

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
- OPEN SESSION -
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD ON APRIL 17, 2018

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 April 17, 2018.

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, April 17, 2018 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
April 11, 2018

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 April 11, 2018 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
William H. Abrashkin/Executive Director/
Secretary to the Board

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:32 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
Priscilla Chesky, Lyon & Fitzpatrick (arrived at 4:35 pm)
Howard Coro
Fidan Gousseynoff
Kathy Hardy
Gail Turner
JoAnn White

The Board reviewed the Minutes of March 20, 2018. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Warren it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of March 20, 2018.

The Board reviewed the Minutes of April 4, 2018. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of April 4, 2018.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve Change Order to Contract with Inglewood Development Corporation for ADA upgrades at Ashley Street. Howard Coro explained that there are two change orders to be reviewed by the Board - the 1st one was for extra work that had to be completed due to the rotted subfloor and beam discovered in the unit at the time of the renovation. The extra work has been concluded, including replacing the subfloors, the beam, the joists, and removing all the sheetrock in the basement. The anticipated completion date is June 4th but the contractors will probably be able to finish before that. Mr. Coro praised the work of the contractors. Mr. Coro continued by providing information on Change order #2. He reminded that when the Board approved the project several months ago, the cost included about \$100,000 charges for some metal work and outside walls painting. Since then the staff went out to request sub-bids for those services, and the response received showed some significant changes (\$52,000 for the metal ornament work instead of \$75,000 as per the bid of the general contractor working on the project and \$10,000 for painting instead of \$30,000). With accepting these new sub-bids even with the cost of the extra work the agency will be able to save some money.

Priscilla Chesky entered the Conference Room at 4:35 pm.

Answering Commissioner Labonte's question Howard Coro explained that at the time of the initial submission of the Contract for the Board's approval the staff only had estimates on the metal work and the exterior walls painting costs, and the estimates were approved by the general architect. Initially nobody responded to the request for sub-bids and subsequently Mr. Coro and John Healy reached out to some contractors they know to request their quotes. Commissioner Labonte questioned why it had not been done before bringing the Contract for the Board's approval and Mr. Coro explained that there was money allotted in the Capital Fund program for the years 2014 and 2015 and the agency only has 2 years to obligate and 4 years to spend the funds. Since there was a risk of losing money allotted for the 2014 CFP, the staff had to show to HUD that the funds have been obligated and the agency is working on ensuring the funds will be spent within the required timeframe. Mr. Coro confirmed that there were no responses for the request for sub-bids and he explained that many contractors are very busy now and it's hard to find vendors. In response to Chairman Thomas's question on whether any other change order is expected Mr. Coro stated that he has requested the vendors to do some work on the electrical panel, to install one more heat and smoke detector and there will be some extra metal work on the outside stairwell, but even with all these changes the total amount of the contract will not be exceeded due to the savings received through the sub-bids.

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

VOTED: to approve Change Order #2 to Contract # 35-c-2017-15-7 with Inglewood Development Corp. for the ADA upgrades at Ashley Street Apartment 104, in the amount \$42,264.00, this will decrease the amount of the contract and the new contract amount will be \$397,337.37, and the contract date of substantial completion will be June 4, 2018.

Commissioner Robles provided brief update on the Community Preservation Coalition. She indicated that her representation term is expiring and asked if any Board members would be willing to serve. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Labonte it was unanimously

VOTED: to nominate [Angela Robles] and continue with the representation at the Community Preservation Coalition

William Abrashkin started his Executive Director's report by providing an update on 4 real estate projects. He informed the Board that Marble Street development is now officially owned by the City after so many years of so much administrative, legal and advocacy work. He indicated that the most important outcome of this disposition project is providing the residents with an opportunity to receive a voucher. Attorney Chesky stated that as per the City's attorney, the check in the amount of \$820,000 will be available on 4/27/2018. She said that she is not aware about the schedule for the demolition. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Ms. Chesky confirmed that the building was secured before the City took it over, Wel-Design recently disconnected the alarm system and the City is now responsible for its safety and security.

Judge Abrashkin continued by providing an update on Central Street and indicated that the duplexes are completely ready to be occupied. He expressed his hope that the bureaucratic hurdles will soon be overcome. Attorney Chesky provided information on her recent correspondence with Jeffrey Twerago, the HUD Facility Management Specialist. She informed that a new Declaration of Trust has been obtained (since the number of units changed from 8 to 4) and she is waiting for HUD's approval to record it. Commissioner Warren expressed his concern about the building being unsecured. Howard Coro explained that he checks the building every morning, all the fire systems are in working condition and the foreman also keeps monitoring it.

On the Eastern Avenue project Mr. Abrashkin informed that as per DHCD request he had asked Attorney Craig Brown to provide a formal opinion that the change was not a material change and he will follow up with Mr. Brown on this matter.

Reviewing of the real estate part of the executive director's report was completed by providing an update on Hobby Club. He indicated that the staff is reviewing opportunities for renovating the space for the Section 8 department. It was determined that there is enough space to accommodate the RAO needs and it is possible to create needed parking space and the staff is currently looking into costs to renovate. He indicated that

renovation will include extra charges for some hazmat work due to asbestos presence. Seniority House is also interested in purchasing the property. Judge Abrashkin stated that it is possible to accommodate Seniority Houses' needs too if they agree to occupy space in the basement and a small elevator is installed.

In response to Chairman Thomas's question Mr. Abrashkin confirmed that the agency is currently working on some small renovations at the RAO office at Riverview because the Hobby Club project will take a while. He reported about his communication with Peter Serafino, a developer with WayFinders who stated that there are might be some financing options for this project.

In response to Commissioner Warren's question regarding an unsafe situation at Hobby Club reported to the Board some time ago, Attorney Chesky stated that she has not heard any complaints about drug related activity at the Club after the Public Safety office addressed the issue and after police raids took place.

Executive Director Abrashkin informed about some staffing changes - Rosa Lebron resigned and Michelle Ricker was appointed Interim Director of the Public Safety Office; District B foreman Jason Guyer also resigned and Dave Thompson, District C foreman was transferred to that District and Steve Monteiro took Mr. Thompson's position at District C.

Judge Abrashkin completed his report by informing the Board about ongoing work on TRS earmark. The agency is investing \$30,000 by paying to Charles Group, an experienced firm providing lobbying and political campaigning services. Mr. Abrashkin stated that the agency is requesting \$150,000 earmark for TRS program.

Howard Coro left the Conference Room at 5:15 pm.

The Board accepted Accounts Payable report for the months of January and February 2018 and Finance Report for the month of February 2018. In response to Chairman Thomas's comment regarding high electrical bills Ms. White explained that some buildings have electric heat. Ms. White provided brief overview of the financial report and indicated that the subsidy received in recent months was pretty decent and really helped in managing the AMPs which are running in black with only Marble Street showing a deficit and it is expected that the relocation costs in the amount of \$113,000 will be reimbursed soon. Ms. White informed that the Accounting Department staff will be working on closing year end and there won't be any reports for a while.

In response to Commissioner Warren's inquiry Attorney Chesky stated that the Marble Street proceeds will be kept in an escrow account and only can be spent with HUD's approval.

Ms. White provided information on the presentations on new software. She informed that the last presentation is scheduled for April 18 and after that a committee comprising of Ms. White, Mike Petro and Stephen Ethier will be making a recommendation based on the feedback of a Steering committee comprising of a few managers, foremen and different department representatives. She provided information on the training component and stated that some vendors charge for ongoing training and some offered to

train the managers who will in their turn be responsible for training all other staff. She indicated that regardless of what software is purchased the cost savings and time savings will be significant and the entire work will be much more efficient.

By the request of Judge Abrashkin it was decided to make a break at 5:40 pm. William Abrashkin, Priscilla Chesky, Gail Turner, and JoAnn White left the Conference Room at 5:40 pm.

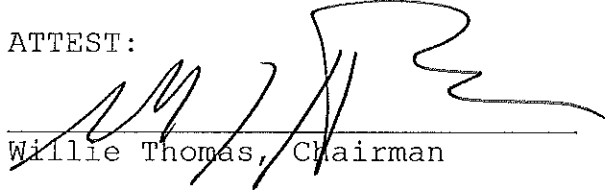
The Board reconvened in Open Session at 5:56 pm. Chairman Thomas entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss, review and determine questions for Executive Director's interviews. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Warren it was by a roll call vote (Thomas - Aye, Labonte - Aye, Quinonez - Aye, Robles - Aye, Warren - Aye) unanimously

VOTED: to enter into Executive Session to discuss, review and determine questions for Executive Director's interviews and not to reconvene in Open Session.

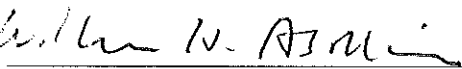
There being no further business to come before the members of the Springfield Housing Authority Board, upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Robles, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn the Open Session of a Special Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 5:57 PM.

ATTEST:



Willie Thomas, Chairman



William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director

