

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
- OPEN SESSION -
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD ON MARCH 21, 2017

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 21, 2017.

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 21, 2017 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 17, 2017

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 17, 2017 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 4:31 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Thomas Labonte
Jessica Quinonez
Angela Robles
Willie Thomas
Raymond Warren

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

William Abrashkin
Michelle Booth
Nicole Contois

Fidan Gousseynoff
Howard Coro
JoAnn White

The Board reviewed the Minutes of February 21, 2017. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of February 21, 2017.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to award a Contract to BG Mechanical Service for renovation at Egan Street development. Howard Coro provided information on the project approved by DHCD. He indicated that the furnaces to be replaced at this group home building are 28 years old. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a Contract to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, B-G Mechanical Service, Inc., 12 Second Avenue, Chicopee, Ma, in the amount of forty six thousand six hundred and forty five dollars (\$46,645.00) for Egan street development 689-2a utilizing the funds from Department Of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) No.281115; appoint Executive Director, William H. Abrashkin as the contracting officer authorizing him to execute the contract.

The Board reviewed the 2017 State Capital Improvement Plan presented by Howard Coro. Mr. Coro explained that the 5-year Plan needs to be reviewed, revised and submitted every year. This plan was prepared based on the input from the Facilities Management, foremen, supervisors and maintenance staff. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Howard Coro confirmed that the items on the list presented to the Board are not the only projects to be completed within the next 5 years but just an addition to the Plan. Answering Judge Abrashkin's question Mr. Coro confirmed that all the projects are funded through the State Capital Plan. Mr. Abrashkin also questioned what happens to the equipment that is being replaced, for example, if the old boilers are sold for scrap metal. Howard Coro stated that all the equipment disposal fees are included to the project costs and it's a responsibility of the contractors to dispose all the equipment properly. Answering Chairman Thomas's question Mr. Coro explained why the suggested list does not contain any amounts. He confirmed that the Board is voting only to approve the list of priorities for state capital improvements and before a contract is awarded for each project it will be brought for the Board's review and approval.

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

VOTED: to approve the Springfield Housing Authority's Capital Improvement Plan 2017 submission for the State Portfolio.

Chairman Thomas informed that item number E3 - award a contract for Pest Control services - has been tabled until further notice.

Howard Coro left the Conference Room at 4:45 pm.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve FYE17 Budget Amendment for Federal programs. JoAnn White reported on increased revenue (rent collection) and decreased expenses (at the expense of less utility costs, cost saving measures and other factors) for most AMPs which ended up with having \$97,180 income deficit versus the original budgeted loss of \$935,410. Commissioner Warren congratulated the team on achieving such good results in reducing the budget deficit and questioned what measures caused increasing income from rent up to 8%. Ms. White and Nicole Contois explained that improved collection (including on back rents) and annual income increase were main reasons for revenues increase. Answering Chairman Thomas's comment that HUD had also anticipated that rent would increase up to 8.2%, JoAnn White stated that most likely the new HUD formula reflected a new larger trend for all housing authorities. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9679 to accept the FY2017 Operating Budget Amendment for the Federal Programs.

JoAnn White presented to the Board a review of the proposed FY18 Operating Budget for federal and state programs. She explained that it is not known yet what the federal proration will be so the presented budget used the average of 4 last years to estimate the proration level. The Finance Director stated that the COCC will be reducing its fees to AMPs from 87% to 85% to help the Districts to save money.

Ms. White stated that income loss for Marble Street is hard to estimate because it is not known when exactly all the residents will vacate and the expenses will still remain until the building is transferred to the City. Michelle Booth informed that the relocation process which was initially planned for May 2017 will be delayed until July due to the delay in getting DHCD approval of the relocation plan. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Ms. White stated that the proceeds from the sale of Marble Street are not included into the budget. Judge Abrashkin indicated that the agency is planning to spend part of the proceeds on upgrading the software which, as per Stephen Ethier's estimations, would cost around \$250,000. Ms. White confirmed that Capital Funds money can be used for software upgrades.

Ms. White continued her report by informing the Board that other AMPs will continue their cost saving efforts to reduce funding gaps. A three-year ROSS grant, planned leaving of Sean Cahillane and retirement of Wallace Kisiel will also help to save money. Ms. White reported that one of the AMPs (Robinson Gardens) that had big water bills will be saving some money on their utility costs because two major leaks have been fixed. The management will continue reviewing opportunities for using internal staff instead of hiring contractors for services like painting and legal. Personnel costs will be reduced mainly in the Section 8 Department which will be losing \$300,000 in subsidy. The State programs are expecting to benefit from the larger cost saving measures as well. For the rental programs, only the 689-C program shows a loss.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Labonte, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9680 to accept the FY2018 budget request for federal programs

to adopt Resolution #9681 to accept the FY2018 state budget request for MRVP

to adopt Resolution #9682 to accept the FY2018 state budget request for program 705-A

to adopt Resolution #9683 to accept the FY2018 state budget request for program 689-C

to adopt Resolution #9684 to accept the FY2018 state budget request for program 667-A

to adopt Resolution #9685 to accept the FY2018 state budget request for program 400-1

to adopt Resolution #9686 to accept the FY2018 state budget request for program 200-A

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve the FY17 operating budget amendment for the State Programs. JoAn White explained that the budget submitted to the State was reverted by DHCD due to some errors related to the program reserves and the way certain revenues were reported. The Finance Department has been working with an accounting firm familiar with state programs to correct the error both for the prior year and going forward. Budget for only program 400-C needed to be corrected however the Board needs to approve the budget amendment for all state programs. Ms. White stated that the State has not been providing full payments to the agency partially due to the error. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Labonte it was unanimously

VOTED: adopt Resolution #9687 to accept the FY2017 Operating Budget Amendment for the State Programs

Nicole Contois left the Conference Room at 5:35 pm.

Executive Director Abrashkin stated that due to the budget discussions he won't be presenting his Executive Director's report. He informed the Board about a recent meeting with Rita Farrell from Mass Housing Partnership and Tilman Lukas from MLB Development. The purpose of the meeting was discussing opportunities for mixed housing program at Carpe Diem.

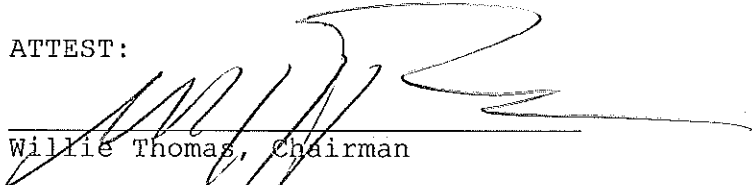
Chairman Thomas asked for the Board's consideration to move into Executive Session. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Robles, it was by a roll call vote (Thomas - Aye, Labonte - Aye, Quinonez - Aye, Robles - Aye, Warren - Aye) unanimously

VOTED: To enter into Executive Session to conduct strategy session in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and to not reconvene in Open Session.


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 Labonte, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the Open Session of a Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 5:40 PM.

ATTEST:



Willie Thomas, Chairman



William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director

