robles and Commissioner Quinonez's term expiring in March and April correspondingly. Judge Abrashkin stated that he will be sending a letter to the Mayor of Springfield asking to reappoint them. Answering Commissioner Warren's question he confirmed that even in case with reappointing the Resident Commissioner, the Mayor's office must reach out to all Tenant Councils to invite any interested residents to nominate

themselves to Jessica Quinonez's position. In response to Chairman Thomas question Judge Abrashkin explained that the Board can reach out to the Mayor's office to provide a Communication of support to Ms. Quinonez's reappointment.

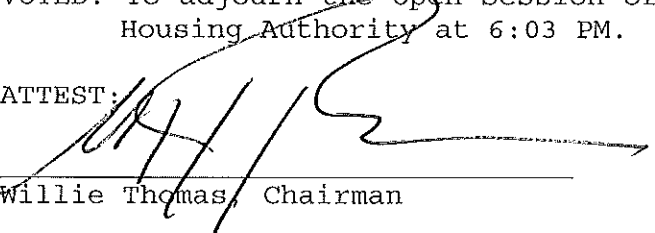
Judge Abrashkin completed his report by informing the Board about his upcoming travel plans which coincide with the date of May Board meeting. By Commissioner Warren's suggestion it was decided to keep the scheduled meeting unless something comes up that requires presence of the Executive Director and re-scheduling the meeting.

The Board accepted the Accounts Payable report and Financial Report for the month of January 2016.

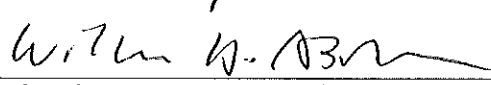
There being no further business to come before the members of the Springfield Housing Authority Board, upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the ~~Open~~ Session of a Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 6:03 PM.

ATTEST:



Willie Thomas, Chairman



William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director

