

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
- OPEN SESSION -  
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY  
HELD ON SEPTEMBER 18, 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 September 18, 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, September 18, 2018 in the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress Street, Springfield, MA 01104.

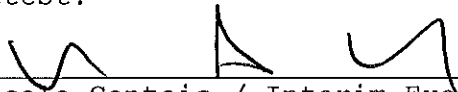
SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY

/s/Nicole Contois, Interim Executive Director  
September 13, 2018

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, Nicole Contois, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on September 13, 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:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Contois / Interim Executive Director/Secretary to the Board

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Thomas Labonte  
Jessica Quinonez  
Willie Thomas  
Angela Robles

ABSENT

Raymond Warren

ALSO PRESENT

Jacque Banks  
Priscilla Chesky, Lyon & Fitzpatrick  
Nicole Contois  
Celina Correa  
Stephen Ethier  
Hellen Exposito  
Fidan Gousseynoff  
Kathy Hardy

John Healy  
Denise Jordan  
Rosa Leo  
Mary Ellen Lowney  
Steve Monteiro  
Ivette Otero  
Paul Pereira  
Herminia Quiles  
Lisa Sanford  
Anna Smith  
Jose Torres  
Pam Wells  
Sandra West  
JoAnn White

Chairman Thomas welcomed the attendees of the meeting and thanked the SHA staff members for using the opportunity to meet with the new Executive Director who officially starts on 10/1/18. By his request the SHA staff members introduced themselves and provided information about what department they represent.

Chairman Thomas provided brief information on the process of selecting the new Executive Director who was chosen out of 13 candidates. He reminded that 6 candidates for the position were interviewed and 3 proceeded to the second round. The Board's decision was reviewed by DHCD and Ms. Jordan was approved for the position. Mr. Thomas expressed his belief that appointing Ms. Jordan as the new leader of the SHA will bring a lot of benefits to the organization. He noted that she is a Springfield native, graduated from the American International College and Lincoln University and has great managerial experience including working as the Chief of Staff of the Mayor's office in the last 10 years. He stated that Ms. Jordan has already met with many Department Heads and will be meeting with other managers after October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Denise Jordan stated that she looks forward to work with all the SHA employees some of whom she knows from her work in the community. She indicated that it will be a learning curve for her and she appreciates everybody's support. Ms. Jordan noted that she is open to any ideas and suggestions and will be happy to provide any support when needed and to have candid discussions with the staff.

The Board reviewed the Minutes of August 21, 2018. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez it was by a majority vote (Commissioner Robles abstained)

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of August 21, 2018.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve the Summary Allowance for Tenant-Furnished Utilities presented by Anna Smith, Director of Operations of the Rental Assistance Office. Ms. Smith explained that the schedule was generated by Happy Software which used engineering, technical and historical data to calculate utility allowances. The allowances are calculated based on the unit size and the type of the building. Ms. Smith noted that this year heat allowances decreased but other allowances increased. She explained that increase of utility

allowances is helpful for the program participants, it is included to the rent calculation to make sure that the combination of rent and utility allowance is not more than 40 percent [of their income].

In response to Commissioner Labonte's question Ms. Smith and the IT Director Stephen Ethier explained that Happy software is a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor used for this particular type of services and when Yardi software project is implemented, the SHA will continue using Happy software for calculating utility allowances.

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

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9723 to approve the summary allowance for tenant-furnished utilities and other services prepared by Happy software.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve the new Fair Market Rents. Anna Smith explained that HUD publishes new FMRs every year and each PHA is allowed to adopt its FMRs between 90% and 110% of the HUD rents. This year HUD's FMRs decreased. Last year the SHA had adopted a 100% payment standard; this year the recommendation is to use 103.5% for studio and two bedroom, 106.4% for one bedroom to keep these bedroom type the same as 2017 FMR because these bedroom types are the most difficult ones to lease up. Ms. Smith noted that other bedroom sizes can be at 100% of the HUD FMR. No approval from HUD will be needed since the rates are below the 110% cap. In response to Chairman Thomas's question Anna Smith confirmed that new rents will be applied at the time of annual reexamination.

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

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9724 to approve the new Fair Market Rents effective October 1, 2018- September 30, 2019 as follows:

Bedroom Sizes	FMR and Payment Standards
	100%, 105.3%, 106.4% Effective 10/1/18 - 9/30/19
0 Bedroom	739 @ 105.3 %
1 Bedroom	884 @ 106.4 %
2 Bedroom	1117 @ 105.3 %
3 Bedroom	1322 @ 100 %
4 Bedroom	1521 @ 100 %
5 Bedroom	1749 @ 100 %
6 Bedroom	1977 @ 100%

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to award a contract to Liberty Chevrolet to purchase a new Chevrolet truck for District A. John Healy explained that DHCD provided the SHA a line item this fiscal year for some equipment and it was decided to purchase a new vehicle. The closed bid did not bring any responses so it was decided to purchase through Commbuys, a state pre-procured contract system. Mr. Healy had reached out to 3 vendors and only one response was received from Chevrolet Liberty. The total cost of the vehicle is \$41,222.25 and it includes a

plow package and a lift gate. The District foreman George Williamson and Richie Daigneault were included to the process of deciding what add-ons are needed.

In response to Commissioner Quinonez's question Mr. Healy explained that the funds came from the State and the vehicle will be assigned to District A which has in its portfolio 439 state units and several developments spread around the city. Nicole Contois indicated that old vehicles assigned to the District A will be assessed and can be transferred to other Districts if determined to be in better condition than the ones used by other Districts. Answering Chairman Thomas's question Mr. Healy confirmed that the SHA is considering using proceeds from Marble Street to renew vehicles at other Districts.

Nicole Contois started her Interim executive Director's report by stating that the work on Energy Performance Contract, which was presented to the Board this winter, is still going on and it is expected that the finalized version will be provided in October. It is expected that the \$9-8 million saved through this contract will be used to replace boilers at Reed Village which would be a great relief for the Capital Fund.

Ms. Contois continued her report by providing an update of Yardi software project. She indicated that Yardi is setting up the productive and testing system while the SHA team is gathering reports from the Districts. The estimated time frame for the project implementation is March - July 2018.

The report was completed by informing the Board that the SHA was awarded a grant from HUD in the amount of \$221925 to fund 28 mainstream vouchers for non-elderly disabled individuals. The staff is currently working with Gerry Mccafferty from the City's Housing Department on this grant and it is expected that the participants will be able to lease in November.

Ms. Contois asked the Board if the Annual Report needs to be submitted for the October meeting. It was decided that a short simpler version shall be prepared but if more time needed to complete it, it may be presented in November.

Chairman Thomas introduced Mary Ellen Lowney, the Communications and PR manager to the new Executive Director. He emphasized the importance of notifying the public about the news and publishing information about Ms. Jordan's appointment in the newsletter and on the web-site. Ms. Lowney took a few pictures of the Board and the new ED.

Celina Correa, Stephen Ethier, Rosa Leo, Steve Monteiro, Paul Pereira, Herminia Quiles, Lisa Sanford, Anna Smith, Jose Torres, Pam Wells, and Sandra West left the Conference Room at 5:00 pm.

Finance Director JoAnn White provided brief summary of the Finance report indicating that all projects are operating below budget projections, mostly due to the higher level of subsidies. She reported that following the discussion at the previous meeting two bank accounts at TD Bank have been closed and she thanked the Board for their assistance.

The Board entered into a discussion regarding naming one of the SHA buildings after Judge Abrashkin to commemorate all his accomplishments as

the SHA Executive Director. Chairman Thomas indicated that it is important to involve the residents to this discussion and to hear their feedback. It was noted that this issue will be discussed at the time of the next Resident Advisory Board meeting scheduled for October 11<sup>th</sup>.

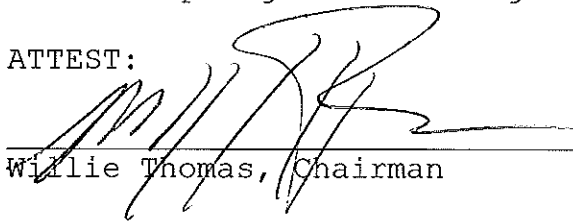
Mary Ellen Lowney and Attorney Chesky left the Conference Room at 5:05 pm.


Commissioner Labonte expressed his condolences to Helen Exposito whose father, Nick Exposito, a long-time SHA employee passed away recently. Ms. Exposito thanked the Board and the staff members for all their support and care.

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 Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 5:10 PM.

ATTEST:

  
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Willie Thomas, Chairman

  
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Nicole Contois, Interim Executive Director

