

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
- OPEN SESSION -
OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD ON JUNE 18th, 2024

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 4:00 PM on June 18th, 2024.

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

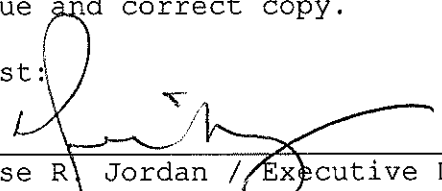
Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 23B of Chapter 39 of the Massachusetts Laws, as amended, that a regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Springfield Housing Authority will be held at 4:00 PM on Tuesday, June 18th, 2024 at the Conference Room of the Springfield Housing Authority at 60 Congress St., Springfield, Massachusetts.

SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY
/s/Denise R. Jordan, Executive Director
June 14th, 2024

CERTIFICATE AS TO SERVICE OF THE NOTICE OF MEETING

I, Denise R. Jordan, the duly appointed and qualified Secretary of the Springfield Housing Authority, do hereby certify that on June 14th, 2024, 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:



Denise R. Jordan / Executive Director/Secretary to the Board

Chairman Labonte called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM, and those present upon roll call were as follows:

PRESENT

Thomas Labonte
Jessica Quinones
Angela Robles
Raymond Warren

ABSENT

Willie Thomas

ALSO PRESENT

Priscilla Chesky
Stephen Ethier
Fidan Gousseynoff
Austin Harris
John Healy

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Denise Jordan
Nicole Kane

The Board reviewed the Minutes of May 21st, 2024. With no questions or comments and upon a motion made by Commissioner Quinonez, seconded by Commissioner Robles and following a board roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of May 21st, 2024.

The Board moved to the 1st item on the agenda - renewing the CDBG grant for the Youth Program at Duggan Apartments presented by HR Director Fidan Gousseynoff who reminded that the Program has been operating at Duggan since 2018. There were some staffing challenges in 2023-2024 but the program is now in full operation after a new Program Coordinator was hired in May.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9799 to accept the 2024-2025 Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$13,000 for the Duggan Youth Program and authorize Executive Director Denise R. Jordan to sign the Contract with the City of Springfield.

Deputy Executive Director John Healy presented next item on the agenda. He explained that Verizon company is working on upgrading a transformer for telephone and Internet services and needs access to Pendleton Apartments. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9799 to grant to Verizon New England, Corp. easement rights to lay, construct, reconstruct, operate, maintain, replace and remove lines for the transmission of intelligence and telecommunications upon, over, under and across a portion of land at 176-194 Pendleton Ave. in Springfield and to authorize Executive Director Denise R. Jordan to sign the easement.

Mr. Healy presented the 3rd item with regards to providing easement rights to Eversource that also will be working on the same transformer project. Attorney Chesky added that removing overhead lines is also a part of the project.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED to adopt Resolution #9800 to grant to Eversource Energy Service Company, its successors and assigns, easement rights to lay, construct, reconstruct, operate, maintain, replace and remove lines for the transmission of intelligence and telecommunications upon, over, under and across a portion of land at 176-194 Pendleton Ave. in Springfield and to authorize Executive Director Denise R. Jordan to sign the easement.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to extend the contract with Wel-Design Systems for testing and inspecting fire safety equipment and sprinklers. Deputy Healy reminded that the SHA has had long relationship with Wel-Design and is looking to extend the existing contract for 2 more years.

Commissioner Quinonez shared her concerns about the equipment not working properly at her development, specifically - buzzing or beeping sounds on the panel for prolonged periods of time, alarms not being connected to the panel. She said that there have been many occasions when the fire alarms were going off but no fire trucks were coming to check. She added that SHA staff members usually show up quickly when alarms go off and when Wel-Design comes to check the box, they charge a lot of money.

Mr. Healy explained how the system is setup and that there are smoke detectors and heat detectors. Many times, the smoke is caused by unattended cooking or smoking - at that time, the smoke alarms get activated and in most of those occasions, tenants act after getting the warning signal and no fire starts. If, however, a fire starts, then heat detectors get activated, the signal goes to the panel, then to the radio box and to the Fire Department. He added that part of the problem is that sometimes tenants tamper with the equipment.

Mr. Healy promised to relay Commissioner Quinonez's concerns to the Account manager at Wel-Design. In response to Commissioner Warren's question, Deputy Healy confirmed that the contract is only for testing and inspecting the equipment; designing is not included. In response to Chairman Labonte's question, Mr. Healy explained what happens when smoke and heat detectors get activated.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Warren and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve Contract extension to Contract No. G-2021-7-4 with Wel-Design Alarm Systems Inc. of Wilbraham for Early Warning and Detection Alarms and Sprinkle; appoint Executive Director, Denise R. Jordan as the contracting officer to execute the contract extension. The contract extension shall be for the period of 2 additional years from July 20, 2024 through July 19, 2026 for an annual cost of Forty-One Thousand Five Hundred Ninety Dollars (\$41,590).

Presenting the next item on the agenda, Deputy Healy explained that the SHA is looking to dispose one van from 2004 which is no longer being used and five 20-years old John Deere utility vehicles that were recently replaced with new golf carts. In response to Commissioner Quinonez's question, he confirmed that the vehicles will be available for public sale.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to authorize the SHA Staff to dispose/Sell One (1) van and five (5) John Deere Utility Vehicles in accordance with Section 8 of the SHA Procurement Policy and to authorize the Executive Director, Denise R Jordan, to complete the sale of each vehicle to the highest bidder.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to award a contract for the window replacement at Gentile Apartments presented by Deputy Healy. Mr. Healy stated that this long-awaited project is funded by ARPA money and will allow to replace old sliding windows that are heavy, hard to use and most parts for which are no longer manufactured. He expressed his satisfaction that at least 3 vendors responded to the RFP and he explained that the SHA has never worked with the contractor that won the bid but it is known to the SHA architect who is confident that they have a good understanding of the scope of work. In response to Commissioner Warren's question, Mr. Healy stated that the project will take some time as the contractor will have to do measurements in the field, design and manufacture the windows and start the trim work. The maintenance staff member who is assigned to the building will be providing assistance and working with the tenants.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a contract to Drizos Contracting LLC of Burlington, MA, 01803, in the amount of seven hundred eleven-thousand Dollars (\$711,000.00), for the Window Replacement Project at Gentile Apartments; appoint Executive Director, Denise R. Jordan as the Contracting Officer authorizing her to execute the contract.

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to award a contract for IT Software and Services. Deputy Healy reported that Emphasys, Yardi and PH Webb were the 3 bidders. A committee was setup with SHA staff members from different departments, including public housing, Section 8, Executive, Accounting, and maintenance. All members of the committee reviewed the proposals and attended demonstrations. The IT Director Stephen Ethier commented on the low price of the contract comparing to the current contract and stated that PH Webb is believed to provide a more personalized approach and better customer service while ensuring compliance. Director Jordan stated that the fee accountant's recommendation was to proceed with PH Webb. Ethier said that even though their software is not expected to be ideal, but it is expected to be more user friendly. Deputy Healy added that unlike the current software vendor, PH Webb only specializes on software for public housing agencies and designing web-sites. In response to Commissioner Warren's questions John Healy provided information about how Yardi presented their proposal. Deputy Kane said that there are no outstanding liabilities because the contract with Yardi was up and carries over until SHA terminates it. Commissioner Warren questioned about what will happen to all the sensitive data that was given to Yardi and Mr. Ethier stated that all data will be deleted. Mr. Ethier and Ms. Kane provided some figures about how the cost of using Yardi services over the years has been escalating despite all the efforts to bring software expenses down. Chairman Labonte expressed his concern that Yardi did not meet the

expectations that everybody was having when the SHA was switching to it. Stephen Ethier noted that a lot of expenses were due to using the services of Yardi consultants and it is not expected that it will be the same with PH Webb.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Robles, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a contract for IT Software and Services to PHA-Web in the amount of five hundred fifty-nine thousand one hundred sixty-five Dollars (\$559,165.00) for five years; authorize the Executive Director, Denise R. Jordan to execute the contract.

Stephen Ethier left the Conference Room at 4:45 pm.

Deputy Kane presented the next item on the agenda and explained how tenants can switch from a flat rent to income-based rent.

Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez and following a roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9802 to adopt new flat rents effective 10/01/2024 as follows:

		FMR 10/23	80%	35%	New Existing	New Admission
0 Bedroom	507	808	654.4	684.45	654	654
1 Bedroom	609	987	789.6	822.15	790	790
2 Bedroom	759	1223	978.4	1024.65	978	978
3 Bedroom	772	1497	1197.6	1042.2	1042	1197.6
4 Bedroom	792	1799	1439.2	1069.2	1069	1439

Deputy Kane requested the next item on the agenda regarding utility allowance to be tabled.

Executive Director Jordan reported about the upcoming HUD visit on June 24-28 and said that the programs to be reviewed are: Public Housing, Applications, Housing Choice Voucher, ROSS Grant, Capital Fund, Procurement, Finance and Maintenance. SHA staff has been preparing for the visit by collecting and sending to HUD all requested documents, ledgers and reports. She continued her report by informing about that the 4 units that were damaged by fire at Moxxon Apartments on 06/02/24 were condemned and the SHA is expecting the final report from its insurance company. She praised the support and assistance provided by Deputy Kane, Property Manager Ivette Otero, Foreman Periera and Harold Rios from Maintenance to the residents, SPF, SPD and Code Enforcement department.

Ms. Jordan continued the report by informing that the software RFP committee has completed the evaluation of all proposals and the good news is that PH Webb contract will include redeveloping SHA website. Ms. Jordan reported about the ongoing work on reviewing and revising ACOP and Administrative Plan to comply with HOTMA regulations. Director Jordan told about her meetings with local legislators to discuss the upcoming Housing Bond Bill and the Capital needs for SHA; about providing a letter of support for the city's park department, as they seek funding for redevelopments to the Donna Blake Park, which services the resident of two of SHA properties on Pendelton Ave. Ms. Jordan talked about efforts on exploring opportunities to work with the Sheriff's Department to create a Community Garden at Riverview Apartments. Other items on the Executive Director's report were: addressing the incident that happened in the elevator at Saab Court; meeting with the Tri-Tower residents; attending the 8th Annual Western Mass Network to End Homelessness Regional Gathering, the Economic Pathways meeting, the Mass Development TDI Tour and the Gateway City Housing Authority Advisory Committee meetings. The report was concluded by informing the Commissioners about starting Phase II Plan for the Energy Performance Contract and by providing brief information about the Bond Bill.

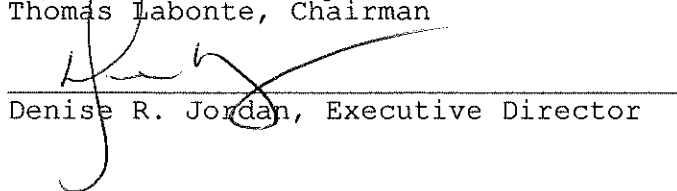
In response to Commissioner Robles's question, Attorney Chesky provided brief information about court cases.

There being no further business to come before the members of the Springfield Housing Authority Board, upon a motion made by Commissioner Wrren, seconded by Commissioner Quinonez, and following a board roll call, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn the Open Session of the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority at 5:13 PM.

ATTEST:


Thomas Labonte, Chairman


Denise R. Jordan, Executive Director