MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

- OPEN SESSION -

OF THE SPRINGFIELD HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD ON JUNE 21, 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 June 21, 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, June 21, 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
June 16, 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 June 16, 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 Direct

William H. Abrashkin/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
Willie Thomas
Thomas Labonte
Jessica Quinonez
Angela Robles
Raymond Warren

ALSO PRESENT William Abrashkin

Michelle Booth Priscilla Chesky, Atty., L&F

Loleta Collins

ABSENT

Nicole Contois
Stephen Ethier
Jimmy Mitchell
Brianna Lee
Fergie Perez
Khialeny Pena
Clifford Ike Jorgenson
Wallace Kisiel
John Healy (arrived at 4:39 pm)
Steven Mitchell
Julia Mitchell
Penny Mitchell
JoAnn White
Pam Wells

The Board reviewed the Minutes of May 17, 2016. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Warren, it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the Minutes of May 17, 2016.

Chairman Thomas moved the 1st item from the New Business before the Old Business and invited Jimmy Mitchell to present the Farris Mitchell Scholarship recipients. Mr. Mitchell expressed his gratitude to the Springfield Housing Authority for the great collaboration that helped so many young people to achieve success in education. He introduced his family members - his younger sister Penny, his brother Steven and his mother Julia. Mr. Mitchell indicated that all 10 children in their family who used to live at one of the SHA developments have had a successful life and career because their father believed in education. He introduced the recipients of this year's scholarship - Khialeny Pena, Brianna Lee and Fergie Perez. Khialeny Pena thanked the Springfield Housing Authority and the Mitchell family for giving her such a great opportunity to pursue career in nursing. Brianna Lee also expressed her gratitude to the SHA and the Mitchell family for their support and indicated that she will be attending a Deaf Studies program at the Holyoke Community College. Fergie Perez informed that she will be studying Secondary Education in the Westfield University.

Chairman Thomas congratulated the recipients with the awards.

Executive Director Abrashkin praised the work of Jimmy Mitchell for all the incredible work he has been doing to support young residents of the SHA.

Jimmy Mitchell, Julia Mitchell, Steven Mitchell, Brianna Lee, Fergie Perez Khialeny Pina, and Pam Wells left the Conference Room at 4:29 pm.

Moving to the Old Business Chairman Thomas gave the floor to Clifford Ike Jorgenson, Mechanic I from the District A. Referring to his presentation at the previous Board meeting Mr. Jorgenson admitted that he provided inaccurate information to the Board and apologized for wrong accusations. He also thanked the Board and Judge Abrashkin for meeting with the Districts' managers and foremen to discuss their concerns and see how the Districts operate.

Judge Abrashkin added that he respects Mr. Jorgenson's courage to come in before the Board to apologize.

Clifford Ike Jorgenson left the Conference Room at 4:34 pm.

The Board reviewed the materials and recommendation to approve Amendment 6 to the DHCD Capital Improvement Work Plan 5001. Commissioner Warren requested a clarification on the subject of the vote. John Healy who entered the Conference Room at 4:35 pm provided explanation stating the Amendment was for the FY2019 budget and clarified that the total amount to be voted on has to be \$405,013.00, not \$40,000.00 as it was written in the Recommendation distributed to the Board earlier.

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

VOTED: to adopt Resolution No.9664, accepting Amendment No. 6 to DHCD Capital Improvement Work Plan 5001 awarding the Springfield Housing Authority the funding in the amount of \$405,013.00 for project 689-1.

John Healy presented to the Board information about the annual bid for heating supplies to be used by all Districts for heating equipment repairs and maintenance. Mr. Healy stated that information about the bid was sent to 7 firms and 4 bidders responded. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to make the following 2016 Heating Supplies contract award recommendations totaling \$64,565.09

Suppliers	PO Amount	#Awarded Items
Baystate Plumbing 15 Mill Street Springfield, MA 01108	\$13,425.76	16 items
Bender Plumbing 197 Warwarme Ave. Hartford, CT 06114	\$16,944.69	43 items
FW Webb 145 Performance Blvd. Springfield, MA 01104	\$33,122.56	29 items
United Plumbing Supply 210 Hickory Street Springfield, MA 01139	\$1,072.08	8 items

The Board reviewed materials and a recommendation to approve the 2016 Contract for electrical and appliances supplies. John Healy provided information about the bid. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to award a Contract for Electrical and Appliance Supplies totaling \$131,490.06 as follows:

Suppliers	PO Amount	#Awarded Items
Hampden Zimmerman 274 Taylor Street Springfield, MA 01005	\$29,306.21	34 items
Twin City Supply Co. 233 Harris Ave. Providence, RI 02903	\$12,410.45	19 items
Wattsaver Lighting Products 22 Thomas Street East Hartford, CT 06108	\$50,972.20	41 items
Graybar PO Box 2514 Springfield, MA 01101	\$38,803.15	46 Items

The Board reviewed materials and recommendation to award a Contract for locksmith services. John Healy explained that the contract with Serv-U, awarded in 2010 and extended in 2015, expired and a new bid was issued. Mr. Healy stated that the SHA purchased its own Medeco keyway due to security issues with the old system and in the last 6 years over 75% of units locks were transitioned to Medeco. The SHA solicited two Medeco certified vendors - Serv-U Locksmith in Springfield and Rackliffe Locksmith in Agawam. Serv-U was the only vendor to respond to the solicitation. In response to Commissioner Warren's question Mr. Healy stated that it is expected that the agency's expenses on locksmith services will be decreasing as most of the work now will be conducted in their shop, not on sites though a lot still needs to be done in the common areas. Commissioner Warren also questioned if there is a budgeted amount for these services and if the money come from the capital or operating budget. Nicole Contois stated that the money come from the Operation budget and she does not have an exact amount but locksmith costs are included into the budget based on the last years' expenses and since most of the work on re-keying the units locks has been done it is expected that the costs will be lower.

Answering Commissioner Labonte's question on who is authorized to request service calls during non-business hours, John Jealy explained that the District managers and foremen can contact Serv-U in case of emergency. He also explained that since they changed the way the lock system is setup, most residents can't lock out themselves thus minimizing a number of service calls during after-hours. Judge Abrashkin reminded that the residents are also responsible for any lock-out fees. Commissioner Quinonez inquired why not the SHA maintenance crew but Serv-U comes to unlock doors in case of emergency. Wallace Kisiel responded that in case of a lockout, the SHA maintenance staff is called to unlock the door but Serv-U technicians are called if there is a broken lock.

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

VOTED: to accept the bid from Serv-U Locksmith and authorize Executive Director, William H Abrashkin, to execute a three (3) year contract with two one (1) year options with Serv-U Locksmiths Inc. at the hourly rates proposed in Attachment 1.

The Board reviewed materials and recommendation to award a Contract with EMG for ADA Assessment. John Healy explained that the SHA advertised a Request for Qualifications for Architecture and Engineering services to perform an ADA Assessment of the SHA's existing accessible units to make sure they are in compliance with all current requirements. Three proposals were received and two firms received identical scores from the reviewing committee of four. The phone interviews were conducted and the fee proposals were reviewed and it was determined that EMG from Boston has more experience to meet the SHA needs. Answering Commissioner Warren's question Kisiel explained that the SHA is obligated to assess its handicapped units every 5 years. Commissioner Warren also inquired if these expenses have been budgeted and Mr. Kisiel stated it is a part of the Commissioner Labonte questioned why one of firm's proposed fees were so high and Mr. Kisiel suggested that most likely because other bidders use more advanced sophisticated methods (special software, laser measuring, computerized data collection and processing). Mr. Kisiel stated in total 90 handicap units and common spaces will be assessed so 120 reports are to be prepared. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to authorize Executive Director, William H Abrashkin, to execute a contract with EMG, for Architecture and Engineering services for an ADA Assessment, in the amount of \$89,050.00.

The Board reviewed materials and recommendation to approve Revisions to HCV Administration Plan regarding Homeownership. Loleta Collins provided information on the suggested revisions. The 1st proposed revision establish a requirement for participants to maintain continuous employment after their home was purchased through the Homeownership program. She explained that a few families who purchased their home with a voucher quit their jobs leaving payment of the mortgage largely to the HCV program. Ms. Collins indicated that hardship situations like layoffs will be excluded from the requirement. Michelle Booth added that adopting such a requirement is also a part of promoting participants' self-sufficiency.

The Second revision establishes a 6 month period for purchasing home. Currently there is no time frame for families applying for the Program. Answering Judge Abrashkin's question Ms. Collins confirmed that the 6 month can be extended for good cause.

The 3rd revision stipulates that all the families participating in the Homeownership program must complete and sign the SHA's Homeownership Obligation Form and the HUD Family Obligation Form. The purpose of the revision is to make sure that all the participants are aware about their requirements and obligations. The forms must me signed prior to purchase or at the time of Annual Recertification.

The 4^{th} revision suggests conducting annual inspections since current homeowners are excluded from the annual inspection requirement.

Answering Chairman Thomas's question Ms. Collins informed that there is a provision for retirees in the Plan. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Quinonez, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to approve the proposed revisions to the Housing Choice Voucher Program Administrative Plan concerning the Homeownership Program and the implementation of the SHA's Homeownership Obligation Form and the HUD Family Obligation Form.

Loleta Collins left the Conference Room at 5:10 pm

The Board reviewed the materials and a recommendation to adopt a revision to HCV Administrative Plan. Michelle Booth explained that the current definition of Chronically Homeless in the Admin Plan is outdated and needs to be revised in order to better capture the goals of a collaborative program between the SHA and the City of Springfield. The program allows chronically homeless people to get a mobile voucher after a year of successful participation in the City's program. The SHA was requested by the City and by the Western Mass Network to End Homelessness to adopt the common definition of chronically homeless that is used by all other agencies in Western Massachusetts. This definition is found in 24 Code of Federal Regulations 788.13.

Commissioner Quinonez questioned if the program can be successful for some homeless people like those who live behind her development and are not interested in getting any housing. Michelle Booth stated that the vouchers are issued only to those people who have been participating in the program for over a year and have been getting various services from the City. Currently 94 slots out of 97 have been filled and the success rate is pretty high. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Robles it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution # 9665 approving the revision of the SHA's Housing Choice Voucher Program administrative plan to reflect the adoption of the definition of chronically homeless as noted at 24 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 578.3 and the requirement for applicants to the SHA's Project-based Voucher Program for the Chronically Homeless to provide certification of chronically homeless status and verification of disability forms.

The Board reviewed the materials and a recommendation to approve revision of SHA schedule of Charges for Tenant Abuse. Michelle Booth explained that the current list that was last updated in 2013 was reviewed by the managers and foremen and it was decided to make some changes, including increasing some charges, adding new items (for example, for solid core interior wooden door or repainting rooms after tenant painting), reducing charge for not preparing unit for extermination from \$125 to \$40 due to the change in the cost charged by the extermination company. Ms. Booth indicated that the new Schedule stipulates not only charging tenant account but also pursuing a complaint in District Court for tampering with a smoke detector or for improper disposal of appliances or furniture. The revised schedule also

lists a \$50 fine for failure to remove trash barrels from curb. Ms. Booth stated in the last quarter the SHA has had to pay \$2000 to the City for tenants barrels left on the tree belt after the pick-up day. Michelle Booth also said that the Districts will be outreaching to the residents to inform them about a proper way to discard big items or to remind them about their responsibility for removing their trash barrels by the end of the trash pick-up day. Commissioner Quinonez questioned what measures can be taken to prevent people from throwing oversize items into dumpsters on the SHA property. Michelle Booth explained that the tenants' cooperation is needed in order to address this issue. She advised against confronting the violators but told it's important that tenants collect as much information as possible (vehicles description, license plate, date and time) and report it to the Police Department and SHA.

Answering Commissioner Robles's question on how information about new charges will be distributed to the residents Michelle Booth told that the new schedule will be posted on-line and in the offices. Commissioner Warren's question on what is considered to be "heat below code" Judge Abrashkin said that it's 68 degrees during a day and 64 degrees at night. Commissioner Quinonez stated that after a new heating system was installed at Jennie Lane Apartments there have been many complaints from the residents about not getting enough heat and Michelle Booth explained that the staff will be looking into how well the new system is working before charging the residents. Judge Abrashkin added that a tenant gets charged for false claims of no heat or not enough heat only if they call during after-hours because those calls cost hundreds of dollars to the agency. In response to Commissioner Labonte's question Michelle Booth explained that at the time of orientation the staff provides tenants with information about what is considered normal wear and tear and in what situations charges will be applied so that tenants would not be afraid to call in case they need something to be fixed. Answering Chairman Thomas's question she said that all units are inspected at least once a year unless a tenant had housekeeping issues that need to be monitored more frequently. She also stated that there is a Tenant Abuse section in the Inspection Form that helps the staff to keep track of the charges when a work order is generated.

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

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9666 to accept the revision of the Tenant Abuse Charges Schedule and authorize staff to implement it in the field.

The Board reviewed the materials and a recommendation to approve the SHA Preventative Maintenance Policy. Michelle Booth explained that both HUD and DHCD require housing authorities to have a Preventative Maintenance Policy and the Policy provided to the Board is a sample document recommended by HUD. Answering Commissioner Labonte's question Ms. Booth confirmed that some of the preventative measures in the Policy have never been undertaken, for example, for the boilers since the agency did not have enough plumbers in staff to do it. Commissioner Warren inquired about preventative measures for the SHA vehicles which, according to the Policy, is now has to be done on a monthly basis. Michelle Booth responded that right now the vehicles are checked quarterly but it is recommended to do it on a monthly basis.

Mr. Warren suggested including to the policy regular inspection of the equipment like snow blowers and lawn mowers. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Labonte, seconded by Commissioner Robles, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9667 to accept the SHA Preventative Maintenance Policy.

The Board reviewed the materials and a recommendation to accept the SHA Maintenance Policy. Michelle Booth indicated that the Policy which was distributed to staff including Deputy Directors, foremen and property managers, incorporates information on all important aspects of the maintenance work including work orders system, priorities, units turnover, vehicles, equipment, landscaping etc. Upon a motion made by Commissioner Warren, seconded by Commissioner Labonte, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adopt Resolution #9668 accepting the SHA Maintenance Plan.

Executive Director Abrashkin started his report by providing an update of the 6 state tornado units at Eastern Avenue. The SHA does not have enough funds to re-build those units and the agency had requested DHCD to authorize transferring subsidy from those units to other similar units which are in a desperate need for improvement. Judge Abrashkin reported that he has just received a confirmation that DHCD had agreed to bring this subject to HUD's attention. He expressed his hope that DHCD's involvement could expedite a response from the HUD Multifamily office on this matter. He also reminded the Board that if this request is approved, a special Request for Proposal will be issued and if a qualified affordable housing developer responds to it, the property will be sold to that developer for \$1.

Judge Abrashkin continued his report by providing an update on Marble Street. He expressed his frustration about all the delays and hurdles in processing the application by the Special Application Center despite the fact that the Springfield Housing Authority is following all HUD's regulations. He indicated that several years ago HUD approved the City's Neighborhood Transformation Plan (including demolishing Marble Street Apartments) and even provided over \$300,000 funding for it. He informed that the SHA and the City of Springfield decided to request a Special Waiver from HUD and, if it does not work, to proceed with a legal claim. Commissioner Warren expressed his appreciation to Judge Abrashkin for his patience and diligence in dealing with this issue. Mr. Abrashkin in his turn acknowledged Michelle Booth who has been managing this project for many years. Answering Chairman Thomas's question about what the City is planning to do to meet the project's deadlines if HUD keeps delaying approval of the application, Judge Abrashkin informed that the City has an optional plan. He emphasized the importance of demolishing the development indicated that unlike many other applications for disposition, this one has no opposition and is in everybody's interests including the City, the SHA and the residents with whom the agency has held 3 meetings and got a 100% approval. Demolishing of Marble Street also meets the standards and requirements of the Fair Housing.

Judge Abrashkin completed his report by reminding the Board members about the Golf Tournament to be held on July $18^{\rm th}$ to support TRS Program. He reminded that \$8000 was raised last year.

The Board reviewed an email from Mike Petro regarding submitting the SHA's 2016 Financial Data Schedule submission. Judge Abrashkin explained that a high score (88.6 points)e achieved this year was a combination of different indicators (REAC, finances, fiscal needs, management, capital fund) and it reflects the hard work done by the SHA staff. Answering Commissioner Warren's question he confirmed that it still does not give the agency a High Performer status but stated that the current score is still a big achievement.

The Board reviewed and accepted the Accounts Payable Report for the month of April. In response to Commissioner Warren's inquiry JoAnn White explained that the Financial Statement were not available because the 2016 books has just recently been closed with the FDS submission but will be provided at the next Board meeting. Nicole Contois confirmed that statements for the months of April, May and June 2016 will be submitted to the Board. Commissioner Warren expressed his appreciation to clarifying information about some bills for legal and locksmith services.

The Board reviewed and accepted the Rental Assistance Division report for the period of January through April 2016. Michelle Booth provided information about some important aspects of the report, including getting 44 enhanced vouchers from HUD, attracting more banks to the Homeownership Program, and Alternative Housing Voucher Program.

Executive Director Abrashkin reminded the Board about the Consent Agenda.

Chairman Thomas entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session. Judge Abrashkin requested the Board to review one more item in the Open Session. In response to Commissioner Labonte's request sent earlier via email, Judge Abrashkin provided an update on the Desktop Virtualization project. He reported that several years ago the IT Department was operating in crisis with unsecured and unprotected data and many other issues. The situation started to change after Stephen Ethier became the IT Director. Now that the IT system is stabilized it is time to review it and assess the needs which has been done recently with help from Cambridge Housing Authority. The next important step is completing a transition to Virtual Desktop System which will help to resolve so many problems and to make everybody's work more efficient. The new system will allow the IT staff to access all computers remotely thus eliminating the need to travel around the City to fix computers in different offices. It is expected that the project will be completed by the end of the year. Judge Abrashkin also reported about some staffing changes in the Department.

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 Quinonez, it was unanimously

VOTED: To go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining; to discuss strategy with respect to

litigation; to discuss strategy with respect to the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property

The Open Session of a Regular Meeting of the Springfield Housing Authority adjourned at 6:09 PM.

ATTEST:

Willie Thomas Chairman

William H. Abrashkin, Executive Director

Attachment 1

The following are the rates that Serv-U is proposing in their bid:

Year 1 M-F (8:30am-4:30pm) M-F (4:30pm-8:00am) Saturdays Sundays & Holidays Discount off List Price	On-Site Hourly Rate \$70.00 \$140.00 \$140.00 \$170.00 Locks-25% Parts-10%	\$35 \$35 \$35	In Shop Hourly Rate \$35
Year 2 M-F (8:30am-4:30pm) M-F (4:30pm-8:00am) Saturdays Sundays & Holidays Discount off List Price	On-Site Hourly Rate \$70.00 \$140.00 \$140.00 \$170.00 Locks-25% Parts-10%	\$35 \$35 \$35	In Shop Hourly Rate \$35
Year 3 M-F (8:30am-4:30pm) M-F (4:30pm-8:00am) Saturdays Sundays & Holidays Discount off List Price	On-Site Hourly Rate \$75.00 \$150.00 \$150.00 \$180.00 Locks-25% Parts-10%	\$35 \$35 \$35	In Shop Hourly Rate \$35
Year 4 M-F (8:30am-4:30pm) M-F (4:30pm-8:00am) Saturdays Sundays & Holidays Discount off List Price	On-Site Hourly Rate \$75.00 \$150.00 \$150.00 \$180.00 Locks-25% Parts-10%	\$35 \$35 \$35	In Shop Hourly Rate \$35
Year 5 M-F (8:30am-4:30pm) M-F (4:30pm-8:00am) Saturdays Sundays & Holidays Discount off List Price	On-Site Hourly Rate \$75.00 \$150.00 \$150.00 \$180.00 Locks-25% Parts-10%	\$35 \$35 \$35	In Shop Hourly Rate \$35

			\$ · · ·